



Supporting writers of all ages and abilities

Peter Cowan Writers Centre Inc.
 (not for profit organisation)
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Workshop Summary for 2016

All workshops are 1.30-4.30 pm except where marked

Course Code

Mon	January	18 th	Centre Opens for Administration	
Mon	February	1 st	Centre Opens for Writers	
Sat	February	6 th	Creative Writing 10am-12 noon and Welcome back lunch 12 -1.30pm	
Sat	February	13 th	(Closed) Writers Retreat 2015 Revisited (1) with Susan Midalia	WRRE16
Sat	March	12 th	<u>Writing Short Stories - Plot and Theme with Laurie Steed</u>	WSS161
Sat	March	19 th	<u>Writing Short Stories: Creating Memorable Fictional Characters with Laurie Steed</u>	WSS162
Sat	April	2 nd	<u>Plotting the Novel: A Workshop on the Devious Art of Plotting with John Harman</u>	PNW163
Sun	April	10 th	<u>Poetry Writing and Editing Workshop with Jackson</u>	PWE164
Sat	April	30 th	<u>Writing Short Stories: Final Steps – Pitching and submitting your work for publication with Laurie Steed</u>	WSS165
Sat	May	7 th	(Closed) Writers Retreat 2015 Revisited (2) with Susan Midalia	WRR166
Sat	May	14 th	<u>Writing Fiction for Children with Ken Spillman</u>	WFC167
Sun	May	29 th	<u>Kickstart Your Writing with Maureen Helen</u>	KSW168
Sun	June	12 th	<u>Memoir Writing Made Simple with Maureen Helen</u>	MMS169
Sat	June	25 th	<u>Writing Dramatic Dialogue with John Harman</u>	WD1610



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Sat	July	16 th	<u>Radical Devotion: Landscape Poetry for the 21st Century with Liana Joy Christensen</u>	RD1611
TBA	July	TBA	<u>Writing Retreat Holiday Program (one day) 12-14 Years with Ken Spillman</u>	WR1613A
TBA	July	TBA	<u>Writing Retreat Holiday Program (one day) 15-18 Years with Susan Midalia</u>	WR1613B
Sun	July	24 th	<u>The Skills of a Bower Bird: Research for Writing with Maureen Helen</u>	SB1612
Sat	July	30 th	<u>Why Conflict Should Drive the Story with David Whish-Wilson</u>	WC1622
Sat	August	6 th	<u>So You Want to Write Poetry Session 1 with Shane McCauley</u>	WP1614
Sat	August	20	<u>So You Want to Write Poetry Session 2 with Shane McCauley</u>	WP1615
Sat	August	27 th	<u>Brushing Up Your Stories: Structure: The Backbone of Short Story Writing with Susan Midalia</u>	BS1616
TBA	September	TBA	<u>Writer in Residence Program</u>	WR1617
TBA	September	TBA	<u>Writer in Residence Program for Youth</u>	WR1618
Sat-Sun	October	15-16	<u>Writers Retreat 2016 with Susan Midalia</u>	WR1619
Sun	October	23 rd	<u>The Best Characters in Memoir Writing with Maureen Helen</u>	MW1620
Sat	November	5 th	<u>Poetry Editing with Shane McCauley</u>	PE1621
Sat	December	10 th	Centre Closes for Christmas 2016	
2017				
Sat	February	5 th	Centre re-opens for 2017	



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Workshop Overviews

[Writing Short Stories – Plot and Theme with Laurie Steed](#)

WSS161

12 March: 1.30 – 4.30 pm

\$38 Members

\$48 Non-members

Your story's plot is the sequence of events that affects other events through the principle of cause and effect. But how does one skilfully manage these events and in doing so, create a story that's not only well plotted but also compelling to the reader. In this workshop, award-winning author Dr Laurie Steed explains the basics of plot and theme, and how to work with each in pursuit of engaging, innovative, and exciting fiction.

[Writing Short Stories – Creating Memorable Fictional Characters with Laurie Steed](#)

WSS162

19 March: 1.30 – 4.30 pm

\$38 Members

\$48 Non-members

We've all read unforgettable fictional protagonists and antagonists, and have marvelled at their richness of character. But how do you create such characters in your own work? Exploring both established character types and ways to play against type, this workshop by award-winning author Laurie Steed, leads writers of all ages and stages towards creating the types of characters that will stay with the reader, long after they have read the final page.

[Plotting the Novel: A Workshop on the Devious Art of Plotting with John Harman](#)

PNW163

2 April: 1.30 – 4.30 pm

\$38 Members

\$48 Non-members

A good plot is both the skeleton and sinews of the story, providing direction, definition and the power to move readers' feelings to a satisfactory resolution. Yet many writers find plotting difficult. By understanding and experimenting with the nine-point arc of a typical plot, workshop participants will learn the devious art of plotting, discovering that plots are driven by the wilful or unconscious desires of the protagonists and that plot and character are two sides of the same coin – that the deepest desires and true personality traits of the major characters can only be unravelled through the exigencies of the plot. Getting the plot and character perfectly entwined is both the storyteller's craft and art.

The structure of a story may be viewed as analogous to a journey
a compass — the premise... theme... threads.

a map — the plot.

an engine — the motivation of the protagonist (plus other central characters).

the fuel — dialogue... which drives the story.



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The depth, dimensionality and authenticity of the plot are vital. As the story may be a quest — either a physically or a psychologically dangerous journey in which the protagonist has a very hard time — the writer needs to create a subtly structured yet believable chain of events that subjects the characters to all the physical, emotional and mental punishment the story is about to hand out.

Poetry Writing and Editing Workshop with Jackson

PWE164

10 April: 1.30 – 4.30 pm

\$38 Members

\$48 Non-members

This workshop will have two parts. Part 1 will be poetry writing: leap or tiptoe out of your poetic comfort zone in a supportive group environment. Try some writing experiments — write in new ways. Part 2 will be poetry editing: learn how to refine your poems for publication, performance or competitions. An afternoon of fun with words for beginners and old hands. Please bring writing materials and, if you like, a poem or two to work on.

This is a rare opportunity to workshop with Jackson, who is a much-published poet and editor with training in mentoring and group facilitation. In 2014 Jackson won the Ethel Webb Bundell Poetry Award. In 2013 Mulla Mulla Press published her second collection 'lemon oil'. She is currently undertaking a PhD in Writing at Edith Cowan University. Visit Jackson at proximitypoetry.com.

Writing Short Stories: Final Steps – Pitching and submitting your work for publication with Laurie Steed

WSS165

30 April: 1.30 – 4.30 pm

\$38 Members

\$48 Non-members

The road to publication is a long and unforgiving one. While it's always difficult to send one's work out for submission, it's vital that certain things are done before doing so. Such things include but are not limited to spelling, grammar, formatting, consistency, and professional presentation.

Thankfully, Dr Laurie Steed has been on both sides of the submission process and is keen to help writers do things better and more efficiently. In this workshop, he'll go through the various benefits and pitfalls of submission, taking in common mistakes so that you, the writer, can avoid them when sending your work out into the world.



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Writing Fiction for Children with Ken Spillman

WFC167

14 May: 1.30 -4.30pm

\$38 Members

\$48 Non-members

This 3-hour workshop is aimed at developing and emerging writers with an interest in the area of children's fiction. It will serve as a practical introduction and a source of motivation to turn ideas into books.

During the workshop participants will undertake a series of exercises designed to develop an understanding of the writing process and build confidence in individual abilities and ideas. Workshop participants are invited to bring along a story or story concept suitable for children or a YA readership, though this is not a prerequisite.

Discussions led by Ken will lead to greater clarity about structures, character and plot, editing, and the various market sectors. Above all, participants will be inspired to develop their stories and encouraged to keep the process simple.

Kickstart Your Writing with Maureen Helen

KSW168

29 May: 1.30 -4.30pm

\$38 Members

\$48 Non-members

This is a fun workshop for new writers and for those who want to re-energise their writing. You will learn a number of enjoyable techniques and approaches to get your writing started and keep your writing-life on track.

*Maureen Helen is an experienced writer and facilitator of writing groups. She is the author of *Other People's Country* and *Elopement: a Memoir*. She has a PhD in Writing.*

Memoir Writing Made Simple with Maureen Helen

MMS169

12 June: 1.30 -4.30pm

\$38 Members

\$48 Non-members

This workshop is for anyone who wants to write (and publish) short life stories. It will combine ways to shape an incident from real life, into the form of a short memoir for publication, or for your own enjoyment.

*Maureen-Helen is an experienced writer and facilitator of writing groups. She is the author of *Other People's Country* and *Elopement: a Memoir*. She has a PhD in Writing.*



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Writing Dramatic Dialogue with John Harman

WD1610

25 June: 1.30 -4.30pm

\$38 Members

\$48 Non-members

A story is a complete process of change which has the ability to move readers' feelings powerfully and pleasurably (or painfully) in a certain, definite way. Although the story arises out of and progresses through causality — which develops into plot — and is driven by the wilful and/or unconscious desires of a character or characters who are the main protagonist/s, much of the narrative is propelled by dialogue.

Good dialogue shows and expresses rather than tells. It makes the story fly.

A story may be structured like a journey with...a compass — the premise... theme... threads; a map — the plot; an engine — the motivation of the protagonist (and perhaps other central characters); fuel — dialogue.

Radical Devotion: Landscape Poetry for the 21st Century with Liana Joy Christensen

RD1611

16 July: 1.30 -4.30pm

\$38 Members

\$48 Non-members

Like people, the world needs to be really seen, touched and loved in order for it to thrive. Not just intellectually, but physically and spiritually. Often indigenous people are much clearer about these responsibilities — but the task is great and all hands are needed here. The work may sometimes happen quickly, but it can never be hurried. It demands depth and presence. This is work worth the doing.

'Slow Story Manifesto'

The emphasis of this workshop will be on playing and having fun. It opens with a gentle reflection and sharing of landscapes that are significant to the individual and some warm-up writing exercises. This will be followed by a brief outline (with examples) of the Western tradition of landscape poetry from the pastoral to the Romantics, with an excursion into the Japanese tradition of haiku. Participants will then have the opportunity to experiment with writing in one of these forms. Having thus established the lineage of landscape poetry — and after a short break — there will be a brief discussion of the influence of ecology on eco-poetics. Participants are then encouraged to begin the draft of a landscape poem for the 21st Century.

Writing Retreat Holiday Program (one day) 12-14 Years with Ken Spillman

WR1613A

July

Content being finalised



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Writing Retreat Holiday Program (one day) 15-18 Years with Susan Midalia

WR1613B

July

Content being finalised

The Skills of a Bower Bird: Research for Writing with Maureen Helen

SB1612

Sunday 24 July: 1.30 -4.30pm

\$38 Members

\$48 Non-members

A basic research workshop for writers in all genres. An introduction to tools, methods and skills for making your writing authentic and honest. You will also learn skills for blending research seamlessly into your stories.

*Maureen Helen is an experienced writer and facilitator of writing groups. She is the author of *Other People's Country and Elopement: a Memoir*. She has a Bachelor's Degree in history and a PhD in Writing.*

Why Conflict Should Drive the Story with David Whish-Wilson

WC1622

30 July: 1.30 -4.30pm

\$38 Members

\$48 Non-members

Content being finalised

So You Want to Write Poetry 1 with Shane McCauley

WP1614

6 August: 1.30 -4.30pm

\$38 Members

\$48 Non-members

See content under WP1615

So You Want to Write Poetry 2 with Shane McCauley

WP1615

20 August: 1.30 -4.30pm

\$38 Members

\$48 Non-members

These workshops will cater for all those who have been interested in writing poetry, but have yet to try, as well as those who have already begun the journey into the art and craft of poetry but want to find out more.

We will look at such matters as: poetry, verse and worse; the fundamentals of imagery, sound and form; poetic strengths and weaknesses (i.e. what can go wrong!); and particular types of poetry suitable for beginners (such as haiku and other short forms). Useful and entertaining practical exercises will be included. We will also look ahead to other practical matters such as submitting poems to journals and the many competitions currently available in Australia.

The workshops aim to be as wide-ranging as possible within the three-hour time frames. As indicated, they are firmly aimed both at 'beginners', as well as those already afflicted by the poetry bug!



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Brushing Up Your Stories: Structure:

The Backbone of Short Story Writing with Susan Midalia

BS1616

27 August: 1.30 -4.30pm

\$38 Members

\$48 Non-members

Structure is a vital aspect of story's meaning, and a crucial way of engaging readers in its ideas and emotions. Using short writing exercises and samples from memorable short stories, this three-hour workshop will consider the different affects you can achieve by using kinds of structures, including fragments, multiple points of view, flashbacks and flash forwards. The aim is to encourage you to take some risks in your writing by being open to different ways of shaping a sequence of events or moments in time.

5-30 September:

Writer in Residence Program

WR1617

Content being finalised

Writer in Residence Program Youth

WR1618

Content being finalised

Writers Retreat 2016 with Susan Midalia

WR1619

15-16 October: 9.30 am – 4.30 pm

Both the Saturday and Sunday-cost for members \$165 for non-members \$200

Saturday Only-cost for members \$90 for non-members \$110

Sunday Only-cost for members \$90 for non-members \$110

Content being finalised

The Best Characters in Memoir Writing with Maureen Helen

MW1620

Sunday 23 October: 1.30 -4.30pm

\$38 Members

\$48 Non-members

Memoir writing is the story of a part of a person's life. But everyone who appears in your story is a character. The skill of memoir writing is to write characters who are believable, honest and engaging.

Maureen-Helen is an experienced writer and facilitator of writing groups. She is the author of Other People's Country and Elopement: a Memoir. She is a trained counsellor and has a PhD in Writing.



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Poetry Editing with Shane McCauley

PE1621

5 November: 1.30 -4.30pm

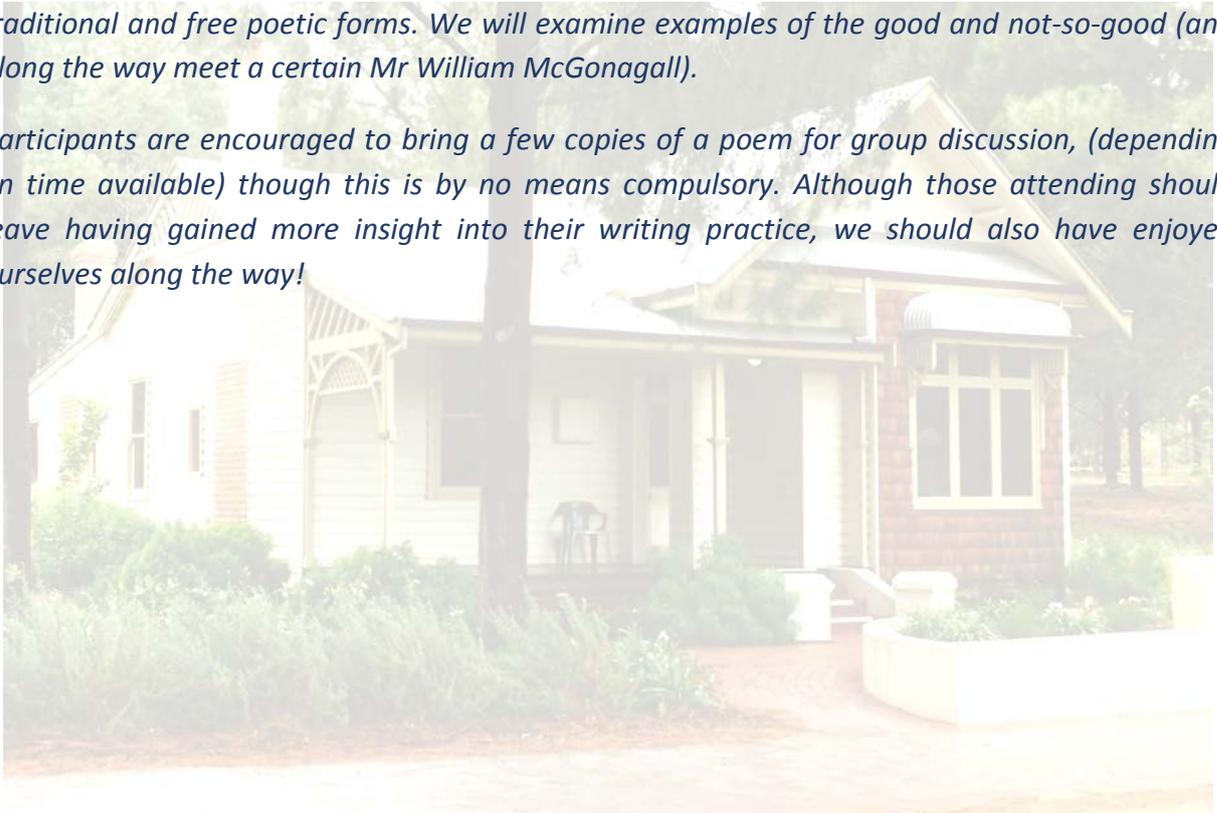
\$38 Members

\$48 Non-members

This workshop aims to encourage an objective critical attitude to the poems we write by considering building-blocks such as phrasing, structure, implication, observation and the element of surprise. It provides a useful supplementary session to the August 'Introduction to Poetry' workshops, as well as being helpful to anyone who wants to hone their poetry technique or consolidate their poetic voice.

The focus is firmly on practical matters - how to shape a poem, what to include and exclude, how to utilise imagery to the best effect, how to incorporate sounds and rhythms in both traditional and free poetic forms. We will examine examples of the good and not-so-good (and along the way meet a certain Mr William McGonagall).

Participants are encouraged to bring a few copies of a poem for group discussion, (depending on time available) though this is by no means compulsory. Although those attending should leave having gained more insight into their writing practice, we should also have enjoyed ourselves along the way!





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Biographies

Laurie Steed is an author, editor and occasional reviewer from Perth, Western Australia. His work has been broadcast on BBC Radio 4 and published in *Best Australian Stories*, *The Age*, *Meanjin*, *Westerly*, *Island*, *Australian Book Review*, *The Sleepers Almanac* and elsewhere. He won the Patricia Hackett Prize for Fiction in 2012 and is the recipient of fellowships from The University of Iowa, The Baltic Writing Residency, The Elizabeth Kostova Foundation, and Varuna - The Writers' House. He recently completed his PhD in Creative Writing at the University of Western Australia and he is editor-in-residence at The Peter Cowan Writers Centre.

Liana Joy Christensen is the author of *Deadly Beautiful — Vanishing Killers of the Animal Kingdom* and two poetry collections, *Wild Familiars* and *Unnatural History*. Her short stories, essays and poems have been widely published in Australian and international literary journals, as well as being included in many anthologies. She has won several writing awards, including the Peter Cowan Patron's Prize for Poetry, as well as having been short-listed for the Newcastle Poetry Prize in 2014.

Jackson won the 2014 Ethel Webb Bundell Poetry Award and won second prize in the 2014 Glen Phillips Poetry Prize. In 2015 she will be commencing a PhD in Writing at Edith Cowan University. In 2013 Mulla Mulla Press published her second collection, *lemon oil*, and Fremantle Press, a micro-collection. Her poems have appeared in many publications, including *Westerly*, *Fire* (Margaret River Press 2013) and *Australian Love Poems* (Inkerman & Blunt 2013). Jackson is the founding editor of *Uneven Floor* poetry magazine, unevenfloorpoetry.blogspot.com. She is a member of the Society of Editors WA. The National Library of Australia archives her collected poems and online home Proximity, proximitypoetry.com.

Dr Maureen Helen is an experienced writer, teacher and published author. Her memoir, *Other People's Country* (ABC Books, 2008) was long-listed for a Walkley Award and short-listed for the WA Premier's history prize.

Shane McCauley is a graduate of both the University of Western Australia and Sydney and has been a TAFE/University lecturer since the mid-1970s, and has had eight books of poetry published. Most recently, he has published *Ghost Catcher* (Studio Press, 2012), *The Drunken Elk* (Sunline Press, 2010) and *Trickster* (Walleah Press, 2015). He has had over 1300 poems published in Australian and overseas journals, and has won many major literary awards, including the Tom Collins Poetry Prize, the Poetry Australia Bicentennial Poetry Award and the Max Harris Poetry Award. Recently he has been awarded first prizes in the Poetry d'Amour Award, Glen Phillips Poetry Prize (PCWC), Patron's Prize (PCWC) and Peter Cowan Writers' Centre Anniversary Prize. He conducts a fortnightly poetry workshop for the OOTA Writers' Group at the Fremantle Arts Centre.

Susan Midalia Susan Midalia is a former academic with a PhD in contemporary Australian women's fiction. She is now a full-time fiction writer who has published three collections of short stories with UWA Publishing: *A History of the Beanbag* (shortlisted for the 2008 Western Australian Premier's Book Awards); *An Unknown Sky* (shortlisted for the 2012 Steele Rudd Award); and *Feet to the Stars* (2015).



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Susan is also a freelance editor and a highly experienced workshop facilitator, as well as the judge of several literary prizes, including the Western Australian Premier's Book Awards and the T.A.G. Hungerford Award. She has twice been a peer assessor for the Literature Board of the Australia Council for the Arts. She was also, and proudly, the 2015 writer-in-residence for the Peter Cowan Writers' Centre.

John Harman has written for a living all his working life: first in advertising and then for many years as a journalist in the UK and America, finally finishing up on London's famous Fleet Street. Later he became the co-owner of a small film production company, where he wrote countless documentary, training and corporate film scripts. For the past twenty-five years, John has earned a living as a full-time writer of both popular novels, with a number of major (500-page) crime thrillers published by Headline in the UK.

Ken Spillman is the author of more than 60 books, two-thirds of them for children. His writing for children is published in approximately a dozen non-Indian languages and almost as many Indian languages. Based in Perth, Ken is a long-time advocate for writers and writing in the Asian region.

*David Wish-Wilson currently teaches creative writing at Curtin University. He has had an interesting writing career, having both taught and set up writing programs at prisons in both WA and Fiji. He started by writing short stories which were anthologised in Pascoe Publishing's Best Fifty Stories Collection. His first novel *The Summons* was published in 2006 by Random House and his second novel *Line of Sight* in 2011, by Penguin, which was also shortlisted for the Ned Kelly award that year. Its sequel, *Zero at the Bone*, was published by Viking/Penguin in September 2013. David's most recent book is *Perth*, part of the NewSouth Books city series, published in December 2013.*

