

Murrumburrah Writers' Group

Newsletter

After a protracted year of lockdown we're delighted to announce **our first meeting since February 2020** is just two more sleeps away. We haven't been snoozing though, because our play about Murrumburrah in the 1800's has progressed under the brilliant guidance of playwright Marty Boyle. In the not so distance future, it will be forwarded to our director, Rob Proven and once it has passed his eagle eye we will be looking at entering it into competitions and also producing the play. Congratulations to everyone involved, you all have done an extraordinary job. We have other projects in mind, but we will need to discuss them on Thursday.

REQUIRED FOR OUR MEETING:

Please bring along any ideas that you wish to write about and if your interest is family history please don't forget to bring along the details that you already know about your family!

And if there's any outstanding work due for the play group please bring it along.

Above all don't forget your writing materials. At our first meeting there will be socializing however I anticipate there will also be writing.



OUR NEXT MEETING

Thursday,

February 25 at 6pm until 8pm
at the **Murrumburrah Court House,**
Cnr. Vernon & Albury Sts, **MURRUMBURRAH.**

If you wish **please** bring a dish to share,
tea & coffee are supplied



The **ENTRY FEE**
(which covers electricity plus other expenses) is:
\$2's **members,**
\$4's **non-members,**
Membership is \$10's per year.
If you'd like more information or need transport and/or wish to let us know you'd like to attend:
Please call **Robin** on **02 6386 2100.**

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Professional Writer Under Focus:

Every month we focus on the career paths of authors/writers of all genre. Each will also offer tips on how to progress your Writing Career

This month our focus is on film director, Peter Herbert who has a very enviable career (see his career summary).

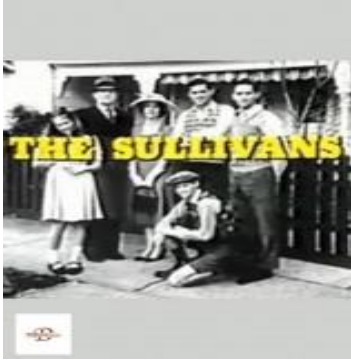
Like many youngsters during their formative years Peter Herbert avidly watched movies as well as a host of TV series, but, unlike his contemporaries, once he saw 'She Wore a Yellow Ribbon' starring John Wayne and Joanne Dru (whom he later met), his interest in film/TV transformed into his passion.



Peter Herbert

When Peter (who has been in the film industry for more than three decades) reached tertiary level, his mind was still set on a career in film, so he read and wrote prolifically, plus watched as many productions as possible, and studied relentlessly and, in addition, wrote film reviews for the university paper.

His singlemindedness led him to a fascinating vocation that spanned writing, film and television producing, teaching and also Head of Screen Business Department of the Australian Film Television and Radio School (AFTRS), plus other positions. (see his resume below).



One of the shows Peter produced.

One of Peter's beliefs when it comes to a career in his field is the importance of a well-rounded education. Opportunities, when presented, are much easier to take advantage of when backed up with a solid understanding of what is going on in the media world. And this is what gave Peter his first break into the industry he hankered to be part of.

While having coffee with a friend, a director working at Crawford Productions (The Sullivans) joined them. The fact that Peter had never met him before didn't deter him, so after some casual chatter he learnt forward and asked, "How do you get a job like that?" Two months later, after Peter had completed his degree majoring in Literature, his question led to an interview with the HR department at Crawfords. Expounding all he knew about the shows made in the studio, Peter got the job and on the ensuing Monday he proudly commenced his profession within the film industry.

It is said that one of the sounder fundamentals of great story telling is to assume that the audience has a liberal dose of Attention Deficit Disorder. Whether Peter agrees or not, judging from his body of work, he has learned his craft well.

"Film is a format built on entertainment", he says. "I'm really passionate about that, both in the obvious sense of not boring people, and, also in the sense of being subversive with your writing. At its best, film helps us make sense of the world in the same way that great art does!"

"I love series television and if you wish to be successful in the industry my advice is, to make sure you know stuff, particularly within your world, then

study, read, write and watch TV and films all the time.

Peter believes that Television has evolved to currently be a more important format than Film. Particularly now that streaming dominates what people watch. Peter favours TV series and still recalls influences from his childhood, with series such as Coronation Street. He watched it with his mother and recalls many fond memories.

"Like a good film, a good series can impact us in many ways. As a writer, my rules are to stay current, adapt where necessary, view every programme, especially programmes that are popular and then ask yourself why!"

Adapting is essential especially when one considers that during his career Peter has seen the popularity of television series/programmes change more times than he cares to remember. Peter is also adamant that if you are not writing all the time, then you are not a writer.

Peter relishes teaching and says: "Apart from the engagement with the students, it is a profession where there is constant learning both for me and for the students, and that is a wonderful thing.

"A good script must have something to say; something that is authentic with no cliches; plus, something that tells an engaging story," Peter declared.

Career Summary:

Peter Herbert is an accomplished writer and producer, with an extensive range of credits in television, stage, event work and film. He has worked on many dramas, comedies and live events, ranging from the classics of Crawford Productions - Cop Shop, The Sullivans and The Flying Doctors - through to such memorable television comedies as The Comedy Company, Acropolis Now and Dossa and Joe. With the Comedy Company, Peter was part of the writing partnership behind the character, Con the Fruiterer, the master of the catchphrases: "Coupla Days, Bewdiful, and Roula, Toula Foula, Soula and Agape". Peter also produced The TV Week Logies with Steve Vizard as host, and went on to create the TV event, The Melbourne International Comedy Festival Charity Gala, which has been running now for 20 years.

Peter has created original programs and formats, and has successfully sold his own work around the world. International broadcasters include Comedy Central in the US, Paramount Comedy Channel, the BBC, Channel 5 and BSkyB in the UK. He is

currently producing a two-part comedy documentary series for SBS about Middle Eastern stand-up comedy and has a sitcom in development set in a Thai Restaurant.

Peter also teaches in Producing and Screen Business at the Australian Film Television and Radio School (AFTRS) and is course leader in the Creative Industries unit at the University of Sydney School of Business.

Book of the Month:

For the first time we bring you book of the Month, which is available at the Harden Library. In addition, another book has been selected that will assist you with your writing. Let me know what you think?



This month's choice is:

The Dickens Boy

By acclaimed writer:

Tom Keneally.

Charles Dickens was a harsh, intolerant man who didn't wish to be judged by his contemporaries for having two under achieving sons, so he shipped them off to Australia in the late 1880's. The central character is the tenth child of Charles Dickens, Edward Bulwer Lytton Dickens, known as Plorn, who was an inadequate scholar and in Dicken's mind rather dull, so at the youthful age of 16 he was shipped off to Australia.

Plorn arrived in Melbourne in late 1868. He brought with him a secret that he was unable to share with anyone; he had never read any of his father's books and Dickens was extremely popular author in the antipodes and for this Plorn became admired. Sent to a huge cattle station in out-of-the-way New South Wales, where he was to learn how to become a man, as well as a gentleman stockman. His instructors were from the most dissimilar and usually rough backgrounds; thus he became entangled with the colonial-born, colonists, former convicts, former soldiers, as well as Paakantji. To cap it off there were hardly any women.

In this unfamiliar environment, there were also cricket tournaments, horse-racing, bushrangers, sheep droving, shifty stock and station agents, frontier wars as well as Plorn first encounters with Australian women. He meets remarkable people and

enjoys marvellous adventures as he works towards proving himself.

This is Tom Keneally at his best, taking historical people plus relevant happenings and reimagining them with vitality, empathy and hilarity. This is rousing work of fiction is a great read.



If you love writing short stories this is a handy book that's guaranteed to get you writing professional short stories and also, give you options on how to publish them.

This month's choice is:

How to Write Short Stories and Get them Published.

By Author:

Ashley Lister

Writers' Group Support:



Writers' Group Support offers suggestions that may be of assistance to you. It's amazing the resources available to writers and yet often we don't know about them. Here's hoping some of the following selections will be of use to you!

You can't escape it, exercise is highly beneficial for writers because it helps keep your thinking, learning, and judgment skills sharp as you age.

And to help you stay on track Greg Medway runs table tennis in the Murrumburrah Flour Mill every Tuesday and Saturday from 8am to 9am.

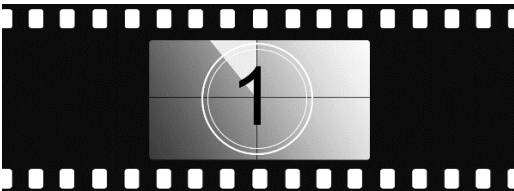


It doesn't matter whether you're a beginner or advanced you're welcome. And the best news is that it's free to join! If you're interested, please give Greg a call on 0487 028 657.



If you're researching Australian history The National Archives of Australia (NAA) collection, in Canberra, contains more than 40 million records (from 1901 until now) about important events and decisions that have shaped Australia.

The staff are extremely helpful and for your comfort there are research rooms set aside for your use, free of charge. All you have to do, is ring up and book. The contact number is:



The National Film and Sound Archive (NFSA) in Canberra offers a variety of on-site and online educational resources including digital learning websites with thousands of video and audio clips available for streaming and downloading.

Digital educational resources with teachers' notes are available on *australianscreen*, as well as specialist resources on Australian history, the First World War and more. The NFSA is well worth a visit. Staff there are very knowledgeable and extremely helpful. The number is: 1800 067 274.

Why belong to a Writer's Group:

The advantages of belonging to a writers' group are often overlooked. When you elect to become a member of a writers' group, you are able to:



1. **Mingle with people of like mind.** It is advantageous to mix with people who share the same or similar interests. A

writers' group is a support group where members can exchange ideas, work together on projects as well as inspire each other.

2. **Receive beneficial feedback.** As you craft your writing in the genre you choose, our group is a secure environment to share your work with and to receive valid feedback. Also critiquing another person's work may offer you incites, into improving your own work.
3. **Be answerable to your group.** Because we only meet once a month for two hours, homework is customarily set. This makes it easier to stave off procrastination plus also, when work is expected, it means others are counting on you to complete the assignment. This will encourage you to write regularly and when it becomes a habit this is when you become a writer rather than a dabbler in writing.
4. **Receive inspiration from others.** When a person gets writers' block and frustration sets in, so at that stage it is easy to give up. In a writers' group other members are usually empathetic and offer words of encouragement as well as advice that hopefully offer new insights.
5. **Find 'beta' readers.** When you complete your first draft, choosing writing friends to be your 'beta' readers can be very beneficial. These are people who do a thorough read of your work and offer feedback. As writers, often writing peers have good insight into the literary elements that make a great story, like structure, character development etc.
6. **Refine your writing process.** A writing group can help you become a better writer. Members will be at all different levels. Each can share their experiences and give advice on the writing process.

MARK YOUR CALENDER PLEASE

MARCH MEETING

Thursday, March 25 at 6pm until 8pm
At the Murrumburrah Court House
Cnr. Vernon and Albury Streets
MURRUNBURRAH NSW 2587

Murrumburrah Writers' Groups Aims:



The Murrumburrah Writers Group logo

The Murrumburrah Writers Group aims to expand writer's abilities as well as their skills, while focusing on encouraging the love of writing plus endorsing professional writing practice. In alliance with you our Writers Group will endeavour to foster an energetic, inventive, as well as a supportive writing family. Where possible it's the group's intention to guide writers towards publication (if you haven't already published) and also to work towards finding writing opportunities for writers. Our group is suitable for keen writers of fiction and non-fiction, of most genre, who wish to build their writing plus presentation skills and who're prepared to offer constructive support to other writers.

Introducing Our Team:

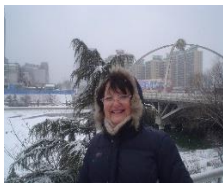
The 'Murrumburrah Writers' Group' team is a volunteer board dedicated to using their skills to help grow a thriving arena for those interested in developing their writing.



MANAGING DIRECTOR/EDITOR

Robin Cooper - 02 6386 2100, 0408 021 026

Robin is an experienced arts curator who ran gatherings for those interested in the performing as well as the visual arts. With a background in journalism Robin's interests are in writing, film, literature, art, in fact most arenas covering the arts. She also has experience in all aspects of running her own businesses as well as in events management. In addition she liaises with members, develops activities, and in general keeps the 'group' ticking.



CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Pam Heys - 6386 4789

Pam has a background in teaching, she has lived in China and is an award-winning artist. Pam has travelled extensively and has lived in Fiji and China. She brings her wide-range of professional skills to our team.



PHOTOGRAPHIC DIRECTOR

Diane Murphy - 0439 785 687

Diane is an avid photographer who enjoys creating photographic compositions for her own use. Diane, held a managerial position within the Club industry for a number of decades. Her interests include writing, photography, reading and art.



FINANCIAL DIRECTOR

Greg Medway - 0487 028 657

Greg has been a successful businessman for more than 35 years. He has just had his first book published which is about 'how to develop a viable business in China'. So far it's received much acclaim from businessmen and academics. Greg's hobbies are writing, poetry and sport.



MEMBERS/GRANTS/PROJECTS DIRECTOR

John McAvoy 0439 785 687

John held a number of positions in the Public Service and although retired, he's currently working with a team of 25 on a ground breaking scientific programme that's developing technology which aims to grow a permanent home within three or so days. If successful this technology will be ideal for third world countries and disasters zones where emergency housing is required. John has always held a great interest in literature and wishes to advance this interest by developing his writing skills.



ALTERNATIVE DIRECTOR

Lena Elphick - 0401 600 301

Lena has studied Visual Art and has a BA, Post Grad Professional Art Studies and a Diploma of Education (Art). She has written two books, one about local soldiers and the other involves her husband Gordon's family history tree.

Membership Form:

If you wish to become a member of our group, please fill in the following form and/or contact Robin on 02 6386 2100

MURRUMBURRAH WRITERS' GROUP
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM
(A MEMBER OF THE HARDEN MURRUMBURRAH ARTS COUNCIL)

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

HOME PHONE NUMBER: _____

BUSINESS PHONE NUMBER: _____

MOBILE NUMBER: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

HOBBIES: _____

WHAT INTERESTS YOU MOST ABOUT WRITING: _____

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE OUR GROUP TO HELP WITH YOUR WRITING AIMS? _____

SIGNATURE: _____

One year's membership:

\$10.00

OR

If you are **already a member of the Harden Murrumburrah Arts Council** (ie belong to another group

within the Arts Council) One Year's membership for the MWG is:

\$ 5.00