



The Storytelling Guild
of Australia (WA) Inc

Office Bearers

President:

Jenny Hill
Phone: 9319 2813
Email:
jennyhill@smartchat.net.au

Adjunct President:

Ingrid Ipp

Secretary:

Jesse Williamson
Mob. 0400-789-765
Email:
secretary@storyguildwa.
windwanderer.com

Treasurer:

Neville Blampey

Newsletter Editor:

Mabel Kaplan
mabelka@hotmail.com

A Twist of Yarn

an alternative to the 'Spinning Yarn'
An occasional Bulletin for the Storytelling Guild in Western Australia

Issue 2 June 2007

ISSN1327-645X



From the Presidents' Desk

Stories by the Fire

Saturday, 30th June 7.30 p.m

Tom Collins Writer's Centre

in the Allen Park Heritage Precinct near the corner of Wood &
Kirkwood Streets in Swanbourne

with

Harald Juengst

writer - Broadcaster - Storyteller - Musician

Since the late seventies Harald's second home - his Irish home - has been in the remote and very scenic County Donegal in the north-west of the Emerald Isle. From those early days he has loved traditional Irish music, and this love led him to found the Irish Folk band, SHEEVON.

By profession, Harald is originally a Primary School Teacher to which he added journalism, music and storytelling.

"Harald Juengst from Duisburg in the "Ruhrgebiet" of Germany is a storyteller whose life has taken him from one of the most industrialized corners of the world to the quiet remoteness of Donegal in Ireland's north west. In such places and on many roads in between, he has stopped to listen and learn, drawing on his experience as a musician and broadcaster to absorb some of the classic myths and legends of Ireland. He has an ear for the sound of the language and his adaptations and translations of these fairy stories have been greeted with enthusiasm by children of all ages, from nine to ninety nine....." Colum Sands

Inside this issue:

A Rope of Words	2
Guild Happenings	3
Singapore Festival	3
Important Dates	4

"Our Fortunes and Lives seem chaotic when they are looked at as facts. There is order and meaning only in the great truths believed by everybody in that older wiser time of the world when things were less well known but better understood." - Roderick Macleish in Mythic Imagination by Stephen Larsen

A Stone Soup Evening

To warm our hearts with shared story

And our bodies with good soup

Bring a vegetable to pop in the soupplus a gold coin donation

To all the folk who shared with us in 'Stories on the Edge' during the 2005 Festival at Point Walter ... we extend a special invitation. We'd love to refresh the fun and fellowship we enjoyed then.

Please join us!

A rope of words by Dorian Haarhoff

a poet, storyteller and former professor of English in Namibia. Passionate about developing innate creativity and imagination, he believes in the power of stories to create new realities



"Let's take hold of the rope."

I am in a workshop with 23 teenagers. A long rope links us as we sit in a circle. Whenever I tell stories, we all hold on to the "story rope."

It symbolizes our being bound together in ritual space, because storytelling has to do with ritual and community.

We are in a Namibian coastal town, **Walvis Bay**, along the south western coast of Africa.

These teenagers are from a registered **Place of Safety** for children in need of care in nearby Swakopmund and from Walvis Bay's townships. My friend, Petro, a social worker with a deep intuition about youth, has gathered these teens, 12 to 14 years old. Some of them are AIDS orphans. One had been raped by an uncle. A few have been living partly at home, and partly on the streets.

In 2004 the Swiss Carl Schlettwein Foundation which focuses on Namibia, granted me support to work with these teenagers.

The nature of the work? To encourage the use of storytelling as a creative way of coping with problems, and where appropriate, develop writing skills.

So I flew up from Cape Town (1,000 miles away) where I now live. It was good to be there -- my second home, since I once worked in Namibia for 20 years.

A Story Workshop in Three Stages

This was a series of three workshops. Each covered three stages as we worked in a cyclic pattern.

Stage One

I told fictional stories to develop a sense of story structure. One story I shared was "The Old Woman and the Pot." Then I showed the group how many stories rests on four movements – a model common to fairy tales.

Here it is in an abbreviated form:

A: A woman looks after a beautiful pot. She dusts it every day. People admire it.

B: A mighty wind blows the pot from its stand and it is shattered.

C: The woman grieves, then collects the pieces. She begins to glue the pot together.

D: She reassembles the pot and places it with all its cracks on the stand. People admire it.

The same structure is found in William Blake's journey as depicted in the 18th century poet's **Songs of Innocence and of Experience**

The four stages in this story are:

A: Paradise (All is right with the world. I call this part the womb.)

B: The fall Brokenness enters the world. This is the wound.)

C: The journey to recover what has been lost (The wandering and the work)

D: Restoring what has been broken/destroyed (The wonder and the wholeness)

This model suggests that when something happens to us (part B) we have a choice (part C) as to how we will respond.

Holocaust survivor Victor Frankl in his book **Man's Search for Meaning** suggests, "The greatest freedom I have, is the freedom to choose how I will respond to a given set of circumstances."

Stage Two

I encouraged the teenagers to begin to make up fictional stories using props and prompts.

We cut out collages, anything they could use for a story, sticking magazine pictures onto sheets of paper.

Then I handed each one a long thread of cotton and sent them outside to collect natural objects.

They created dolls and animals out of straw, sticks, leaves and stones, bound together with the cotton thread. These became the characters in their stories. We inserted these into the four movement story pattern.

Stage Three

After being told stories and constructing their own, it was time for the group to work with their own lives, to insert their life stories (life fictions) into these patterns.

The group created drawings, sketched with the non-dominant hand, of a childhood memory.

By sharing their personal memories, the participants began the >

A Rope of Words (continued from page 2)

process of seeing their lives as a story.

Life Fictions

As the 20th century French novelist and philosopher **Jean Paul Sartre** suggested, "A man [or woman] is always a teller of tales, he lives surrounded by his stories and the stories of others, he sees everything that happens to him through them; and he tries to live his own life as if he were telling a story."

If my life is a story, then I can activate choice. Each of us can choose how we want the story to continue.

The teenagers began to draw on long-lost creativity. This third stage of the workshop needed more time. Perhaps the sense of our lives as being

worthy of a story needs time to make its home in us.

Response of Participants

How do we measure the impact of a story? Their faces and feet told me. All the teenagers returned for all three workshops. As the workshop progressed, the teenagers picked up the rope when they wanted a story.

In the closing moments, I cut the rope and gave each teenager a piece to take with them. I asked them, "Will you take out the rope whenever you feel lost or are in trouble? Remember the stories that we have told and the work that we have done."

As I cut the rope, it split into various strands. "Each strand,"

I told them, "is a story."

A Personal Response

Working with these teenagers has increased my passion and understanding of story. This is in line with the discipline of narrative therapy – that ***we construct our identity through the stories we choose to tell about ourselves***. I believe in the power of stories to reach across cultures and to establish meaning. Stories form a language beneath our other languages. They place authority in the heart of the listener. Stories educate our desires and help us locate ourselves in time and place. The story rope holds us and binds us. And as we follow its treads, we find our way home.

Guild Happenings

Tuesday
12 June, 2007

STORYSHARING EVENING
"Mixed Bag"
at the home of Pip & John Leake
42 Dunrossil Street, Wembley Downs
Pip Leake 9341 2880

Tuesday
10 July, 2007

STORYSHARING EVENING
"Open Story"
at the home of Ingrid Ipp

Drawing is speaking
to the eye; talking is
painting to the ear. --
Joseph Joubert

Singapore Storytelling Festival 30 Aug–6 Sept. 2007

International Storytellers

Showcase 30 Aug - 1 Sept, 2007
Tickets \$15 (matinees) & \$25
(evening shows).

Asian Congress of Storytellers 5-
6 Sept 07

NOTE: Congress dates have
changed from the 3-4 September
to **5-6 September**. There are also
some changes to the original pro-
gramme. Check website for de-

tails. There is a clickable link to
the schedules for Day 1 and Day 2]
Registration fees do not include
accommodation. The Peninsula.
Excelsior offers special daily
rates. The Grand Plaza hotel is the
nearest hotel to the Festival
venue - the Arts House. **Website:**
[http://www.bookcouncil.sg/sisf/
acs.htm](http://www.bookcouncil.sg/sisf/acs.htm)



The Storytelling Guild of Australia (WA) Inc

PO Box 633
North Perth WA 6906

Contact the Guild Secretary

Jesse:Williamson
Phone: 0400-789-765 (mob)
Email:
secretary@storyguildwa.windwanderer.com

Guild Membership 2007

As from 1st May, 2007 subscription rates are as follows:

Regular Subscription \$30.00 p.a

Concession rate ... \$25.00 p.a

Cheques should be made payable to:
Storytelling Guild of Australia (WA) Inc
and forwarded to: The Treasurer,
PO Box 633 North Perth WA 6906

We're on the Web!
[www.geocities.com.
storyguildwa/index.html](http://www.geocities.com/storyguildwa/index.html)



LOOKING FOR STORYTELLING WORKSHOP INFORMATION

Anyone facilitating a storytelling workshop (or know of one to be held) that would assist someone wanting to explore ways to use storytelling in an After-School-Care programme

Contact Liz 9388 8856

Another enquirer is interested in workshops in developing stories and story skills for use in her work.

Check out this website—<http://www.cbc.ca/radionoonnl/media/>

Friday Night Storytelling Café

Next month:

ANDY WRIGHT

and

CLARE STACE

June 8th - 7.30. pm - \$7

La Tropicana, 177 High St. Fremantle
Enquiries phone Jenny Hill 93192813
Or Jesse Williamson 0400789765

Children's Book Week 2007

Theme: READiscover

Date: 18th - 24th August

ARTS GRANTS JULY FUNDING ROUND



Department of Culture and the Arts invites applications from individuals, groups and organisations requiring financial assistance to undertake activity in the following artforms; Arts Development, Indigenous Arts, Young People and the Arts.

CLOSING DATE: 6 July, 2007

Check website www.artswa.wa.gov.au for details

Guild meeting
All welcome!
Tuesday 19th June 7.30
41A Baal Street, Palmyra.

Now is the time to get your thinking caps on! Dream up a project for your community ... a Ghost Concert in the Park? Ride a Story Train? Street Party?

Let the committee have you ideas for its next meeting

Tuesday 19th June 7.30

41A Baal Street, Palmyra.

ALL WELCOME!