



The Storytelling Guild
of Australia (WA) Inc

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*We shall not cease from
exploration, and the end
of all our exploring will
be to arrive where we
started and know the
place for the first time.*

-- T. S. Eliot

A Twist of Yarn

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

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From the Presidents' Desk

*'Past and present are related,
advice is passed along
Good words to enlighten the world,
instruction infused in amusement'*

*Words inscribed on the wooden boards hanging on each side
of the stage in the storyteller's house of Yangzhou in China*

Past and present came together with humour during the month of June in the performances of Harald Juengst and Andy Wright.

Beside a crackling fire with a hot bowl of soup Harald wove his experiences and deep love of Ireland into lyrical tales, taking us into the landscape and mood of Irish "wordmusic", whilst at the June Café Andy took us into the riotous and yet touchingly empathetic world of his childhood.

A group of nine met on Sunday 22nd July at the South Perth Book Caffe in Millpoint Road to enter a discussion in the art of 'the storyteller'. This is an important and engaging beginning of becoming conscious of the techniques, issues and processes of storytelling which we will continue over the next six months.

The coming weeks are full of stories in schools and libraries as 'BookWeek2007' approaches. But how great it would be if we could bring storytelling to broader audiences all year round!

In the next edition of 'Twist of Yarn' we would like to bring some focus on the storytelling in it's therapeutic role within the community, so please let us know if you have been working or have experiences in this area to share.

The next General Meeting of the Guild will be on Thursday 6th September, 6.30 pm at 5 Wroy Street Beechboro

All are welcome.

With best wishes from co-presidents

Jenny and Ingrid

Project promotes cultural bridges through the recording of Aboriginal stories

DECEPTION BAY,
Queensland, Australia --

It is a wild and windy day in Deception Bay. At a local park on the edge of the bay a group of 60 people sit in a learning circle with Indigenous elders. We watch their children perform the dance of the seagull and the dolphin.

We listen to the story of this park -- a gathering place where Aborigines from local tribes were herded together and marched off their land.

They walked and they walked and they walked -- hundreds of kilometres -- and then they were forced to resettle on missions with the people of other tribes and lands.

This is a hard story for the listeners to hear. We all feel the tread and step of those feet. Above us the trees sway and bend with the wind. This is a story the landscape knows and tosses from ear to ear.

Uncle Alan continues. He tells us that many families are moving back to the bay. The young people and the children are learning the stories and the dances and we are sitting here today to celebrate their learning and to remember.

He invites other people to speak and we listen. Then we share morning tea, piklets and jam and biscuits made of lemon myrtle and macadamia nuts. The wind continues to carry the stories from person to person, shifting and changing and weaving us all together in this place and this time.

I am a storyteller. For the last year I have been working with my colleague, Gail Robinson, on a project called 'Let's Read' in Deception Bay on the outskirts of Brisbane in South East Queensland. Let's Read is an early literacy program developed by the Smith Family, a not-for-profit organization. Let's Read aims to encourage parents to read aloud to their children and to place books in the homes of disadvantaged families. We have been working in partnership with the local public library and many community groups.

However we found that the library had no books in its collection that told the stories of the local Indigenous people. We tried to purchase books and resources that would



Used with the permission of Bettins Nissen

tell their story and found that these books did not exist. The stories were oral; they had not been written down. They were told amongst the families but it was rare for the non-Indigenous members of the community to hear them. In fact the library and schools did not have any books which celebrated the culture and identity of local Aborigines. This made it especially difficult for these families to find books to read aloud that affirmed and valued their experiences and role in the community.

Gail began to work closely with local elders, parents and learning support teachers to collect these stories at play days, sports events and community festivals. She took photos and handed her camera to the children and encouraged them to photograph their friends and aunties and uncles. Each week she would take the photos back to the group and they would laugh and tell stories. As the relationship grew more stories unfolded about games and rhymes and play, about fishing and family and cousins and brothers and sisters. These stories trace the journey of a displaced people and celebrate their survival. They tell the local children who they are and where they come from; they celebrate their cultural knowledge, skills and wisdom. They are stories

(Cultural Bridges -
continued from page 2)

worth reading aloud over and over again. The picture books which were created from these stories are now available for loan at the library. They have been distributed amongst many community organizations and highlight the profile of the local Indigenous families. The stories are read aloud and heard in many places -- classrooms, playgroups, the Neighbourhood Centre, the doctor's surgery, conferences, community forums, universities and politicians' offices. In fact the stories are doing what they do best -- moving around the community, from mouth to ear, told by parents, teachers, and elders, Indigenous and not, building bridges of understanding and reconciliation and celebrating the rich diversity of our community.

Guild Storysharing Evenings

Tuesday
7 August 2007

STORYSHARING EVENING

"Numbers"

at the home of Betty & Bill Park
20 Miramare Boulevard, Currambine
Tel. 9305 3506

Wednesday
12 September 2007

STORYSHARING EVENING

"Heroes"

at the home of Glenn Swift
5 Courtland Crescent, Redcliffe
Tel. 9479 7794

Wednesday
10 October, 2007

STORYSHARING EVENING

"Heroines"

at the home of Jenny Hill
41A Baal Street, Palmyra
Tel. 9319 2813

Tuesday
13 November, 2007

STORYSHARING EVENING

"Festival"

at the home of Ankie & Neville Blampey
5 Wroy Street, Beechboro
Tel. 9377 5215

A WARM WELCOME AWAITS ALL!

http://storyteller-and-listener.blog-city.com/bettina_nissen.htm

Bettina Nissen and Gail Robinson of Queensland, whom some of you met at the 2005 International Storytelling Festival at Point Walter, have been doing some exciting cultural development work with indigenous communities. Bettina writes: The Deception Bay project is exciting and challenging. I left my library job in mid May to focus on storytelling community arts work again. Gail and I are both working on two projects in Deception Bay funded through the Communities for Children initiative (C4C) – Let's Read and I am also working on a project called Playgroups as Hubs – which involves working with 12 local playgroups. Gail is also working specifically with the Indigenous Network and playgroup. Very good stuff.

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 programme. 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/>



The Storytelling Guild of Australia (WA) Inc

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



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Guild Membership 2007

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

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

Children's Book Week 2007

Theme: READiscover

Date: 18th - 24th August

A story is like water
that you heat for your bath.
It takes messages
between the fire and your
skin. It lets them meet.

Rumi, trans. Coleman Barks

Guild General Meeting
All welcome!
Thursday 30th August 7.30
at the home of
Ankie & Neville Blampey
5 Wroy Street, Beechboro
Tel. 9377 5217

Friday Night Storytelling Café Presents Indigenous Tales from WA

Featuring:
Jocie Boyle

Noel Morrison & Theresa Walley
Plus music by Pedro, Gary and
George Walley

August 10th - 7.30. pm - \$7
La Tropicana,
177 High St. Fremantle

Enquiries phone Jenny Hill 93192813
or Jesse Williamson 0400789765



RUMI VOICE OF THE HEART

“Today, like every other day, we wake up empty and frightened
Don't open the door to the study and begin reading.
Take down a musical instrument.
Let the beauty we love be what we do
There are hundreds of ways to kneel and kiss the ground.”

Rumi's words have an almost magical ability to speak directly to the heart of people of all races and faiths. His passionate, wise and beautiful words still have a remarkable ability to touch contemporary audiences - firing the imagination and nourishing the heart.

Called 'Jelaluddin Balkhi' by the Persians and Afghans, Rumi was born on September 30, 1207 to a learned family in Balkh, Afghanistan. By age 24, his mastery of mathematics, law, philosophy and astronomy allowed him to take over his father's position as leading Sheikh in the Sufi learning community in Konya.

Rumi was a philosopher and mystic within the Islamic tradition, but was not an orthodox Muslim. His doctrine was one of unlimited tolerance, positive reasoning, goodness, charity and awareness through love.

Ashely Ramsden is the Director of 'The School of Storytelling' at Emerson College in Sussex and is one of the first European performers of Coleman Barks' modern translations of Rumi's work. He has taken Rumi's stories and poems to audiences across the world, and this year has offered performances and workshops in Europe, South Africa, United States and Australia.

More information: www.rumitour.co.uk

“...vivid and highly engaging..”

“Last Saturday night was sheer wonder. The love, the beauty, the passion, the knowledge and the majesty of Rumi was alive and present!”

The Independent
Audience member

Bookings: Melbourne: Vivienne Howson 03 95373436 viviennehowson@hotmail.com
Sydney Joy Day 02 99580718 joycday@hotmail.com
Perth Jenny & 08 93192813 jennyhill@inet.net.au
Renate 08 9337 5671 renatem10@bigpond.co

WORKSHOPS

“HOW SILENCE SPEAKS”

Storytellers and actors use words a great deal, but silence can also speak. The experienced speaker and storyteller knows what to leave out as much as what to tell, and is not afraid of silence. Come and discover what lives in the silence and risk doing less so that your listeners will go away with more.

Melbourne: Saturday Sept. 1st Melbourne institute for experiential and creative arts therapy

Sydney: Saturday Sept. 8th Kamaroi Steiner School

Perth: Saturday Sept. 15th Perth Waldorf School

“SPEAKING RUMI”

To speak Rumi's words is to enter into a process of transformation. Ashley will guide you into experiencing the inner artistry necessary to embody the inspiration behind Rumi's poetry.

Melbourne: Sunday Sept 2nd Melbourne institute for experiential and creative arts therapy

Sydney: Sunday Sept 9th Kamaroi Steiner School

Perth: Sunday Sept 16th Perth Waldorf School

COST: One Day \$165, \$135 concession Both Days \$310, \$270 concession