**The Thurrock Writers’ Circle Newsletter**

“None of the secrets of success will work unless you work.”

Chinese fortune cookie

**The Festive Season!**

The summer is over and so our minds turn to the joys that autumn and winter will bring. Here’s a list of some literary festivals that the more adventurous among us might enjoy.

**The Hampstead and Highgate Literary Festival -** 15th – 17th September London NW11. Confirmed authors include: Nick Ross, Shelina Permalloo, Judith Kerr, John Crace, Esther Walker, Thomas Harding, Tracy Chevalier, Marcus Berkmann and many others. For more information go to: hamhighlifest.com.

**Essex Poetry Festival -** Three events planned: 26th Sept – Wivenhoe, 2nd Oct – Southend, and 5th Oct Chelmsford. Go to: essex-poetry-festival.co.uk

**Small Wonder -** The 10th Annual Short Story Festival held at Charleston Farmhouse, Lewes, East Sussex. From the 25th to the 29th September. Lots of different speakers and a chance to shop for antiques in Lewes. Go to: charleston.org.uk

**Canterbury Festival -** 19th October – 2nd November. Various venues across Canterbury. A general arts festival with a fairly strong literary strand. A range of speakers over the two weeks, however there is also the Poet of the Year Awards on October 3rd. Go to [www.canterburyfestival.co.uk](http://www.canterburyfestival.co.uk)

**Wiv Words** – From 11th – 13th October New Literary Festival in Wivenhoe, Essex. An ‘unstuffy celebration of the areas written and spoken word talent.’ Go to: [www.wivmayor.co.uk](http://www.wivmayor.co.uk)

**To err is human?**

Following on from the Pet-Hates homework assignment here are some examples of human error involving a simple thing like the English language:

‘Older adults: If you feel cold, put on a sweater, crap yourself in a blanket or turn up the heat, recommend the physicians.’

‘Views plus spacious 1554 sq. ft. home with large lot, family room with fireplace, huge dick for entertaining & enjoying the views, 3 bedroom, 2 baths, central heat & air, views of city lights & Shasta. #74916’

‘Menu: Friday – Honey Mustard Chicken Diapers with Dipping Sauce, Favorite Tators, Mixed Fruit Cup, Cheddar Guppies, Milk.’

‘A Guide to Pinpoint Your Child’s Leaning Problems’

‘One man was admitted to hospital suffering from buns.’

September 2013

**Terse Verse**

My Pet Hates

You come into my house unseen,

Making everything unclean,

Settling on every surface,

Table, sideboards, every purchase.

I’ve tried and tried to clean you away,

But you come back as if to say,

I’m here to stay, clean if you must,

You are my favourite hate, dust.

Eva Rees

**Carpe Diem**

**2014 Commonwealth Short Story Prize** Free to enter, 2000-5000 words, entries between 1st Oct and 30th Nov. Prizes: Regional winners £2500, overall winner £5000. Go to commonwealthwriters.org/prizes/

**Fish Short Story Prize**. Entry fee 20 Euros (45 Euros with critique), prize 3000 Euros. Entries by November 30th. Go to fishpublishing.com

**H.E. Bates Short Story Competition**. 2000 words max, entry fee £4. First Prize £150. Closes November 4th. Go to hebatescompetition.org.uk/

**The New Writer Prose and Poetry Competitions**. Fiction: 500-3000 words, 1st Prize £300. Micro Fiction: up to 500 words, 1st prize £150. Single Poem: up to 40 lines, 1st Prize £100. Collections (6-10 poems) up to 60 lines per poem, 1st Prize £300. Entries by 30th November. Go to: thenewwriter.com/prose-and-poetry-prize/

**Words and Women Prose Competition 2013**. Open to women living in the East of England. Up to 3000 words, £600 First Prize. Go to: wordsandwomenblogspot.co.uk

**A writer’s Progress**

We’re a modest lot in the Thurrock Writers’ Circle. Our bushels are truly sub-lit judging by the lack of mail on the subject of member’s progress and achievements. So a challenge to our members is set: No more bashfulness. If you finish a short story; tell us. If you start work on a novel; tell us. If you finish the crossword, then let us know!! Let’s hear about what each one of us is doing.

**Seeing is believing**

Blue Stockings. The Globe Theatre till October 11th.

Life isn’t fair, yet it used to be a whole lot less so, and while women today still seem so far from equality it is chilling to hear the prejudiced words that were accepted as fact only a hundred years ago.

Blue Stockings, Jessica Swale’s first full length play, should shock us with its portrayal of the sexist attitudes that dominated society at that time, and yet a sign of the progress we have made is that we can now laugh at so much of it as the nonsense it truly is.

In 1896 the girls at Girton College in Cambridge, the first college in Britain to admit women, can study, but can never graduate. The fight for women to be awarded degrees, like their male counterparts, must come before a vote of the Fellows of the university, and therein lies the drama played out on the stage. Along the way the girls face the usual dilemmas that young people have always faced: the responsibilities of family and the distractions of the heart, but whilst students today can protest at the costs of tuition, how much more might they protest if 19th century values were suddenly re-imposed.

A history lesson and a reminder: of how much those before us suffered, how far we’ve come and how far we have yet to go, Blue Stockings’ message should not be ignored.

**Less Terse Verse**

The Day

Up in the morning all full of beans,

Wash, dress, you know what that means,

Breakfast first, then off to the shops,

Bread and milk, perhaps some chops.

Bargains always top my list,

Shopping bags that cut my wrist,

Laden down you wobble along,

Full of your bargains you bought for a song,

Good job I didn’t sing for my supper,

We wouldn’t eat, just live for a cupper,

But what would we do, if we were all the same,

Start all over, try a new game.

Eva Rees

**Short and Sweet**

Too Much of a Good Thing

The first night was wonderful. The seclusion of the place! The beauty of that sunset, the sea air, the sounds of the beach: the lapping of the waves a lullaby for a soul with no cares but what lazy adventures the next day would bring.

The second night was excellent. The book I had brought half read; the excitement building, and the dinner washed down with an excellent wine that soon stilled the lullaby waves.

The third night was the same, the book was finished: a satisfying end: the hero foils the plot, kills the villains, and gets the girl: the way life ought to be. And the waves sang me to sleep.

The fourth night was boring. Yes I’d seen that sunset before. My book was finished; wish I’d paced myself better. My plug adapter didn’t fit the sockets, and even for the wine the incessant waves announced their arrival one after another and kept me sleepless deep into the night.

The fifth night. Sunset …so what? Happens every night. Wish I’d bought a Kindle, but then the adapter doesn’t work! …and do those waves never stop.

The sixth night: two bottles of wine!

The Last night. Yes at last! Tomorrow back to the real world so I can start saving and do this again next year.

**The Small Print**

Unbelievably it’s September already! Where did the first eight months go? Here are the dates for this year’s remaining meetings: September 4/18, October 2/16/30, November 6/20 and December 4/18.

The TWC Writers’ Weekend still has places available. An excellent chance to sharpen those writing skills. Speak to Joy or Tina for details.

Send newsletter submissions to: [twcnewsletter@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:twcnewsletter@yahoo.co.uk)

For Thurrock Writers’ Circle info call Joy Ridgewell (01375-XXXXXX)