The anniversaries are coming thick and fast this year. This month marks the first anniversary of the current incarnation of this pamphlet. With a year behind us, we have the opportunity to look back and take stock of the advances and successes made by the group.

**One Today!**

Thurrock Writers’ Newsletter

September 2014

The most notable advance has to be in the membership of the group; the last year or so has seen a rush of new members each of whom has added a new voice to the circle. We now have the mix of short stories and journalism brought to us by Danielle Chinnon, the romance of Shona Mawby, Terry’s sex-laced soap opera, Gary’s edgy poems and most recently the haunting poems of Louise, our newest member. The addition of new members adds new perspectives and new skills to the group from which we all have the opportunity to learn.

Over the year we have also had many chances to improve our writing through both in-house and external tutoring. September 2013 saw a large portion of the group venture forth to Oxford and attend a weekend of writing at Ruskin College. January saw many members take advantage of a short course at the local adult education centre. However, throughout the year we have all relied on our own secret weapon, Cindy Barber, who has run a series of connected workshops at the meetings, and of course, ran the Thurrock Writers’ Circle Workshop at the Writers’ Festival in July. All of this hard work has paid off in the form of an increased output of increasingly high quality work, some of which found its way into the second edition of our anthology, produced to coincide with the Writers’ Festival.

Cindy Barber deserves special mention, not only for her efforts on behalf of the group today, but also for her plans for the group of the future with the delivery of another ‘Barber’ TWC future member in the form of her beautiful, and invariably quiet, son, Daniel.

As a group, we are reaching out to the wider world more than we have done in the past. Our new website provides a window on our activities for the world to look in through, and already this year we have had enquiries from people in the area looking to join. Sadly, we have been unable to take on any new members due to the constraints of our venue, and bearing in mind what strong voices our newest members have brought to the group we can only hope that we are somehow able to accept new members in the near future.

We can be proud of our achievements over the last twelve months: as a group, we have not missed an opportunity to learn and then to use what we have learnt in our writing.

 **The Small Print**

Find us online at: <http://thurrockwriterscircle.weebly.com/>

Newsletter submissions to: twcnewsletter@yahoo.co.uk

Poetry, Prose, News… anything wanted.

**Review of Timehop App**

Most people can recall memories easily but for those of us with Epilepsy our memories can need a trigger to revive them.

Timehop is a new app which can be downloaded through Google to use on your computer or mobile phone. Once downloaded you open the app. Then you are instructed to link it to Facebook, followed by Twitter, Instagram and your internal camera on your computer/mobile phone.

I have recently started using Timehop and have found it easy to use and a great asset.

Timehop works by gathering your personal information through Facebook and other social media that you have linked your Timehop app to, recalling posts that you made on this day a year ago. It will give you an update every day of what you wrote to your friends and family. Any photographs that you posted on Facebook will be shown on your Timehop and you can choose to share them.

If you are new to using Facebook (social media) getting started with Timehop will help you to recall your memories from now on. By updating posts on Facebook frequently, just everyday events like shopping trips or birthday parties, accompanied by photographs of yourself with friends, you will build up a database of your memories, which Timehop will relate back to you a year from now. So, a year down the line when you go on to Timehop you will be able to relive the moment when you read your comments and look at the photographs. A visual diary of your life at the touch of a button.

By using Facebook to keep your friends updated with things going on in your life you will grow more confident in communicating, getting used to describing a special day out. Your friends will share their experiences with you and when you and your friends look back using Timehop you will be able to share the memories together instead of feeling left out.

Tina Thompson

**A Writer’s Progress**

Tina Thompson has been busy picking up paid work from the Epilepsy Review, as demonstrated by the article she wrote about the Timehop App (above). We have been able to print it here early, it will appear in the Epilepsy Review later in the year.

Meanwhile Danielle Chinnon has been working hard on her Christmas short story and is in the process of submitting to magazines. Fingers crossed.

**Carpe Diem**

Mogford Prize

Entries are now being sought for the 2015 Jeremy Mogford Prize for Food and Drink Writing, the annual short story competition run by the FT Weekend Oxford Literary Festival in association with Oxford Gastronomica, part of the Oxford School of Hospitality Management at Oxford Brookes University.

Food and drink has to be at the heart of the tale. The story could, for instance, be fiction or fact about a chance meeting over a drink, a life-changing conversation over dinner, or a relationship explored through food or drink. It could be crime or intrigue; in fact, any subject as long as it involves food and/or drink in some way.

The story should be up to 2500 words and must be written in English.

Entries should be submitted by email as a Word document to the mogfordprize@oxfordliteraryfestival.org by January 1, 2015 (one submission per person and not previously published). The winning entry will be announced at the FT Weekend Oxford Literary Festival in March 2015 and the winner will be presented with £7500.

**Fish Publishing International
Short Story Contest**

**Short Story Competition 2014/15**: **Closes:** 30 November 2014. **Max length:** 5,000 words. Prizes: **First** - €3,000 **-** (€1,000 of which is for travel expenses to the launch of the Anthology). **Second** – a week at the [Anam Cara Writers' & Artists' Retreat](http://www.anamcararetreat.com/) in West Cork's Beara Peninsula, and €300 travel expenses**. Third** - €300

**Entry Fees**  1st Entry €20.00 Subsequent €10.00.

**Short Memoir Contest:** **Closing**: 31st January 2015. **Max length:** 4,000 words. **Prizes** **First** - €1,000

**Entry Fees**  1st Entry €16.00 Subsequent €10.00.

**Flash Fiction Contest:** **Closing**: 28 Feb 2015.**Max length:** 300 words. **Prizes**: **First** - €1,000

**Entry Fees**  1st Entry €14.00 Subsequent €8.00.

**Poetry Contest 2015:** **Closes:** 31 March 2015. **Max Length:** 300 words. **Prizes** **First** - €1,000. **Second** - A week in residence at [Anam Cara Writer's and Artist's Retreat](http://www.anamcararetreat.com/), West Cork, Ireland.

**Entry Fees**  1st Entry €14.00 Subsequent €8.00.

For information on all the Fish Publishing competitions please go to: <http://www.fishpublishing.com/short-story-competition-contest.php>

**The Fiction Desk Newcomer's Prize 2014**
Closing date: 31st October 2014.
Prizes: First prize £500, second prize £250.
Entry fee: £8 per story.
The competition is for stories from 1,000 - 5,000 words. Writers should not have been previously published by The Fiction Desk, and should not have published a novel or collection of short stories in printed form. Go to: http://www.thefictiondesk.com/submissions/newcomer-short-story-prize.php

**Poet’s Corner**

**Carnival on the Motorway**

Taillights glowing in the dark

Fireflies caught in the

Overhead beam of yellow light.

Stretching,

Snaking,

Dipping.

Across the barrier come floating

Twin cones of light.

Miniature yachts sailing

On a tarmac sea.

Now come lumbering trucks,

Looming, out of the night,

Festooned with fairy lights,

Pinpoint bright,

Hurrying on to who knows where,

No time to wait, or spare.

Rain on windscreen beading down,

Blending colours, misty bright.

And the cat’s eyes shine with ruby glow,

Watching,

Winking,

Gleaming.

Barbara Spencer

**The Last Word**

‘The roots of education are bitter, but the fruit is sweet.’  ~Aristotle