



MENTORING WRITERS Newsletter

QUARTERLY ISSUE - JAN-MAR 2022



UPDATE

Found out what has been happening with us recently

POETS CORNER

Learn what a Nonet poem is all about

Q&A's

Check out the answers to some searching questions



UPDATE

Welcome one and all, and A Happy New Year! You may, or may not have gathered that I have been rather quiet and absent from the writing and mentoring scene for the last few months of 2021 and at the beginning of 2022. The reason being, is that there has been a lot going on with me personally which has resulted in some changes having to be made within Mentoring Writers and my operations overall.

These changes were put in motion as far back as August 2021 when I was notified that the publisher I worked with had decided to withdraw his services. His intention had been to ensure that all my books, plus those I had commissioned as part of the Kids4Kids.org.uk mentoring group would be placed back in my control by the end of September 2021. Knowing I would need to spend time checking the files over and relaunching my books both in print and ebook formats I reduced the amount of work I took on. Needless to say despite a number of promises I didn't actually get the books back until just before the Christmas holidays. To say I was not amused is an understatement, especially as I had informed the publisher that early in January 2022 I was due to undergo knee surgery.

With the situation beyond my control I took the opportunity to have a nice relaxing short stay break over Xmas at a beautiful hotel and feeling refreshed I returned with new plans in mind. But first I had to get the knee sorted.

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This change and the delay resulted in my losing approximately six months book sales and work. Anyway I am now trying to put that behind me and move forward but, I just wanted to take this opportunity to say that if I have let you down during these last six months in anyway then please accept my deepest apologies.

Operation: On the 20th Jan I had my knee surgery. This went well and I want to thank all those who sent me well wishes for a speedy recovery. Unfortunately, whilst the surgery was successful and my wound has healed well, I suffered with four weeks of sleepless nights, resulting in my feeling totally exhausted. As such no work was done due to my woolly head. Again I apologise for any delay this has caused.

Update: This week has finally seen me back on the road to being able to sit at my laptop and get some work done. I have also managed to put some positive planning for the future in place. I want to take this opportunity to thank those people whose manuscripts I have delayed working on for your continued patience. These will be and are now my priority.

And that my friends is it for now. I know I've probably waffled on a bit but I like to be honest about what is going on, so forgive me. We all have hiccups in our life don't we. There is much more to tell you which you will discover further in this newsletter. In the meantime, I must say thanks to my husband who has been a real gem as a 'nurse' so at least I'm being well looked after. Take care out there all of you and I hope to chat to you sometime soon. Perhaps even meet a few for coffee.

Ann Brady

LIS'S POETRY GROUP

If you are interested in trying poetry but feel perhaps you are good enough, or maybe thinks it's something that is too posh? Well think again because that is just not the case. Poetry in all it's forma is making a great comeback (that is if it ever really went away). The idea of writing short spurts of prose should appeal if writing a novel doesn't. So why not check out Lis's Poetry Group.

Currently held via Zoom, the group meets the last Saturday in the month (2-3pm). We discuss poetry formats, listen to poems we've written, usually based on given prompts and have a general chit chat about poetry.

Come along and join us. We are a very friendly bunch of people and down to hearth. For further details click the link.

POETS CORNER

Nonet

This is a 9 line poem, where on each line the last word has one syllable less.

9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1 syllables.

It does not rhyme.

"NATURE"

There's a life curled in the darkness
sweating out the evening storm
beneath leaves covered with rain
and an urge to bolt like
the lightning before
thunder. Under
here we run
free of
why.

©Robert Lee Brewer

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In order to help progress this new element to my operation, particularly on the publishing side I am pleased to announce that I have now been welcomed into two publishing groups. One in the USA and one here in Wales.

IBPA - The Independent Book Publishers Association. As I work with mentees and writers across the world, especially those who wish to go down the self-publishing route I have been accepted as a member of the IBA. I feel there are benefits that such a group can bring to those writers and authors who self-publish and whom we work with.

CCPW - With our commitment in relaunching Pen & Ink Designs Publishing I am delighted to announce that I have been recognised as a Welsh publisher. As such I have been accepted as a member of the Cyhoeddi Cymru Publishing Wales' Organisation. This is a new group working with the support of the Books Council of Wales. They have brought together a great collective of Welsh publishing houses whose aims are to unify, represent and promote publishers in Wales, thus giving Welsh authors more power internationally. I am both delighted and honoured to be a representative of CCPW for all our writers and authors.

Pen & Ink Designs Publishing

DO YOU NEED HELP?

Are you a new, developing or established writer and are needing some help?

DO you need someone to discuss your storyline with?

Or maybe you need help with your finished manuscript, either with reviewing, editing or proofreading it.

Whatever help you need we are able to assist you. For more details email us:

contact@mentoringwriters.co.uk



NEWS IN BRIEF



THE PAGE TURNER AWARDS

The Page Turner Awards Writing Competition is now open. There is a great selection of prizes to be won from screenwriting to a publishers contract, audio deal to a couple of mentoring prizes. Check it out now.

<https://pageturnerawards.com/>

CALL FOR CRIME WRITERS

Headline Publishing Group has a submissions call for crime and thriller fiction by unagented, unpublished BAME writers. To submit to Modern Stories, send the first 3,000 words of the manuscript, a synopsis no longer than 600 words and a strapline. Closes 25 Feb 2022

The Bridgend Writers' Circle Open Competition is open until March 1, 2022. Maximum word count: 1800.

Entry Fee: £5 for the first entry, £2.50 for each thereafter.

Prizes: 1st - £100 / 2nd - £50

3rd - £30

Click Link



The 2022 Bristol Short Story Prize is open for entries. The closing date is May 4th 2022. 20 stories will be shortlisted and published in Bristol Short Story Prize Anthology Volume 15. 1st prize is £1,000

Click Link



LIS'S POETRY PLACE

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LATEST NEWS FROM THE MENTORING WRITERS RESOURCE BOX PODCASTING SERIES:

WHICH TENSE SHOULD YOU USE

Choosing which tense to use when writing your story can sometimes be difficult. However with some care and understanding you should be able to find the right one to suit your storyline. Listen to Podcast B049



THE POSITIVES AND NEGATIVES OF WRITING

Many writers sometimes get feelings of negativity when it comes to their writing. This podcast takes you through the steps of how to recognise, learn to cope with and overcome this side of your creativity, changing them into positive feelings, thoughts and ideas. Listen to Podcast no P069



WHOSE POINT OF VIEW IS IT PLEASE

Who is the narrator of your story? In all stories knowing this is important, even in a children's picture book Here we offer a quick explanation on why you need to get your POV correct from the very start of your story. Listen to Podcast B052



<https://mentoringwriters.libsyn.com/website>



"You're going to be terrible at a lot of things for years until you're successful. People probably aren't going to listen to your podcast initially. But if you like it and you keep putting it out, people will find it." Keith Kingbay, Co-Host of 'New Player Has Joined'

BECOMING A RECOGNISED PUBLISHER

Bearing in mind the problem created by my publisher I realised that I was left with a major decision. Do I take the time to look for a new publisher or do I consider resurrecting my old business - 'Pen & Ink Designs.' Considering the number of books involved I realised that having the experience and having built on my publishing knowledge there was no reason why I couldn't do the latter. And so I relaunched Pen & Ink Designs Publishing.

Let me give you a bit more about background to the history of Pen & Ink Designs. The business began in the late 1990's whilst I was working in the sports and fitness industry. We produced advertorials, editorials, newsletters and booklets relating in the main to fitness. We also worked with Kids4Kids.org.uk by encouraging children to be fit and healthy through sport.

In 2012 we moved into the book world when we produced our first books including the award-winning historical novel 'Dear Friends: Letters from Abroad.' However, the business was put on hold when we began working with our local publisher.

Currently we publish under two imprint names - Pen & Ink Designs and Kids4Kids. Any books published by us are done so under one of these imprints, and that includes all those published via our old publisher.

To-date we have published 8 books and have a number in the pipeline ready to be completed. However, it is Pen & Ink Designs intention that we will be selective in the choice of work we will undertake, with our main efforts being for the benefit of younger writers wherever possible.

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MENTORING KNOW HOW?

WORDS (THAT) RUIN SENTENCES

Tell me? Do you know the difference between a good sentence, and a GREAT sentence?

One of the most interesting 'writing rules' I came across recently was while reading about Hemingway's feelings on adverbs.

He absolutely hated them; calling them 'lazy writing.'

For the uninitiated adverbs are any descriptor word which ends in -ly. For example: Lazily, Eerily, Honestly, Mostly, etc.

Strangely this is a rule that once known about could well change your my writing forever. Having said that you might still make the odd mistake by using one-too-many adverbs here and there, but at least you'll try harder not to fill all your sentences with them.

Adverbs, I've learned, are in effect a passive way of saying the same thing that the sentence is already saying. As such you don't need them.

Once you learn that rule and follow it, realising all the ways it can improve your writing, you may well want to start looking for even more rules. I know I did.

And, as it happened, I have learnt that it is important to remove all those 'little words.'

The reason being, that those little words (especially when using turns of phrase such as 'In so forth' or 'So much as') have this knack of killing what could be a great, powerful, and concise sentence – often turning it into a sloppy mess.

For example:

Here is an original sentence: "One of the most common changes that occurs when people go off to university is that they become different versions of themselves."

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WORDS (THAT) RUIN SENTENCES

MENTORING KNOW HOW?

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So what if we were to rewrite it:

“When people go off to university, they become different versions of themselves.”

As you read you will see that both sentences say the same thing. However, the second sentence reads ten times easier than the first.

The questions is why?

Well, simply put - we removed all the little words:

One

Of

The

That

Is

So, the next time you are staring at a sentence but can't quite put your finger on why it's not reading the way you want it to, ask yourself this: “Which little words can I delete?”

It's that easy.

Of course, what you should also remember is, that with writing, less is usually more.

YOUTUBE & SOCIAL MEDIA

As with all things that has been happening to me this last few months I have, unfortunately, omitted to update my YouTube Channel - much to my own disappointment.

Like most social media outlets this is one of those areas that authors should be involved with. And not just authors but anyone in business. And of course that is what you, as an author, is. You are a business. You are a brand and you have a product - well at least one - your first book.

So it's back to the drawing board for me with more work planned including an updated Youtube Channel plus some new posts on my Social Media sites.

WE NEED YOU...

Do you have something of interest that our listeners would enjoy hearing about? Have you written a new book and would like the opportunity to chat about the process? Have you learnt something along your writing journey that you feel will benefit new and developing writers, and are you willing to share it with us and our listeners?

If you would like to be 'In Conversation With...' Ann Brady of Mentoring Writers then email us with your details to: contact@mentoringwriters.co.uk placing Interview in the subject box.



MENTORING WRITERS RESOURCE BOX
YOUTUBE CHANNEL LINK



BOOKS

PEN & INK DESIGNS PUBLISHING

We are pleased to present details of the books published by Pen & Ink Designs Publishing during 2021.

The Survival Guide for Birthing by Maureen Gannon. A great self-help book about preparing for pregnancy based on Maureen's 30+ years as a qualified midwife.



Doyle's Casebook Trilogy by author Ann Brady. Based on the award winning story 'WhoDunIt' this trilogy is a rewrite of the original Doyle's Casebook that has been expanded with new stories from Doyle's casefiles.



The Mentoring Writers Short Story Book. A variety of stories written by assorted writers who entered the MW 2021 Writing Competition. The stories included were classed as being the best in their genre by the independent judges.



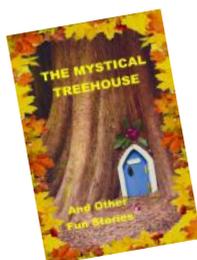
One Year of Poetry presented by Lis McDermott. This is the first book from Lis's Poetry Place Group. It consists of a year's poetry contributed by members of the Poetry Group.



A Multitude of Stars, An anthology of micro poems written by Lis McDermott. A collection of poems written being Lis's reflections during the problems we all suffered due to Covid.



The Mystical Treehouse & Other Fun Stories is a collection of stories written for the 2020 MW Short Story writing competition by a variety of writers. These stories are based on a given theme written for children and includes the winners and runners up.



All books available from Amazon or www.annbradybooks.co.uk

MY NEWS



It is surprising what a forced break can do for your mental thoughts. With the delays, disappointment and frustrations I have gone through over the last six months I am still surprised that I have not gone stir crazy. However, the one good thing that it has brought home to me is how much I still love doing what I do. During this period of time I took my original book titled 'Doyle's Casebook' which was based on a winning short story and rewrote it into a trilogy of books based around the cases of the main character - Tommy Doyle, Private Investigator. Whilst I realise I do not stand up to the level of my good crime author friends Arthur Cole and Nigel Williams I am pleased with the results and the great comments received from those who have read the books.

I was also pushed into writing a small novel based on a short story I had written many years ago, which I have titled The Brampton Musketeers. Please don't be misled by the title as it's about a school reunion, with a twist?? The only problem is, that with the genre and theme being somewhat racy, I am thinking that I may have to publish it under a pen name as it is a total contrast to the historical novel and children's books I have already written. This book is due out in the next few weeks. But at least I've got the writing bug back - whoopee - as I thought, at one point, I had lost it.

Well folks I am glad to note that you are all doing well. I have been pleased to see

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posts of those of you that have been productive by launching new books so I send congratulations to Lis McDermott, Claire Donald, Steve Guinee, Maureen Gannon, Nigel Williams, Arthur Cole, John F Wake, Sam Smith, Claire Fayers, Colin Parsons, Chris Stead, Mary Jones, James Morgan, to mention just a few. There are many more, which just goes to show what a prolific lot of writers we all are.

As for me apart from the writing I have been doing my best to sort out my websites. Whilst currently I am going over the plans for adapting my business to suit the addition of relaunching my publishing arm, whilst keeping the momentum of me writing going. Now, obviously I know something has to give so I have decided to back away from doing the workshops. As it happened with the restrictions put on us with Covid most of my workshops ended up being cancelled anyway. A shame but I honestly haven't missed them that much as I've been doing other stuff. They do say that a change is as good as a rest though, don't they. So, with the op over and done with, and my knee well on it's way to improving the next few months might be busier but they do look promising and that's all I can ask for isn't it.

So that's me for now. I hope you are all well, but if anyone wants to chat I am always available - just let me know. Maybe we could even get together for a coffee? Well at least once my 'nurse' feels I'm able to go out safely!! Till the next time. Stay safe and keep writing.

Ann Brady

ANN BRADY - THE FAIRY GODMOTHER FOR ASPIRING WRITERS

ANN IS A MEMBER OF:

Society of Authors (in the UK & Australia - SOA)

Society of Children's Book Writers & Illustrators (SCBWI)

Alliance of Independent Writers (ALLi Partner Member)

Romance Writers of Australia & New Zealand

Association of Freelance Writers & Journalists

Q&A WITH ANN BRADY



Q: How long should my book be?

A: I've seen writers claim with pride that their book is done at 20,000 words, which barely qualifies as a novella, and others wondering if 200 pages is a sufficient length for a book.

Let me give it to you straight: from a publishing standpoint, it doesn't matter how many pages you've written. You could put five words on each page in a giant font and call it 200 pages, or cram 100,000 words onto 100 pages. What matters is word count. Any publisher or agent will want to know how many words you've written, not how many pages.

So research word count for your genre.

Q: Should I create an outline for my book?

A: Authors come in two camps on this topic. The first, plotters, believe strongly in building a complete framework for the story, the character arcs, and a clear three-act structure. It helps them see the ending before they begin, helps them iron out wrinkles before they get too deep into the weeds of their story (or write themselves into a corner), and makes their characters' journeys more visible.

The second camp, called "pantsers", tend to write by the seat of their pants, meaning they let the story go where it wants. Many successful authors, such as Stephen King, have admitted to using this creative style in their work. They feel that their stories write themselves, and that outlining inhibits the creative process. They let their muse fly free, and they still end up with great work.

I would argue there's a third camp of middle-pathers, which are authors who sketch out a rough outline only a few chapters ahead, while still allowing the story to surprise them (and subsequently changing the outline on the fly if needed).

The important thing is to find your own groove. Not everyone will have the same creative process. Deciding whether to outline or not is personal preference. If you find it difficult to plan ahead, try being a pantsler. If you can't ever finish your work due to writer's block or creative ennui, you may find outlining gets you to the finish line more consistently.

Q: Should I hire an editor for my book?

A: To put it in simple terms the answer has to be YES. If you want your manuscript/book to be the best it can be then you really should invest in the professional services of a good editor. A good editor will bring a perspective to your work that will show you where you should perhaps change the story to make it flow better, read better for your readers while keeping them hooked. And that is all you really want achieve.

CONTACT US

**www.mentoringwriters.co.uk
contact@mentoringwriters.co.uk**

