

December 14, 2010

Dear Poets Union Members,

The Extraordinary General Meeting of the Poets Union was held on 27th November and authorised all the necessary changes for the merger with the APC in Melbourne. *Australian Poetry*, the new organisation, is only a few weeks away and counting.

Thank you to all those members who were able to come to the celebration of the Poets Union on Saturday 4th Dec. and make it such a success. There were over 30 readers, a great deal of reminiscing and a potted history of the Poets Union from Martin Langford.

Australian Poetry is the merger of the Poets Union (based in NSW) and the Australian Poetry Centre (based in VIC). Commencing formally in January 2011, it is a company limited by guarantee which has been recently granted Key Emerging Organisation status by the Australia Council. *Australian Poetry* has been created for the purpose of better serving the needs of the Australian poetry community while developing an increased interest in, and providing all poets and the wider community with greater access to, Australian poetry and poets.

VISION

Australian Poetry's vision is to excite all Australians about Australian poetry and poets by delivering an innovative national program of events, workshops, activities, festivals and publications in order to provide opportunities for Australian poets while engaging the wider Australian population, focusing on inclusivity and retaining high standards of excellence in regards to all activities.

As many of you may be wondering how the organisation will operate, here are some answers to some frequently asked questions:

MEMBERSHIP

If you're not a member of either the APC or Poets Union, you are welcome to subscribe to the organisation (via the website when it's launched in February) to receive the free e-newsletter, or join the organisation at a cost of:

- \$80 standard
- \$60 concession
- \$90 if you're overseas

In return for this payment, members will receive:

- a copy of Australian Poetry's new journal (which will produce two issues in 2011 and three issues per year from 2012 onwards).
- Membership concession to Australian Poetry events, festivals, competitions and opportunities, as well as concession to the activities and publications of partnered organisations (such as other literary organisations, bookshops and selected retail outlets).
- Access to the members-only section of the website, which includes: an e-version of the journal, feature articles by established poets and reviews of poetry-related events.

Poets Union members will receive free membership for the first six months of 2011. APC members will have their membership roll into the new organisation when they will be given the option to remain a member or decline membership of Australian Poetry.

THE JOURNAL

Australian Poetry will produce a high quality poetry journal which will come out twice in 2011 and then three times a year starting in 2012. **Victoria Amy** has recently been appointed Australian Poetry's National Publications Manager and will be keen to work with a committee early next year to decide on a process for how the editor will be selected and the journal produced. It is envisaged this process will take the first few months of 2011, before finalising the style, content and management of the journal.

The journal will also play only one part of the publications arm of Australian Poetry. The organisation aims to produce other publications which are targeted at a wider audience to interest more people around the country in Australian poets and poetry.

PROGRAM

As Australian Poetry is a national organisation, we intend to roll out a national program of events, competitions and opportunities, led by National Program Manager, **Katie Walsh**, while working with poets and poetry organisations in each city and state to provide as many people and poets access to Australian poetry as possible.

We have also recently appointed a WA Director, **Katrina Bercov**, and NSW Director, **Leah Greengarten**, to deliver a program of activities in those locations. Over the next few years, we plan to have representation in all states and territories to work with existing poetry and literary organisations in order to build the Australian poetry community.

STRATEGY

Australian Poetry is currently developing a clear strategy to prioritise its activities and how they are executed. In achieving the vision and goals for Australian Poetry, the organisation will determine its program and activities based on six key criteria:

1. Supporting the existing Australian poetry community
2. Developing new initiatives and building new audiences for poetry
3. Being financially sustainable and nurturing a culture of growth to provide more opportunities for poets and more Australians access to poetry
4. Focusing on diversity, connecting with Australians of all backgrounds, abilities, interests, cultures and locations
5. Developing a presence internationally
6. Building an online presence and community for Australian poets and poetry

You can read more about Australian Poetry's national strategy on the APC website

http://www.australianpoetrycentre.org.au/?page_id=1291

STAFF

We have recently appointed the following staff to cope with executing the responsibilities of Australian Poetry in 2011:

National Director: Paul Kooperman

National Publications Manager: Victoria Amy

National Program Manager: Katie Walsh

National Education Officer: Emilie Zoey Baker

National Library Manager: Andy Jackson

NSW Director: Leah Greengarten

WA Director: Katrina Bercov

National Administration Officer: Robert Lukins

Melbourne Events Coordinator: Raphaela Lee

[You can read more about our staff here.](#)

http://www.australianpoetrycentre.org.au/?page_id=1291

If you have other questions, please see our responses to more [frequently asked questions here](#), or call the *Australian Poetry* office on (03) 9094 7826.

NEXT STEPS

If you're already a member of the Poets Union or the APC, please be patient and you will receive an email in the new year from *Australian Poetry's* website, officially announcing the new organisation and letting you know about events, opportunities and special projects in 2011. **Poets Union (2010 financial) members will receive free membership of *Australian Poetry* for the first six months of 2011.**

If you're not currently a member of the Poets Union or APC, please stay tuned and join Australian Poetry via our website www.australianpoetry.org when it is up and running in January 2011.

With best wishes for Christmas and 2011,

Brook, Cathy and the Poets Union Committee.

Poets Union, 1977-2010.

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We welcome your input. Please contact us by mail (above) or email us with your thoughts on how we can support Australian poetry

Please keep in touch in 2011 - **FYI , the outgoing Poets Union committee members who are now on the new board of *Australian Poetry* are:**

Margaret Bradstock

Anna Kerdijk Nicholson

Martin Langford and

David Musgrave.