

## Eastwood/Hills FAW 2016 Annual Literary Competition

### Short, short story Judges' Report

Laura Davis and Alan Russell

We received 69 entries in this category. Reading them was enjoyable, particularly as there were so many interesting plots and characters. We read about grey nomad bikies, murderous crows, true love, class differences, grief, confrontation, robbery, healing, faithful dogs, a snake, broken marriages, Santa Claus, the pangs of adolescence, and so much more.

The importance of plot cannot be overstated. Some entries started off well but were let down by weak plots or no plots at all.

A story needs a strong beginning which grabs the reader's interest, and introduces the main character with his/her conflict or dilemma. In some cases beginnings were rather mundane and did not introduce the protagonist.

The middle of the story carries the plot forward while rounding out the main character and any others. At the same time, this is the opportunity to create emotional impact with which the reader can empathise. In some cases stories and characters were a little confusing.

The end of a story needs to be satisfying to the reader, with a sense of completeness and resolution (even if it is not a happy ending). In some instances, stories with promising beginnings were let down here. Others gave away their endings too soon.

There are, of course, many other things we looked at in judging the entries, including titles. A good title is imaginative, hooks the reader and reflects the story's theme. At times titles were trite or seemed to be added as afterthoughts. Judges also looked at vocabulary and style, punctuation, grammar and spelling, dialogue, the impact of the story on the reader, and narrative voice.

It is always disappointing to see so many spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors and entrants who have any difficulties in these areas are urged to revise them. Entrants are reminded that illustrated stories do not comply with competition rules and are eliminated without being read. Winning entries each had a strong plot, solid character development, superior language skills and a clear narrative voice.

We thank all writers for entering our literary competition and congratulate the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place winners and the runners up.

We urge you all to keep writing and honing your skills, and look forward to hearing from you all next year.

**Commended**

**Commended**

**Highly Commended**

**Highly Commended**

**Highly Commended**

**Second Place**

**First Place**

**The Legend of Konrad and His Dogs – Mike Woodhouse**

**Forces Conspired – Jan Foster**

**Big Words – Helen Lyne**

**Transition – David Brelsford**

**Room 212, Ward 4 South – Kerrin O'Sullivan**

**Doing Everything Once – Kerrin O'Sullivan**

**The Pledge – Gavin Austin**