

# Hamilton Mountain Writer's Guild *Newsletter*



July 2024



**“It is perfectly okay to write garbage as long as you edit brilliantly.”**

- C.J. Cherryh

Welcome to our July Newsletter!

Michael Williams describes his memoir writing workshops and his community involvement in helping people remember and write their stories.

*“Memoirs are the backstairs of history.”*

- George Meredith

Liam Oneill's gives to us an introduction to his presentation on July 10th. At the same meeting, the anthology team hope to roll out the submission guidelines for Book VII.

Christine Carleton tells us about her first Authors in the Park experience.

If you would like to contribute something of interest to our newsletter, or if you have any suggestions, please send Linda an email at: [lindalambert33@gmail.com](mailto:lindalambert33@gmail.com)

Happy writing!

In this newsletter  
you can expect:

**Schedule**

July 2024

**Memoir  
Writing**

Michael  
Williams

**On Drafting**

Liam Oneill

**Authors  
in the Park**

Christine  
Carleton

**Rom-Com  
Novella  
Contest**

**Bi-Weekly  
Recap**

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Schedule: July 2024		
July 10	Liam Oneill	Anthology VII: Developmental Phase
July 24	Edward Martins-Berki	“Dreaming by the Book”



## Memoir Writing, by Michael Williams

A few months ago, I completed my Certification as a Guided Autobiography Instructor. Guided Autobiography (GAB) is a process whereby participants are helped to write memoir pieces two pages at a time following a thematic course through life events. Many find this process helpful in recovering experiences and structuring them into stories that can be stand-alone or part of a larger memoir project.

I have begun offering memoir-writing workshops at the Adelaide Hunter Hoodless Homestead Museum in St. George, Ontario as part of my role as Writer-in-Residence. I also recently began offering a life-writing workshop at the Wellington Retirement Home and Long-Term Care Facility where I work with a group of residents helping them share their life experiences one story at a time. Also, fellow writer and Guild member Anita Joldersma and I have been offering monthly storytelling and readings for residents at the Home. The best part is when residents come to us to share stories that have been inspired by ours. Stories really do connect us.

I've also been facilitating a story circle at the Bob Kemp Hospice once a month and hope to offer a life-writing program there in the fall. There are so many wonderful stories out there just waiting to be told. What a privilege it is to hear them!

*Michael Williams facilitates the Team 2 writing group. They meet monthly at the Turner Park Library. If you are interested in joining, contact Michael at [iamthestoryteller@gmail.com](mailto:iamthestoryteller@gmail.com).*

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## A Lesson On Redrafting And Editing Processes, by J. L. Oneill

As writers, we should approach redrafting from a top-down approach. This means tackling the 'big picture' ideas first. Why? Because time is precious. There is nothing more heartbreaking for a writer than spending weeks agonizing over grammar in a 2000-word scene only to realize the scene weakens the chapter and the only solution is that beautifully unforgiving delete key.

It's okay to press your delete key.

When many of us start out writing, one of the most common critiques we receive from experienced writers is: "Your prose is clean, but where's the plot?" It's possible for us to vomit 80K words and forget, or mangle, the plot of our first drafts. Understanding the rules of the plot, just like a plumber needs to understand physics and chemistry and which end of the wrench is for whacking, is important for us writers. We need to study the craft so we can grow as creatives. If we don't, we're gonna wear out those delete keys faster than we can type.

Be nice to your delete key. It just wants to help.

We're going to cover four major steps of redrafting and editing in our workshops to prepare us for Anthology VII. On July 10th, we will dive into the Developmental Phase, where we can learn to be certain that our plots are airtight. No leaky pipes for us!

Hope to see you there.



## Authors In The Park, by Christine Carleton

Bill King is the creator of Authors in the Park and the president of Attawandoron Publishing. He is a dedicated supporter of the Creative Arts in Hamilton, Hamilton history, and Hamilton writers. Since 1 August 2021, Bill has hosted and organized *Authors in the Park*, an event that has grown in size and is a good way to keep in contact with what is happening within the writing community.

I was excited to attend the first one, held at Gore Park. The day was bright and sunny with little to no wind, but, with heat reflecting from the downtown buildings, it soon became a cooker of an event. I was scheduled to read an excerpt from the novel I was working on and stood nervously waiting my turn. Sweat trickled down my face and pooled under my arms and down my spine. A crowd had gathered, standing in most of the available shaded spots. My friend offered me a hat as my skin had paled with possible heat stroke or nerves. Removing my shoes I wiggled my toes in the cool grasses, helping a bit. I read my piece over the din of traffic and noise of idle chatter, then I escaped to the coolness of an air-conditioned HSR bus, went home, and jumped into my grandson's pool, clothes and all.

Things have improved since that first event. Bill now uses Victoria Park where there are lots of trees providing plenty of shade and comfort. There is plenty of room for authors and supporters of Hamilton writers.

Please try to come out and support Bill this year, August 25th from 1:00 until 4:00. I will be there to meet other authors and creative people, regardless of the weather. It is unlike anything I have attended and certainly worth taking in.

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# Rom-Com Novella Contest

If you're a contemporary romance fan — why stop at reading? Why not try your hand at writing instead? Whether there's a rom-com story in the back of your head that you've been itching to write, or you have the drafts stashed away in a drawer or hiding in the depths of your Notes app — we want those ideas to see the light of day and bring them to life!

Kobo Originals is running its first-ever writing contest in Canada where the winner will have the opportunity to have their story published exclusively as a Kobo Original eBook this holiday season. We're looking for previously unpublished works from Canadian authors.

Submissions open June 14, 2024 and close August 15, 2024.

Submission form can be found [HERE](#) and full contest rules can be found [HERE](#).

Submissions should include the following:

- Full author name;
- Email addresses and phone number;
- Mailing address (CANADA ONLY);
- Name of the novella being submitted;
- 200 word maximum description on what makes your novella a winning entry;
- 15,000-20,000 word manuscript, previously unpublished (.pdf or .docx version of the submission accepted).

Happy writing! If you have any questions, please contact Kobo Writing Life directly at [writinglife@kobo.com](mailto:writinglife@kobo.com).

*NO PURCHASE OR PAYMENT OF ANY KIND IS NECESSARY TO ENTER OR WIN. Enter between June 14, 2024, 12:00:01 a.m. EST and August 15, 2024, 11:59:59 p.m. EST to be eligible. To participate, submit your **unpublished winter holiday-themed romantic-comedy novella**, 15,000 – 20,000 words in length, in English, via the Entry Form. Limit to one (1) entry per person. Open only to legal residents of Canada who have reached the age of majority in their respective jurisdiction at the time of entry. The use of AI-based tools for writing assistance is strictly prohibited. Entries will be judged on writing excellence, language use, style, and public interest. Rakuten Kobo Inc. will select winners based on these criteria. Prizes include a Kobo eReader, sleep cover, and a potential publishing agreement, valued at approximately \$2,000 CAD. The winner will be announced on September 1, 2024. Odds of winning depend on the number of eligible entries received. For full contest rules, [click here](#).*

<https://tinyurl.com/KoboRomComContest>



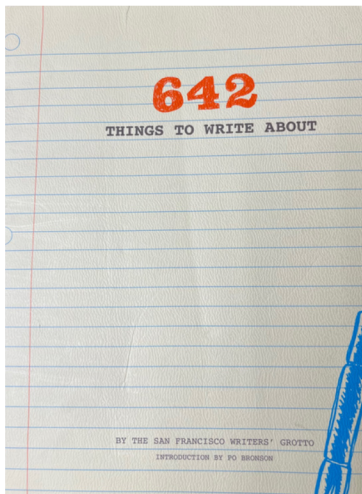
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## Bi-Weekly Recap: June 2024

Last month, we had two bi-weekly meetings.

On June 12th, Vincent Kocznur gave another great presentation on audio dramas, explaining and demonstrating embedded narrative (nesting story, or a story within a story). Above all, Vincent provided us with an excellent piece of wisdom: "Art cannot be appreciated if no one knows it exists." So let's get writing!

On June 26th, Mark Leslie Lefebre's, "My Side Quest Journeys Through Publishing", took us on his long, funny, and educational journey to get his writing published. He certainly understands all aspects of self-publishing and we appreciated his helpful tips, including one of his most important: "Pay attention to your market!" The meeting ended with a lovely surprise. Mark gave us all an autographed copy of an anthology of original stories, "Obsessions".



### What's This All About?

Anita has this little book  
She brings to every meeting  
It certainly is worth a look  
And will help you with your writing!

**Ask Anita if you can check it out!**

## Hamilton Mountain Writers' Guild



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