

SACRAMENTO
MARCH 2024



BRANCH
NEWSLETTER



Memoir Mojo—Tips for Writing a Memoir That Sells



Sunday
17
March

Brooke Warner

Memoir is a much-beloved genre, but it's notably hard to sell to publishers. One of the reasons for that is because too many memoirs fall into the trap of being a story about what happened rather than the meaning that the memoirist infuses into events that shaped or changed their lives. In this session, Brooke Warner will cover three qualities of memoir that you'll want to consider and understand if you want to write a story that will impact your readers' lives. Covered in this session will be:

- Your story's universal relevance or resonance.
- Storytelling (ie, "showing") and scene-building.
- Writing a book that holds deep meaning for your reader.

What attendees will learn:

- How to write a meaningful memoir.
- What publishers are looking for in a memoir.
- Common mistakes memoirists make when first starting out.
- How to write in "scene" and be a good guide to your reader.
- How to think about "why it matters" over "what happened" as you tell your story.

Sunday, March 17th 12–3:30 pm

Cattlemens Restaurant

12409 Folsom Blvd, Rancho Cordova, CA

[Tickets for the Event](#)

Crocker Art Museum
Sacramento

WRITE ON, SISTERS!



Voice, Courage, and
Claiming Your Place
at the Table

Brooke Warner
Author of *Green-Light Your Book*

Brooke Warner is publisher of She Writes Press and SparkPress, president of Warner Coaching Inc., and author of *Write On, Sisters!*, *Green-light Your Book*, *What's Your Book?*, and three books on memoir. Brooke is a TEDx speaker, weekly podcaster (of “Write-minded” with co-host Grant Faulkner of NaNoWriMo), and publishes a weekly newsletter, *Writerly Things*, on Substack at brookewarner.substack.com. Brooke is the former Executive Editor of Seal Press and writes a regular column for *Publishers Weekly*.

In addition, our very own Gloria Perrot-Dyer, will be holding an additional fundraising talk.

Gloria is a 2023 awardee of the [Jack London Award](#), for her contributions to the California Writers Club, Sacramento Branch.

Gloria has published her first book in 2020 entitled [Allensworth: Two Tales of Triumph](#). She will be sharing elements of the process that she used in conducting the extensive research necessary for writing this book.

Some of the areas she will cover are the following:

- choosing a time period in history
- authenticity in setting, plot, characters, dialogue and historical issues
- how to conduct the needed research
- authentic language of the time period
- authentic clothing, transportation and necessities for daily living.
- building a world in the historical context of the time period.

A discretionary club fundraising donation is requested and very much appreciated, \$10 suggested.



Gloria Perrot-Dyer
receives the
Jack London Award

Coming in April

Jordan Rosenfeld

As a teacher and coach, [Jordan Rosenfeld](#) spent more than 20 years working closely with writers to strengthen, grow, and refine their skills in fiction and memoir writing. In addition to offering private virtual classes and workshops throughout the year, she has published six books on the craft of writing, including [How to Write a Page Turner](#), [A Writer's Guide to Persistence](#), [Make a Scene](#), [Writing the Intimate Character](#), [Writing Deep Scenes](#) (with Martha Alderson) and [Write Free: Attracting the Creative Life](#) (with Becca Lawton).

Jordan is also the author of three novels, most recently [Women in Red](#) and [Forged in Grace](#), with a forthcoming new novel, [Fallout](#), from Running Wild Press, due in 2024, and my work can be found in national publications such as *The Atlantic*, *Mental Floss*, *The New York Times*, *Pacific Standard*, *The Rumpus*, *Scientific American*, *The Washington Post*, and many others.



First Friday Networking Meeting

Ina Coolbrith—Whom She Was, and Tougher Than We



Friday
1
March

Karen D H Durham

Born into a world with no room for talents beyond the home, Ina Coolbrith forged her unique path during a time of great change.

- What world was Ina Coolbrith born into?
- Who were her family?
- What were other women doing?
- How was the world she left behind?
- What poetry did she leave to us?

Karen Durham was born and raised in The San Francisco Bay Area of California. When she's not writing she loves to swim, hike, and run on the coast. She came to appreciate poetry late in life, when in the late twenty-teens she attended a writing workshop at Tomales Bay. There she first heard current US poet laureate Ada Limón read from her book, Bright Dead Things. She was hooked. Karen's had two poems published in anthologies. Like most poets, she doesn't always understand what questions she's asking when she writes, but hopes to, someday.

Friday, March 1st from 9–11 am at
CH Cafe & Grill, 6215 Sunrise Blvd. (just off Greenback)

Kathy Lynne Marshall's Research for Writers



Would you like to leave a written legacy? Would you like to reveal the truth about your family, or any topic that floats your boat?

Black ancestor biographer [Kathy Lynne Marshall](#) shared research tips at the February 2, 2024 meeting of the California Writers Club, Sacramento. The group meets on the first Friday of each month to network and study writing strategies.

Marshall writes factual accounts of the lives of women and enslaved African Americans. She seeks to add to the American historical record. Each of her eight books was researched, imagined, and written to open a truthful window into the past.

When preparing, the search for information can begin in many places. She gathers “cold hard facts” from secondary and primary sources. Then she uses imagination and story telling to recreate a representation of the past.

“I love a mystery,” she said. Before writing, Marshall spent forty years gathering family history and documents. The journey began with a DNA test which revealed she had European ancestry as well as African roots. The biographer sifted through bills of sale, land deeds and other government records. She travelled to plantations and battlefields. She spent time interviewing people who lived through historic events.

Marshall turned the facts into biographies such as *Finding Otho: The Search for Our Enslaved Williams Ancestors*. In addition to gathering facts about Otho, she studied the historic period. Otho could then speak, act, and live as a man of his times.

“Google search is your best friend,” she said. “Place key words in quotation marks and search for information.” Another good web resource is *Chronicling America* operated by the Library of Congress. This site provides access to reproductions of old newspapers. Also available are church, government, personal, and genealogical records. Marshall stressed that sources should always be cited. When working on the internet, the URL can be cut and pasted into the manuscript. Marshall stressed the importance of gathering information from multiple sources. Documents and articles can be full of mistakes. People often misspell names and get dates wrong. Get information from more than one place to make sure it is correct.

Marshall sells her books on Amazon in Kindle and paperback format. Those for sale include *Finding Marshalls: A Genealogy Trip with a Black & White Twist*; *The Mystery of Margaret Booker: The Marshall Legacy: in Black and White*; *Finding Daisy: From the Deep South to the Promised Land*; and *Family Harambee!: How to Discuss Potentially Challenging Discoveries in Your Family Tree: A Workbook*

Review of January 25th Open Reading

By John Patterson

2024: The 4th Year of Open Readings Begins

The January 25th Open Reading had a good turnout. The Zoom event enabled easier sharing during the winter. Despite a last week cancellation, we had our largest line up of eight readers. All in attendance agreed to a longer session permitting all our readers to share their work. One of the great take-aways from these readings is the developing comradery of the participants. As other writers' read us into their works and worlds, we see our common values.

Katherine Henderson again took us back in time. She read from her current project, *Another View of Hazel M. Cornellison: Memories, Interviews, and Letters from Caroline Cornellison Neywick*. She read from the 2005 interview of her mother's sister, Aunt Caroline. Her interview revealed information about her father, the lifestyles of the non-urban families, of the exchanges between their family and the railroad. The train employees would get some meals of warm milk and bread, and then bring bushels of apples from the train to the family in gratitude.

Robin Schmid has completed three manuscripts, with one on Amazon, read about a child kicking at womanhood. Her captivating descriptions held everyone's attention. A young lady, leaving a ditch and a lizard behind, in high heeled, sequined shoes, running, holding a permanent pout, scab on her elbow, and a barn fire in Nebraska. Compelling!

[Dr. Lally Pia](#), wrote a memoir, *The Fortune Teller's Prophecy: A Memoir of an Unlikely Doctor* will be published by She Writes Press this year and is available as an audiobook. Her story, "Appah," is a story about her father. It begins with what a Sri Lankan priest said to her father when she was six months old and moves on to focus on her recognitions and good-byes to him as he had passed away not two weeks earlier. Described as an active, passionate, intelligent man at 94, it was difficult to picture the changes in the last weeks of hospice.

[Andrew Laufer](#), a gentleman farmer, writer & poet, and storyteller around town, read some poems centered on the theme of mortality. During covid, he lost three people, unexpectedly. "Unanticipated Grief" journeyed from a fractured hip, with complex diseases, leading to complex discussions. He had to give himself permission to move on. In "Nothing Matters," in the disengagement he saw one ready for sleep. In "Talking About God," he's tracing impossible resolutions.

[MP “Mary” Smith](#) has lived in Northern California, a retired editor writing cozy and traditional mysteries. She’s published two novellas, a short story, and anticipates two novels being published in 2024. She read from her latest novella, *Murder at Farling Crossroads*. The descriptions put us at the dusty four corners, a whistlestop, a roadkill question, a sheriff and deputy, a new bar, Halloween, and of course, karaoke emitting *Islands in the Stream*.

[Marcia Ehinger](#), a retired doctor, who has been published in two anthologies, California Update, reported on recently acquired Egyptian history gained from a trip a few months ago with her family. There are some findings indicating: the Hebrews were not slaves, there was some trial and error involved in building the pyramids, and that pyramid building was a sophisticated enterprise, with stone coming from three different locations.

[Bernard Wozny](#), with a technical background in software development, has authored two books, [Girl Electric](#) and [O.R.P. Orzel](#), the latter about a Polish sub that left base just before Germany attacked. He read from [Girl Electric](#). This story is about a teenage girl in a coma whose father has used stolen military nano technology to keep her going. The selection puts us in high school music class. The chipped implanted brain listens to another student who doesn’t want to sing. The enhanced teen empathizes with the shy student to help him sing, a demonstration machine learning positive traits.

John Patterson read a selection from a forthcoming memoir. It reaches back to when he was in middle school on a farm. It begins early Sunday morning with a banging on the old door, an armed man yelling at him while another stands with a sheep whose neck is chewed out.

Everyone indicated they enjoyed the evening and would like more people to come to listen, and perhaps open this up to anyone. There was a brief discussion about having the readings in person, finding a venue, and having them more often. Please look out for an announcement of the next Open Reading. Lastly, John would like to apologize to any of the authors whose work may have been incorrectly represented, and, to our writers who shared their thoughts about loss, hoping my summaries did not offend. My perception is that your thoughts are appreciated on this difficult subject and we felt honored you would share them.

Please everyone. Write on!

Members' Corner

by [Bonnie Blue](#)

We welcomed six new members in February. So here they are. Please say hello if you see them.

- Vaani Tiwari is a student member. She writes YA fantasy, historical fiction and YA fiction (romance).
- Tracey Napier writes non-fiction prose and poetry.
- Trudi York Gardner writes personal essay (incl memoir), short stories, and childrens (NFPBs).
- Christina Brabham writes creative non-fiction and memoir.
- Derek T McHenry writes YA fantasy, science fiction and non-fiction.
- Dena Kouremetis is an associate member who offers audio book narration. She also offers copywriting/ branding. She writes her own blog, memoir and self-help.

New members are invited to share a brief (200 words max) bio and a jpeg headshot for our website's Members page. And you can include a link to your own website in your bio! Please send to sacramentowriters@gmail.com. You can have your published books listed in our Members Book section by sending a description and a picture of its cover to [Bernard](#).

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Critique Groups

Interested in finding a Critique Group? So many of us write alone and have gotten very little feedback on our work. Exposing our creative efforts to a group of like-minded and considerate writers is the first step towards sending our masterpieces out into the world.

Email [Bonnie](#) if interested. Your names and genre will be collected and linked with other members. Your newly formed group can get help with getting started on our [website](#).

Announcements

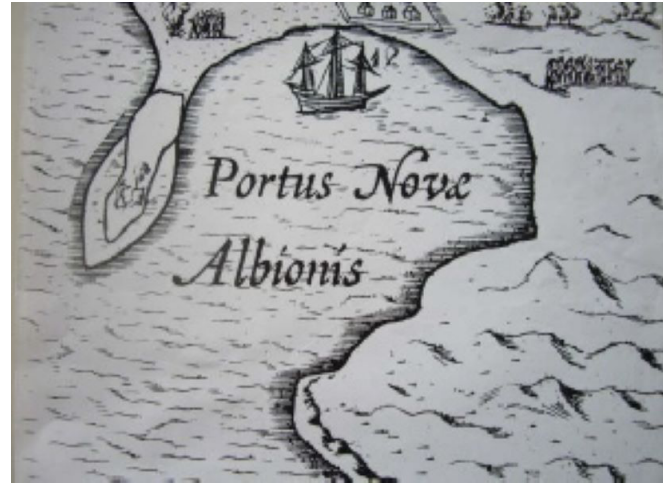
[Tim Schooley](#) will present the first in a series of author talks sponsored by the Roseville Library. Please join him on Saturday, March 16, from 2:00–4:00, at [The Fig Tree Coffee, Art & Music Lounge](#), 217 Vernon Street, Roseville.

His presentation, moderated by CWC member [Judith Starkston](#), will delve into the crafting of *The Wool Translator*, a historical fiction novel set in the fifteenth century across western Europe. Come here tales of The Alhambra, of stumbling onto fifteenth century documents, and of bumbling into ancient castles.

The talk is free, and free parking is available in the garage behind The Fig Tree. Hope to see you there!

California State Railroad
Museum, Sacramento

Kevin's Occasional Pods is CWC member Kevin Woodruff's retirement project, which is to produce podcasts—on an occasional basis—about curious aspects of California history. Follow this podcast to get notice of new pods!



[Episode 1](#): *The Quest for Nova Albion, Francis Drake's West Coast Landfall*. Listen for a review of current research, conflicting opinions, and a description of artifacts that may—or may not point to Nova Albion.

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Vision and Verse

Les Bernstein and I are very pleased to announce that an additional 20 artists members' artwork will receive honorable mention and appear in the new book *Vision and Verse, a Fusion of Poetry, Prose, Art and Photography*. It is our expectation that these images will serve as future prompts for poems and prose by our members. Congratulations to all the artists who will appear in this new book.

Also, we want to remind you have until March 7, 2024 in which to submit poems and prose for the upcoming CWC book *Vision and Verse*, here is a link to the book guidelines and submission form.

[Vision and Verse Ekphrastic Book guidelines and submissions](#)

For questions, contact [Les Bernstein](#).

All the best,
 Roger C. Lubeck, CWC President
 Les Bernstein, Editor in Chief

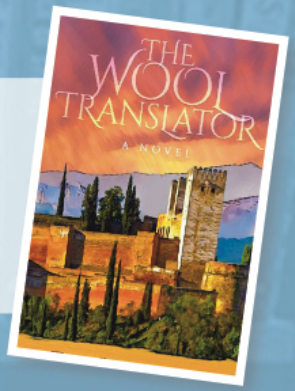
Leland Stanford
 Mansion State Historic
 Park
 Sacramento

LOCAL AUTHOR TALK SERIES

The Fig Tree Coffee, Art, & Music Lounge



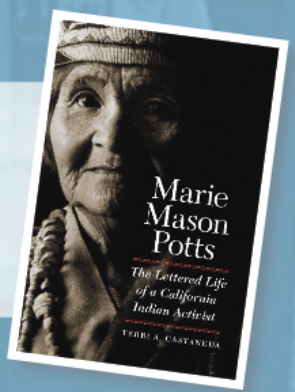
Tim Schooley
March 16 • 2:00-4:00pm



Thomas M. Brant
April 20 • 2:00-4:00pm



Terri Castaneda
May 18 • 2:00-4:00pm



roseville.ca.us/library



Announcements from Afield



Open to all cwc members and non-members

Extended submission deadline is now March 15

6 winning plays will be selected and performed Friday, May 10, 6:30 p.m. & Saturday, May 11, 2 p.m. presented by Off The Page Readers Theater. Winning playwrights will receive 2 comp tickets.

- Up to 2 plays per entrant, submitted separately
- Only original, unpublished and unproduced works
- Must be appropriate for Readers Theatre. Make sure props will work in a “reading” of the play.
- Length: No maximum page limit; however, when read out loud, play should fit within 10-minute time frame.

Go to the [Redwood Writers](#) for all submission details.

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Scholarship for High School Students

The Sacramento Suburban Writers Club is holding an annual scholarship fund for senior high school students. The next award will be made in Spring 2024 for the best short story or essay. A cash prize of \$1000 will be awarded to the winner, which will be paid directly towards college fees for the winning student’s first year.

Submission of entry to the competition is free, subject to support by one of the applicant’s Teachers.

A panel of judges will be appointed by Sacramento Suburban Writers Club, to choose the winner. Their decision is final. Their subjective decisions will be based on their individual experience and expertise. Objective decisions will be based on a clearly defined set of writing criteria.

Full rules of entry are listed [here](#).

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Write on the Rail 2024!

Join [Shut Up & Write! Greater Sacramento Area](#) Saturday, July 13th for our 7th Annual train trip to San Francisco, a fun filled day bracketed by 90 minute writing sessions each direction on the train. This is your chance to both socialize with other writers and to put in three or more hours of focused writing time on a fun day in “The City By the Bay”. It's amazing how much writing you can get done with like-minded friends and lots of good creative energy.



WRITERS OF KERN SPRING CONFERENCE

Writer Workshops are a fun way to Network and Learn

Tables & Publicity
Opportunities
for authors
to sell books

Saturday, March 16th
8:00 to 3:00 p.m. at Hodel's, Bakersfield, California

EARLY BIRD DEADLINE (before February 10th): attendance costs \$50.00 for WOK & CWC members, \$75.00 for nonmembers, and \$25.00 for full-time students (18 and up) with ID. After February 10th, the cost is \$60.00 for WOK & CWC members, \$95.00 for nonmembers, and \$45.00 for full-time students (18 and up). The registration fee includes a continental breakfast, snacks, a delicious lunch, and a workshop with our panel of experts on the ups and downs of self-publishing. Register soon, as attendance is limited. **Purchase your tickets HERE.**

Robert Price

Robert Price is a veteran news anchor, journalist, and historian who spent 30 years with the Bakersfield Californian as an editor and a columnist. Now he is an Emmy Award—winning reporter for KGET-TV 17. Robert covers a range of topics, from politics and crime to community events and human interest stories. Robert is a factual and entertaining news-teller who has made a huge impact on almost every aspect of Kern County. In addition to his new book, Bakersfield (Images of America). Robert is also the author of the 2018 book "The Bakersfield Sound: How a Generation of Displaced Okies Revolutionized American Music."



Annis Cassells

Annis Cassells is a poet, writer, teacher, and life coach. She was born and raised in Detroit, Michigan. Annis now splits her time between Bakersfield, CA and Coos Bay, OR, where, in addition to her own writing, she facilitates memoir writing workshops for senior adults and poetry workshops for aspiring poets. Her occasional blog features articles about writing, stories, and poetry.

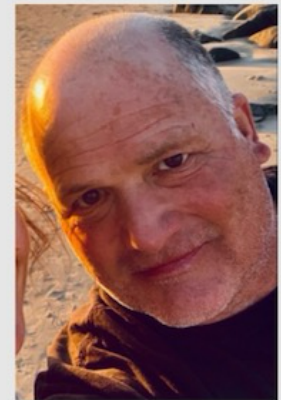
Annis's well-received poetry collection, What the Country Wrought, launched in 2023. She is a contributor to the social justice anthology ENOUGH "Say Their Names..." Messages from Ground Zero to the World. Annis is also the author of You Can't Have It All: Poems, published in 2019.

Chris Hennessy

Chris Hennessy is an award-winning filmmaker, author, and speaker serving on the board of directors at California Writers Club, Sacramento. His workshop, Story-Telling Crossover: How to Use Visual Media in Your Author Platform and Writing Projects, is great for authors needing promotion and marketing help.

Chris will show us how to produce quality visual media at little or no cost, the types of videos to make, how to create social and mainstream media buzz, and much more.

Chris is writing his upcoming memoir, Touched by Hannah, and producing an uplifting and comical newsletter, henschtick.substack.com, which is jelly-packed with unorthodox business and life tips from raw, real-life essays. See more at henchris.com.



www.writersofkern.com

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Epilog

Everyone knows public libraries loan books. Most folks are aware of being able to download ebooks or audio books for use on personal computers, tablets, and smart phones. Many aren't aware of various other resources now available at the Sacramento Public Library, such as borrowing tools, like power posthole augers, flatbed scanners, or electrical test equipment. Current editions of National Geographic, the New York Times, and the Sacramento Bee can be read in digital format at home.

The Sacramento Public Library also provides access to [learning resources](#), such as over 250 subjects in the Great Courses, 16,000 hours of tutorials in LinkedIn Learning, and much more.

Explore all that is available for the cost of a library card, which is free!

Boat Launch on the American
River near Sunrise Blvd.
Fair Oaks