



**September 2014**

September is now upon us and our Council convey warm wishes and a welcome back to all of our clubs who disbanded for the holiday period. We hope a good break was had by all.

**The Scottish Association of Writers Conference Prospectus**

It's exciting that the conference prospectus is now available to download from the Saw Website and Facebook page. Filled with new and exciting competitions, I'm sure you will find the content appealing.

**The AI Guthrie Challenge**

Marc posted on facebook details of the AI Guthrie challenge, so for those who missed his post prepare to be thrilled.

This new and exciting competition is one of the opportunities brought to you in the forthcoming prospectus for SAW 2015. A minimum of 10,000 and maximum of 15,000 words of a crime/thriller novel along with a synopsis comprising of no more than two pages.

This exciting competition will see AI Guthrie from Jenny Brown Associates, the largest literary agency in Scotland, read the entries and choose from them, a long list of between six and eight. Short critiques will be provided for all long-listed entries.

The top four of his choice will then form a short list. The four authors will meet with AI on a one-on-one over the conference weekend for a detailed chat about their book.

The winner will be announced on the Sunday and their prize will be representation by AI for a minimum of one year with a view to working on the manuscript (if required) and submitting to publishers.

Eligibility requirements are only one entry per author, and no current agented authors submit entries. Please check the prospectus for further details.

This is a unique opportunity not to be missed so put pen to paper now and have your masterpiece ready.

Would you like to work with AI Guthrie?

**Not to Be Missed!!**

**Write Up North**

**A repeat of the highly successful event in the Town House, Inverness**

**25<sup>th</sup> October 2014**

**09:30 am – 4:00 pm**



**Visit Our Shop**



**ON SALE NOW!**

# Erskine Writers



Erskine Writers are a well organised group who meet most Tuesday afternoons in the Bargarran Centre, Erskine.

Including postal members, Erskine Writers currently have a membership of 40 in number, ranging from beginners to published authors. Having a varied programme of talks, discussions, workshops and open manuscripts, there is never a dull moment.

Encouragement is key as the opportunity is often given for work to be read out to the group in order to have positive feedback and comments in return. Competitions in stated genres such as romance, general articles, children's stories and poetry are available, keeping all poised at the pen and ready to enter.

The group's success is evident in the 35 books that have been produced between them in genres such as crime, romance, cosy crime and non fiction. Books for teenagers, children and illustrated children's books also add to their success

Pieces have been published in magazines as diverse as The Highlander, Scottish Home and Country, Scottish Memories, The Peoples Friend, My Weekly, YOURS, The Lady, Camping Magazine and newspapers such as The Evening Times, The Courier and the Daily Record.



Erskine Writers prove their capabilities time and time again at our annual conference, earning many awards and certificates between them.



This talented bunch host an annual dinner where trophies and certificates are awarded and the year is rounded up with a garden party in May.



Watch out for them in 2015 and wish them well!

## **Annual Conference 2015**

**Westerwood Hotel & Conference Centre,  
Cumbernauld,  
G68 0EW**

**27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> March**

**A MUST FOR YOUR  
DIARY !!!**

## **SHOP**

**Please visit our SAW shop. We hold a range of shop items available for purchase all year round, many of which are branded with our SAW logo.**

## **Join Us**

**Join us on Facebook –  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/sawriters>  
and visit our web site  
[www.sawriters.org.uk](http://www.sawriters.org.uk)**





### SAW AFFILIATION

Once again it is the time for SAW Club Affiliation renewals. Please renew your club today. Our Memberships are invaluable and your SAW needs you. For bank details please contact:  
pajamurs@btinternet.com

### Saw Alumni

An opportunity to ensure the expertise of former Scottish Association of Writers' Council Members and Authors is not lost to the Association once they leave post or become successful.

### Donations

Should you wish to make a donation, please download our SAW Donation Form, complete and forward along with your contribution to our valued and wonderful treasurer, Jacklin Murray. All donations are greatly appreciated.

## Other Writing Competitions

### Creative Writing Matters

Flash fiction competition for stories of 250 words. Entry fee £3.00 with a first prize of £100.00. Visit [www.creativewritingmatters.co.uk](http://www.creativewritingmatters.co.uk)

### International Song Writing Competition

Deadline of 18<sup>th</sup> September. For further information visit [www.songwritingcompetition.com](http://www.songwritingcompetition.com)

### New Children's Author

Stories of 20,000 – 40,000 words for 8 to 12 year olds. Deadline of 30<sup>th</sup> September. Entry fee is £30.00. Further information can be found at [www.literacytrust.org.uk/authorprize](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/authorprize)

### 2014 NAWG Open Writing Competition

Short stories of 500 – 2000 words and poems of 40 lines. Both categories have a first prize of £250.00. Entry fees are £5.00 per story and £3.00 per poem and flash fiction. Deadline is 31<sup>st</sup> October. Visit [www.nawg.co.uk](http://www.nawg.co.uk)

### National Poetry Competition

With an entry fee of £6.00, a poem on any subject with no more than 40 lines. Further details can be found at [www.poetrysociety.org.uk,npc](http://www.poetrysociety.org.uk,npc)

### New Writing for Scotland

Accepts work from writers who are resident in Scotland or who are Scottish by birth. Send no more than four poems to ASLS, Department of Scottish Literature, 7 University Gardens, University of Glasgow, Glasgow, G12 8QH. Visit their website <http://writ.rs/newwritingscotland>

Many more competitions and interesting facts can be found in the 'Writers Umbrella'. For further details to join this wonderful organisation contact Barbara Hammond, 14 Ladysgate Court, Carronshore, Flakirk, FK2 8HE

[The Writers Umbrella](#)

[barbara@ladysgate.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:barbara@ladysgate.freeserve.co.uk)

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[Federation of Writers \(Scotland\)](#)

[www.writersfederation.org.uk](http://www.writersfederation.org.uk)

[Bloody Scotland](#)

[www.bloodyscotland.com](http://www.bloodyscotland.com)



## **Shop**



Please visit our shop and view the many items we have for sale. Our quality lined notepads are now in stock and come in blue, black and red with our SAW logo in silver. These come at a bargain price of £6.49

## **‘Write up North’**

The date is now closed for submissions of entries for ‘Write up North’ in the Town House, Inverness on the 25<sup>th</sup> October 2014, a fun packed day not to be missed. However, we are still taking registrations for the day

It is our pleasure to introduce published poet, lyricist and librettist, Bob Davidson, also the founder and Managing Editor of Sandstone Press, as our key speaker and workshop host. The poetry will be adjudicated by Christopher Powici and the short stories by Kenneth Stevens.

Come along and take part, meet old friends and enjoy the comradeship in our day of learning.

## **Outreach Team**

Our outreach team are busy trying to target writing groups not affiliated with our association. Should you know of any writers who meet and would benefit by joining in our writing community please contact our affiliation and outreach secretary, the one and only Lesley Traynor at [scotwriters@gmail.com](mailto:scotwriters@gmail.com) Should you require an outreach visit to your club, please let Lesley know and she will be delighted to organise this for you.

## **SAW Alumni**

Are you a former SAW Council member, adjudicator or author? Your expertise, your experiences and your support are sought! Enquiries to Marc Sherland: [marcsherland@me.com](mailto:marcsherland@me.com)

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## **SAW 100 Club**

**The more members we have, the bigger the prizes!**

**Download your membership form today**



# Questions and Answers with Marc Sherland



Working with Marc on the Council has been fun but I thought it was time that I got to know him a little better. So I sent him a few questions . . . lets find out what he answered!

Q. Tell me about yourself Marc . . . where do you come from?

A. Most people know I was born in Kent, the accent betrays me. Fewer people realise how long ago I left England for the chilly weather, but warm welcome of the West Coast of Scotland. I was only two years old. Being tenacious, I don't let go and with parents and my six plus elder siblings, the voice remained Anglicized. My Father, who at the time of the move worked for the Admiralty in Sheerness Dockyards, scheduled for closure, was given a choice, East or West Coast Scotland, he chose West and my Uncle and family chose East.

Q. Where did you grow up?

A. I grew up in Gourock and Greenock, attended the local schools though not one is left standing. I grew to love reading, partly as I was often the pupil singled out to read to class, as I was in the Methodist Church, where my father enrolled me for every Bible reading opportunity going. It could have gone either way, love it or hate it, but for me the colour, tone and flavour of words on the tongue fascinates me.

Q. What is your favourite colour?

A. Talking colour, my childhood favourite was borrowed from my elder sister Ruth, who loved blue and, when pushed to state a choice, I said the same. The truth though is more complex, I love vibrant colour, imagine a rainbow spectrum amplified to its highest in that range of almost luminescent hues, my choice at any given point would lie. I've often said that although I'm a DJ and sound is vital to what I do, the loss of sight scares me far more than hearing. I guess it's one reason I love Celtic art, illuminated manuscripts and the like.

Q. What is the inspiration behind your passion for writing?

A. When I was around 7 or 8, my Mother gave my younger brother and I a jotter each (mine had a bird on a branch on its cover) and suggested we write down short stories and she would look at them. This inspired me to write. Later at high School I had an inspirational English teacher, Duncan Caldwell, who enthused any in his classes who wanted to improve their literary world, setting aside time to build personalised reading lists, look over poetry and stories and encourage all to excel.

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Q. What was your first pet and what was he/she called?

A. My first pet was an independently minded black cat, which I was to name. Unfortunately until I went to school, I had a pronounced lisp and difficulties with certain vowel sounds, so when my father suggested I call the cat Taffy, it came out of my mouth as Toffee and being the man he was, that was the pronunciation which stuck. Standing on the pavement and calling out 'Toffee, Toffee.' did make me seem like a rather desperate, if deprived, sweet-toothed child.

Q. Tell me your favourite 'all time book'?

A. I'm a bit awkward around questions like this, as it's rather like what is my favourite music, it changes all the time and depending where I am. Pushed to make a choice, it is likely to lie in the sci-fi/fantasy range and certainly Tolkien's 'Lord of the Rings' trilogy would be up there, along with the first three books of Stephen Donaldson's 'Lord Foul's Bane (sometimes known as the Tales of Thomas Covenant the Unbeliever). My secret love are dictionaries and word books such as books on phrases, etymology, thesauri and rhyming dictionaries. Other than that anything on history and folklore are always a treat

Q. What is your 'burning desire'?

A. As a humanist, I am bound to say 'world peace' though I am aware this seems trite and glib. With all things my view is nuanced, peace is not a good advocate of scientific endeavour, so tied in to my desire for world peace is a hope for space research and development. It is my opinion that earth-kind is doomed unless we expand into the universe. On a purely selfish level I would like to be a successful poet and author with a string of titles trailing behind my name. This would require that I dedicate more time to writing and less to administration of the several writing and educational organisations that I am part of . . . in due course in about five years that is exactly my plan.

Q. Do you have any words of wisdom that will help those who are entering the SAW 2015 competitions?

A. The best bit of advice I can give is, please read the conditions of entry, which Barbara Hammond has striven to refine over several years and ensure you comply. Enter everything you can and enjoy the experience. Second bit of advice is around innovative writing, as a past adjudicator, what really turns me on, is surprising, well written pieces that go in unexpected directions, use clever writing devices or challenge the reader. So much of what I've judged is rehashed tropes and you can only stretch on old trope so far before it frays and snaps under its own tension.

A sincere note of thanks to Marc Sherland for his time and consideration in answering the questions presented to him. Should any of you have further questions you wish to put to Marc, drop me an email and I'll be sure to find an answer

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Have your say – tell us what is happening!



## **SAW 100 Club**

Well done to our August winner – Elizabeth Fratarolli and Congratulations to our September winner Sharon Pottinger from Caithness Writers.

We currently have 30 members in our SAW 100 Club. It is our aim to grow the membership as this project helps fund new and diverse projects within our association. If you haven't already joined, please download a form from our website today and help make a difference. Your membership is much appreciated and a special thanks to all who have re-joined and continue to give support.

Remember, the more members we have, the bigger the prize.

## **Twitter**

Have you joined us on Twitter yet? We can be found @ScotAWriters. Check this out and see who is tweeting what. Our followers are growing so don't miss out! Tweet us of work in progress, any publications, awards or events. We want your tweets!

## **Affiliation**

Have you completed your SAW Club Affiliation Renewals? If not, please do so today. Our memberships are invaluable and your SAW needs you!

## **Finally**

With two conferences under my belt, but still feeling like a 'baby writer', I can't hide my excitement about 'things to come'.

Our Council has worked extremely hard and doing a wonderful job of bringing fresh and exciting initiatives.

New and inspiring competitions are heading our way which you will notice in our Prospectus for March 2015 conference.

I hope that like me, you are motivated and eager to take part. I am already planning my writing diary around what is on offer.

In the meantime, good luck with your entries for 'Write up North', The Town House, Inverness on the 25<sup>th</sup> October.

I look forward to meeting with you all there.

Kind regards

Susan McVey  
Publicity Officer.

## **The Guillotine Choice** **By Michael Malone** **with Bashir Saoudi**

Please sign the petition to help clear Bashir's fathers name at [www.change.org](http://www.change.org)

## **Promote Your Club**

Should you wish your club to feature in future newsletters, please contact Susan McVey at [susanscribes@gmail.com](mailto:susanscribes@gmail.com)

## **Promote a Member**

Do you have a member in your club who deserves some well earned recognition? If so, please let us know and we would be delighted to feature them in future newsletters. Contact Susan McVey on [susanscribes@gmail.com](mailto:susanscribes@gmail.com)

## **Club Affiliation**

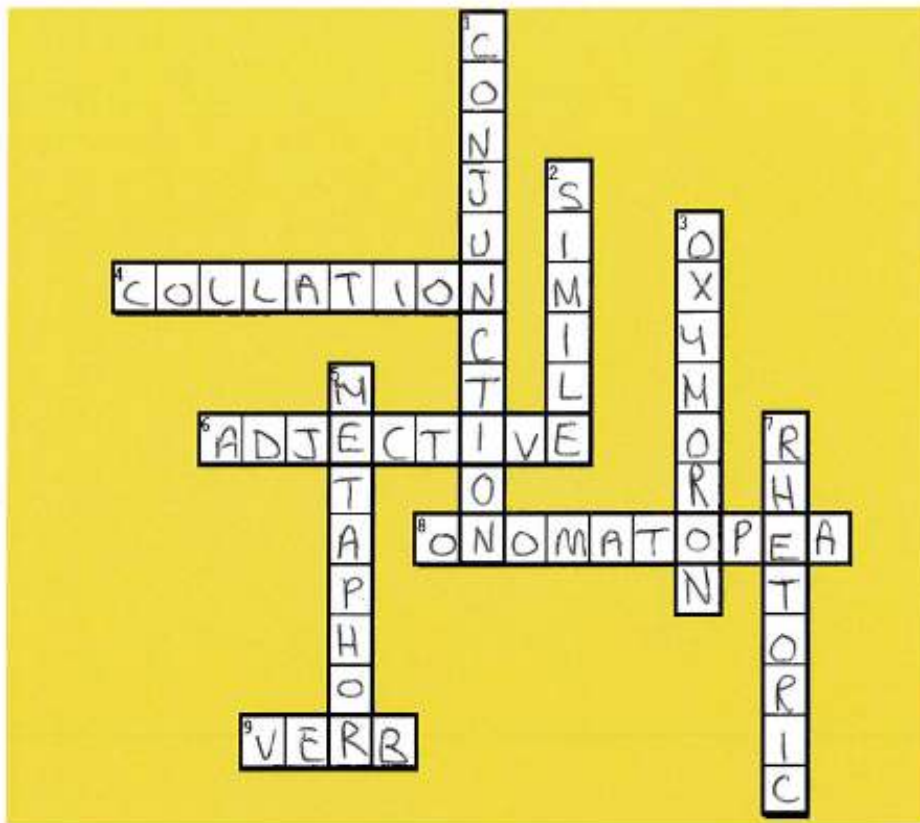
Do you know of any writing clubs who meet together but are not affiliated to the Association? Please pass them our details and we can encourage them to join our community.





**Let's Have Fun!**

**Crosswords Answers From Previous Edition**



**Autumn Sudoku**

Every row, column and mini-grid must contain the letters L E A F.  
Don't guess - use logic



F			
			A
L			
			E



