



Creative Wordshops

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## Writing Letter

### Aug 2025

re-story, re-create, re-  
imagine you

for this letter, a weekly  
story and ongoing  
opportunities -  
[dorianhaarhoffblog.co.za](http://dorianhaarhoffblog.co.za)

Dear writer, storyteller, reader, lover of words, images, silences...

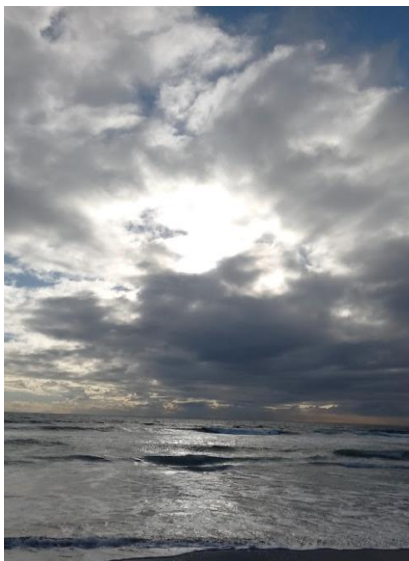
Thank you for those who subscribe to the monthly letter and/or who receive the weekly Sat story. While the letter and story remain as a gift to all, for those who wish, I appreciate any voluntary donation.

Dr R D Haarhoff Standard Bank Current account 0828 59 248

### Ageing without getting Old

*Grow old along with me, the best is yet to be, the last of life,  
for which the first was made...(Browning)*

Of late I've been revisiting Octogenerianville where some of us live and breathe, facilitating New Wine in Old Bottles - GAGA wordshops. GAGA (not Lady) but Gracious Ageing, Grateful Ageing. (see offerings 6a and 6b at the end of the letter.)

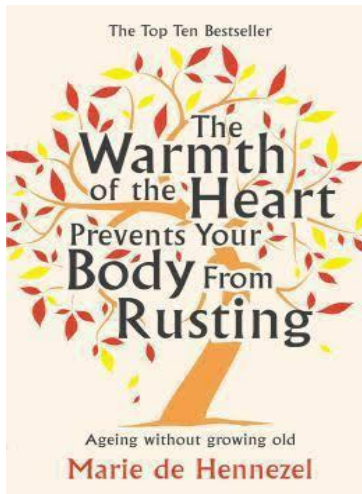


So here we are, some of us hairless or silver-haired ('sure I love the dear silver that shines in you hair') filled with stories, rich in memory. Like an artist we lie on our backs and paint our lives on the ceiling. Like John Keats (who died at 25) 'Much have (we) traveled in the realms of gold and many goodly states and kingdoms seen.'

How do we energise the myths we live by? Our big stories? Discovering these gifts to share and treasures to delight the mind, heart, eye and ear.

We consider our losses, lyrics and loves. And what of the future? For 'It's a poor sort of memory that only works backward' (Lewis Carroll).

What can stories teach us as we age in the 'season of mists and mellow fruitfulness' (Keats) for the tale is often wiser than the teller. How can we open to innovative beliefs that keep the inside bright, shiny and rust free?



The philosopher Martha Nussbaum (1947- ) reminds us 'We are all going to encounter illness, loss, and aging, and we're not well prepared for these inevitable events by a culture that directs us to think of externals only, and to measure ourselves in terms of our possessions.'

Metaphors can sustain us and place us in a wider world, opening us to time beyond the tick tock where living into the moment or looking back we choose not duration but intensity - those moments of expanded or contacted time when we lived on the don't know edge.

Here's Shakespeare (Sonnet 73):

That time of year thou mayst in me behold  
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang  
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,  
Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.  
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day  
As after sunset fadeth in the west,  
Which by and by black night doth take away,  
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.  
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire  
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,  
As the death-bed whereon it must expire,  
Consum'd with that which it was nourish'd by.  
This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong,  
To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

.....

And Yeats who much deliberated on age:  
An aged man is but a paltry thing,  
A tattered coat upon a stick, unless  
Soul clap its hands and sing, and louder sing  
For every tatter in its mortal dress.

.....

And my recent tumble of metaphors:

### **Hiking through a Life**

in the higher reaches  
of the pilgrim path,  
along the cloud line.  
as we age, choices  
narrow  
yet insights widen.  
we edge through mist  
in lossjoy, youngening,  
coining laughing words,  
tasting them on the tongue,  
privileging concepts we met  
in valley days  
yet not made flesh till now.  
we step along a ledge  
of loose stones  
between rock face  
paradox  
and sheer cliff  
ambiguity.  
the bitter-sweet bird  
oxymoron  
hawkeyes our  
uncertainty.  
will stiffening limbs  
and pulsing  
irony  
carry us through this  
rare-air breath?  
our headlamp flickers  
yet we sing, we sing our swansong

as we approach the mountain hut  
of our resurrected  
death  
where we meet  
hovering above  
the bright star.

What chosen metaphors can place you in a context of belonging to that which is larger than you are? And endures?

Dorian

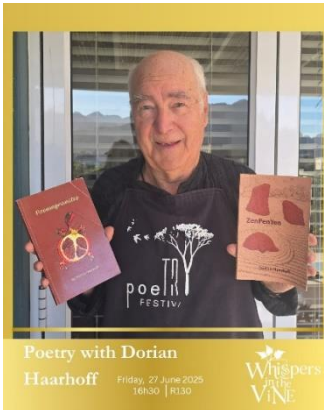
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## Writing Retreat Radar - Winter 2025

detailed flyers on request

### 1. Mentoring: ongoing one-on-one attention

*You help me to sound like myself (numerous clients)  
Like a pair of sandals we walk this road together.*



### 2. Writeway in Pringle Bay 2-3 Aug

Are words and ideas stuck in your head? Want to shake them loose? Need inspiration and writing company? Befriend words/let words befriend you?

Then this weekend is for you. Only 9 places

**FFC FESTIVAL  
WRITING  
WORDSHOP**

craft your text with Dorian Haarhoff

*The Writer's Voice*  
A workbook for writers in Africa

Sat 23 Aug 13.30-16.00  
Som West

R290

12 places

082 873 6802

FRINGE FIRESIDE CHATS  
INDIE AUTHORS RISE UP

3a

3b Also part of the Indie Authors Rise Up Festival: Mentoring Panel - 5 writers whom I've mentored discuss their self-publications done and dusted or on their way

Sat 23 Aug 09.30-11.00 Gordons Bay Yacht Club

#### 4. Magic Carpet Writers (Somerset West)

last Wed of the month writeaway  
a fun-loving supportive thinking/being group of aspirant writers  
2 places open

#### 5. Accra Ghana Storyshop for Authentic leadership 3 Sept

#### 6. Buddhist Retreat Centre Ixopo

082 579 3037

<https://www.brcixopo.co.za>



#### 6a. Travelling Light: Words To Lighten The Load Along The Road

Fri 26 - Sun 28 September 2025

*Oh, tranquility  
Penetrating the very rock,  
A cicada's voice. (Basho)*

Writing and Mindfulness are close travelling companions, walking ancient paths. As they step through the natural world of wonders, they communicate sometime in silence, sometimes in words. They offer healing of body, mind and spirit. Come and practise how to release stress onto the page or screen amid the natural splendours of the BRC hills.

#### 6.b Writing In The Twilight: Leave A gift, Leave A Legacy

Sun - Tues 30 September 2025

*The temple bell stops  
but the sound keeps on coming  
out of the flowers (Basho)*

Cultivating the world within, as we age can be a source of blessing to us and others. Come and practise how to turn ageing into sage-ing through the silence and sounds of words. Share the richness of your story down the line to generations living and yet unborn.