



# DREW LINDSAY



*Prolific author Drew Lindsay and his wife, Narelle, recently relocated to Port Macquarie from Sydney. Drew's currently working on novel number 33 - and the hero of his books, ex-Police Detective Sergeant Ben Hood, manages to get himself involved in all kinds of exciting escapades. Drew's loving life on the coast - and his family connection to the area is helping him to feel right at home ...*

**H**i Drew. You have a family connection with Port Macquarie; could you please tell us a little about the time you spent here as a child?

Around Easter of 1841, John and Agnes Dick arrived in Port Macquarie from Scotland and made it their home. In 1889, my grandmother, Ivy Agnes Dick, was born and raised in Port Macquarie and married Maurice Walsh.

In 1919, her daughter Josephine was born and spent much of her youth living at *Grantham*, on the hill just above the TAFE. She married David Lindsay, another Scotsman, and in 1949 I was born.

I was transported as a baby and young boy by steam train from Sydney to Wauchope and thence bus to the side of the road at *Grantham* and up the milk box track at the side of the red oxide mine to the grand old house, where I spent every Christmas holiday.

Later, when my dad could afford a car, we did the trip by road until 1964, when my grandmother died. My mum and dad were married in St. Thomas' church, and I was christened there in 1950.

**You and your wife, Narelle, recently relocated here from Sydney. What led to this decision?**

Narelle, her mother and I basically got sick of Sydney. Too many cars. Too many people. Too many assaults and home invasions and murders. "Time to move," my wife said. "You love Port for so many reasons, so we'll go there."

We found this magic place near Lake Innes, overlooking a billabong. It had been on the market for a long time - no one seemed to want it. We loved it, and it didn't take long to make it ours.

**How have you settled in at Port Mac so far - and what are you enjoying most about your "sea change"?**

We love Port. We stay out of the CBD as often as possible, because it's become a bit of a mad house - especially in the peak hour - but the beaches never change. The river never changes. We are surrounded by all kinds of birds and wildlife here. Kangaroos and koalas roam freely in our backyard. Ducks and herons have made the billabong their home.

**Your career has undergone a few twists and turns ... but when/how did the idea to write novels start to gain momentum for you?**

Yes, I've had a go at a few things. I have a trade in general engineering and then did three years in a Theological college in South Australia. I served three years as the Pastor of the Five Dock/Drummoigne Uniting Church in Sydney, then I joined the Police Force. I served as a designated Detective for most of my 14 years as a Policeman and then operated my own private investigation business (mainly insurance fraud) for 12 years. I took up various positions as Investigations Manager for a number of major insurers, until the corporate rat race and the ever-present element of corporate corruption eventually overpowered my attempts to prevent it, and I was forced into unemployment.

In an attempt to deal with depression and a very strong feeling of being thrown on to the corporate rubbish heap, I turned to something I had done in my teens and early 20s for fun ... writing. Ben Hood (my main character) was born in 2010 - and the rest is history.

**Introduce us to Ben Hood - the character who plays a central role in your novels. What are his main characteristics?**

Ben Hood is an ex-Police Detective Sergeant from NSW. He was basically asked to resign from the Police Force because of his rather aggressive way of dealing with violent criminals. He reluctantly found his way into a VIP protection agency, where his new "boss" and eventually best friend continues to serve him up assignments which test his martial arts

skills, as well as his emotional stability and moral attitude.

He is a big man, tall and strong. He works out. He's now in his mid 50s and divorced. He's gentle and also tough ... even cruel. He won't take crap from anyone, especially criminals. **It's often been said that authors should write about what they know, or have experienced themselves. How much of this is true in your case?**

I write lots about what I know and some things I have experienced for myself. Most of the locations within Australia and overseas which form the backdrop of each of my novels are places I have been. *TREASURE*, novel number 9, for instance, is set mainly in Port Macquarie.

**With 32 novels already published (and the 33rd currently underway) - what motivates to keep writing? Do you ever experience that dreaded "writer's block"?**

I began to experience "writer's block" in novel number 31, *THE LIME PIT*. I have no idea why, because the previous 30 were such a joy to write. I struggled through it, forcing myself to write for at least three hours each day. I didn't like the book, but everyone else seemed to like it - and it is still selling well. What do I know?

I struggled through novel 32 even more (*RAPTOR*). That book has just about outsold every other book I have written in a world-wide market, mainly in the USA. Now I'm into book number 33. I've learned that the best cure for "writer's block" is to keep writing ... even if it doesn't seem to be going the way you want it to go, or you are struggling a bit with the story line ... keep going. Resist the strong temptation to simply give up.

Novel number 33 has the temporary title *DEATH IN YOUNGHUSBAND*. Younghusband is a tiny town on the banks of the Murray River in South Australia. The mutilated body of a young male person is found tied to a high branch of a Blackbutt tree in the bush not far

from the river near Younghusband. A young female, who happens to be a practicing witch from Adelaide, is implicated in the horrible murder. Ben Hood reluctantly accepts the assignment on behalf of the young girl's mother, to put his own experienced investigative eyes over the police investigation. The further he delves into the murder, the more deadly the situation becomes - not only for his clients, but for himself.

**What does your writer's "cave" look like ... and how does this space help you to focus on your work?**

A photo of my my "writer's cave" is above. It's a mess! I gain inspiration from the strangest of objects, from Chinese cats that wave to me, to bones and skulls, spiders, curiously carved creatures, clocks, watches, forceps used for pulling teeth and my aqualungs which allow me to escape to the bottom of my swimming pool any time I like (day or night) for silence and weightlessness.

**Where can we find out more about you/ purchase your books?**

My books are proofread by my wife, Narelle, and a special friend Barbara (who I went to school with). I know you are not supposed to end a sentence with "with", but I have a rather quirky way with words and sentence construction, which often breaks all the rules - but I don't care. It drives my proofreaders wild, but as long as I can clearly communicate, I don't worry too much about grammar.

Narelle publishes my books via the internet through Amazon and Smashwords. Smashwords distribute my books to Barnes and Noble, Apple iTunes, Kobo and most other e-distributors. We also publish some of the books in print via Createspace (which can be ordered through Amazon). My first book, *CORAL SEA AFFAIR*, is free to download on just about any e-reader. Once you are hooked on Ben Hood ... you may want more.

**Thanks Drew.**

**Interview: Jo Robinson.**