



Newsletter April 2005

New Zealand Poetry Society *Te Hunga Tito Ruri o Aotearoa*

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☞ This Month's Meeting ☜

**There will be no Wellington meeting
at Turnbull House in April**

Poets in the Workplace NZPS Pilot Programme

Rachel Bush

An ordinary Saturday morning in February 2004. The early visit to the Nelson market to get fruit and vegetables, the house to be cleaned, the clothes to be hung out, my friend to visit. Then a phone call. Was I interested in being a poet in residence, attached to Wellington Hospital?. But being away from Nelson? Where would I stay? Who would take my granddaughter to school and pick her up in the afternoon. But I am very pleased to find myself saying that I was sure these things could be worked out and that I would like to do it.

Later when it seems likely that the funding will come through, I mention the residency to Cliff Fell. I find myself saying, 'I only half like hospitals'. I respect them greatly, but like them? Cliff says it would make a very good opening line for a poem.

I begin to wonder what I have to offer. I know so little about hospitals. What if I am there every day but cannot write? That anxiety stays with me for most of September October and November, but in December, after I have come back to Nelson, I finish twelve poems.

One of the reasons for the residency was that poems might help raise the morale of hard working nurses. After my twenty-four days in the hospital I admired nurses and midwives even more that I did before I started the residency. I am awed by their combination of professional skills and compassion, but this sort of respect is a very long way from even a half way decent poem. I like poems to be a discovery for me as well as

the reader and I don't want to write poems that just state what I already know.

I was given a nametag with a slightly demented photo of myself to prove I was poet in residence. Reactions to my job varied from monosyllabic comments like 'Wow'. 'No!' and 'Oh' to the benignly challenging, 'But what does that actually mean?' and the frequent, 'Who pays for that?' I was glad to be able to say that the funding came from outside the hospital system.

I was encouraged to do anything that would make poetry an acceptable part of hospital life. I gave two readings to patients and staff in the Assessment treatment and Rehabilitation Ward. Another thing I did was get permission from twelve talented New Zealand poets to publish one of their poems in the hospital. They went sent on the email within the hospital. The poems could be put on walls, left on table for read or copies printed for particular staff or patients. I also worked with new graduate nurses and took a session at one of their study days.

But I was to write some poems. I had to be gentle with myself and not expect that these would happen immediately or by a sheer act of will. It comforted me to talk with Dinah Hawken who was attached to the Botanical gardens and further into a similar residency.

I talked to patients in the Assessment Treatment and Rehabilitation Unit and in the Antenatal Unit. I watched babies in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and how midwives and nurses worked with them. I met the chaplains in their long narrow room by the hospital cafeteria. I talked to staff and customers in The Fuel Bar. I talked to the Co-ordinator of Volunteers and to the man at the gate with the anti-abortion placard.

I kept a diary. I wrote about two pigeons that faced each other on the concrete ledge outside a patient's room and about the big blue crane that hovered over the changing building site. I wrote about babies in their incubators. Sometimes I wrote about unglamorous parts of the hospital like the forlorn garden outside the Emergency department where the biggest crop seemed to be cigarette butts. I copied medical notices from the walls of wards. It was from scraps in this book, a

recorded conversation or perhaps two or three lines that didn't stretch to the right hand margin, that I was able to start the poems.

The arts, including poetry are valuable in hospitals. Their presence is an acknowledgement that staff are more than a set of professional skills, and that patients are more than their sickness. In hard times the arts give us joy and help us to make sense of our situation. I hope there will be more artists, including poets, who have the privilege of the opportunity I was given to work in Wellington hospital.

☞ From the Committee ☞

Robert Stratford has unfortunately stepped down from his position of committee member due to other work commitments. Thanks go to Robert for all his hard work. We are very happy to welcome our 2004 competition winner, Dr Harvey Molloy, to the committee. Dr Molloy has a background in Information Technology and education.

Wellington Members Please Note:
We have had no offers from Wellington members interested in continuing to run the Wellington meetings. As a result there will be no meeting in April. In May we are planning to have the AGM where the future of Wellington meetings can be discussed. We are planning special readings for June and July in conjunction with the Museum of Wellington, City and Sea and their exhibition of 100 years of Wellington. We will keep you posted.

☞ From the Editor ☞

Thank you to all those members who got their renewal forms back early and congratulations to Debbie Williams of Dunedin who has won the draw for the poetry books, they are on their way to you now. Due to the great response I am now very busy updating our database and aim to get membership cards out with the May newsletter. Those of you that don't manage to get your renewal forms back before the end of March may risk delays in receiving your May newsletter.

I am very pleased to announce that the committee has appointed a new permanent newsletter editor – Lynn Davidson. Lynn will be working with three publishing students from Whitireia Polytechnic, who will be providing typesetting and editorial support under the supervision of course coordinator Rachel Lawson. Lynn will start work with the June issue. You can read Lynn's writer biography at: <http://www.bookcouncil.org.nz/writers/davidsonlynn.html>

This issue contains the regular events listings. These listings will usually appear only in the March and September issues. They can also be obtained at any time from the editor or on the website and will be sent out with new membership packs.

Only a few copies of the 2004 anthology *The Enormous Picture* are left, order now to avoid disappointment. Order forms are available from the editor or via the website.

A reminder also that the 2005 International Poetry Competition closes May 30th, so get writing!

If you are interested in reporting on poetry events in your area we would love to hear from you - contact the editor for further information. If you have reported on events in the past but have not heard from the editor it may be that we no longer have your contact details, please feel free to get in touch.

☞ Correction ☞

The editor would like to apologise for the incorrect spelling of Jenny Powell-Chalmer's name in the March issue. See page eight for the report on her recent event in Wellington.

☞ Upcoming Events ☞

AUCKLAND

Preview of the Writers & Readers Poetry Events

Open Mike: BYO Genius Float Bar - Princes Wharf
Saturday 21 May: 10.00am–2.00pm
FREE EVENT

The BYO genius part of the festival is now established as a lively, popular and unpredictable event. Published poets appear at scheduled times of the day – the rest of the time it's an open mic and an open floor.

Guest Poets include:

10.00am	Anne Kennedy
10.30am	Diane Brown
11.00am	Iain Sharp
11.30am	Jo Randerson
12.00pm	Sonja Yelich
12.30pm	Karlo Mila
1.00pm	Mike Johnson
1.30pm	Harry Ricketts

Sing Song Maritime Museum, Princes Wharf
Saturday 21 May: 12.00–1.00pm

Anne Kennedy's volume of autobiographical verse *Sing Song* won the prize for Poetry in the 2004 Montana New Zealand Book Awards. She joins popular poet Diane Brown, poet and academic Michele Leggott, and Paris domiciled William Direen. Chaired by Harry Ricketts.

Ticketek \$12 / Door \$15

Palaver Lava: Readings
Maritime Museum, Princes Wharf
Saturday 21 May: 3.00pm–4.00pm

Sue Fitchett's new collection of verse *Palaver Lava Queen* centres on Auckland, its history, geography and culture. Fellow Auckland poets Murray Edmond, CK Stead, Sonja Yelich and Paula Green read and discuss Auckland as a demanding muse. Chaired by Iain Sharp. Ticketek \$12 / Door \$15

CHRISTCHURCH

Canterbury Poets present Poetry in Performance Autumn Readings 2005

Open microphone and guest readers. Wednesdays 7pm at the Madras Café Bookshop, 165 Madras St – licensed and BYO. \$5 waged and \$3 unwaged

Win a \$20 MCB voucher – audience vote for best open mic poet each night

Guest Poets

30 March Owen Marshall, Christina Stachurski,
Robert McLean

6 April Gordon Challis, Jan Hutchison, David Gregory

13 April Chris Orsman, Bernadette Hall

20 April Secondary School Poets

27 April Janet Charman, Frankie MacMillan,
Helen Jacobs

4 May Rob Allan, Koenraad Kuiper, Tom Weston

11 May Final Night Poetry in Performance Competition

First prize \$50 MCB voucher. Second Prize \$30 MCB voucher. Open entry. Judge: James Norcliffe. A copy of the poem(s) entered must be submitted by 4 May

DUNEDIN

Port Chalmers – Sevenths

SEVENTHS: Seven Poets, 7pm Thursday 7th April at Port Chalmers Community Library FREE

Rob Allan

Diane Brown

Kay McKenzie Cooke

David Eggleton

David Howard

Martha Morseth

Peter Olds

Port Chalmers Community Library

20 Beach Street, Port Chalmers

Phone: (03) 474 3364

Fax: (03) 474 3364

Email: library@dcc.govt.nz

URL: <http://www.dunedinlibraries.com/home>

WELLINGTON

Poets Collaborate with Painters

The fruits of the collaborative labour, an original concept project entitled *Kissed*, can now be viewed by the public at Porirua's Pataka.

Kissed features original artworks interpreting and incorporating poetry. The *Kissed* quartet is completed by poet Helen Heath and painters Kirsty Morison and Daisy Wood.

Heath, of Paekakariki, says the paintings have been created not just as illustrations of the poems. Instead, the poetry has become an integral part of the paintings, finding the extraordinary in the ordinary, exploring domesticity and community.

"A kiss is a blessing, something we share with our loved ones, sometimes taken for granted, other times relished," says Heath. "We may be different combinations of lover, mother, sister, daughter, or granddaughter but we are all part of a family. Especially when they nag us, leave their wet towels on the bed or wake us in the night."

Kissed is launched 12 noon April 17th at Pataka, Porirua. View: <http://www.pataka.org.nz>

☞ A Warm Welcome to ... ☛

Robert Tapp – Morrinsville

Diane Brown – Dunedin

Catherine Kelsey – Auckland

Barbara Rehder – Wellington

Quotation of the Month

'Poetry is what gets lost in translation.'

Robert Frost

☞ Other News ☛

Te Mata Poet Laureate announced

Wellington poet Jenny Bornholdt has been announced as the new Te Mata Poet Laureate. As Laureate, she will receive \$5000, a ceremonial tokotoko, and Te Mata wine. Jenny will be expected to produce a book of poems as part of her two-year tenure. Footfall, the volume by outgoing laureate Brian Turner, was launched in late February.

Montana Poetry Day 2005

Montana Poetry Day will be held on Friday 22 July this year - and will include in the announcement of the

winner of the Poetry Category for the Montana New Zealand Book Awards 2005. Laura Kroetsch will once again be co-ordinating Montana Poetry Day. If you would like to be involved in an event or have ideas for one, please contact Laura on: laura.kroetsch@paradise.net.nz

Looking for the Kiwi in Poems

Rotorua Museum is working towards an exhibition entitled Kiwi. They would love to know of poems, stories, books songs - where the kiwi is mentioned. If you know of any or have any please contact: Ann Somerville on: asome@rdc.govt.nz

Writers & Readers Programme out

The programme for the fifth Auckland Writers & Readers Festival is now available and it's overflowing with events that surpass the promise of this year's Festival theme, 'Nourish: Feasting the Mind and Feeding the Soul'. The Festival offers a full menu of 63 events featuring over 100 leading international and local writers, talking about fiction, poetry, travel, food, crime, biography, history, writing for television and film, and that 21st century phenomenon, 'blogging'.

The Festival begins on Thursday 19 May, and continues with three full days of interviews, panel discussions, book launches and readings before culminating in the Buddle Findlay Sargeson Dinner on Sunday 22 May. Tickets go on sale from Ticketek on Friday 8 April. Friends of the Festival can book a week early from 1 April.

For those wishing to hone their writing skills, the New Zealand Post Writing Workshops will be held on Saturday 14 and Sunday 15 May in the lead up to the Festival. Eight workshops cover a number of genres, and skilled practitioners tutor their specialty subjects: Jill Malcolm on travel writing; Harry Ricketts on creative non fiction; Diane Brown on poetry; Owen Marshall on short prose; Michael Bennett on writing for the screen; Joan Rosier-Jones on writing family history or memoir; James George on the novel; and Stephen Stratford on editing.

National Library Gallery Poetry Exhibition "Main Trunk Lines"

Gregory O'Brien and the new Poet Laureate are currently curating an exhibition about New Zealand poetry for the National Library Gallery. The exhibition will run from 21 July to 30 October.

"Main Trunk Lines" will trace the various energies that have formed this country's poetry. Focusing largely on the poetry of the last 30 years, the exhibition will trace connections between poets, from early times to the

present, exploring the pervasive themes and changing ideas of what a poem is. It will also highlight specific books and poems.

The exhibition will include books, manuscripts, broadcast materials and visual images and will be supported by lively public and educational programmes. A comfortable reading area stocked with books of New Zealand poetry will be provided.

☞ Publications ☞

Announcing Masthead 9

With editor Alison Croggon, featuring: "Twenty One Iraqi Poets" (in English translation) by guest editor Margaret Obank of Banipal magazine. Translations from Chinese, Spanish, Persian and German as well as the broad selection from Arabic.

An extract from Yang Lian's forthcoming book length poem, "Concentric Circles", soon to be released by Bloodaxe, as well as essays on the poem by Yang Lian and his translator, Brian Holton.

Two fascinating essays on sexuality.

Poetry from Michael Ayres, Alan Halsey, Jeff Harrison, Matt Hetherington, Pierre Joris, Trevor Joyce, Danijela Kambaskovic-Sawer, Sally Ann McIntyre, Peter Minter, Geraldine Monk, Simon Perchik, Colin Reeves and Stephen Vincent.

View: <http://masthead.net.au/>

blackmail press 12

"Mark Pirie edits what is to become, one of the best yet from blackmail press" - *Doug Poole*

Guest New Zealand Poets include:

Anna Jackson

FWN Wright

Jenny Powell Chalmers

Linzy Forbes

Vivienne Plumb

International Guests include

Brett Dionysis

Paul Hardacre

Saadi Yousef

Hsien Min Toh

And many more...

View: <http://nzpoetsonline.homestead.com/index12.html>

Queensland University literary journal

QUT is re launching *dotlit* (dotlit@qut.edu.au), its online literary journal of creative writing in July 2005. The journal will have an emphasis on new writing and the reviewing of interesting directions in fiction, non-fiction and writing about creative writing. Established in July 2000 by the Creative Writing and

Cultural Studies discipline of the Creative Industries Faculty, dotlit publishes new fiction, poetry, creative non-fiction, hypertexts, digital story telling, reviews and scholarly articles. The journal is supported by QUT and Arts Queensland.

If you have any further enquiries please contact co-ordinating editor Angela Slatter on email: dotlit@qut.edu.au .

Report from NZSA

☞ Residencies & Opportunities ☞

French Residency Programmes

The Ministry of Culture and Heritage, on behalf of the French Embassy, wishes to notify interested parties within New Zealand of French residency programmes available in France. These residencies and programmes offer a wonderful opportunity for individuals and institutions to forge links with cultural organisations in France. The programme categories are: Writer-in-Residence and Translator-in-Residence. More information can be found at: www.ambafrance-nz.org

Sanskriti Residency - India

Applications are sought from established writers, visual artists and craft/object artists who are New Zealand citizens or permanent residents to undertake a residency at the Sanskriti Foundation of India's Kendra campus. The residency will be for three months between September 2005 and April 2006 and. Further background information on the Sanskriti Foundation and the Kendra campus can be found at: www.sanskritifoundation.org/home.shtml

The closing date for applications is 5.00 PM Friday 20 May 2005. For more information please contact: Assistant Arts Advisor, Arts Services, Creative New Zealand. T: (04) 473 0880 or E: info@creativenz.govt.nz

Red Gate Residency – Beijing

Applications are sought from established writers, visual artists and craft/object artists who are New Zealand citizens or permanent residents to undertake a residency at the Red Gate Gallery in Beijing. The residency will be for 12 weeks between October and December 2005. Further background information on Red Gate Residency facilities can be found at: www.redgategallery.com/residency.htm

The closing date for applications is 5.00 PM Friday 20 May 2005. For more information please contact: Assistant Arts Advisor, Arts Services, Creative New Zealand. T: (04) 473 0880 or E: info@creativenz.govt.nz

Nominations called for Prime Minister's awards 2005

Readers, writers, other individuals and organisations are invited to nominate their choice of an outstanding New Zealand writer in the genres of poetry, fiction and non-fiction for the Prime Minister's Awards for Literary Achievement 2005.

Worth \$60,000 each, the annual Prime Minister's Awards for Literary Achievement recognise writers who have made a significant contribution to New Zealand literature. Previous recipients are Janet Frame 2003, Maurice Gee 2004 (fiction); Hone Tuwhare 2003, Kevin Ireland 2004 (poetry); and Michael King 2003, Anne Salmond 2004 (non-fiction).

Although literary organisations tend to make a collective nomination, Creative New Zealand is keen to encourage individual nominations. "This is your chance to nominate an outstanding writer or writers whose work you particularly admire.

The nominated writers should have written a body of work that has received national acclaim and/or international recognition. They may also be working in other genres. The fiction category includes novels, short stories, plays, children's fiction and scriptwriting.

For a nomination form contact Danielle Tolson (Tel: 04-473 0184 Email: daniellet@creativenz.govt.nz) or download it from the website (www.creativenz.govt.nz).

Nominations called for Montana Review Awards

Entries are now open for the Montana New Zealand 2005 "Reviewer of the Year" and "Best Review Page or Programme" Awards.

Submission criteria and entry forms can be downloaded in pdf form from www.montananzbookawards.co.nz or printed forms are available by contacting the Awards Coordinator, Kathryn Carmody, Phone: 027 287 7963 Email: kathryn.carmody@gmail.com

The judges pay particular attention to the audience for whom each review and review page or programme is intended, so please do encourage entrants to include as much detailed information on their target audience as they are able.

The closing date for submissions is Friday 15th April, 2005.

☞ Congratulations ☞

Anita Sadler Weiss Memorial Haiku Award

Congratulations to Ernest Berry of Picton who won 2nd Honorable Mention with:

*autumn night
firelight draws in
the walls*

**Washington Poets Association
Francine Porad Award**

Congratulations to the ubiquitous Ernest Berry of Picton,
Who won first place with:

*precipice
the ascending cry
of an osprey*

Ernest also won an honorable mention with:

*hot night
the length
of a siren.*

Irish Rathcoola Residency

The three recipients of the inaugural Rathcoola Residency, Co Cork, Ireland, include two New Zealanders – Denis O’Connor, a sculptor, poet and installation artist from Waiheke Island and Fiona Farrell, author of novels, stories, plays and poems from Otanerito, Banks Peninsula. Australian documentary photographer, Charles Page from Queensland, is the third. The three were selected from 110 Australian and New Zealand applicants by the London-based Richard and Sophie Nicoll Trust.

Further details about The Rathcoola Residency can be found at: www.rathcoola.info

Reviews

Four French Horns

Jenny Powell-Chalmers

Jenny Powell-Chalmers is a Dunedin poet and *Four French Horns* is her fourth collection of poems. Seeing Powell-Chalmers perform her work at the March Poetry Society meeting I noticed that she reads her poems as though ... well... as though she were playing a French horn, occasionally cupping her body around certain words the way a musician will curl around their instrument for an important note or phrase.

Music is a theme that runs through Powell-Chalmers’s writing. The book has a beautiful photo of four French horns on the cover, and a photo of Powell-Chalmers playing the French horn on the back.

There is a musicality to Powell-Chalmers’s work, apparent in poems such as ‘Sings The Southern Green’ with it’s repeating riff ‘Stay with me/ Sings the green’ which at the reading Powell-Chalmers chanted on one note, like an incantation. On first reading these poems I

felt that Powell-Chalmers was slightly heavy-handed with the alliteration and assonance. They seemed to be working too obviously in lines such as from ‘Couture Virgin’ “I’m paraded applauded/ persuaded to fluently flaunt/ to bounce my breasts/ when I strut and stretch”. However, the alliterative technique works well when the poems are read aloud.

The book is divided into four sections, the first called ‘Southern Woman’. The first poem in this section, also called ‘Southern Woman’, with its rather Banjo Patterson rhythm, sets out to address some of the clichés about Southern men and woman. The south in this collection is vivid, visual and compelling. There is the landscape itself and the landscape of the imagination; both aspects captured in the lovely ‘Sings the Southern Green’.

In this first section there is the presence and influence of writers such as Hone Tuwhare and Denis Glover. The way their voices influence her writing seems both deliberate and natural.

The second section, ‘White Gold’, focuses more on the domestic, from the poet’s own childhood to the present day. ‘Miss Kjelgaard’, a poem about not quite cutting it at ballet lessons, has the funny and poignant lines:

...Step
to the right, slide slide
step to the left, slide
slide point our toes step
step arm arm I forget
the rest.

The third section, ‘E Flat’ opens with a poem about loss, “I am her still life/ she had asked for two/ but there is only me.” There is also a theme of solace through music, writing, the life of the imagination, as in ‘Silence’:

Breath warms the coiled
silver, it carries forever the longing,
the shiver of song
the sigh of your silence.

The final section, ‘Moving Pictures’, moves away from the strong, centred physicality of the south in the opening section, to what seems to be a journey away from the pain of loss, starting with ‘Is It Helpful?’ with the tentative opening lines ‘check before i enter,/ anyone i know?’. It closes with the powerful ‘Seven Gates to God’, a poem which signposts her latest collection, a collaboration with Anna Jackson called *Locating the Madonna*.

A few poems tend towards the predictable. Poems like ‘All that Glitters is Cold’ and ‘Rich Witches’ don’t seem surprising enough. However, the majority of poems have a musicality and substance that stay with you long

after you have put the book down. remarks about a young waitress. You just can't keep a good Punch down.

**Powell-Chalmers, Jenny. *Four French Horns*.
Headworx.
RRP \$19.95 ISBN 0-476-00884-0**

Review by Lynn Davidson, Kapiti Coast poet and tutor.

The Red Tram

C.K. Stead

There are at least two Karl Steads. There's the maverick intellectual banging on about the value of the European enlightenment and what not; a figure very aptly described by David Eggleton in NZ Books as "one of those hard-headed Mr Punch figures." And then there's Karl Stead the poet, the figure we glimpse behind the masks of Punch and various Latin personae. This thirteenth volume of verse has a wider range of subject matter and more warmth than Stead's previous poetry.

What's delightful about these poems is the sense of playful and good humour, often spiked with the odd touch of mischievous violence just to keep them more real. 'The Season, Tohunga Crescent' is a virtuoso garden poem. There's an almost classical Japanese quality in the sharpness in his observations of his changing garden but lest we feel that we are digging the Zen or Tao of gardening the poet points out that he spends October whacking and tenderising snails. Later on in the year, he deals to a thrush with a broken beak with an axe.

Stead continues to poke fun at the teaching of modern Eng. Lit by offering us modern adaptations of the classics in the contemporary vernacular ("shaping, editing and extending texts in an extended range of genres" is how this particular exercise is described by the Ministry of Education in the English Curriculum). Given this treatment, the opening of Eliot's *The Waste Land* becomes:

*Yes it's spring
but London's hell —
all these
dead people
and me.*

For the sake of propriety—just the sort of propriety Stead pokes a finger at—I won't quote the modernised version of Marvell's *To A Coy Mistress*. Stead gives more reign to this lighter, comic tone in *The Red Tram*. There's less hectoring and bemoaning and more mucking about with texts. Yet like a petulant ventriloquist's dummy, the more sententious Mr Punch never agrees to get back into the box and pops out towards the close to deliver some lines to Cantullus and Baudelaire while making lewd

**Stead, C.K. *The Red Tram*. AUP \$24.95
ISBN 1-86940-330-4**

Review by Wellington poet and teacher Harvey Molloy.

🔗 Websites 🔗

Hot Blogs

For the uninitiated *Blogs* are online journals, which are quickly gaining momentum in cyberspace.

Blogs are becoming the fastest way to convey thoughts and feelings by more people than any other previous method. They are changing the way humans communicate. Instant message technologies have opened up a whole new field of linguistic studies, and researchers say the impact will be as significant as the advent of the telegraph and telephone.

Here is a taste:

Rachel McAlpine's poetry blog:
<http://www.writing.co.nz/blog/>

A Hay(na)ku blog hosted by the NZ Electronic Poetry Centre:
<http://eileentabios.blogspot.com/>

An overview of literary blogs:
<http://www.complete-review.com/quarterly/vol3/issue3/litblogs.htm>

The Electronic Poetry Center (NY) Blog list:
<http://epc.buffalo.edu/connects/blogs.html>

Also check out:
The Web Not the Death of Language (article)
<http://www.wired.com/news/culture/>

Charles & Camilla's wedding gets verse

Who would be UK Poet Laureate at a moment like this? Read more about Andrew Motion's awkward task at:
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2005/03/21/npoet21.xml>

Major Poetry Project Published Online

The works of esteemed New Zealand poet Kendrick Smithyman can now be accessed online, with the launch of a major poetry project published exclusively on the Internet.

Co-editor and Head of English at The University of Auckland, Associate Professor Peter Simpson, says this

is the largest poetry publishing venture ever attempted in New Zealand for a single author. "It is because of the massive scale of the Smithyman project that we have chosen to publish via the Internet".

The online publication, *Collected Poems 1943-1995 of Kendrick Smithyman*, consists of 1550 poems, of which some 540 are previously unpublished or uncollected. Smithyman was one of New Zealand's most prolific and respected poets. View the project at: www.smithymanonline.auckland.ac.nz

Report from New Zealand Book Council [abridged]

☞ Out & About ☜

GOLDEN BAY

Golden Bay Poets Tenth Birthday Celebrated

Golden Bay Live Poets reached another milestone on the 17th March with the celebration of a tenth birthday. Nineteen poets participated by reading their work before a full house in the famous Mussel Inn Bush Cafe at Onekaka.

We are frequently blessed with visiting poets and this occasion was no exception with no fewer than five readers from the USA and two from Canada amongst the line-up.

Of special note was Thomas King of native Canadian descent. Thomas was in the Bay on holiday following a poetry tour in the North Island with two other native Canadian, three Aborigine and three Maori poets.

At an average of ten poets per night reading three poems per person times eleven months each year over the past decade approximately 3,300 poems have been recited during Golden Bay performances!

Tributes were paid to poets Ken Carpenter, Allen Ward and Alan Fricker who shared their words but have sadly passed away during the past ten years.

The Mussel Inn is a wonderful venue and the proprietors, Andrew and Jane Dixon, are very supportive of many forms of the Arts in Golden Bay.

We enjoy great support from local and visiting poets and it is wonderful to see the progress of new poets who start tentatively and then develop their own confident poetry voices.

Over the years we have heard poems recited in German, Japanese, Dutch, Maori and a multitude of English accents.

We have had several visitors who have been inspired to write a poem on a table napkin which they are happy to share. We particularly enjoy the ones that offer observations on aspects of their Golden Bay visit.

Being St Patrick's Day added to the occasion with some Irish poems and jokes added to the mix. Two

wonderful chocolate-to-die-for birthday cakes were also a Mussel Inn treat enjoyed by all.

As to the future, visiting poets are most welcome and the dates for the rest of the year are listed on the Mussel Inn website: www.musselinn.co.nz

Report by Joe Bell

WELLINGTON

New Zealand Poetry Society

When publisher Helen Rickerby told me that Jenny Powell-Chalmers and Anna Jackson were great performers I thought I'd better get along to the March meeting in Wellington to find out for myself. I was not disappointed.

The readings focused on Powell-Chalmers' and Jackson's recent collaboration *Locating the Madonna* (Seraph Press, 2004), which is the outcome of an experiment in poetic influence. With Jackson in Auckland and Powell-Chalmers in Dunedin, they posted poems back and forth, each responding to the voice and ideas of the other in their own work. The poets met in 2001 but it was not until the next year that the project began and even later that the poets found themselves drawn to focus on the recurring image of the Madonna. Eventually the poets came to see madonnas everywhere and as Jackson said "it turned everything into a poem".

Collaboration and interest in influence is not a new concept for either of the poets. *Double Jointed* (Inkweed, 2003) is an earlier collaboration of shared poems between Powell-Chalmers and ten other poets. Jackson's *Catullus for Children* (AUP, 2003) explores in part the influence of other poets on her work. As Lynn Davidson points out in her review of Powell-Chalmers' *Four French Horns* (page 6) there is a lovely musicality to her poems, which was beautifully demonstrated with the reading. This coupled with Jackson's ebullient delivery and the humourous interplay between the poets made for a great night.

Report by Helen Heath

Windrift Goes Public

Konichiwa. Windrift members gave a haiku reading in a day of celebrating Japanese culture at Hutt-Minoh House, Lower Hutt in February. Jeanette Stace devised an interesting programme of seasonal haiku from both Japanese and New Zealand traditions. The Reading was a condition of our accepting a grant for Haiku Festival Aotearoa from the Japanese Education and Culture Grant Scheme of the Hutt Minoh House Friendship Trust. A marquee, microphones and outdoor audience were new to our haiku experience - but the haiku word was spread. Jeanette Stace and Nola Borrell reached a yet wider audience on 'What's Going On?', RadioNZ, 4 March. As

well as news of the Festival (starting that day), the skilful producers included about ten haiku. Domo arigato gozaimasu.

Haiku Festival Aotearoa, March 4-6, Wellington

What happens when haijin from all over New Zealand gather in one room? Despite haiku's emphasis on minimalism, the answer is: a lot of talk.

Aimed at writers both new and experienced, the festival proved a wonderful place to make new friendships, renew old ones, exchange ideas and opinions, laugh a lot and learn, learn, learn. A total of 30 writers attended the festival, travelling from as far away as Auckland, Hokitika, the Maniototo and Sydney, plus a strong contingent from Wellington, especially the Windrift group.

Leading haijin Ernest J Berry made Friday night's opening address, beating Kiwi reserve by getting us to introduce one another and play a game where three people wrote a line each of a haiku. Out of something like chaos came a clutch of respectable poems. Setting the tone for the weekend was:

hot air
room full of haijin
and the sunset

Settled in the Stella Maris conference centre high above Seatoun, participants were challenged and extended by workshops (Barbara Strang, Jeanette Stace, Ernie Berry and a composite by Richard von Sturmer (tanka)/ Barbara (haibun)/ Vanessa Proctor (renga); plenary sessions by Richard (haiku and Zen) and Vanessa (haiku today); and a ginko (observational walk) co-ordinated by Catherine Mair and Pat Prime.

Saturday evening was something of a gala, thanks to the combined talents of genial MC Tony Chad, writers, selector Cyril Childs, reader Jamie Bull and cellist Sue Robinson. Cyril, who was unable to be at the festival, had chosen 20 seasonal haiku from more than 150 submitted to be read by Jamie, while Sue used a skilful selection of music and sounds, some from her cello, some from her voice to accompany the poems. The enthusiastic reception from the audience said it all.

The evening also included the launch by Nola Borrell of *A to Zazen*, an anthology edited by Vanessa Proctor of the Zazen email group – Ernie Berry, Tim Bravenboer, Bertus de Jonge, Catherine Mair, Jeanette Stace, and Vanessa. Introduced by Vanessa, the members each read two of their haiku, Tim reading for Ernie who was unable to be present and Annette de Jonge reading poems by her late husband Bertus.

Gale-force winds on Sunday morning saw the ginko split into groups – the less mobile explored Stella Maris grounds, while another group headed for the wild coast.

Sandie Legge considered flying, but came back down the cliff in one piece!

*above the wind
hymn singers*

Laurice Gilbert

*wandering over pebbles
my pocket
grows heavy*

Barbara Strang

The final session, run by Karen Peterson Butterworth, brainstormed forming a national haiku association. With the majority of those present members of NZPS, it was felt that, logically, haiku activities belonged within that framework. One exciting idea was to have a separate page for haiku news within the Poetry Society website. A loose plan was made to re-stage the festival in two years, venue undecided.

Donald Buglass of Hokitika canvassed interest in staging a haiku walking weekend on the West Coast, possibly this winter. Contact: 47 Livingstone St, Hokitika.

Ph. 03 755 8446, mobile 021 1030 180.

Email: buglass_d@yahoo.co.nz

Our thanks go to the Japanese Education and Culture Grant Scheme for their contribution towards funding.

*desert sky ...
wishing I knew more
about everything*

Vanessa Proctor ('Frogpond' - forthcoming)

Report by Sandra Simpson

WAIRARAPA

A bevy of New Zealand's finest poets, including [immediate past] Poet Laureate, Brian Turner, held a small crowd of around 60 spellbound as they performed at Poems on the Vine, the fourth of this biennial wordfest held at Gladstone Vineyard last Saturday.

National Radio host, Chris Laidlaw introduced each poet, all with distinct inimitable styles of their own. They were John Ansell, Stephanie de Montalk, Cliff Fell, Graham Lindsay, Anna Livesey, Rachel MacAlpine, Ron Riddell, Lewis Scott, Saray Torres, Brian Turner and Denis Welch. Thank you to Pat White and his team. Poems on the Vine, the Golden Shears and the Martinborough Fair all on one day. What a region!

Report from Marlene Ditchfield [Abridged]

PICTON

Picton Poets

At our monthly meeting there were the usual poetic bits and bobs, including more haiku tips from Ernie Berry ("last line, a surprise"), and copies of the just-published *A to Zazen*, of the Zazen haiku group, in which he had a chapter. Thank you Ernie. During the month there was also a request by the Otago University Bookshop for a copy of our *Seas, Ships and Sailing Boats: Poems for Children of All Ages*. The last half hour was filled, breathlessly, with Julie Kennedy's poetic memories - a few of them - recalled, she said, over one sleepless night. We look forward to a second delightful bite at the cherry next time

Picton Poets combined with Poetry Corner of Blenheim in stands at *Senior Expo* (a first-time event) and *Artrageous*, both in Blenheim, earlier this month. They were good days but at *Artrageous* it did get a bit blustery at times. Our 'Request a Poem' sign at *Artrageous* was misconstrued by most of the public as they didn't seem to want to listen to us but wanted a poem written for them instead. Something to think about for next time. Neil made quite a hit with a visitor who had just bought a bonsai tree for her partner for a Valentine's gift and wanted a suitable poem to go with it. Neil obliged with just the right one from his extensive portfolio

Report from Sandy Arcus

☞ Competitions ☞

Bravado Poetry Competition

Judge: Alistair Paterson

Prizes: 1st 500, 2nd \$250, 3rd \$100

plus 10 Highly Commended Prizes of \$50 each

For entry forms email: info.bravado@xtra.co.nz

Atlanta Review International Poetry Competition

Grand Prize: \$1,000

Second Prizes (5): \$100

20 International Publication Awards; 30 International Merit Awards; includes Certificate, Honorable Mention in Atlanta Review, and Free Issue

Winners will be published in Atlanta Review (in over 120 countries)

Entry fee: \$5 for the first poem, \$3 for each additional poem.

Entries must be postmarked by 16 May 2005. Winners will be announced in August.

The Poetry 2005 contest issue will be published in October. For more information, see www.atlantareview.com

The Bridport Prize 2005

The Bridport Prize International Creative Writing Competition started in 1973 to raise funds for the development of Bridport Arts Centre. There are two categories – Poetry and Short Story.

The first prize in each category is £3000, second prize £1000 and third prize £500. An additional 10 supplementary prizes (for each category) of £50 each are awarded. The entry fee for the year 2005 is £6 per poem or story. The top four poems are entered for the *Forward Prize for Poetry*, an award not open to the general public. The long list of shortlisted stories will be read by leading London literary agents with a view to representing writers.

All entries to the competition are judged anonymously. The judges make their evaluations on the quality of the work alone. Nobody wins because of who they are, who they know or what their name sounds like. All the poems and stories go into the same pile whether the writer is famous and very experienced or the writer is entering his/her first competition. Deadline June 30 2005. For more information and an entry form log onto the website: www.bridportprize.org.uk

☞ Regular Gatherings ☞

If you belong to a group not listed here, or you need to change the information on show please send an e-mail to the Editor.



AUCKLAND

Poetry Live meets at the Grand Central, 126 Ponsonby Road on Tuesday nights from 8 p.m. Contact: Judith McNeil (ph 09 360 2510), co-ordinator of Poetry Live & four-by-two publishing.

The Glad Poets of Henderson meet at the Waitakere Community Resource Centre Ratanui Street Henderson on the last Sunday of each month at 2 p.m. All welcome. Contact Barry (ph 09 832 4605).

Auckland Poetry Nights. 6 p.m. First Monday of every month at Baxter & Mansfield's Bookshop, 54 Wellesley Street West, Auckland. BYO work or someone else's – Bloomsburys, beatniks, punks and post-modernists all welcome. e-mail books5@hardtofind.co.nz or phone 09 307 7889

BALCLUTHA

Meets every first Wednesday of the month from 7 p.m. at The LumberJack Café Owaka (15 minutes down Southern Scenic Route). Information: Gwyneth Williamson (ph 03 418 983).

BLENHEIM

Poetry Corner @ The Vines Restaurant, Redwood Tavern, Cleghorn Street, Blenheim, on the third Wednesday each month at 5.30pm - 8.30pm. Readers, writers, performers, listeners - all welcome. Contact: Fay (ph 03 5783109), Anne (ph 03 574 2757) or Julie (ph 03 573 8281).

CHRISTCHURCH

The Airing Cupboard Women Poets meet at 10 a.m. every 2 weeks at The Quiet Room YMCA Hereford Street. Ring Judith Walsh (ph 03 359 74330 or Barbara Strang (ph 03 376 4486).

Another group is **The Live Poets' Society**, which meets the second Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Linwood Community Arts Centre (corner of Worcester Street/Stammore Road). Contact Alan McLean (ph 03 389 0908).

A haiku group, **The Small White Teapot**, meets upstairs at the Mainstreet Café Colombo Street at 7.30 p.m. monthly, 3rd Tuesday. Contact Barbara Strang: ph 03 376 4486

CROMWELL

Cromwell Writers meet on the last Tuesday of the month in the homes of members on a shared basis. Contact Tom Llandreth (ph 03 4451352) or e-mail tomal@xtraco.nz.

DUNEDIN

Fortnightly readings are held at 8.30 p.m. at the **Arc Café**, 135 High Street. Check with the Café itself for dates and times.

Upfront-spotlighting women poets meets on the last Tuesday of each month at Cobb & Co. (first floor lounge) from 7 p.m. Open mic reading promptly at 7.30 p.m. followed by featured poets. Contact Sue Wootton, e-mail david.sue@xtra.co.nz.

GOLDEN BAY

Joe Bell from Milnthorpe is the Convenor of **The Golden Bay Live Poets Society**. This Society has a monthly Performance Night at the famous Mussel Inn Bush Café at Onekaka.

(For dates go to www.musselinn.co.nz.) Visiting poets are most welcome. For news of meetings contact Joe (ph 03 524 8146, fax 03 524 8047; or e-mail gbybell@xtra.co.nz).

HAMILTON

The Hamilton Poets Group meets on the last Thursday of each month at the Satellite Campus on Ruakura Road Hamilton at 7.30 p.m. Contact Penny at: pen101nz@yahoo.co.nz (ph 07 854 0378).

HAWKE'S BAY

The Hawke's Bay Live Poets' Society meets at 8 p.m. on the second Monday of each month (except January) at the Cat and Fiddle Ale House in Hastings. Contact Keith Thorsen (ph 06 870 9447) or e-mail: kthorsen@xtra.co.nz

KAPITI

Mahara Poetry Group meets at Mahara Gallery, Mahara Place, Waikanae, at 7.30 p.m. on the last Tuesday of every month.

LOWER HUTT

Poets Pub A free entry community sponsored poetry reading happening. First Monday of the month from 7 p.m. at Angus Inn, Murphy's Bar, Waterloo Road. Bar is open & food to order. Free coffee and tea. Guest reader plus open floor mike session. For more information contact convenor Stephen Douglas (ph 04 569 9904, e-mail DouglasSR@xtra.co.nz).

NELSON

The Nelson Poets meet on the second Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. in Kaffeine New Street Nelson. New poets welcome. Contact: Martina (ph 03 548 2989) or Gaelyne (ph 03 546 8434).

OPOTIKI

Opotiki Writers meet at 10 a.m. on the last Wednesday of the month at the Opotiki Hotel, for chat, support and motivation, all loosely based on our writing experiences. Contact Ann Funnell (ph 07 315 6664 or e-mail timann@paradise.net.nz

PICTON

Picton Poets (founded by Ernest Berry in 1996) meet at The Cottage, 75a Waikawa Road, Picton at 10.30am - 12noon on the second Wednesday of each month. New poets welcome. Contact: Anne Barrett (ph 03 574 2757) wheezyan@msn.com or Sandy Arcus (ph 03 573 5442) aces2@xtra.co.nz

PORIRUA

Poetry Café meets monthly in the function room upstairs at Selby's Sports Café, 1 Selby Place Porirua on the second Monday. Free entry.

ROTORUA

The Rotorua Mad Poets meet every Monday night at the Lakes Hotel Lake Road, 7.30-9.30 p.m. Contact: Colleen (ph 07 347 9847) or Kay (ph 07 349 0219).

TAURANGA

Bravado @ Browsers. Poetry live at Browsers Bookshop, 26 Wharf Street every 2nd Sunday at 1 p.m. Featured poets and open mike. **Poets' Parlour** is a workshop meeting monthly for 3rd Sunday 12.30 p.m. in the Robert Harris Café, State Insurance Arcade, off Grey Street. Bring copies of work in progress for constructive feedback. Contact Jenny Argante (ph 07 576 3040, e-mail: jenny.argante@xtra.co.nz).

TIMARU

If you are interested in the Timaru **Poetry in Motion** performance poetry group contact Karalyn Joyce (ph 03 614 7050) or e-mail karalynjoyce@xtra.co.nz.

WANAKA

Poetry Live at the Wanaka Arts Centre, first Thursday of the month 7.30 p.m. Contact Pip Sheehan (ph 03 443 4602).

WELLINGTON

The New Zealand Poetry Society meets on the third Thursday of each month (except for December and January) at 8 p.m. at Turnbull House Bowen Street.

Bluenote 191-195 cnr Cuba Street & Vivian Street, **Poetry Studio** every Sunday afternoon from 2 to 4 p.m. Free admission. ph 04 801 5007. Also at **Bluenote** performance poetry most Sunday evenings at 8 p.m. Contact Blaise Orsman (mob 025 616 04 53) or Blue Note (ph 04 801 5007) after 4 p.m. to confirm.

Poesis: Poetry and Religion Forum

A forum to discuss religious poetry (international and New Zealand) will be held every five weeks in the WIT Library, Anglican Centre, 18 Eccleston Hill, Thorndon. All enquiries to antonin@wn.ang.org.nz.

WEST COAST: HOKITIKA

Contact Don Neale (ph 03 755 7092) or e-mail: startledworm@paradise.net.nz for news of the winter meetings of the **Hokitika Wild Poets' Society**.

WHAKATANE

East Bay Live Poets meet at 7.30 p.m. on the third Monday of each month in the Craic. Contact: Mary Pullar (ph 07 307 1126, e-mail jwpullar@wave.co.nz

WHANGAREI

Poetry, Prose, Tea & Talk. Last Sunday of the month, 2.00 p.m. at 18a Vale Road Whangarei. Contact: Rosalie (ph 04 388 913) or e-mail chtoomer@xtra.co.nz.

☞ Talk Poem 12 ☞

My friendship with Dante
Anna Jackson

Lost in the dark wood I want
to rekindle my affair with the sun.
I look about for my stiletto-heeled
black leather boots to put on.

It is too dark to see.

Three beasts stand between the sun and me.
Simon, Johnny and Elvira stand at the top of the hill
and howl at me. 'We are baby panthers.'
Elvira howls at the sight
of my wool work coat.
I can't get past.

But out of the obscurity emerges the figure of a man,
weak, as if his lungs have been still too long.
It is Dante, of course.
Dante! Can't you take me to the sun?

But Dante has to take me first along the path
he once was led along by Virgil.
'Another poet will take you to the sun.
Frank O'Hara knows the sun well
and knows the way to Paradise.
But I can show you the way to hell.'

And so to escape the three beasts
I take Dante by the hand.
When he moves on, I move on close
behind.

Anna Jackson is a poet interested in exploring the influence of other poets on her work.

In this poem Jackson uses her work in translating Dante as an allegory, in which Jackson inherits the legacy of Dante as he inherited the legacy of Virgil and Virgil inherited the legacy of Homer. In doing so Jackson strongly aligns herself with a historic poetic tradition, personalising and adapting it to fit her needs. Aspects of Dante's Inferno influence and appear in parallel themes in Jackson's work.

The obvious theme of the poem is the modern conflict a mother has between public and private worlds. The poet craves intellectual stimulation to escape the despair of domestic drudgery. Her translation of Dante's Inferno becomes an allegory for her journey back to academia.

References to Dante occur through-out the poem. The "dark wood" a reference to canto one titled "Despair". The three beasts from canto one become Jackson's husband and two children, literally blocking her way to work.

A parallel theme is the notion of poet mentors. Dante guides Jackson as Virgil guided Dante through hell – as a mentor. However, only a modern poet (aka Frank

O'Hara, with his relaxed, conversational narratives of everyday events) can actually take her to Paradise. Some scholars have suggested that the entire theme of the Divine Comedy is about being in exile from the "true path" and from true love, so perhaps here Jackson is declaring O'Hara as her true poetic love - as Beatrice was to Dante and that Jackson, the poet, is in domestic exile.

Dante wrote in the vernacular of his times – in Italian, not Latin (which was preferred by the educated elite) in order to make his writing accessible and readable for those he was hoping to save from damnation. Jackson also writes in the vernacular – of our times, she uses her husband and children's names with quotes and events from her life to produce a personal and confessional tone in her writing, rather than an academic jargon. Perhaps she offers salvation to others in domestic damnation?

This poem works extremely well on different levels. With no knowledge of Dante a reader can still share and understand Jackson's modern dilemma. The more knowledge a reader has of Dante the more they can come to an in-depth understanding of the importance of poetic mentors and a historic poetic tradition.

Helen Heath is a Kapiti Coast poet whose work can be seen at Pataka, Porirua from April 14th – May 8th.

My Friendship with Dante IN (2000) Jackson, A. The Long Road to Teatime. AUP.

☞ Request for Help ☞

Gail Romano would like to hear from anyone who may have a spare copy to sell of the now out of print NZPS anthology *Something to Expiate*. Please email: gailr@intouch.co.nz

☞ KiwiHaiku ☞

admires handbag
on the sill then
Rangitoto's Fugi

Bernard Gadd
(Auckland)

Please submit KiwiHaiku, preferably, but not essentially, with a New Zealand theme, to Owen Bullock at PO Box 13–533, Grey Street, Tauranga.

May DEADLINE IS April 22nd