



# The New Zealand Poetry Society

*Te Hunga Tito Ruri o Aotearoa*

With the Assistance of Creative NZ  
Arts Council of New Zealand *Toi Aotearoa*

New Zealand Poetry Society  
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## This Month's Meeting

### Whitireia Poets

**Thursday August 21**  
8.00 p.m. Turnbull House

Preceded by an open reading

Do you love to work with words...and with poets?  
Do you have a home computer, email, and printer?  
Do you have experience producing a newsletter ... or  
would you like to gain it?

Our editor is retiring from her position, and so we are  
looking for a new Newsletter Editor for the NZPS.

If you are organised, timely, and want to know  
everything about poetry around the country and  
beyond, you may be the right person for this essential  
position. A modest honorarium is available.

For a brief job description and more information,  
contact Margaret Vos at [nzps@hotmail.com](mailto:nzps@hotmail.com).

'In their Own Words', is a performance by students of the Whitireia Creative Writing Programme. The works being performed reflect the diversity of background and experience amongst these emerging writers.

The writers have recently studied poetry with Vivienne Plumb and Performance and Presentation with Jamie Bull. During their work with Jamie they take a leap into the world of performance, a somewhat daunting exercise for many writers. The combination of Jamie's skill and the developing writers' voices culminates in an impressive performance of poetry and short fiction.

Course coordinator, Pip Byrne, says it is always rewarding to witness this blossoming from shy writer to confident performer. "The students are half way through their full year course and already they're writing with strong, individual voices," she says. A lunchtime performance of their work at Whitireia recently was extremely well received.

The students who will perform for the Poetry Society are: Steve Booth, Jessica Bromley, Dennis Duerr, Dene Findlay, Rosie Gordon, Michelle Grace, Adam Groucott, Kyla-Jayne Harris, Charlotte Hurley, Larree Lust, Magenta Papara, and Liz Wilkinson.

## NZPS Meeting, July 17

The July meeting was a chance for the NZPS to extend its range outside New Zealand. Members were introduced to the work of Writers' International, which is one of the newer groups set up in Wellington with the specific purpose of bringing together refugee writers or those living in exile. It may also include New Zealanders who have worked in overseas countries, particularly those non-English speaking.

Susan Pearce founded the Wellington group last September, following the model of Writers' International in London. Susan was not able to be present at the meeting, having just had a baby, but in her place Saray Torres, a Colombian who has been in New Zealand for eight months, spoke for the group.

After a notice in the Wellington Capital Times last year, about 20 people got together and have formed a fairly informal group which now holds regular monthly meetings. These are usually on the last Tuesday of the month at the Town Hall, and new members are very welcome.

The evening's meeting focussed on those working as poets, and three writers were represented.

## Coming Events

### Auckland

We first heard two long poems by the Iraqi refugee poet, Basim Furat, but because he was attending another meeting in Auckland, Amelia Nurse read these for him in English. His work has been translated from Arabic into a number of languages.

The second reader was the Spanish writer Puri Alvarez, who has been in New Zealand 12 years. She read what she called "poetic prose" from her book *Una Historia de Amor en Gijon* (A Love Story in Gijon) in which inscriptions in Spanish and English face full-page photographs. She read in both languages.

Puri then read two poems in English from her second book *Translations of Kapiti into a Spanish Soul*. As Puri has overcome her homesickness, Kapiti has gained increasing meaning for her. This book also had many photographs of Kapiti Island.

The last reader, filling the category of overseas NZ poet, was Ron Riddell (now vice-president of the NZPS). He had lived for a year in Colombia, and was overwhelmed by the treatment of poetry and poets in that country – 10,000 people may attend a poetry conference.

One of his recent books of poetry has poems in both English and Spanish versions. He read a number of poems, most written in his current role as Poet of Naenae. (Did you know they had one?)

Here is 'The Sparrows':

In my hand small birds  
Are pecking at crumbs

Fluttering down  
From the winter branches.

Their feet brush my palm  
Their beaks, their wingtips.

I look into each tiny eye:  
unique, attentive, gleaming.

O the untold delight  
Of breaking bread with birds.

O the blessing of their feet.  
Such tiny feet of God

In the first half readings from the floor attracted some regulars, some new. First Michael O'Leary reading from his most recent collection *Toku Tinihanga* (Self Deception – see June newsletter, page 11 for more about his work). We also heard Dilys Rees and then Nola Borrell read a poem called 'Fitting In', appropriate for the evening's theme of going to live in a different country. Robin Fry read about the Russian witch, Baba Yaga, Helen Francis (a new voice) read three poems and Mike Webber was ebullient about NZ birds and other fauna ... I think. A varied evening. (*Jeanette Stace*)

The World's Wife At The Maidment.

Carol Ann Duffy's slim volume of poetry is brought to life in this sparkling piece of contemporary theatre. The 'other halves' of famous men from history, literature, fable and myth take the stage with amazing tales to tell. Mrs Rip van Winkle, Queen Kong, Frau Freud, Mrs Quasimodo, Anne Hathaway, Medusa... With salty wit, damning truth and luminous beauty they tell it how it is and always was. Their stories are the stuff of which fairy tales, tabloid headlines and legends are made. Maidment Theatre July 22 to August 16 2003. Book at (09) 308 2383 or [www.atc.co.nz](http://www.atc.co.nz).

'Reflections' is an exhibition of poetry and art to be held at the Titirangi Community Arts Upstairs Gallery in Lopdell House, 418 Titirangi Road, West Auckland from August 27 to September 14. Ten poets, five from West Auckland and five from Manakau, supplied five poems each to ten Waitakere artists, and the artists chose a poem they wished to respond to. The poets were organised by Jenny Clay in West Auckland and Bronwyn Bryant in Manakau. The two met in 1999 while on creative writing programmes at Whitireia.

The Waitakere poets are Cherie Barford, Jenny Clay, Paul Taylor, David Brasted and Ila Selwyn. The Manakau poets are Jill Chan, Catherine Pedersen, Marie Cameron, Bronwyn Bryant and Anna Rugis.

The ten artists work in a variety of visual arts: Kate Northcott, Ross Melles and Jacky Thain are painters; Anna Tibbutt and Mary Webster are fibre artists; Peter Selwyn and Lorraine Barnett are known locally for their pottery. Sergio Arellano and Iona Matheson work in mixed media and Liz Constable is a book artist. The exhibition will be the ten chosen poems and the ten artworks in response to the poems.

There will be a poetry performance on Sunday August 31 in the Lopdell House seminar room opposite the Upstairs Gallery from 2.00 to 4.00 p.m.

## Around the Country

### Christchurch

Jeff Harpeng's farewell/book launch, July 2003.

I [John O'Connor] first met Jeff Harpeng and Karen McNabb in 1988 – they had just come down to Christchurch and were attending a dramatisation of poems and haiku by the Actors Improvisation Company at the Arts Centre.

They mentioned poetry readings in Auckland and asked what was happening here – nothing much, as it happened. For almost ten years there hadn't been regular readings in Christchurch. I think they suggested possibly setting something up here. This was when they first met David Howard, who had organised the dramatisations.

One thing led to another and a couple of years later the Airing Cupboard women's poetry group and the Canterbury Poets Collective were both formed and immediately successful. The CPC held weekly readings for as long as we wanted, in both senses: you read for as long as you wished, and the readings went on till well into the year. They were held in the Folk Club rooms in the Peterborough Centre.

By the end of 1990 there was a video produced and also the first *Voiceprints* anthology. It cost \$4 and, as far as I'm aware, was only the second representative anthology of Canterbury poetry since the first in 1866.

Under Jeff, Karen and David (with Jeff taking over many responsibilities from '91) the CPC readings continued for another two years – moving to the Arts Centre and then to the Senior Common Room at Hagley High.

Those three years set the foundation for others to build on. Before then local poets knew each other through being at university together, through PEN, or through contact with a central figure such as John Summers. From 1990 we began to see much more of each other, to share poems, ideas and enthusiasms.

Things progressed and between a revived CPC in 1994, another *Voiceprints* anthology, Hazard Press, Sudden Valley Press, the magazines *plainwraps* and *Takahe* and the Airing Cupboard there developed in Christchurch at that time a community of poets and even the elements of what might be called a house style.

This could certainly be over-stated, but I'd suggest that during that period the work of a number of otherwise diverse and nationally and/or internationally linked poets shared enough of the following characteristics to identify their work as coming from Christchurch:

1. An emphasis on craft over flamboyance or display – leading perhaps to what we might call a moderated intensity, difficult to define but easy to recognise once encountered. It was poetry written for both voice and eye, intellect and heart, classical in its implicit insistence on the limitations of sense over imagination and vice versa.

2. A recognition of the centrality of the image, and the uses of concision – it could almost at times be termed mediated post-imagism.

3. Independent of the above, an interest in haiku and the influence of this on their other poems, and/or an

interest in European literature to the point of marked influence on their work.

4. A concern with the spirituality of locality and more so – relatively explicitly in comparison to other recent “schools” – with spirituality in a broader sense.

Those characteristics, together with regular meetings, readings, critiquing of each others' work, collaboration on renga, appearing often in the same magazines, anthologies and from the same book presses constitute, I think, a strong case for there having been a Christchurch group, at least until fairly recently.

Various things have combined to break that down over the last couple of years, particularly:

1. Inevitable changes in individual poet's work. One simply moves on from earlier orientations.

2. New poets joining the community with different enthusiasms, such as the recent interest in the sonnet by the Lost Friday poets.

3. Poets moving away, etc. Firstly Kenneth Fea stopped writing poetry in '99 and a couple of years later John Allison left for Melbourne. Recently David Howard moved to Dunedin, Joanna Preston to England, and a few other central figures – James Norcliffe, Bernadette Hall, David Gregory – have moved either to the outskirts of town or considerably further on. Now Jeff and Karen are returning to Brisbane.

We'll be seeing less of some and little, if anything, of others in future. It's a fair assumption that Christchurch poetry will continue to change in these circumstances.

However that turns out to be, were it not for Karen, Jeff and David getting together to set up the CPC in 1989 an interesting period in Canterbury poetry would have been much reduced if not missed altogether.

Thanks for that Jeff. I hope in turn we've been able to help you in your development as a poet to this point. That's a development represented by the poems selected for this volume, *Interruption of Dreams*, one of the strongest and, in some senses, most representative books of poetry to come out of Christchurch over the last decade.

(John O'Connor)

## East Bay

East Bay Live Poets celebrated Montana Poets Day with readings slotted throughout the day on Radio 1XX, our local radio station. We also had lunchtime readings at the Whakatane District Library where we presented original works to a small audience. As it was a pleasant day we were able to read outside in the courtyard.

Five poets participated and it was great listening to works we hadn't heard for a while. Vivien Herdman read her poem 'Spring' as part of the celebration.

The wind that blows above the sleeping dog  
Is different from warm air-conditioned wind  
That funnels the stairway of the hospital ward  
Where I visit my sick old uncle  
He's asleep too, dreaming  
But opens blue eyes to stare  
Deep, intense, into mine  
As I offer out of breath  
A crushed camellia  
Relinquished painfully from the tree.  
We gaze into the wind of life  
I babble my sister is a marathon runner  
We hold back tears.

(Report by Mary Pullar)

## Manukau City

Manukau celebrated Poetry Day early, on June 25. A small but appreciative group of 22 people gathered in the comfort of the Research Room at the Manukau Central Library Services building to enjoy readings of the usual high standard. The occasion also served to celebrate the on-line anthology hosted by the Manukau library System, *Manukau in Poetry* ([www.manukau-libraries.govt.nz/whatwehave/poetry](http://www.manukau-libraries.govt.nz/whatwehave/poetry)) which now has 51 poems by 27 writers with more ready to be added.

The guest poet was Tony Beyer who has written more poems about Manukau city, where he grew up, than anyone else. In addition there were readings from Alistair Paterson, Riemke Ensing, Jill Chan, Alan Papprell, and Bernard Gadd. Jill Chan was congratulated on her just published first collection of poetry, *The Smell of Oranges* (ESAW, \$19.95).

Readers from the floor included a 10-year-old and a visitor from Rarotonga.

(Bernard Gadd)

## Nelson

Over thirty people met on a very wet, cold July night at Yaza Café where we celebrated Montana Poetry Day early. Night was the theme for at least one poem from the first three poets, Joan Lees, Jean Bird and Michael Lee. Whilst very different styles, the poems were evocative and captured the different dimensions of night. Ian Burns, recently returned from a holiday in East Timor, held the audience captive with his poems 'Elephants' and 'Bust' which contained intelligent, thought-provoking social comment. Colin Gunn introduced us to the works of American Poet, Raymond Carver, before reading two of his own

poems. Gaelynne Pound read Ernesto Cardenal's poem 'A Museum in Kampuchea' before lightening the mood with her own work. Simon Jackson (a visitor from the UK) and Cass proved that rhyming poetry is alive and well with their amusing renditions. Other poets to read were Jessica Le Bas, Kathy Valler, Benjamin Nathan, Marvin and Mark Raffills. It was good to see some new faces. It might have been wet and cold outside, but inside the atmosphere was definitely a warm, friendly one. The following poem is by Michael Lee.

### NELSON FLAT

The flat, in which I dwell, has, like most things, flaws in its character. But, as night has day, black has white, white has black, death has life, there are compensations for these foibles.

Carved in a bank like a cave is my flat. Dungeon stepped, hillside swept not with sun even on the finest day. Concreted, carpeted blue like a darker sea, and chill as that North Sea.

The shower shinnies thin the wall, bends, a chromed swan, over painted bath brushed with strokes that lift and float like snowflakes on water sucked of warmth, beneath a ceiling, rough as plastered boards, low as shelves in morgues.

The laundry has a roof of sky. Rain the windows. Wind the walls. And the toilet teeters on broken bolts. (Woe betide they who lean toward any imbalance.)

But ah the views from a wall of vista glass:  
Waterfalls and desert dusks and Spanish galleons  
battling cheek to cheek,  
and wildebeests in swarms like bees.  
Sunsets, mandarin and gold, and clouds like feather  
boas, rolled across hulks of hills that could be  
howling wolves  
when night's dark soul is eerie lit by city stars in  
ghostly glow along a  
spiked and cragged ridge  
that holds the moon  
that creeps away and  
holds in soft embrace the sequoia,  
like a hundred foot Christmas tree without  
decorations (unless the moonlight burnished be  
those baubles).  
The bottle brush is a blazing cloud,  
the gum a gorgon,  
the pine a lunatic with trembling arms.

There're tui notes as round as raindrops  
and peeling rich cathedral bells.  
rock bands strut the morn. And long haired  
girls in misty gowns play cellos on the lawn.

(Report by Gaelynne Pond)

## Palmerston North

300 flowers attached to 300 poetry booklets, given away in two hours by two poetry princesses. The second annual Great Palmy Poetry Giveaway was unleashed on Palmerston North for Montana Poetry Day on July 11, and Palmerston North survived.

The booklet contained poems by local poets M. Roy Newman, Dorothy Alexander, Tony Chapelle, Belinda Diepenheim, Paula Harris and Seth Winn; also included were two poems by Pandora Heron and Ashleigh Ualesi, who won their categories in a youth poetry competition run by the Manawatu Standard.

The two poetry princesses, local poets Paula Harris and Sharon Turner, offered giveaway booklets to passersby in the central business district on a sunny Palmerston North day, with Sharon occasionally reciting poems from the booklet when the mood struck. Reaction from the public ranged from confusion to offers of payment (for the flower) to absolute delight.

The event, organised by arts.manawatu and supported by Montana, Booksellers New Zealand, and the Palmerston North City Council and Creative New Zealand (through Creative Communities) was again a resounding success, and the poetry princesses are planning on returning for more next year.

### UNTITLED

Again I come to the old house  
and lean upon its fence  
it hasn't changed in thirty years  
except it's had a fresh paint job  
The old pepper tree has gone  
on which I used to climb  
and there is a flash new car  
instead of a '38 Chevy in the driveway  
It is with a feeling of nostalgia  
I view where I grew up  
and played in the backyard  
one man rugby teams (M. Roy Newman)

*(Report by Paula Harris)*

## Porirua

While Selby's roof groaned and crashed in the June storm, the Poetry Café audience, who had been brave enough to face the elements, were delighted by yet another appetising selection in the Open Mike Competition, haunting music from the guest musicians and the humour, crisp observation and polish of Julie Leibrich. An evening that made braving the elements well worthwhile!

Jonathon's 'Flight of Fancy' once again showed what an extraordinary ability he has to take the usual and find the unusual in it – entertaining, probing, and

always a great starter to the evening. Poetry Café is fortunate to have the support of the Learning Connexion.

Well-known local poets Karen Butterworth, Alison Wong and Peter Rawnsley were all competing in the Open Mike. However, it was Lynn Chapman with her poem 'The Lake' who won the Selby's prize and Steve whose poem on the Wellington Railway Station will ensure that commuters never listen to the sonorous tones of the announcer in quite the same way again.

But the highlight was definitely Julie Leibrich! Her childhood poems, 'Miss Garnett's bloomers', 'Dorothy in snow', 'The lesson' and 'First love' were a delicious combination of the visual, onomatopoeia and ingenuous rhyme:

Lumpy-legs  
in lisle, clumping  
down the aisle (Miss Garnett's Bloomers)

of traditional rhymes and street songs and of universal recollections:

Seven. And bullied relentlessly  
by Dorothy White. All curls and soapy smile.  
(Dorothy in snow)

A mystical sequence, 'The Prophet of Tyree', took us on a Celtic journey to 'The Place Of No Shadows' – "somewhere between/my eyes and the horizon" where

You do not notice the sun go out or the fields  
turn brown, do not hear the rustling of small birds

in dark grass, disturbed by your ancestors  
taking the coins off their eyes.

Julie's engagingly warm delivery, her humour, her observations of people and what they do not say, her evocative imagery and language finesse make her a poet not to be missed. Whether she is "guzzling love" or seeing "hands swirling like seagulls", ultimately it is her optimism that shines through.

roses if loved can even flower in autumn.  
(Autumn flowering)

*(Report by Nancy Cooney)*

## Publications

Tussocks Dancing – Hymns and songs by Jane Simpson, sung by Poiema Voices, directed by Chris Graham. Godzone Hymns, 5 Taramea Place, Addington, Christchurch 8002. \$29.95.

On this CD Jane Simpson seems to be making a valiant attempt to modernise the hymn. It's a difficult task, many might see hymns as antiquated; the problem may arise, for the writer, of which traditional elements to leave out.

These hymns are traditional enough. There's some up-dating as far as context goes, with frequent Pacific references, and I do like the details described in 'Anawim, all little things, praise'. But the references to church offices and standard beliefs have to be there and may bore the non-church-goer.

I was looking for joy, or some other strong and genuine emotion. I think I found it most in 'Spread your feathers' which is a rousing celebration. Here, as elsewhere, a little percussion goes a long way to lift the music; the children's voices are a delight. The melody is the most distinctive on the CD with its tight, jaunty phrasing and a chorus reminiscent of those in the musical 'Oliver'.

Some of the music is bland, though improved by Denis Guyan's vocal arrangements.

Syncopation is used rather uncomfortably.

Another stirring piece was 'Breath closer than breathing' due largely to the warmth, and restraint, of Howard Harvey's solo.

It's hard to judge lyrics as poetry – they don't always come across well on paper, they're not meant to, the quality of performance gives them their power. It's perhaps harder to attain that quality in a hymn, because individual performance is not the object. How can a believer say something original about their faith, and have a dozen or a hundred others share it, without the listener feeling that it's all been said before?

A lyric is much more obvious than a poem. Here we have "Hildegard dared to/ write down her visions..." The phrase 'dared to' interprets it for us, and loses as poetry. Elsewhere we have "people in prison...people stripped of rights...people forced to breaking point". The reiteration of that vague word is tedious on the page.

Certain lines, such as "Creator work through us/your truth is our freedom" are no doubt comforting to the believer, but could be meaningless to those outside a religious group.

What songs and hymns can have in common, is a level of passion. So that's what I looked for in these pieces. It's there, but not consistently.

(Owen Bullock)

SPIN 45, March 2003, edited by Dr Jack Ross.

This is the last edition of *SPIN* edited by Jack Ross. There will be a change of managing editor too when Owen Bullock takes over from Tony Chad, also a new enlarged format.

*WinterSpin*, re-named as *Kokako*, will continue to be edited by Bernard Gadd and Patricia Prime.

There are six short reviews as well as Jack Ross' usual careful selection of poems including new writers alongside established ones and experimental writing with more traditional forms. Short bios could be a useful inclusion.

Although mostly local there are contributions from the United States, Australia, Ireland and Scotland this time.

For sheer contrast here is Tania Butcher's 'Poetess' dreaming under a tree:

There is a broken book in her lap – And  
Like leaves – words spill on her bare feet

And here is Virgil Suarez's 'Young Pornographers' which muses on the shock value he finds in some student writing:

...another creature driven mad  
by this allure of bad words, *baaaad* deeds.

(Robin Fry)

*Lazy wind poems*, by Graham Lindsay, Auckland University Press. RRP \$21.99.

This well-established poet has published a book of poems every three or four years over a period of some thirty years. It's Graham Lindsay's seventh book and the second to be published by AUP. The book has a luscious, painterly cover by Bill Lindsay – a brother perhaps? (His small son is also called Bill.) His poems can also be found in a number of anthologies including *100 NZ Poems* and the *Oxford Anthology of NZ Poems* includes eight.

*Lazy wind poems* is suffused with Graham Lindsay's Canterbury environment. Its four sections open with 'making love', a sequence of poems filled with an almost paradisaical happiness as he charts the birth of his new son, starting with the pre-natal scan in 'diorama' "... we interrogate/a lampshade-shaped room", then the dash to the hospital 'coming through' which picks up speed with the contractions.

Fatherhood is territory which poets including James Brown and Tim Jones have used and Lindsay has a whole lexicon of love for his baby son. In 'saliva' he "grabs my notebook and/tries eating words". The ubiquitous notebook is quite revealing. In 'yellow plastic ducks' "He.../looks up to where I'm /watching his every move". You can almost see the poet in the bathroom, notebook in hand, so avidly has he observed his child. But is the poetry of life the same thing as poetry for publication? Baby talk and pet names abound and it occurred to me when reading this sequence by such a good poet that there is a fine line between being besotted and being bathetic.

At times he almost teeters but then redeems himself with lines like "he's the only person in the world/I'd

let use my handkerchief,/then put it back in my pocket” and, while watching his son being suckled “On the radio, a man is singing/a song about being so/happy he could die”. His intimate poem ‘big bed’ is most appealing as is the final poem in this sequence where he wakes from a bad dream, “and look out and listen to the birds,/thinking this is not my life/but someone else’s I’m living”.

In the second section, ‘you are here’, Lindsay’s taxi poem ‘cab dub’ has the energy of direct reportage rather than remembered experience. He skewers the moment with sharp observation, as of an old man seen in ‘river’s edge’.

‘Eyebright’ is an update on Peter Rabbit and his beautifully imagined escape from Mr McGregor “a beetled, bespectacled,/gaffer in a Glengarry and pullover...”

Lindsay’s third section ‘big feet’ marks a change of mood and voice. ‘Chink’ moves from living in the moment to questions of belief and a father’s judgment. ‘Keep in touch’ is also meditative:

The old man – once so real  
and hero of his own impermanence;  
self-styled ball-of-string-and-pocketknife handyman –  
a memory.

‘The ballad of fanny grace’ (“Love your mother-in-law.../when...”) is a return to the more quotidian style of the earlier sections and mingles disgust with humour and affection for a live-in relative with Alzheimer’s.

I especially enjoyed Graham Lindsay’s more elliptical poems and his more complex insights as in ‘wake’ (about his grandparents):

They’re the lords  
of their lifetimes,  
as adept as we

at interpreting  
the moment’s shifting  
subtleties,

‘Swingdoor’, the final section has ‘steeple’, an especially lovely poem, and ‘particle and wave’ written for the late Ross Stevens. The collection ends eloquently and appropriately with:

Sunset over the baked clay

Roofs of Spreydon.  
All this beauty fading away.

Graham Lindsay’s latest book *lazy wind poems* is a protean collection full of feeling, humour and sharp observation.

(Robin Fry)

Electric Yachts, by Tony Beyer (Puriri Press, \$26.00, includes postage, 110 pp.)

Tony Beyer’s poems stand by their own merits – as well as his credibility from six previous collections of poetry, going back to 1971, and widely anthologised work. There are no supportive guides: preface, acknowledgements, bio, sections with headings, back cover blurb. Simon Denny’s cover design has a large pink lens and a grey ?stockpot. Then there’s the intriguing title.

Beyer’s poems are serious and crafted. They show an acute awareness of the process and complexity of living and the limitations of maps, of unwanted changes and aloneness. They are poems of journeys, the poet sailing carefully into his past. His view is changed through the lens of what he now knows. And, if you like, poems are selected from a stockpot of memories.

‘Retrieving the Map’, the opening poem, tells us that we need maps in this unpredictable world, but, even armed, we battle with interpretation, cultural differences, even mispronunciation. I am reminded of an earlier poem of Beyer’s, ‘Changing Ground’ (*Landfall* 159, June, 1984), “... take one step to the side/and you are as lost as anyone”.

‘Map References’ cherishes “attachment to place/constructed of memory” – sixteen sharply focused cameos, both celebrating and grieving a personal and collective NZ past – ‘Christmas Tree Farm’, ‘Glover’, ‘Poppy Syndrome’ ... There’s a sustained tone, crisp and evocative language, a dipping into a variety of topics. Here’s the first, ‘The South Island’:

compressed by sleep  
into dream fragments

memories of salt works  
on the coast

roads that followed ridge lines  
through spectral hollows of clouds

a gate  
and a river of pebbles

a church left to settle for a century  
like angels’ new-marbled wings

landscape as dry and firm  
as a good man’s handshake

The complexity of the map is identified in the title poem, ‘Electric Yachts’: “belief in the map/as vertical/layering the past”; the choices and dead-ends, “the midnight map I read asleep/guides me to crossroads/bus stops and a cul-de-sac”. This poem pinpoints map locations, subjects for future poems in this collection – travel, rural and urban landscape,

age, war, work on the land, workers' rights, social issues, loss and farewells:

there is life at best  
in these glancings  
these unfinished and indelible  
presences among ourselves

There's a strong NZ location throughout. Beyer identifies with physical land work – spreading wet sheep pelts, slashing weeds; branding cattle, and hauling timber, pruning trees, fishing. Sea and rivers are to the fore – dotterels, pelicans and eels, damp houses, mussel shells and river songs. Water, of course, has to be a central motif:

think of the voice  
as a column of water  
in its steady fall diverted  
to a single note  
or dispersed over many  
.....  
if you think of me  
think of water  
moving so fast the clear lens  
of its surface appears still  
and magnifies the deepest shapes of stones

Change infuses all. Beyer sees with present and past vision: "...describing the city/in terms of what's there/but with an eye/to what it replaced" ('Saturday Morning Market'); "the mixture of regret/and curiosity/I use to absorb such things" ('Building Site Coffee'). There's regret for the days of the old boarding house "before it went upmarket"; "leaf fires, ... the fly-specked/nicotine stained bolt-holes".

Loved people are part of that change, loss. 'Grass Street' – a simple appreciation (I assume) of Lauris Edmond; 'Answering Machine' – "...we have yet to erase/the information/that he's not at home"; 'Missing', an early death of a loved friend. 'Thank You for Writing' communicates "*breath and death/the invisible/characters of the poem*".

There's an explicit identifying of social issues: Aborigines in 'Stolen' and 'Red Centre', 'In the Wake of America', 'Days of 1968'. (A link with Beyer's long-time concern with human rights in his poems.) In these NZ Pakeha days of confessional and entertainment poetry, we need poetry that makes a critical response to society.

The lines are plain, brief (frequently 2,3 words), stanzas short; precision rules. The majority are concise one pagers, but there's a leap to 11 pages for 'Map References' and a retreat to 'Two Very Small Poems'. (Beyer also writes tanka. See *Kokako*, 2003, the mid-year issue of *SPIN*.) Beyer's poems suggest far more than they say: a "dignity of landscape/that exceeds the frame/and has life through/

connectedness with/what is out of view" ('Electric Yachts').

In his concluding poem, 'Buried Motif', Beyer wishes "god-speed" to penguins crewing an enormous iceberg past his window, but names their "...permanent winter/sliding over the slick sea surface/like spilt oil was carrying them". More hidden depths, no maps – and another motif.

There you are. Do your own navigating, appraise through the eye of the lens, dip into the stockpot. In the end, a little fantasy may help.

*Electric Yachts* has nearly 60 poems in a hand-sewn book with a soft cover. It is available from 37 Margot Street, Epsom, Auckland.

(Nola Borrell)

Amongst the Graffiti, Collected Haiku & Senryu 1972-2002 by Janice Bostok. (Post Pressed, 31 Allara St., Flaxton Qld 4560, Australia. A\$22.50, jwk@powerup.com.au.)

Those who know the work of Australian writer Janice Bostok will be delighted that her collected haiku, *Amongst the Graffiti*, has been published at last, illustrated by her brush paintings.

Those who don't already know her work can discover one of the leading writers in the western haiku world and one of the pioneers of haiku in this area.

Jan describes her own haiku journey. When she discovered this Japanese form in the early 1970s, almost by chance as so many of us do, she set off on a mission to the USA to find out more, and managed to make contact with most of the leading haiku writers of that time. People such as W. J. Higginson and Marlene Mountain, who have remained her friends and mentors. In his introduction, Bill Higginson calls Janice the spirit of haiku and senryu in the southern hemisphere for the last 30 years and hails her as among the truly outstanding creators of world haiku.

Jan is no stranger to New Zealand and has made several visits here. She has read to the Poetry Society and taken part in several of the Sounds workshops in Picton. She has also been involved, from the first, with the inspired project of the Katikati haiku walkway, where two boulders are inscribed with her haiku.

Naturally, much of her work reflects her Australian background; its birds (one of her favourite subjects), its animals, insects, country scenes. She also calls on her life as a banana farmer in northern NSW, and some of the problems as the mother of a handicapped son and wife of a stroke victim.

Promoting the cause of haiku, she has been not only a writer but also editor, publisher, frequent judge and in general a teacher and encourager. She has also worked with the associated forms of tanka, renku,

haibun – some of which have been published in smaller book form. Along the way she has acquired a BA in English literature.

And now we have her collected haiku, the book copiously filled with what must be hundreds of haiku and senryu (has anyone counted?), most in the traditional three line form, but many one liners – a good discussion point could be why she uses one form or the other. Higginson suggests that one line gives readers greater freedom of interpretation to supply their own breaks, and he takes as an example: “travel the mind hesitant at cross roads”.

It would have been interesting to have had some chronological order, so we could get an idea of the development of her work.

In such a large collection, not all reach the same standard but many of them, as English writer Alan Summers says, “steam off the surface and we inhale them”.

Readers may like to choose which, for them, have this special quality that makes the haiku continue to resonate in the mind, the ones we keep going back to. Take the title haiku:

amongst the graffiti  
a tiny violet  
clinging

or one that has been anthologised world-wide:

pregnant again...  
the fluttering of moths  
against the window

or two of my favourites:

in this blue  
the scalloped flight  
of one swallow

white egrets lifting through fog whiter

Thanks, Jan.  
(*Jeanette Stace*)

Please note that *Rat Tickling* is not available from 12 Manuka Street, Christchurch. It is distributed by Addenda and is available only through bookshops for RRP \$19.95.

## Regular Gatherings

### Auckland

**Poetry Live** meet at Pog Mahones Tavern, 108 Ponsonby Road on Tuesday nights. Contact: Judith McNeil, (09) 360 2510.

**The Glad Poets** of Henderson meet at the Waitakere Community Resource Centre – Ratanui St. Henderson – on the last Sunday of each month, 2.30-4.30 p.m. Contact: Maxine Green, (09) 836 7280.

**The Pub Poets** meet in the Royal Room at The Cock and Bull, Botany Town Centre, at 7.30 p.m. on the first and third Monday of the month. For more information contact Alan (09) 272 4104.

**Passionate Tongues** is a monthly reading at Temple, 486 Queen Street from 8 p.m. There’s also an open Poetry Slam (prizes). \$5 or \$3 entry. Contact Michael Rudd: (09) 4417034; 021 2998643; email [oralink@hotmail.com](mailto:oralink@hotmail.com). Michael is also running the occasional **Vocal Point** at The Depot, 28 Clarence Street, Devonport.

### Balclutha

Meets every first Wednesday of the month from 7.00 at ‘The Lumber Jack Café’, Owaka (15 minutes down Southern Scenic Route). Information: Gwyneth Williamson Ph: (03) 4158983.

### Christchurch

**The Airing Cupboard Women Poets** meet at 10.00 a.m. every 2 weeks (starting from February 1) at ‘The Quiet Room’ in the YMCA on Hereford Street. Ring Judith Walsh (03) 3597433 or Barbara Strang (03) 3764486.

Another group is **The Live Poets’ Society** which meets the second Wednesday of each month at 7.00 p.m. at the Linwood Community Arts centre (corner of Worcester Street/Stammore Road). Contact Alan McLean (03) 389 0908.

A haiku group, **The Small White Teapot**, meets upstairs at the Mainstreet Café, Colombo Street, at 7.30 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month. Contact Barbara Strang on (03) 376 4486 for more information.

**Lost Friday Salon.** 7.30 p.m., last Friday of the month, upstairs Mainstreet Café, Colombo Street. ‘Open text surgery and the laying on of words in the company of the muse.’ Contact Jeffery Harpeng or Eric Mould: [eric.mould@xtra.co.nz](mailto:eric.mould@xtra.co.nz).

### Cromwell

Cromwell writers meet on the last Tuesday of the month in the homes of members on a shared basis. Contact Tom Llandreth on (03) 4451352 or email [tomal@xtraco.nz](mailto: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.

### 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. Visiting poets are most welcome. For news of

meetings contact Joe on (03) 524 8146; fax (03) 524 8047; e-mail: gbaybell@xtra.co.nz.

### **Hamilton**

The Hamilton poets' group meets on the last Thursday of each month at the Satellite Campas on Ruakura Road, Hamilton at 7.30 p.m. Contact Penny at: pen101nz@yahoo.co.nz or phone: (07) 8540378.

### **Hawke's Bay**

The **Hawke's Bay Live Poets' Society** meets at 8.00 p.m. on the second Monday of each month (except January) at the Cat and Fiddle Ale House in Hastings. Contact Keith Thorsen (06) 870 9447 or email: kthorsen@xtra.co.nz

### **Lower Hutt**

The **Poets' Pub and Café** (Murphy's Bar, Angus Inn) meets on the first Monday in each month at 7.00 p.m. Guest reader and open mike session. Contact Steven Douglas on 5699904.

### **Nelson**

The Yaza Poets meet the second Wednesday of each month at 8.00 p.m. at Yaza Cafe, Montgomery Square Nelson. New Poets welcome. Contact: Martina 03 5482989 or Gaelyne 03 5468434.

### **Picton**

The **Picton Poets** meet at The Cottage, 75a Waikawa Road, Picton at 10.30 a.m. on the second Wednesday of each month. Contact Ernest Berry (03) 573 7774; Fax (03) 573 6882. E-mail: bluberry@xtra.co.nz

### **Porirua**

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

### **Rotorua**

The **Rotorua Mad Poets** meet every Monday night at the Lakes Hotel, Lake Road, 7.30-9.30 p.m. Phone Colleen (07) 3479847 or Kay (07) 3490219.

### **Tauranga**

**Tauranga Writers Group** meets on the second Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Staffroom, Otumoetai Primary School. For more information please contact Kellee Maree Attwood on (07) 572 2669, email Sue Emms on sue.emms@xtra.co.nz, or fax Jenny on 07 570 2446.

### **Timaru**

If you are interested in the Timaru **Poetry in Motion** Performance Poetry group contact Karalyn Joyce (03) 6147050; or email: karalynjoyce@xtra.co.nz.

### **Wanaka**

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

### **Wellington**

The **New Zealand Poetry Society** meets on the third Thursday of each month (except for December and January) at 8.00 p.m. at Turnbull House, Bowen St.

**Bluenote**, 191 – 195 Cuba Street, has performance poetry most Sunday evenings at 8.00 p.m. Ring Blaise Orsman 025 6160453 or Blue Note (04) 801 5007 after 4.00 p.m. to confirm.

**Cafe Poetry to Go** at The Rock Café, 4 Glover Street, off Ngauranga Gorge (up from LV Martin). If poetry is new to you this is the place for you to learn to read aloud, talk about your poetry and find friends and get some tips from each other and books. Last Thursday of the month, supper provided, gold coin donation appreciated. Contact Stephen and Rosa Douglas. Email: DouglasSR@xtra.co.nz or phone 04 5699904.

**The Cenacle** in Johnsonville is hosting workshops on a regular basis. There's a series of evenings 'Poetry in Season'. Spring: Thursday September 25, 7:30 to 9:30. Phone 4788575 or email cenaclewellington@clear.net.nz if you are coming.

### **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 at (03) 755 7092 or email: 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 Settlers Bar of the Chambers Restaurant.

### **Whangarei**

Poetry, prose, tea and talk. Last Sunday of the month, 2.30 p.m. at 18a Vale Road, Whangarei. Phone Rosalie on 4388913 or email: chtoomer@xtra.co.nz.

**Do you belong to a group not listed here? Do changes to this information need to be made? If so, please let me know.**

## **Competitions**

The Yellow Moon 'Seed Pearls' competition has 5 categories (A – Prose: a haiku journey, Haibun; B – Haiku; C – Tanka; D – Renga; and E – poem up to 28 lines, Nature Poetry). Closes August 31 2003.

The Yellow Moon 'Nutshell' competition has 5 categories (Cinquain, Idyll, Limerick, Humorous–up to 24 lines, and Tetractys) and costs Aus \$3 per entry. Entry form (with guidelines) essential. Competition closes October 19 2003.

The Yellow Moon 'Search for a Sonnet 3' competition costs Aus \$5 per entry or \$10 for 3.

Theme open but structure traditional. Three equal first prizes of \$100 each. Entry form (with guidelines) essential. Closes October 30 2003.

2003 San Francisco International Competition Haiku, Senryu, Tanka and Rengay. Sponsor: Haiku Poets of Northern California. Deadline: October 31, 2003. Details in last month's newsletter or visit [www.creativeideasforyou.com/hpnc2003.html](http://www.creativeideasforyou.com/hpnc2003.html) for more information.

Aoraki Festival Of The Arts Awards  
J Ballantyne & Co/Timaru District Council/Aoraki Poetry Award. First Prize \$1000 plus Elworthy Family Memorial award of \$500 and greenstone bookends. Judge David Eggleton. Closing date September 30. \$5 per entry. Entry forms and conditions: Mary Meehan: [maryc\\_meehan@xtra.co.nz](mailto:maryc_meehan@xtra.co.nz).

If there are any new members wanting competition information, please send an SSAE to the Secretary, PO Box 5283, Lambton Quay, Wellington.

## Submissions Sought

Astropoetica.com is planning to publish an online anthology of poems "of any length, style, or genre relating to any one of the 88 currently recognised constellations. Poems should focus on one constellation specifically, though others may be referenced within the poem. Scientific, mythic, historical, multicultural, and personal approaches are all welcome. Reprints are acceptable if clearly identified as such. Please indicate where your piece was previously published and when." They pay US \$5 per accepted poem on publication. Submission guidelines at: [www.astropoetica.com/guidelines.html](http://www.astropoetica.com/guidelines.html). List of constellations which haven't been 'filled' yet at [www.astropoetica.com/constellationindex.html](http://www.astropoetica.com/constellationindex.html).

Stylus issue 7 is live and well at [www.styluspoetryjournal.com](http://www.styluspoetryjournal.com). The Sept/Oct issue of Stylus will feature haibun only in the haiku section and are calling for submissions now (as well as for the contemporary poetry section). Poets with books and CDs, see the Poet Support button for details on advertising your work.

## Other News

A warm welcome to Lynn Frances of Raumati Beach; Peter Gordon of Waiwera; Deborah Walker of Carterton; Marian Birch of Fielding; Glenn Hancock of Tauranga; Karen Conrad of Tokoroa.

If you would like to become a member, the annual subscription for overseas members is \$30. For those

living in NZ, the sub is \$15. From October 1, please pay HALF the appropriate subscription rate. Send a cheque to The Treasurer, PO Box 5283, Lambton Quay, Wellington.

Thames would like a poet to work at a school to help with the English programme. 100 pupils in total. The council pays well through Creative NZ. Contact Vanessa Parkes (07) 8687969 Thames.

Cyril Childs has a few copies left of three books he's holding on behalf of Jim Kacian, owner/editor of Red Moon Press: *the loose thread* – the RM Anthology of English language haiku (publ. 2001); *summer dreams* – the 3rd RM Anthology of Haibun and Haiga (2002); and *Haiku Guy* (2000) – by David Lanoue, probably the first novel concerned with haiku writing. These are each NZ\$20 incl p/p, to Cyril Childs, 41 Harrington St, Port Chalmers, Dunedin.

Two Poetry Journals from New Zealand: *Fresh* has issues in May, August, November, February. *Nineteen-O-Splash* has issues in May & September. Editor Kevin J. McIvor.

Subscriptions – *Fresh*: NZ\$25 per year within NZ. Overseas NZ\$42 per year. Features poetry of a wide diversity and quotes. Does the odd review when space allows.

*Nineteen-O-Splash*: NZ\$15 per year within NZ. Overseas NZ\$22 per year. Features poetry of a wide diversity, short-stories, articles and quotes and will do the occasional review as space allows.

OR Subscribe To *Fresh* and *Nineteen-O-Splash*. Subscription New Zealand \$35 per year. Overseas \$50 per year. Send Subscriptions and Submissions to Kevin J. McIvor or *Fresh Magazine*, 6 Smith Cres, Onehunga, Auckland, 1006, New Zealand.

Email: [kmc39@hotmail.com](mailto:kmc39@hotmail.com) or [kev@fresh.org.nz](mailto:kev@fresh.org.nz). A self-addressed envelope and equivalent IRCs must accompany all correspondence if acknowledgement is desired. All submissions by standard post only.

The IIML's annual electronic journal *Turbine* is again calling for submissions of original poetry, short fiction and essays. Created in 2001, *Turbine* showcases the work of Victoria's creative writing programme as well as the work of other New Zealand writers. The submission deadline for this year's *Turbine* is October 17, 2003. Work can be submitted in electronic or printed form. Submission guidelines and past issues can be found online at: [www.vuw.ac.nz/turbine](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/turbine).

MQ Publications have produced an excellent haiku anthology titled *Haiku, Poetry Ancient & Modern*. It's 254 pages, well illustrated and covers a selection from the earliest Japanese poets through to the latest in English from around the globe. Kiwis included are:

Ernest Berry, Cyril Childs, Ruth Dallas, Bertus de Jonge, Bernard Gadd and John O'Connor.

Haiku: A Poet's Guide. Gurga, Lee – Modern Haiku Press, box 68 Lincoln, Illinois 62656 USA Charles Trumbull Editor, 170 pages, perfect bound.

Enquiries to Ernest J Berry, box 272 Picton, 3 of whose haiku appear as examples in the important volume. This new text book for haiku poets just hit the shelves in North America to wide acclaim and is destined to be the seminal reference work for all teachers and students of haiku world wide.

The Poet Within writing course. Six week course, starts Monday August 4, 7.00 to 9.00 p.m. at Rangitoto College, North Shore City. This is a course aimed at developing critical faculties, examining what makes a good poem and studying the various aspects of poetry – form, rhyme, free verse and found poems. The course will use group discussion and workshop participants' poems. Course tutor, Stu Bagby.

Contact Rangitoto College Community Education, 564 East Coast Road, Mairangi Bay, Auckland. Website: [www.rangitoto.school.nz](http://www.rangitoto.school.nz) or phone (09) 477 0075.

The following information may be of interest to poetry groups who meet in January:

My name is Jive Poetic and I am extremely interested in booking a performance of my partner (Mahogany L. Browne) and myself at your venue some time in January. Both Mahogany Brown and myself have performed throughout the states; winning poetry slam competitions (including the world renown Nuyorican Poets Café) or appearing on nationally syndicated series (HBO's Real Sex). The best way to reach me is via email at: [jive\\_hip@yahoo.com](mailto:jive_hip@yahoo.com).

Upper Hutt Poetry Competition winners: First: Streets Ahead, Betty Don – Hamilton; Second: Haiku Around, Andre SurrIDGE – Upper Hutt; Third: Refreshment Place, Doris Silver – Upper Hutt. Highly Commended: Green Fingers in Upper Hutt, Linda Bremford – Wellington; The Block, Mike Buckham – Upper Hutt. Commended: Street Names of Upper Hutt, Audrey Harper – Upper Hutt; Upper Hutt – The River, Birds and Trees, John Christianson – Upper Hutt; Valley Verse, Christine Hammond – Upper Hutt.

The Humanities Electives programme has been running for some years at the University of Otago. Lecturers teaching Humanities subjects volunteer to offer a specially constructed course for third year medical students – two or three hours a week for five weeks. Fourteen such courses are on offer this year. Elizabeth Isichei decided to offer Reading and

Writing Poetry which has proved very popular. The class was fully subscribed and the participants full of enthusiasm. Not surprisingly, when they were asked to bring along a favourite New Zealand poem, many turned to Glenn Colquhoun.

## Congratulations

Kay McKenzie Cooke won the NZSA Jessie Mackay Best First Book Award for Poetry with *Feeding the Dogs* (published by the University of Otago Press). The judges said that this collection was “the work of an extremely intelligent poet with a fine awareness of the possibilities of language and the power of a well turned image”.

Veronica Haughey was commended in the Nutshell competition for her limerick:

for his latest haircut the professor  
had by chance an expensive hairdresser  
who implied that the charge  
in his high-class menage  
would insult all his clients if lesser

On National Poetry Day, Bernadette Hall and James Norcliffe received the inaugural Press South Island Literary Awards for services to literature in Canterbury.

### KIWIHAIKU

sixtieth birthday  
she gets a viking ship  
tattooed on her calf

*Karen Peterson Butterworth*  
(Otaki)  
Also published in Presence20

*KIWIHAIKU features one haiku, senryu or tanka each month. Poems with a New Zealand slant are preferred. Fresh submissions (including details of any previous publication) with SSAE to Cyril Childs, 41 Harrington St, Port Chalmers, Dunedin.*

**If members have renewed or joined for 2003-2004 and have not yet received their membership card, send an email to: [cheripinner@xtra.co.nz](mailto:cheripinner@xtra.co.nz) and she'll send one to you.**

**September deadline:  
August 25 2003**