



# a fine line

July 2009

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*Te Hunga Tito Ruri o Aotearoa*

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JULY MEETING

**Lynn Davidson, Kapiti Coast**

Monday 20 July, 7.30pm

AUGUST MEETING

**Group Reading: Voyagers**

Monday 17 August, 7.30pm

The Thistle Inn, 3 Mulgrave St, Wellington  
Meetings begin with an open mic  
\$2 entry

Meetings Sponsored by Creative Communities / Wellington City Council

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## Feature Article

### Bickle Meets West

Lucas Bernhardt

According to legend, during a debate over bilingual education an unnamed U.S. congressman (some attribute the quote to a former governor of Texas) stood up and said, “If English is good enough for Jesus, it’s good enough for us.” Though most writers I know find this story amusing, I wonder if they can laugh about it with an altogether clean conscience. My sense is that most American writers view all of world history, art, and metaphysics as, in a very real sense, American. I, for example, have no difficulty seeing Federico Fellini as a resident of Fresno, or Enkidu as having roamed the wilds of North Dakota.

While much good can come of adopting such views, I will—since I am writing for a foreign audience—mention a couple of their negative repercussions with reference to the writing of American poetry, and contrast these negatives with countervailing merits I see in New Zealand poetry.

The first problem of adopting an exploded sense of Americanism is that it may engender in the American poet a sense of entitlement. What could be worse? I know a few poets who cut and paste from Wikipedia with impunity. They seem to believe they’d already thought of everything on the internet, and thus unattributed collage has become for them an efficient form of recall. Similarly, most every American poet has at one time or another awakened with an empty bottle of Maker’s Mark at her side and copies of Hopkins’s notebooks and Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit* sliced up into fortune cookie fortunes. The night before she’d felt like a misunderstood super-genius—now she has a hangover and a small mess to clean up.

The second problem is that once a poet comes to believe that all the salient figures past and present are his countrymen, practically his roommates, he may easily be cowed by the combination of their greatness and proximity. Surrounded by giants, some of whom eerily resemble Beowulf or Mallarmé, the poet feels both insignificant and self-conscious. He may respond in the style of Travis Bickle from the movie [Taxi Driver](#)\*, by acquiring a small arsenal, by adhering within his small, cluttered room to a quirky but demanding conditioning regimen, and by pointing his weapons at the mirror and rehearsing his lines: “...faster than you...saw you coming...I’m standing here, you make a move...you talkin’ to me?” etc.

It is my understanding that New Zealand poetry has produced few Travis Bickles. You have your share of Munters and Kaseys, alternately able and unable to uphold their arguably high ethical standards. You have your peculiar and endearing friendships between your Teds and Waynes. You have some Loretas—bright and big-eyed, with mercenary instincts—as well as some Pascalles orbited by Aaron Splitters (in the states we have those too).

You have dubious partnerships between your Wolfgangs and Garys. You have your Vans—part mystic, part sensualist—and your Auroras, cut down in their prime in the style of an 18th century French romance. You have many Jethros currently raising Cain overseas. Most importantly, you have your Cheryls, those trusted figures whose strength, kindness, and vigilance help maintain the New Zealand literary scene’s unusual ethos, its blend of permissiveness and propriety.

It was a pleasure to teach in such an encouraging environment, where we all hiked up and down inevitable inclines, thinking our own thoughts and developing great legs; where there was so much to read in order to have read it; where students didn’t suffer from the compulsion to shoot one another in the belly.

Now I am back in America—bristling at pimps and antagonizing my peers—and one of my students recently said, “When people ask me about Brazil, I do not talk about the danger and instability, but the ice cream and music.” When asked about teaching in New Zealand, apparently I talk about the hit TV show *Outrageous Fortune*. It’s because I believe you are lucky to have the West family, flawed and atomized as it is. Maybe you feel that you have been tucked away and forgotten in the West Auckland of the literary universe. You are not alone; most everyone who lives outside of this year’s badass

neighborhood in Brooklyn feels that way. So, it is out of a sense of affection and sympathy that I ask you, the poets of New Zealand, the following questions—and since they have to do with irony I must ask them slantwise: when, pacing around your dingy rented room, you do find yourself face to face with your reflected image, won't you have a gun up your sleeve? Won't you have some choice words for the forces of iniquity?

\*<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NMaTfAn7KAs>

## ***From the National Coordinator***

*Laurice Gilbert*

In this issue you'll find a link to the 2009 President's Report, delivered at this year's AGM on 15<sup>th</sup> June. To access it you'll need to register for the Members' Pages of our website, which I assure you is painless.

The evening was cold and grey, as usual. It's possible that the original scheduling of this important function in June was designed to keep people away, but in Wellington it generally takes more than a bit of bad weather to put people off. No, I accept that AGMs are not popular events, especially if you fear being persuaded to join a committee.

It has long seemed to me that the Guest Poet on AGM night has drawn the short straw, because of the reduced audience, even when the guest is well-known and popular. That's why I chose something a bit different this year: a mini poetry workshop after the meeting. It must have been the shortest workshop in history, at 1 hour!

The 7 poets who stayed on joined in enthusiastically, and I hope to hear at least some of the finished versions of the 3 poems drafted in that short time, at the next open mic.

Welcome back to Linzy Forbes (Vice-President), Gillian Cameron, Anne Faulkner and Tim Jones, and welcome to Alan Wells, who has rejoined the committee after a break, having already "done his time" long ago.

The [minutes of the AGM](#) are also available in the Members' Pages of the website.  
<http://www.poetrysociety.org.nz/files/Minutes%20of%20the%20NZPS%20Annual%20General%20Meeting%202009.pdf>

## ***About our Contributors***

Lucas Bernhardt teaches Literature and Composition at Portland State University, Oregon. He taught the January 2009 Iowa Poetry Workshop at the IIML, Victoria University.

Nola Borrell is a Lower Hutt poet and former NZPS committee member.

Jeffrey Harpeng lives in Australia and used to be a Christchurch poet.

Anne Harré is a Wellington writer and musician, with editing and publishing experience. She's had poems published in *Jaam*, *The New Zealand Poetry Society Anthology*, and *The Listener*.

Harvey Molloy is a Wellington poet and secondary school teacher, who published his first poetry collection, *Moonshot*, in 2008.

## ***A Warm Welcome to:***

**Fleur Adcock**, England

**Dorothy Alexander**, Palmerston North

**Jenny Argante**, Tauranga

**Ruth Arnison**, Dunedin

**Michael Bartram**, Wellington

**Valeria Barouch**, Switzerland

**Robin Baldwin**, Wales

**Shane Cave**, Kapiti

Michael Coldham-Fussell, Hamilton  
Lynn Davidson, Kapiti  
Sarah Dwyer, Christchurch  
Susan Edwards, Mt Maunganui  
Sally Franicevich, Auckland  
Alexandra Fraser, Auckland  
Tracey Green, Upper Hutt  
Charles Hadfield, Auckland  
Batch Hales, Levin  
Kayleen Hazlehurst, Warkworth  
Janette Hoppe, Australia  
Bruce Honeywill, Australia  
David Irwin, Auckland  
Lynne Kohen, Upper Moutere  
Helen Lehndorf, Palmerston North  
Tim Nees, Wellington  
Megan Robinson, Christchurch  
Jonathon Russell, Kaitaia  
Hany Samuel, Wellington  
Julie Simpson, Auckland  
Tracey Sullivan, Netherlands  
Isaac Tait, Christchurch  
Jeff Taylor, Hamilton  
Kenneth Walker, Taupo  
Gill Ward, Kapiti

### ***Congratulations***

**Helen Lowe** scooped the prizes she was nominated for in the Sir Julius Vogel Awards, announced in early June. Her novel *Thornspell* won Best Book: Young Adult, while Helen herself won the prize for Best New Talent. Helen was especially pleased with The Best Book: Young Adult award, as the strong field included in the short list Margaret Mahy's *Magician of Hoad*, Fleur Beale's *Juno of Taris* and *Anywhere But Here* by Ella West. Great work!

**Tim Jones** had 2 nominations in the Best Collected Work section of the same contest (*Transported* and *JAAM 26*) but was pipped by Elizabeth Knox.

**Zarah Butcher-McGunnigle**, **Kerrin P Sharpe**, and **Mary Cresswell** have poems in *Snorkel 9*, the online literary magazine with a special interest in bringing together the creative writings of Australians and New Zealanders. (<http://snorkel.org.au/009/contents.html>)

### ***Publications***

New arrivals on the NZPS bookshelf since the last issue:

*These Hands Are Not Ours* Jill Chan (Earl of Seacliff Art Workshop)

*Pocket Edition* Geoff Cochrane (Victoria University Press)

*James K Baxter Poems* sel. by Sam Hunt (Auckland University Press)

*Anomalous Appetites* ed John Irvine (e-book, available from Lulu.com)

*Twenty Contemporary New Zealand Poets* eds Andrew Johnston & Robyn Marsack (VUP)

*Mirabile Dictu* Michele Leggott (AUP)

*Voyagers – Science Fiction Poetry from New Zealand* eds Mark Pirie & Tim Jones (Interactive Press)

*The Double Rainbow – James K Baxter, Ngati Hau and the Jerusalem Commune* John Newton (VUP)

*Further Convictions Pending – poems 1998-2008* Vincent O'Sullivan (VUP)

## ***Noticeboard***

For a complete rundown of regional events, and to find the poetry meeting in your town, please go to our website:

[www.poetrysociety.org.nz](http://www.poetrysociety.org.nz)

Reminders:

FESTIVAL OF JAPAN, WELLINGTON

On **Saturday 11 July** the NZPS, in collaboration with Windrift Haiku Group, will have a stall at the Festival of Japan at the Wellington Town Hall. I will be on the stall accompanied by Windrift members, talking haiku (not *in* haiku!). Come and pay us a visit, and enter the one-day haiku competition.

WRITERS ON MONDAYS, WELLINGTON

Ten poets whose work appears in *Best New Zealand Poets 08* read their work and share their favourite poems by other New Zealand writers. **Monday 20 July**, 12.15 -1.15pm, at Te Marae, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.

## ***2009 International Poetry Competition – Preliminary Results***

Congratulations to the prize-winners of this year's competition. It's always a thrill to find out who's won, and telling them is the best part of my job as Competition Secretary. Here are the major winners:

Open Section: (Judged by Michael Harlow)

1<sup>st</sup> Frankie McMillan, Christchurch

2<sup>nd</sup> Owen Bullock, Waihi

3<sup>rd</sup> John Horrocks, Lower Hutt

Open Junior Section: (Judged by Sue Wootton)

1<sup>st</sup> Prize: Charlotte Trevella, Christchurch

1<sup>st</sup> runner-up (Prim./Int.) Oliver Sircombe-Kohen, Nelson

2<sup>nd</sup> runner-up (Prim./Int.) Yanhao Tay, Christchurch

1<sup>st</sup> runner-up (Sec.) Sonya Clark, Hastings

2<sup>nd</sup> runner-up (Sec.) Rebecca Hawkes, Christchurch

Haiku Section: (Judged by Tony Chad)

1<sup>st</sup> Claire Knight, England

2<sup>nd</sup> Ernest Berry, Picton

3<sup>rd</sup> Sandra Simpson, Tauranga

4<sup>th</sup> Patricia Prime, Auckland

5<sup>th</sup> Steve Cordery, Tauranga

Haiku Junior Section: (Judged by Linzy Forbes)

1<sup>st</sup> Sophia Frentz, Tauranga

2<sup>nd</sup> Sophia Frentz, Tauranga

3<sup>rd</sup> Devon Gurney-Meehan, Christchurch

4<sup>th</sup> Margaret Reed, Christchurch

5<sup>th</sup> Cathy Reimer, Christchurch

The full results, including Highly Commended and Commended poems, will appear in the next issue.

## Regional Reports

Readers are invited to submit reports on local events as they occur. Please email to [editor@poetrysociety.org.nz](mailto:editor@poetrysociety.org.nz) preferably as attached Word or rtf documents, or send hard copies to PO Box 5283, Wellington 6145.

### PICTON POETRY GROUP

*Ruby Roberts*

We hold our meetings in Ernie Berry's old cottage on Waikawa Road, and the June meeting was interesting, to say the least.

Our topic (Pigs) was well under way and we had heard and enjoyed two poems when our eminent patriarch noticed water pouring from the roof on to the courtyard beneath. He rang a plumber who was kind enough to arrive within twenty minutes. At the same time the smoke alarm went off. Drama drama.

The plumber climbed up in to the attic and did things up there whereupon of course the water pouring out slowed down somewhat.

Unfortunately in the meantime the ceilings, walls and carpets were all soaked. (We presume the frost had caused a burst pipe.) The meeting came to a rapid halt.

All the insulation in the attic was completely soaked, and apparently the insurance assessors were at the cottage all afternoon checking out the damage. There will, I understand be no meetings this week at the cottage for the weavers, spinners, Scrabble group, etc. etc. In Picton we all appreciate Ernie's generosity in allowing so many people to use this charming, if wet, small meeting place.

Ernie, a haiku in there somewhere?

### AIRING CUPBOARD WOMEN POETS ANNIVERSARY

*Elizabeth Robertson.*

The Airing Cupboard Women Poets 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary and launch of their fourth anthology, *Splash!* was held on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2009, at Eliza's Manor House, in Christchurch.

The event took the form of an afternoon tea, preceded by a welcome from our co-ordinator, Judith Walsh, detailing the history of the group. Ursula Rose introduced well-known poet, writer and teacher, Bernadette Hall, who initiated the launch with very kind words about the Airing Cupboard and its members. She finished her talk with a brilliant poem, the lines of which had been gleaned from the poetry in *Splash!* Six of the women poets then read their work from the anthology.

James Norcliffe was thanked for the initial editing of the poems, as was Barbara Strang. Nancy Rudkin was also thanked for providing the wonderful cover design of *Splash!* A delicious meal followed in the evening, which most poets and their partners attended.

The history of the group on the back cover of *Splash!* states, "In 1989 four women met in a room little bigger than a cupboard and aired their poems for the first time. Our numbers are now four times larger and our poems are published and performed widely. The year, 2009, will be our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary."

The first meeting, in 1989, was held at the Women's Drop-In Centre in the Atlantis Building, a former home of the Christchurch Star, situated at the back corner of the Christchurch Square. Karen McNabb was responsible for starting the group. It was the first public voice for many women poets.

When Karen left, Judith Walsh took over as co-ordinator, and is still ably filling that role.

In 1992, with the expansion of the group, came a shift to the Board Room in the Arts Centre. In 1993, there was a change of venue to the YMCA. The group's present meeting place is at the Christchurch South Library.

There have been four collections published by the Airing Cupboard. We are all indebted to Barbara Strang for editing each anthology in a truly professional manner.

## Anthologies:

*On the Line*, 1993.

*Throwing the Words*, 1996.

*Half Light and High Wind*, 2000.

*Splash!* 2009.

The Airing Cupboard has been well represented in the NZ Poetry Society Anthologies as well as the many literary magazines and journals in New Zealand and around the world. Airing Cupboard poets are well represented in the Canterbury Poets Collective. Some members have also successfully published their own anthologies.

## Reviews

*How to live by the sea* Lynn Davidson 74 pp (VUP, 2009) ISBN 978-0-86473-599-7

Nola Borrell

The voice of lament is Lynn Davidson's strength. You hear it in the comings and goings of the tide, in left behind rooms and houses, childhood and adulthood. This poet will engage you immediately with her direct address - in the first and third sections of the book in particular.

*How to live by the sea* is tidily arranged: 3 parts, 43 poems: Intertidal zone, The Middle Ages, Table to table. All discrete sections, each with its own cohesiveness. The front cover has the tattooed shoulder of the author's son; the back cover, the author with distant gaze: both images neatly link with the title.

This is Lynn Davidson's third book of poetry. It follows *Tender* (Steele Roberts, 2006) and *Mary Shelley's Window* (Pemmican, 1999), as well as a short novel (*Ghost Net*, OUP, 2003). Lynn is a graduate of the 2007 IIML MA poetry class. She received a Louis Johnson Writer's Bursary in 2003, and teaches creative writing at Whitireia Community Polytechnic. Porirua Lynn is also a former editor of the NZPS newsletter (as it was).

You won't have any difficulty reading these short poems: free verse, simply structured, frequently personal and created around one main image. There's a care with words, length of line; at times a lyrical touch. Short they may be, but they're not lightweight.

*Intertidal Zone* opens with 'My House', a song of love and a lament. It is "a house to set your bearings by" ('Visitors'). Indeed, the whole selection, the whole business of living, is to do with bearings. The poet tells us to "settle for disorder" (but) "Keep one craft at hand/ a kayak out back among nasturtiums" ('How to live by the sea').

I liked the conciseness, but at times I wanted more than a single image/ event poem. 'Visitors' is an exception. It develops, stretches way back, undergirds the present, has a reach that the shorter poems lack.

*The Middle Ages* centres on the powerful 'type' of the Fool: jester, innocent and clown, truth-teller, social critic and insight-bringer. This allows the poet to dip into a medieval world of dark woods and fairy spells, comfrey and pennyroyal, "ice hanging from her wrists like charms" ('Lark Pie'). The device also offers the potential to tell something we'd rather not know about. Another way of seeing impacts on everyday events. I liked this imaginative extension as a contrast to the here-and-now poems of the rest of the book.

The two final poems in this section appear to depart from the theme - a minor point. 'About Love', a plangent poem with a terse ending, seems to belong to the poet persona, not the Fool. And 'Remains' takes a great sweep to the dawn of time, when "all the animals and trees/ have turned one by one/ back into words".

*Table to table* I found the least appealing. Eighteen poems travel from early childhood to sibling events to motherhood, with a leap to thoughts of death. Many of them do have tables: in cafes, restaurants, kitchens, a school fair, a workbench. They are clear and direct, but again I wanted more. 'This freezing morning' gives a snatch of conversation, 'Biker girl', a picture with a brief response; 'A spell to

tame horses', a short ritual.

A short prose piece (?prose poem), 'A family feast', provided a variation in format as well as several agreeably unexpected lines: "The babies wake and cry, wave marshmallow fists at loved ones with knives" ... "Parents and grandparents carry children heavy as potting mix".

Many of these poems would read well at a poetry reading. The audience would stay with the poet's sense of time passing, appreciate the poignancy, and enjoy the flashes of fantasy too.

The lamenting tone returns in the final three poems: the leaving behind of rooms and gardens, the moving towards old age and death, as in 'Conversations':

It will be comforting  
on those ringing-cold walks  
to see exactly how  
the earth  
is reaching up towards me

This, indeed, is a voice that Lynn Davidson does well.

*Our Favourite Poems: New Zealanders choose their favourite poems* Intro. by Iain Sharp. (Craig Potton Publishing, 2007) RRP \$24.99 (<http://www.poetrysociety.org.nz/aboutfavouritepoems>)

Harvey Molloy

*DIY Graffiti - The 8<sup>th</sup> in the Re-Draft series* Eds Tessa Duder and James Norcliffe (Clerestory Press/School for Young Writers, 2009)

Anne Harré

*DIY Graffiti* editors Tessa Duder and James Norcliffe have put together a stunning array of writing from young New Zealanders ranging from Year 9 through to first year University students.

As Tessa Duder states in her introduction "...at some point we needed to remind ourselves that these writers were all young people still at school or in tertiary study..." A sentiment that I would echo wholeheartedly. There are too many contributors to list, but to mention a couple of examples, take Amy Peppers's 'Twilight':

I'd take the haloed  
light and stretch it  
like string. I  
could use it as floss,  
wind it around my teeth  
and radiate stars from  
my lips.

or Mary Dennis's 'Precious Gaps':

Teach me how to speak in another language. Teach me  
the skill of saying thank you in a way that means  
something, the technique needed to say I love you  
in a way that demands to be neither mirrored nor excused

This is a collection that the contributors can be very proud of; it is articulate, mature writing that demands to be read then re-read.

Re-draft (the competition) is open to contributors between the ages of 13-19; you can find further information at [www.schoolforyoungwriters.org](http://www.schoolforyoungwriters.org)

No tears in the writer, no tears in the reader. No surprise in the writer, no surprise in the reader.

Robert Frost

*Push* David Gregory (Black Doris Press, 2008) ISBN: 978-0-9582835-0-2 RRP \$18

Jeffrey Harpeng

There is a staid double door with bevelled glass panels, and brass kick plate, on the cover of David Gregory's latest collection *Push*. It is an invitation that Rene Magritte could have offered us. A large brass plate bearing the word PUSH spans these doors. The imperative invokes and defies action. Gregory subverts action with wry rhetoric; in 'Shutters' capturing a thing is the way to lose it.

### Shutters

It is not so much  
the opening of the eye  
of the camera  
in which everything  
happens that can  
happen,  
including the end  
of the world,  
as all worlds end,  
instant by instant,  
thrown against the  
fly-paper of the film.  
It is useless to struggle,  
but we do, against  
misery, against bliss,  
like this, when I rise,  
to find a brochure  
beach printing itself  
against the blue,  
against the retina.  
Wait, wait, I say.  
I will get the camera  
and lose the moment  
utterly.

But the inevitability of loss was already prefigured, "all worlds end, instant by instant, thrown against the fly-paper of the film". He operates with blinking recognitions and shifting considerations that turn quick as a pun. These blinks are often loaded with expansive clarity.

Some days are easier  
to carry  
Some lift you like a father  
how much  
more you can see of the world  
(from 'Weight')

Gregory travels in the ticking present between the sounding of the grace note and the gray fact, or between the gray fact and the sounding of the grace note. In 'You All Over' a grand scale of causality is condensed in a moment resonant with implications:

I'm sore from scratching the  
itch that is you.  
And you say a stone  
is a stone even when picked from the  
shoreline wet as an eye regarding you  
from your palm and going blind as  
it dries.  
You throw it back and I ask,

*do you know how long that pebble  
took to get this far? And I  
mean me, blind in your hand.*

His sense of *here* is the *here* of culture conditioned to the notion of journeys of discovery, but a culture so geographically pervasive that scepticism has turned that notion to a bruised fruit:

I would give you a map,  
but the journey, as to truth,  
is through a trackless wilderness.  
I would be there to meet you,  
but I am high  
above, and the steward  
is serving what may be  
breakfast, and telling me  
we are halfway between  
remembering and forgetting  
and cannot go back even  
if we wanted.

(from 'A Tour of My Native Land')

*Push* is a crafty collection that well deserves the high praise of being read and reread, reread and contemplated.

**Kokako 10** Editors Joanna Preston and Patricia Prime, 60 pages, ISSN 1177-0902

*Jeffrey Harpeng*

Let us sing praises to the demigods of small magazines, and here sing peons to *Kokako's* acolytes: its editors Patricia Prime and Joanna Preston with their butterfly nets out in a field of wildflowers, catching monarchs, catching haiku, blue admirals, senryu, ladybirds, tanka, mayflies and haibun, moths and reviews.

Their catch is not preserved with formaldehyde and pinned in place. See, they rise and hover as evocative reveries as you amble through the pages of *Kokako 10*. But your ramble need not be aimless. Richard von Sturmer offers a compass:

pohutakawa filaments  
in the folds of our map –  
crimson needles  
pointing to

the magnetic north

The acolytes have set a winners' dias out there in the paddock of the opening pages. It is for the winners and runners up of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Kokako Tanka Competition. Carolyn Eldridge-Alfonzetti stands highest, with Beverley George and Richard von Sturmer completing the flying wing.

Red-stockinged pukekos, the thread of quilters' tales, Van Gogh stars, guilt, remorse, and rhododendrons, and a polished conch shell are the tanka epicenters of small seismic shifts by another five commended tankajin. To a greater or lesser degree these seismic tanka, the winner, runners up, and commended, will sway your light shade and rattle your windows. Rereading will only deepen the epicentre of these small quakes.

Turn the page and climb through the wire fence and we get into haiku fields. An A to Y of genetic diversity: thin stalk one liners, three line clumps and over there Margaret Beverland points out:

the thrush  
just  
part  
of  
the  
old  
fence  
post

Journeying A to Y, Jenny Argante is the 'goodbye' opener. There is a straight path and many renga-suggestive paths through the haiku. My attention leaped from Argante to Owen Bullock to Helen Yong:

saying goodbye rain on the desert road

a giant rimu falls  
& within an hour  
rain

these daffodils I bring you -  
still wet  
from last night's rain

Haiku and tanka also call out to each other across the pages. The loving humour of **Barbara Strang's** haiku finds companionship with **Karen Peterson Butterworth's** tanka.

her funeral  
finally she's  
on time

tangi for a beloved kuia -  
the bike she rode  
into her nineties  
parked outside  
the church

The haibun section opens with Christchurch poet **Helen Bascand**. 'A Place in the Sun' is a graceful and warmly nuanced account of how memories and affections bind us with a place. In this case it is the garden of the family home. There is a three part structure to the piece. Each part concludes with a haiku, and they could well be stepping stones in the flow of things passing, and naturally if you try to stand on a stepping stone too long vertigo will conspire with the flow around you. It concludes:

Now they're all hinting at selling the place - *it's too much for you Mum*, and they list the advantages of a rest home. The only reasons she recalls right now are - *no maintenance* and what she interprets *as nothing to do!*

outside  
caged  
the canary

Then: Stanley Pelter's 'butterfly wings' is enigmatically symbolic. Graham Nunn's 'Galah' folds a moment's drama back into the ordinary, and in 'Laundromat Education' he does his laundry to the soundtrack of Dr Phil and Oprah. The stodgy present responds to the wash of media. He concludes:

The dryer stumbles to a halt. I throw everything into the basket as the discussion turns to clothes.

my underwear  
long after  
they lost their shape

Not only by their words, but also by their echoes shall ye know them. Many of the soundings in *Kokako 10* not only echo back the world, but long after reading, the gaps between the speaker and the named, the named and the hearer resonate with an oddly consoling and confirming quaver, a kind of "Yes" trembling in those gaps.

*Made in New Zealand 2009* - the NZ Symphony Orchestra, 29 May 2009  
Laurice Gilbert (<http://www.poetrysociety.org.nz/aboutnzso>)

## *Haiku NewZ*

### CONGRATULATIONS

- to Ernie Berry, for First place in Haiku Ireland's kukai No. 18, with

grand Canyon  
a red ant  
disap..

Ernie also shared 4<sup>th</sup> equal place with four other people, with two haiku:

autumn chill  
my neighbour chainsaws  
the shade:

nursing home  
some old soap  
on the radio

- to Nola Borrell, who won second prize in The Robert Spiess Memorial Haiku Award competition for 2009, with

adult walk  
a skip  
in the child's step

### COMPETITIONS AND SUBMISSIONS

See NZPS website for a detailed list: <http://www.poetrysociety.org.nz/haikunews/competitions>

Early warnings:

#### *Kokako Haiku & Senryu Competition*

**Deadline: 31 October.** First prize \$NZ200; two runner-up prizes \$NZ50; each winning haiku published in *Kokako 12* (April 2010). Judge is Karen Peterson Butterworth. Entries must be unpublished and not under consideration elsewhere. Send 2 copies of each haiku or group of haiku with your name, address and e-mail address on 1 copy only. \$NZ5/every 3 haiku; or \$US1/haiku (overseas entrants send cash at their own risk). Make cheques out to "Kokako". Send entries to: Kokako Haiku & Senryu Competition, 42 Flanshaw Rd, Te Atatu South, Auckland 0610, New Zealand. Inquiries by e-mail to Patricia Prime at [pprime@ihug.co.nz](mailto:pprime@ihug.co.nz)

#### *Turtle Light Press, second bi-annual Haiku Chapbook Competition*

**Postmark deadline: 1 December** In general, we are open to both traditional and modern-style haiku but have a particular fondness for haiku that deal with both people and nature. Please submit an original, unpublished collection or sequence of poems on a theme of your choice between 12 - 24 pages, two haiku per page maximum. For entry fee and more details, please go to:

[www.turtlelightpress.com/Books/chapbook.shtml](http://www.turtlelightpress.com/Books/chapbook.shtml)

## PUBLICATIONS

*frogpond* ed. George Swede, Box 279, Station P,  
Toronto, ON M55 2S8 Canada. Email: [gsswede@ryerson.ca](mailto:gsswede@ryerson.ca) Subs: \$US45 p.a. – expires 31 Dec yearly,  
includes 3 issues

*Modern Haiku* ed. Charles Trumbull, PO Box 7046,  
Evanston, IL 60204-7046, USA. Email: [trumbullc@comcast.net](mailto:trumbullc@comcast.net) Submission guidelines:  
[www.modernhaiku.org](http://www.modernhaiku.org)

### *KiwiHaiku*

op-shop coat  
someone's hanky  
in the pocket  
Barbara Strang

beside the river  
ducks eat ham fat, get fat and  
waddle back downstream  
Sharyn Brown

silken spider web  
captures sunshine  
moving  
Debbie Williams

Please send your KiwiHaiku submissions to Patricia Prime at [pprime@ihug.co.nz](mailto:pprime@ihug.co.nz), or post to: 42 Flanshaw Road, Te Atatu South, Waitakere 0610.

### *Tanka Reflections*

- short songs of the human spirit –

the oyster catchers take flight  
in a swirl of wings . . .  
did I frighten them?  
their leaving like yours  
so abrupt  
Barbara Strang

something  
will not let me forget  
about you . . .  
bidibids stuck  
to my trouser leg  
Andre Surridge

Members are invited to submit unpublished tanka. Please send your submissions to: at [pprime@ihug.co.nz](mailto:pprime@ihug.co.nz), or post to: 42 Flanshaw Road, Te Atatu South, Waitakere 0610.

SEPTEMBER DEADLINE is 7th AUGUST

## Ten Minutes With Tim Jones

Anne Harré

**Tim Jones** is a New Zealand author, editor and sustainable energy activist. He is the co-editor, with Mark Pirie, of the anthology *Voyagers: Science Fiction Poetry from New Zealand*, which was published in May 2009. His other recent books are short story collection *Transported* (Vintage, 2008), poetry collection *All Blacks' Kitchen Gardens* (HeadworX, 2007), and fantasy novel *Anarya's Secret* (RedBrick, 2007). For the latest info, see his blog at <http://timjonesbooks.blogspot.com> or follow him on Twitter:

<http://twitter.com/senjmito>

Tim lives and works in Wellington and I began by asking him...

*How long have you been writing poetry, and what motivated you to start?*

I don't know exactly when I started writing poetry, or even what motivated me to start - although I enjoyed studying poetry at high school - but I do remember having a couple of poems published in the *Gore High School Magazine* and a teacher telling me that the poems were reminiscent of James K. Baxter's work. That gave me quite a boost!

Between leaving high school and about 1996, I wrote in bursts, and that went for writing poetry as well. Since 1996, which was when I started getting work published more regularly and also when my son was born, I've had to become a lot more organised. In general, though, writing poetry has had to be fitted around writing fiction, simply because fiction is so time-consuming. Probably the only year poetry has taken precedence was 2003, when I completed many of the poems in my second collection, *All Blacks' Kitchen Gardens*, while doing Dinah Hawken's *Writing the Landscape* course at Victoria. I'm aiming to complete the manuscript of my third collection next year, so I'm hoping to make 2010 another "poetry year".

What I'd really like is a couple of clones: one to work full-time and another to do the activism (see below), so the original "I" could concentrate on writing, reading, spending time with my family and friends, watching cricket, and listening to music! That would be bliss.

*You've written short fiction, non-fiction, poetry and now a novel Anarya's Secret: An Earthdawn Novel; do you enjoy moving between the different genres and is there a genre which you, overall, prefer or feel most comfortable in?*

I sometimes ask myself why I put myself through trying to write in all those different genres, especially when I can only write part-time. The answer, really, is that when I have a writing idea, it tends to come to me with a little tag attached, 'poem' or 'story' or, rarely, 'novel'. It would be a shame to ignore any one entire category of those tags.

I enjoy writing non-fiction, but I've never tried an extended project in that format. When it comes to short fiction, poetry and novels, I enjoy writing in all three formats, although novels are scary because it's such a large commitment of time if there's no assurance of publication at the end. Poetry is my favourite genre; short fiction is the one I feel most comfortable in, probably because I've had the most practice there.

*Voyagers: Science Fiction Poetry from New Zealand (which you've just edited with Mark Pirie) is a collection of Sci-fi poetry. Sci-fi and poetry might be considered unusual bed-fellows, how easy was it to find such a terrific collection of poems?* <http://timjonesbooks.blogspot.com/2009/05/voyagers-contents.html>

Aaargh - "science fiction" or "SF" please, not sci-fi! That faint protest over, thank you for the kind words about *Voyagers*. The answer is that it was surprisingly easy to find the poems, but surprisingly hard to get the anthology published!

Mark suggested in 2004 that we put together an anthology of New Zealand science fiction poetry. We sent out a call for submissions, and while they were coming in we each went through great chunks of published New Zealand poetry to look for previously-published poems that would fit the bill - and we found plenty, even if many of them were gloomy and apocalyptic! So we were able to put together what we thought was a strong collection. Unfortunately, neither Creative New Zealand nor most New Zealand

publishers saw any commercial potential in such an anthology, and it wasn't until poet Iain Britton suggested that we get in touch with Interactive Publications in Brisbane, who were publishing his new collection *Liquefaction*, that we started getting somewhere.

*Voyagers* is already available from Amazon.com internationally and Fishpond in New Zealand; we've sent out contributor and review copies; and we're planning for a launch in July. (If you can't wait till then for a copy, please contact me at [senjmito@gmail.com](mailto:senjmito@gmail.com).)

*Which writers do you admire?*

Lots and lots of writers – in fact, everyone who has the tenacity to stick with it! Locally, I have a great deal of time for Mark Pirie, Helen Rickerby and Harvey Molloy, all of whom have taught me lots about the practicalities as well as the craft of writing poetry and having it published. Overall, my favourite poets include Anna Akhmatova, Paul Celan, Allen Curnow and Sergei Esenin.

In fiction, I love the great 19<sup>th</sup> century Russians, especially Ivan Turgenev, and I'm always looking out for new books by Gene Wolfe, Ursula le Guin, Alice Munro, Kim Stanley Robinson and Elizabeth Jane Howard. But my favourite writer is Jorge Luis Borges: a peerless short story writer and essayist, a considerable poet, and often surprisingly funny as well.

*On your website <http://users.actrix.co.nz/timjones/> you list yourself as (amongst many other things) a political activist, care to explain.....?*

I got interested in the environment at high school. It was 1975, and the Values Party, predecessor of the Green Party, was coming to prominence. The 7<sup>th</sup> form was basically divided between Gore's version of young urban intellectuals, who were passing the Values Party Manifesto around from hand to hand as if it was a Soviet-era samizdat publication, and farmers' sons and daughters who were implacably secure in their Nationalness and in their God-given right to rule the earth, or at least large tracts of Southland. I wasn't in possession of a large tract of Southland.

When I went to university in Dunedin, I became involved in environmental and then anti-nuclear and peace campaigns. I got back into activism around climate change and sustainable energy issues at the start of this decade, and I'm currently the Convenor of the Sustainable Energy Forum [<http://www.sef.org.nz>] and a committee member of the Climate Defence Network [<http://www.climatedefence.org.nz>]. As an old lag in these areas, it's great to see a wave of younger activists getting involved, especially in climate change issues. I will be happy to be superseded.

*What do you do in your "day" job? The one that earns the moolah?*

I work part-time for Webstruxure [<http://www.webstruxure.co.nz>], a Wellington web development company. I do documentation, testing, and marketing. I'm the only non-developer there, so a big part of my job is to say "hang on a minute, will ordinary users understand this?"

*J. G. Ballard said, "I would sum up my fear about the future in one word: boring. And that's my one fear: that everything has happened; nothing exciting or new or interesting is ever going to happen again... the future is just going to be a vast, conforming suburb of the soul." (Interview, 30 Oct. 1982, in Re/Search 8/9.) Do you agree/disagree and why?*

I'm afraid not – and I do mean "afraid". I'm reluctant to disagree with J. G. Ballard, since he got so many things right, but my view is that the 21<sup>st</sup> century is not going to be boring for the majority of the human race. We've exceeded the carrying capacity of the Earth by a considerable margin, and we can't, or at least haven't managed to, reign ourselves back in. As a species, we're already beginning to pay the price for the changes we've wrought to the Earth's ecosystem, and that price will increase over the decades ahead.

I'm not a complete pessimist – I still think it's possible to right the ship – but even in a best-case scenario, there are difficult times ahead. That view sneaks into the background of a lot of my fiction, even (or maybe especially) the funny stories. My poetry tends to be about other things, but 'No Oil' and 'The Wise Ape' in *All Blacks' Kitchen Gardens* take a fairly dim view of proceedings.

Sorry to be gloomy!

*And the all important culinary question, Vegemite or Marmite?*

Both. Neither. I'm a Gemini. What can I say?

*What are you working on at present ?*

I'm trying to finish the manuscript of my second novel, which is set in New Zealand and Antarctica in the near future, I have a couple of short stories to finish in time for anthology deadlines, and I'm gradually accumulating poems for a third collection. The working title is *Men Briefly Explained*.

## MEMBER'S POEM

### The Consequences of Untrammelled Greed

For those who forgive  
it is almost inconceivable  
that sudden blood smell  
that first crackle  
of the kindling of ire.

Is it despair?  
No. That is still a safe house.

Is it denial?  
Well. God knows we've been there;  
pored all over it like  
the turd blossoms in a Le Carré novel;  
and sure, we found the odd bit, but  
nothing that you could set alight.

Is it fear?  
No. We had to pass through there  
on the way to our safe house, before  
we found the shortcut through inaction.

I dare to call it hope.  
The experts, they must find their truths  
through a rigorous appraisal  
of all possible negatives.  
This is why they stumble in the dark.  
This is why they stumble in the dark.

We make our way  
around the fragrant discord,  
a tit of hope  
at the very edge of our sight.  
This is the only way that offers life,  
but it is not a pleasant thing  
to be reborn  
to discover  
that we are angry.  
It is only possible to forgive

one's torturers  
when they take their foot  
off our collective throat.

*Linzy Forbes*

If you have any young friends who aspire to become writers, the second greatest favor you can do for them is to present them with copies of *The Elements of Style*. The first greatest, of course, is to shoot them now, while they're happy.

Dorothy Parker