



# a fine line

July 2010

The Magazine of The New Zealand Poetry Society  
*Te Hunga Tito Ruri o Aotearoa*

We are grateful to our sponsors: Signify <http://www.signify.co.nz/>  
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JULY MEETING (Monday 19<sup>th</sup>)  
Guest Poet: James McNaughton

AUGUST MEETING (Monday 16<sup>th</sup>)  
Guest Poet: to be confirmed

7.30pm The Thistle Inn, 3 Mulgrave St, Wellington. Open mic. \$3 entry for members (\$5 Public)  
Meetings Sponsored by Creative Communities Wellington Local Funding Scheme.

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Vaughan Rapatahana.

## *Feature Article*

### **Report from Menton**

*Michele Amas*

Being a writer who is the partner of a writer who happens to be the Katherine Mansfield fellow living in the south of France this year has to be the best luck. All care and no responsibility, although it is best not to damage the KM fellow by mopping the bathroom tiles with fabric softener (written in Italian) and thereby creating a death trap as the man gets out of the shower. Or frittering away all the KM fellow's money by being hopelessly flattered at the market (Italians again) and coming home with 44 Euros worth of sundried tomatoes and no jars to put them in.

We make wonderful daily mistakes. We walk around in a state of wonder and for me that is the best place to be in as a poet. Everything is new, undiscovered, bewildering. You walk out into the day with no preconceived ideas of what to expect, you have the time to choose what you want to muse upon, what draws your eye. It's this childlike vision and the simplicity of being creative for the hell of it, for the fun of it.

The KM fellow is very generous with the little writing room at Villa Isola Bella, happy to take turns. The room does have a special feel about it, full of amiable ghosts or so it seems. Janet Frame got the fright of her life when we first unlocked the door. Not just literary ghosts either, quite a few of my own dead have appeared in dreams while I have been here, even animal ghosts. It's not as if they have followed me here, more that I have stumbled upon them. I have decided it's possible no one actually died, just relocated to the Cote d'Azur. I prefer to write from home though, always have enjoyed the background noise of the washing machine and the compulsory pauses it creates.

Mornings are spent in cafes – me, that is; the KM Fellow is very diligent and is in the writing room by 9am (after ensuring I am awake before he leaves) – and wandering around markets sourcing food. I love the daily-ness of it. Sometimes I bring home blue cheese, the aroma of which the KM fellow says reminds him of the toilet at the KM room. I love buying bread every day, there is something life affirming about carrying bread – I feel decent. We lunch in the French way with a glass or two of wine – me that is, KM fellow still being diligent and preferring not to drink in the middle of the day. Then I will put some time into my own writing in the afternoon, thoroughly fortified by the wine, and wondering why this system of working never occurred to me back in NZ.

We were invited to the Princess Grace Irish Library in Monaco to hear Irish writer William Wall (poet and novelist) read. A wonderful collection of eccentrics in the audience. Words followed by whiskey and Guinness, all under the glamorous and benevolent gaze of Princess Grace. It's a bit like dreaming, some of the places we find ourselves in. I have been looking back on the work I brought over with me from NZ and it seems somewhat dark, or sombre at least. I wonder if, for me, it has something to do with writing in a colder climate. There is a dampness to the words, so I have decided to let them dry on the balcony in the sun and see what happens. The poems I have been writing here seem to come under a different heading: *Songs of Utter Joy*.

I have never really worked out under what conditions I work best. If I take myself off to somewhere remote, retreat into the landscape, I end up eating my entire ration of weekend food on the first night and being utterly miserable until it's time to come home. Being in France offers the best solution. I am surrounded by people and stimulated by that but the only words I understand are the language of my own thoughts. Not alone but not distracted either. It allows for watching without having to participate – a sort of camouflage. For me I can't think of a better position to write poetry in.

The following poem is not so much the utter joy type poem but is about when we first arrived and our difficulty with tenses – it could be called 'Living in the Present'.

### **Spring Letter Home**

Like the lists made before we  
begin began begun  
we do again, and did and done

and happy in our present  
to give gave have given  
our stride strode and stridden  
we tread trod have trodden  
as honestly as we strive strove  
are striven to sing sang sung  
French song with timid tongue  
which tear tore torn our wear  
wore worn. This we have write  
wrote and written to family beget  
begat and begotten  
we blow blew blown  
via orange internet connection  
love - ten hours beyond  
the spring sprang sprung  
of the northern hemisphere.

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

*Laurice Gilbert*

The two busiest months of my working year are almost over, the annual competition closing so near the date of the AGM, and then straight into the July issue of the magazine. At least I've had the pleasure of notifying the prizewinners, a list of whom you will find below. This year's judges were really quick to get the results back to me, making it easier to accommodate them in this issue. Congratulations to our winners, all of whom can be proud of their achievement. As for the rest of us, well there's still the anthology selection to come.

We had a fabulous crowd at the AGM on 21<sup>st</sup> June – 35 people is a far cry from a few years ago when we had to repeat the exercise (two years in a row) for lack of a quorum. We now have a new committee, consisting of myself as President, Tim Jones as Vice-President, Anne Faulkner as cheque signatory, and recidivists Gillian Cameron and Linzy Forbes joined by Janis Freegard and Sally Holmes. A warm welcome to the newbies. We will be meeting before long to work out a strategy for the year, including some exciting new fund-raising initiatives that arose from discussion at the meeting.

The minutes of the meeting are in the Members' Area of the website (for which you need to be registered – a simple online process).

The AGM was followed by readings of 5 poems each from Jack Duggan, Anne Harré, Tim Jones, Sugu Pillay and Mercedes Webb-Pullman. They presented a rich variety of styles and subject matter, and it was a most inspiring evening.

Also in this issue is the President's Report and the usual variety of reviews, notices of interest, items submitted by our members and a generous sampling of our members' poems. I welcome submissions at any time, and hope to receive more reports about poetry groups around the country.

Finally there is the result of the 'Food' mini-competition, which I held over from the last issue in the hope of receiving more entries. In the end I had so many that the decision was really hard – an example of being careful what you ask for!

And lest you think me a sad sack: I have a daughter home from London after 13 years; she arrived in the middle of the annual madness and brought the rightness of the world with her.

The poet is in the end probably more afraid of the dogmatist who wants to extract the message from the poem and throw the poem away than he is of the sentimentalist who says, "Oh, just let me enjoy the poem."

Robert Penn Warren, "The Themes of Robert Frost," Hopwood Lecture, 1947

## ***About our Contributors***

**Michele Amas** is an actress and poet. Her first book *After the Dance* was published in 2005 by VUP. She is spending the year in Menton courtesy of her partner, playwright Kenneth Duncum, who is the Katherine Mansfield Fellow for 2010.

**Liz Breslin** lives and writes in Hawea Flat and is co-founder of Poetic Justice Wanaka.

**Keith Nunes** is a former newspaper journalist who has had poems published in *Landfall* and *Takahe*, as well as online journals. He writes to stay sane.

**Julie V Simpson** is an Auckland poet, working hard at her craft.

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

**Dale Bennett** Nelson

**John Bird** Australia

**Rosie Bolderston** Christchurch

**Helen Davison** Australia

**Carmen Downes** Wellington

**Seren Fargo** USA

**Margaret Grace** Australia

**Mary-Jane Grandinetti** USA

**Joy Green** Ashhurst

**Trevor Hayes** Wellington

**Kulbhushan Malhotra** Auckland

**Ron Moss** Australia

**Mikaela Nyman** Wellington

**Deryn Pittar** Papamoa

**Vanessa Proctor** Australia

**Lorraine Rigg** Kapiti Coast

**Barbara Robinson** England

**Nalini Singh** Wanganui

**Eduard Țară** Romania

**Charmaine Thomson** Wellington

**Lonnard Dean Watkins** Wellington

**Mia Watkins** Dunedin

**Quendryth Young** Australia

(More next issue)

## ***Letter to the Editor***

*Response to review*

The irony around *Voyager: Science Fiction Poetry from New Zealand* is not the content, lavishly praised by many reviewers, but that an anthology picked by the *Listener* as one of the 100 Best Books of 2009 was touted round New Zealand publishers for four years without finding a taker, being brought out instead by Interactive Press (Brisbane.)

Whose expectations or what criteria my fantasy love poem 'Space Age Lover' was supposed to fulfil, reviewer Joanna Preston does not deign to explain. Instead she avers, as if in the know, that I "packed this with science fiction terms added like decorations to help the poem qualify for inclusion." In fact, it was written over twenty years ago and published in the UK. I offered it to Tim and Mark in a spirit of friendship only, admiring of their project, and with no personal investment in its acceptance or refusal. Fortunately, they - and many readers - have recognised 'Space Age Love' for exactly what it is: a playful romp.

Anything less like an exercise I could not imagine, nor how that is derogatory as the origin of a poem.

It is not where poems begin, but where they end up, that matters. And, in her blog, Preston has frequently admitted to exercises as the foundation of her own work. It's a pity her only intellectual exercise in this instance was merely jumping to conclusions.

Jenny Argante (Tauranga)

### ***Results of the 2010 International Poetry Competition***

The NZPS's annual International Poetry Competition is over for another year. As always there is a satisfying sprinkling of NZPS members among the chosen, and we congratulate you all.

Open Section (Judge: Vivienne Plumb) **1<sup>st</sup>**: Johanna Aitchison, Palmerston North; **2<sup>nd</sup>**: Maryrose Doull, Auckland; **3<sup>rd</sup>**: Lynne Kohen, Nelson. **Highly Commended**: Carmen Downes, Wellington; kimbala, Rangiora; Frankie McMillan, Christchurch; Kate McKinstry, Wellington; Kerry Popplewell, Wellington; Atif Slim, Auckland. **Commended**: Johanna Aitchison, Palmerston North; Jenny Clay, Auckland; Siobhan Harvey, Auckland; Trevor Hayes, Wellington; Lynne Kohen, Nelson; Marion Moxham, Palmerston North (2); Janet Newman, Levin; Nick Williamson, Christchurch.

Haiku Section (Judge: Tony Beyer). **Winner of the Jeanette Stace Memorial Prize, 1<sup>st</sup>**: Quendryth Young, Australia; **2<sup>nd</sup>**: Patricia Prime, Auckland; **3<sup>rd</sup>**: Quendryth Young, Australia. (Regrettably, there were insufficient entries in this section to cover the cost of five prizes, and only three were awarded.) **Highly Commended**: Mariana Isara, Christchurch; Sandra Simpson, Tauranga; Barbara Strang, Christchurch; André Surridge, Hamilton (3); Eduard Țară, Romania. **Commended**: John Bird, Australia; Helen Davison, Australia (2); Seren Fargo, USA; Margaret Grace, Australia; Claire Knight, UK; Ron Moss, Australia; Vanessa Proctor, Australia; Elaine Riddell, Hamilton; Sandra Simpson, Tauranga.

Open Junior Section (Judge: Lynn Davidson). **Overall winner**: Nalini Singh, Wanganui; **1<sup>st</sup> runner-up (secondary)**: Nalini Singh, Wanganui; **2<sup>nd</sup> runner-up (secondary)**: Rowan Woods, Auckland; **1<sup>st</sup> runner-up (primary/intermediate)**: Phoebe Barrett, Whakatane; **2<sup>nd</sup> runner-up (primary/intermediate)**: Fergus Beadel, Christchurch. **Highly Commended**: Emily Draper, Auckland; Sophia Frentz, Tauranga; Charlotte Guy, Auckland; Kate Loveys, Auckland; Leika McIver, Palmerston North; Isabella Tayler, USA (2). **Commended**: Rosie Bolderston, Christchurch; Charlotte Hall, Arrowtown; Roanna Lin, Auckland; Alex Rainbow, Arrowtown; Nalini Singh, Wanganui (2); Isabella Tayler, USA; Marina Vivas, Christchurch.

Haiku Junior Section (Judge: Karen Peterson Butterworth). **Winner of the Jeanette Stace Memorial Award**: Ashleigh Goh, Christchurch. **Secondary** – **1<sup>st</sup>**: Harry Frentz, Tauranga; **2<sup>nd</sup>**: Hannah Ban, Christchurch; **3<sup>rd</sup>**: Daniel Maier-Gant, Christchurch. **Primary/ Intermediate** – **1<sup>st</sup>**: Ashleigh Goh, Christchurch; **2<sup>nd</sup>**: Brenna Quinlivan, Christchurch; **3<sup>rd</sup>**: Sophie Marris, Christchurch. **Highly Commended**: Chanel Feala, Christchurch; Harry Frentz, Tauranga (2); Sophia Frentz, Tauranga; Georgiana Gall, Christchurch; Sophie Marris, Christchurch; Oscar Wilson, Christchurch. **Commended**: Frances Campbell, Christchurch; Bridget Craig, Christchurch; Harry Frentz, Tauranga; Eleanor Hurton, Christchurch; Juliette Newman, Christchurch; Tarbon Walker, Auckland.

And if you're wondering about all those Christchurch names in the Haiku Junior list, the majority of them are students of creative writing teacher and NZPS member Kerrin Davidson. Congratulations to Kerrin for her students' success.

Unless you are at home in the metaphor, you are not safe anywhere.

Robert Frost

## ***Congratulations***

**Ernest Berry** – Winner of the Elizabeth Searle Lamb Award in the Kaji Aso Studio 22nd Annual Haiku Contest:

spider silk  
broken starlight  
between pines

and an honourable mention for 'deserted church'.  
– 3<sup>rd</sup> in the 2009 Eleventh Jack Stamm Haiku Award:

ocean floor  
the ribs and backbone  
of the fishing boat

– 3<sup>rd</sup> in Haiku Ireland's kukai #20:

old bucket  
raindrops hit the bottom  
of the sound

**Nicola Eastwood** has a poem in the forthcoming *The Great American Poetry Show 2* - <http://greatamericanpoetryshow.com/> - and another in Mark Pirie's new anthology of cricket poems, currently in production.

**Charles Hadfield** has had a poem accepted for *PoetryNZ 41*, as a direct result of the workshop he completed under the tutelage of **Siobhan Harvey**.

*Valley Micropress*, the journal published by Upper Hutt member **Tony Chad** has had a run of NZPS members as Featured Poets this year: as noted in the last issue, **Vaughan Rapatahana** was March's poet, and has been followed by **Laurice Gilbert** in May and **Robin Fry** in June.

**Jenny Powell** was short listed for the 2009 UK Plough Poetry Prize. There were 1035 entries.

## ***President's Report – 2009-2010***

*Laurice Gilbert, President, June 2010 AGM.*

### **Patrons and Sponsors**

I'd like to begin by acknowledging and thanking our Patrons and Sponsors. Dame Fiona Kidman is an active member of the Society, and Vincent O'Sullivan kindly remains a nominal Patron and generously contributed to the cost of my travel to Christchurch to present the Lauris Edmond Award in September.

Our major financial sponsor for the 2009-2010 financial year was the Creative Communities Wellington Local Funding Scheme, and we are grateful for the part this scheme played in enabling us to continue our monthly Wellington meetings.

Asia:New Zealand has continued to support the Junior Haiku section of the International Poetry Competition, with the prizes covered by their grant. We greatly value the support they provide each year.

The web development company, Signify, hosts our website for free, for which I am truly grateful. I have had little need for IT support this year, but it was good to know that Daniel Bar-Even was at the other end of the phone for those rare occasions.

Finally, the Thistle Inn has continued to be a comfortable and welcoming host venue for our monthly meetings, and I'm grateful to Manager Richard Walsh for his encouragement to hold our meetings here.

### **Committee**

The financial year opened with four committee members besides myself: Gillian Cameron, Anne Faulkner (as a cheque signatory), Linzy Forbes (Vice-President) and Tim Jones. They have contributed their time

generously to supporting my work and I'm grateful for their encouragement. Alan Wells was elected after nomination from the floor at the 2009 AGM. Linzy Forbes resigned as Vice-President prior to moving to Dunedin, from where he continues to be a supportive email committee member.

As always, the day-to-day work of the committee has been carried out by me, in my role as National Coordinator, with emailed support, advice and encouragement from the other committee members as required.

### **Membership**

At the end of the financial year in March 2010, we had 260 members. As usual, Wellington remained the biggest membership area, with Auckland and the Far North in second place, followed closely by the Canterbury region. 15 members lived outside NZ.

### *a fine line*

The magazine continues to tick over as a core part of the Society's services. Feature articles are of excellent quality, and their topics have been varied and interesting. The regular book reviewers have been a great group to work with, and I'm grateful to everyone who has contributed over the year, in whatever way they have, for their assistance in keeping the magazine interesting.

In view of the loss of Creative New Zealand funding, thank you to those who opt to receive their magazine by email, thus saving on the costs of printing and postage. I have no intention of eliminating the printed option, as I know that there are many who still prefer the physical object and there are also members without access to email.

### **Competition/Anthology 2009**

Once more these two activities complemented each other, as the funds raised from the competition subsidised the production of the anthology. Michael Harlow, Sue Wootton, Tony Chad and Linzy Forbes made a great job of the judging.

Congratulations to Frankie McMillan (Christchurch) and Claire Knight (one of our UK members) for winning the Open and Haiku sections respectively. Charlotte Trevella (Rangiora) achieved a hat trick by winning the Open Junior section for the third year in a row, and Sophia Frentz (Tauranga) with her undoubted talent won both First and Second in the Junior Haiku.

Our 2009 editor, Barbara Strang, produced another super anthology, which sold well, and we made a small profit overall. In view of both Charlotte Trevella's achievement and Frankie McMillan's win, we held the anthology launch in Christchurch in November. It was attended by around 100 people, and was a most pleasurable event, with the youngest reader being 7 years old.

We are most grateful to the Jeanette Stace Poetry Trust for additional prizes awarded to both the haiku and junior haiku winners, in memory of Jeanette, who was a longstanding and hard-working member of the Society.

### **Website**

The website continues to develop, with the help of zeal.com, which provided me with a free consultation early this year. Despite an inclination to prefer words, I have introduced images, though they're a bit random at this stage. I subscribe to a number of websites that supply information on poetry competitions and submission opportunities, and I update this section of the members' area whenever I'm between other jobs.

As always, Sandra Simpson has kept the HaikuNZ pages current and topical, and I am pleased we are able to support the New Zealand haiku community in this way.

### **Wellington Meetings**

This year's financial supporter of Wellington meetings has been the Creative Communities Local Funding Scheme. Combined with a small door charge this enabled us to pay both poets and coordinator, though the income was still not sufficient to cover travel and accommodation to bring in out-of-town poets.

Nevertheless, we were fortunate enough to have a good variety of readings from both local and more

distant poets. Our April guest was Claire Kirwan, a well-received performance poet from Liverpool. In May we heard Chris Price, a full house making up for the last time she read for us, when we had only 3 in the audience. June was the AGM, followed by a mini workshop I took for the 10 enthusiastic people who stayed on. Lynne Davidson came in July, and in August there were contributors from *Voyagers: Science Fiction Poetry from New Zealand*, hosted by Linzy Forbes. In September Lewis Scott attracted a standing room only crowd, and in October Helen Rickerby introduced us to the joys of video poetry, showing us some clips she has posted on YouTube. Charlotte Simmonds rounded out 2009 for us in November, and we began 2010 with John Ansell, who enjoyed himself so much he read for over an hour, to the delight of those in attendance. In March we concluded the financial year with an inspiring session with Mary-Jane Grandinetti, American editor of online journals *fib review* and *Shot Glass Journal*. Mary-Jane was in Wellington for the International Arts Festival, and went on to read for the Canterbury Poets Collective in Christchurch.

We have been very fortunate with our guest poets, and I'm grateful to those who agreed to read for us.

### **Financial Matters**

It has been an easier year for the Society financially, partly due to the increase in membership fees, and partly due to my taking a significant pay cut as National Coordinator. An application to Creative New Zealand in July was declined once again, despite my meeting with the literary adviser for that organisation to get advice on making the application. As only 30% of applicants received grants, it is clear that CNZ can no longer be relied on for financial support, and I have no plans to repeat that unrewarding exercise. In effect I have decided to continue to work for a nominal honorarium, and I offer grateful thanks to my gainfully employed husband Wally, who has found himself co-opted to the position of de facto Patron of the Arts.

I hasten to add that this is not entirely altruistic – the job gives me great pleasure, and the option of returning to my former career simply to increase my income is not an attractive one. Since I'm not qualified for anything else I'll keep doing this as long as it works for all concerned, and hope that the committee will let me know when I reach my use-by date.

### **Poetry Advisory Service**

There was one application this year. Despite the lack of demand, it remains the only poetry-specific assessment service available, and is easy and not time-consuming to administer, so will continue.

### **The Lauris Edmond Award**

This was awarded to Brian Turner in September 2009. In order to synchronise it with the Christchurch Writers and Readers Festival the normally biennial award will be made again this year, and then will return to alternate years. The 'Friends of the Lauris Edmond Award' committee met in Wellington in March to select this year's recipient. The Festival is in September, and once more the President of the NZPS will be there to present the award; I hope that will be me.

### **Conclusion**

The recession has had an effect on both our income and membership numbers, both of which were reduced relative to the previous year. Nevertheless, we still have a core of dedicated and active members, and the Society is looking healthy and well-supported. I thank all of you who have stayed with us, and hope you continue to enjoy the benefits of membership.

Like stones, words are laborious and unforgiving, and the fitting of them together, like the fitting of stones, demands great patience and strength of purpose and particular skill.

~ Edmund Morrison

## ***Publications***

New arrivals on the NZPS bookshelf since the last issue:

*Manual: the fourth 20* Richard Berengarten (Earl of Seacliff Art Workshop, 2010)

*Walls to Kick and Hills to Sing From: A Comedy With Interruptions* Murray Edmond (AUP, 2010)

*Time Traveller* **Robin Fry** (ESAW, 2010)

*Dear Sweet Harry* Lynn Jenner (AUP, 2010)

*Songcatcher* **Robynne Milford** (White Stream Press, 2009)

*Leaving the Tableland* **Kerry Popplewell** (Steele Roberts, 2010)

*The Pop Artist's Garland: Selected Poems 1952-2009* **F W N Wright** (HeadworX, 2010)

## ***Surfing the Web - members***

<http://www.rangifaith.co.nz> Rangi Faith

<http://janisfreegard.wordpress.com/> Janis Freegard

<http://timjonesbooks.blogspot.com/> Tim Jones – *Books in the Trees*

[www.freewebs.com/justohugo/index](http://www.freewebs.com/justohugo/index) Hugo Kauri Justo - *Island of Universe* (text is in Portuguese)

[www.fionakidman.co.nz](http://www.fionakidman.co.nz) - Dame Fiona Kidman (Patron)

<http://harveymolloy.blogspot.com/> Harvey Molloy – *Notebook*

<http://jopre.wordpress.com/> Joanna Preston – *A Dark Feathered Art*

<http://wingedink.blogspot.com/> Helen Rickerby – *Winged Ink*

<http://highcountrypoeet.ning.com/> Greg Wilson

We have a links section on our website for members' blogs and websites. If you want yours linked, send details (ie the URL) to me at: [info@poetrysociety.co.nz](mailto:info@poetrysociety.co.nz)

## ***Noticeboard***

WRITERS ON MONDAYS, Wellington: July-September. The IIML's popular winter series of readings and interviews will shortly be under way for 2010. For the full programme see:

[www.victoria.ac.nz/modernletters/](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/modernletters/)

NATIONAL POETRY DAY

<http://www.booksellers.co.nz/awards/new-zealand-post-book-awards/poetry-day> Lots of things going on, and a poetry competition as well. For events in your area, check the Booksellers website.

## ***Competitions & Submissions***

**Heartland Poetry - Poems about your Community. Entries Close: Friday 16 July.** Free entry. The National Poetry Day theme is "Poetry in the Community": poems about any community that is important to you – sporting, academic or even a virtual community. Book tokens for the best three poems: 1<sup>st</sup> \$200.00; 2<sup>nd</sup> \$100.00, 3<sup>rd</sup> \$50.00. Each will also receive a year's subscription to *Valley Micropress*. Winners announced Friday 30th July at evening poetry event and local finalists invited to read. A selection of poems later published as a commemorative booklet. Entry forms from [www.upperhuttcity.com](http://www.upperhuttcity.com) or [www.upperhuttlibrary.co.nz](http://www.upperhuttlibrary.co.nz) The National Coordinator also has copies - send SSAE to NZPS. Contact: Tennille Maxey at Upper Hutt City Library - (04) 527 2132.

**National Poetry Day Competition. Deadline: 16 July.** Free entry. To celebrate National Poetry Day, Time Out Bookstore, with *Sunday Star-Times*, is holding a nationwide poetry competition. Submissions by email only to [competition@timeout.co.nz](mailto:competition@timeout.co.nz), subject line 'poetry'. Upper word limit 300 and the competition is open to **previously unpublished** poets over 16 years of age only. Winner announced on National Poetry Day, Friday 30 July and will receive a \$500 Time Out Voucher. The winning poem will be published in the *Sunday Star-Times* on 1 August.

***Msllexia* Poetry Competition for Women who Write (UK). Deadline: 26 July.** Entry fee: £5 for up to 3 poems. (NB: there is a £1 processing charge to cover administration of online entry) 1<sup>st</sup> £1,000, 2<sup>nd</sup> £500, 3<sup>rd</sup> £250. 22 other finalists will receive £25 each. All winning poems published in *Msllexia*. Winners notified mid-September. Website, with all entry details and entry form:

[http://www.msllexia.co.uk/whatson/msbusiness/pcomp\\_active.php](http://www.msllexia.co.uk/whatson/msbusiness/pcomp_active.php)

**Essex Poetry Festival Open Poetry Competition (UK) Deadline: 30 July.** Entry Fee: £6. 1<sup>st</sup> £1,000, 2<sup>nd</sup> £500, 3<sup>rd</sup> £250 and 3 runners-up: £50. Poems may be up to 40 lines, and on any subject. Website:

<http://www.essex-poetry-festival.co.uk/compa.html>

**Rattle #34 - Call for Submissions (USA) Deadline: 1 August.** Theme: Mental Health Professionals. Poetry: the tribute section will feature poetry written by mental health practitioners - poets must be working or retired from a career in mental health. To submit via email or hard copy follow the online guidelines, but please note in the cover letter that you are submitting for the mental health workers tribute. For full details go to: <http://www.rattle.com/callsforsubs.htm>

***a fine line* - call for submissions Deadline: 7 August.** The editor welcomes your contribution. We currently pay a small fee for Feature Articles. See publication guidelines for these and other sections of the magazine at <http://www.poetrysociety.org.nz/aboutsubmissionguidelines>

**Arvon International Poetry Competition (UK). Closing date: 16 August.** Entry fee: £7 per poem. This prestigious biennial poetry competition was founded by Ted Hughes in 1980 . 1<sup>st</sup> prize is £7,500 - the highest ever offered in the competition and one of the most generous prizes available for a single poem. There's also a special prize of £500, offered in association with The Wenlock Poetry Festival, for the best poem on the theme 'The Pity of War...' Judge: Carol Ann Duffy, with Elaine Feinstein and Sudeep Sen. Open to anyone aged 16 or over, from any country. Poems must be written in English, on any subject, and maximum of 42 lines in length. Previous winners include former Poet Laureate Andrew Motion, Don Paterson and Siân Hughes. Enter online at <http://arvonfoundation.org/p236.html>

**Writers' Journal Poetry Contest (USA) Deadline: 30 August.** Fee: \$3.00/poem - U.S. funds only. 1<sup>st</sup> \$50.00, 2<sup>nd</sup> \$25.00, 3<sup>rd</sup> \$15.00, Plus Honorable Mentions. 1<sup>st</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> published in the *Writers' Journal*. Maximum length 25 lines. Entries typed on 8 1/2" x 11" paper, 2 copies. Name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address, if available, in upper left corner of one copy; no name or address on duplicate. Only original, previously unpublished poems accepted. *Writers' Journal* requires only one-time rights to winning entries. Send Entries to: "Poetry Contest", Val-Tech Media, P.O. Box 394, Perham, MN 56573, USA. Multiple entries from one party may be mailed in one envelope. Please make checks or money orders payable to: Writers' Journal. Submissions must be postmarked by the deadline date. Any postmarked after the deadline date will be placed in the subsequent contest. Submissions will not be returned.

**Aesthetica Creative Works Competition (UK).**

**Closing date: 31 August.** The Competition has three categories: Artwork, Poetry and Fiction. Entry fee: £10. Winners and finalists are published in the *Aesthetica Creative Works Annual*. Winners of each category receive £500 prize money. The entry fee allows the submission of 2 images, 2 poems or 2 short stories. Poems must be no more than 40 lines each. More guidelines on how to submit can be found online at [http://www.aestheticamagazine.com/submission\\_guide.htm](http://www.aestheticamagazine.com/submission_guide.htm)

**Bravado. Closing Date: 31 August.** Entry fee: \$NZ5 a poem, or \$NZ10 for three. Judge: Michael Harlow. 1<sup>st</sup> \$500; 2<sup>nd</sup> \$250 3<sup>rd</sup> \$150. Five Highly Commended poets get a year's free subscription to *Bravado*. All winning poems published in November issue. Rules on the website at [www.bravado.co.nz](http://www.bravado.co.nz) or send an email to: [bravadoinfo@bravado.co.nz](mailto:bravadoinfo@bravado.co.nz) or contact: Jenny Argante, Competition Secretary, Bravado Magazine Inc., PO Box 13533, Central Tauranga 3141, New Zealand

## 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.

### WINDRIFT, Wellington

Kerry Popplewell

The Windrift Haiku meeting on June 17 at Sally Holmes' place was a particularly lively and congenial affair. There were contributions not only from the eight members present, but from four other poets as well. Among these, the haiku John Ross sent in made some trenchant comments on current issues and events.

Throughout the meeting, discussion of particular haiku led us to consider more general issues: for instance, should haiku be spare and minimalist, or is it better to be expansive and give more weight to euphony and rhythm? Debate became quite impassioned and at one point when, having held forth for some time, I said "I will now shut up", Bevan Greenslade responded "Yeah, right!"

The entries for 'any subject' encompassed a wide variety of subject matter: taiko drummers, fantails, neighbourly relations, and different aspects of autumnal or winter weather. This one is by Sally Holmes:

one leaf left on the fig tree overnight  
now, none

The next group of haiku focussed on 'hibernation'. Word play was present in Bevan's:

on the Spanish oak  
in the gall  
a wasp asleep

This, it was decided, was a 'value-added' haiku as we also learnt about the habits of wasps.!

'Transience', the subject for the final group of haiku, sparked some very different responses. We chuckled appreciatively at Laurice's:

going out for lunch -  
a hedgehog  
crossing the road

And we enjoyed, given local knowledge, the unexpected in Penny Pruden's:

last of the sunset  
a ridge of gold  
across the Orongorongos

At the end of the meeting Sally served us a delicious vegetarian curry and, most satisfied, we all went home.

VALE – IRENE RUTH d. June 2010

Nola Borrell

I think it's 4 years since Irene left her home in Stokes Valley for Napier - first to live with her daughter and then in her own apartment. Not longer after she shifted she showed me her book, *Bridging Time*, published for her family & friends. I recall she introduced her haiku with one by Issa of seeing beauty in snow, although he was dying. Her haiku in that book had themes of loss and death as well as hope and rays of pleasure. She dedicated the book to her unknown great-great-granddaughter.

pansy bed  
the many faces  
of love

*Irene Ruth, Windrift report, a fine line, April 2006*

## OCTAGON POETS, Dunedin

*Carolyn McCurdie*

Emma Neale was our guest poet at the Circadian Rhythm cafe on June 23. Emma's reputation ensured that a good crowd braved the winter cold and damp, and her reading, a mix of old and new work, was deeply satisfying. In the open mic part of the evening, readers included Sue Wootton, Carolyn McCurdie, Ann Jacobson, Larry Matthews, Liz Breslin, Martha Morseth, Penelope Todd, Sarah Paterson, Tim Robinson, Matthew Robertson and Lydia O'Dwyer. MC was Carolyn McCurdie.

Octagon Poets meet fortnightly at 8pm at Circadian Rhythm. July 7 will be a themed open mic evening, suggested theme 'home' and MC Kay Cooke. Lydia O'Dwyer (Edwards) will be guest poet July 21, with MC Martha Morseth. Entry is free, all are welcome.

## *Reviews*

*mirabile dictu*, Michele Leggott (AUP, 2009) RRP \$27.99 ISBN: 978-1-86940-440-6.

*Liz Breslin*

one thing leads to another  
though the trail is not always  
obvious

So begins 'the liberty of parrots', one of the fifty six poems that make up *mirabile dictu*. Relating wonders. And it's an apt hook into this book, which is packed with pluralities of images, sounds, smells, stories. There are poems about family, about journeys, about Italy, about poets, about poetry. For us as readers, the trail, indeed, is not always obvious. And it's rewarding to stick with it, read closely and revisit.

No pun intended with stick in the last sentence. Though two sorts of sticks figure prominently in the collection. The first, a set of tokotoko, talking sticks, presented to Leggott as the inaugural New Zealand Poet Laureate. The second, the white cane with which "she's walking/ the road to implementation". In a city walk in 'smoke tree',

the steps  
chuckle not difficult  
to read that one a whiff  
of jasmine in front of  
a fence a flat white  
in Exchange Lane a sugar  
cone from Valentino's  
are you ok they ask we weren't  
sure you knew where you  
were the water smiles

The 'chichichichi' of the stick walks the light/ dark line, as Leggott, through this collection, journeys on with her failing sight. Still, daily wonders are strongly re-visioned. Here are just two of the swathes of examples that leap out:

dark Siena gold and purple sockettes  
on the feet of the Child  
(*'passagiata'*)

and  
cheekbones  
focussing an old charm  
(*'tessuti'*)

Looking at the poems on the page, the gaps between the words also play an interesting part in the reading experience. Although these are mostly long, wordy works, the line breaths make them work both

horizontally and vertically and really pace the poems. There's a beautiful bit of spacing in 'tessuti', where they "take t r a v e l a t o r s" - the word looks so perfect stretched out that way, it was natural and new all at once. And that's the kind of dense, intelligent detail that can be noticed on every page of this collection. There are too many gems to do justice to here.

Another visual pleasure is in 'gulielmus igitur', where three identical ship pictures are placed between each stanza. And then there's 'winter 1928', letters from daddy, punctuated by stickmen.

Although there's deep, demanding reading in the 154 pages here, there's also lots of light relief. Take 'Te Kikorangi'. In 'tell your mama', we learn that it's

the sky-blue stick  
whose stories have just begun

Te Kikorangi, we could call it  
almost as good as the blue from Kapiti  
we eat when the good times roll.

Te Kikorangi appears again in conversation with Leggott in 'taking it seriously'. They talk about:

working till midnight  
three thousand words forty percent out of coffee  
out of smokes out of time the computer ate it  
and that one doesn't give extensions  
even for dead grandmothers my tenth  
this semester heartless just heartless  
how will my grandmothers cope  
with the news of my expiry from Intellectual  
Over-Utilisation Syndrome IOUs  
and youse and youse I am the future  
sitting here in academic drag flat broke  
about to get an arts degree  
how do you come back from that?

...

uh huh comes the reply  
why don't you help me get this hapuka  
into the smoker and tell Walt (Whitman) to bring  
his grandma as well as a good red  
and whatever poems he's written lately  
we'll have a session there's always room  
in the world for poems grandmothers  
and arts degrees looking for a good time

Indeed. The stick rears its head again a few times, and many of the poems refer backwards and forwards to each other in strong or subtle ways. 'Nice feijoas' talks about "poet philosophers" and traces the finding of a poem with the minutiae of a day. 'shore space' imagines a cacophony of who's who NZ poets turning up to help one of their own head offshore. There's something so touching about

a sausage sizzle to do a fundraiser  
for a poet who has run out of cornflakes  
on the other side of the world.

Those be poetic realities. And there are so many realities in this collection. Familiar and foreign journeys. TradeMe. Histories. Families. Sweet fruit. Lost sight. Lost babies. A kid in an alleyway tuning up his violin and "belting out/My Heart Will Go On with full/ orchestral backing from a box".

Leggott absolutely achieves the effect of the "poetic emporium" that she outlines on the front fly. There are so many wonders related in *mirabile dictu*. It's a really, really, really rewarding journey of a read. Last words go to the stick:

bring on your poems dance with your grannies  
we feast with the gods tonight.

*The Double Rainbow: James K Baxter, Ngati Hau and the Jerusalem Commune* John Newton (Victoria University Press, 2009) RRP \$40 ISBN 9780864736031

Keith Nunes

What really happened at Jerusalem when James K Baxter moved into town? Were the locals behind him? Did the commune change anything and what happened after Baxter died? John Newton's *The Double Rainbow* gives readers a genuine insight into Baxter's Nga Mokai (the fatherless) followers, the Ngati Hau who helped the commune survive and the legacy it left.

Newton digs into the psyche of the commune by interviewing dozens of ex-commune residents as well as people who had peripheral contact with the 1970s movement. What I like here is that the author gives an all-encompassing view of the Whanganui River commune - the history of the area; the people in the neighbouring pa; Baxter and those involved with him.

Newton's book has left me with something special - an idea of what New Zealand's most famous poet was trying to do at Jerusalem and, perhaps as important, who was there with him and who held up the walls after he died.

The Double Rainbow name is born from this statement: When Maori and Pakeha do these things together the double rainbow begins to shine. The bi-cultural journey is paramount here. Newton describes a virtual experiment with a group of Pakeha submitting or working at least within the framework of a Maori community and way of life – it could be said that the Jerusalem commune conveys an image of what a bicultural Aotearoa might yet become.

A poet and critic and former university lecturer, Newton says "Jerusalem isn't a place to visit lightly". He paints a vivid picture of river life and in fact New Zealand itself in the late 1960s and early 1970s. From this comes James K Baxter and his vision of communal, harmonious and Christian life.

Tim Shadbolt wrote after visiting Baxter's experiment that the commune was more of a "rural crashpad. A place where anyone could stay when the city smashed their souls and brains." Baxter's "Jerusalem hug" welcomed all comers initially and the place was thrown into the public arena by the news media.

The book goes on to describe life at Jerusalem during the Baxter years as sometimes stormy and giving but always right-minded. The local pa and Maori river people kept the youngsters in food and direction and Newton highlights a number of them who were colourful and soulful.

The book doesn't get bogged down in Baxter rhetoric and in fact spends just as much time dealing with characters like post-Baxter commune leader Greg Chalmers who at 22 showed immense moral and physical strength to guide those who stayed on. The commune would continue for three years after Baxter's 1972 death and would, says Newton, enter its period of greatest maturity.

Much of the last third of the book deals with the fallout from the commune after it finally splintered and the spin-off communes and crashpads around the country that owed their histories to ex-commune residents. This is where a reader could get lost - if you're a strictly "tell me about Baxter" fan then this last section might drift off into the ether. For those keen to know how New Zealand reacted to Baxter's commune after he died this is an intriguing section of the book.

Overall I enjoyed the up-close and personal look at the commune and its ramifications. It's a part of the country's history worth telling.

I have made this a rather long letter because I haven't had time to make it shorter.

Blaise Pascal

## ***KiwiHaiku***

piercing cold –  
a kea calls  
through the mist

*Barbara Strang*

foggy morning  
a field full  
of spider webs

*Celia Hope*

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 –

Pink blushes of early dawn  
Grace the mists drifting over the smile of my lover  
Serene above the snow draped mountain  
Suddenly, in full wakefulness, I rouse  
To the lingering touch of her perfume.

*Greg Wilson*

the tui in the bush  
would not say hello  
though I greeted him  
one hundred times:  
but clearly I heard him say goodbye

*Jenny Argante*

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.

## ***Mini Competition***

Here is the “food” winner, by Sue Fitchett, of Waiheke Island. Congratulations, Sue. The DVD is on its way. Thank you everyone who entered the food mini competition. I’ll have a new one in the next issue. I’m all competitioned out for the moment.

### **Kiwi coffee lounge benediction**

I’m a time lord in this provincial city  
up near a roof lit by the sky  
throat moist & lumpy  
stepping from the Tardis  
into

*a Kiwi coffee lounge*

white bread wraps asparagus  
cheese & pineapple sandwiches squish

there are heaps of chips cheap as chips  
cheese scones  
lamingtons  
custard squares  
a stuffed baked potato

hot toastie triangles whisk past  
my double chocolate shake's long & cold  
the blonde waitress snows down south  
her toenails smartie red  
Farmers' fashions  
the RSA pin  
workman's boots  
the perm  
walking sticks  
are here in droves  
plus a pram or two  
& best of all  
no cell phones ring

*God of nations at thy feet  
in the bonds of love we meet*

rattles at the back of my teeth  
I daren't open my mouth  
or close my eyes  
two angels  
or sparrows  
their wing breeze  
a benediction on my arm  
land on the lino

hop & peck

hop & peck

as if this is most ordinary  
we keep eating & talking

tender our smiles

### ***How it is***

#### **My Poetry Kit Experience**

*Julie V. Simpson*

I'm a new poet and recently did the 'Poetry 1' course with Poetry Kit [www.poetrykit.org](http://www.poetrykit.org)  
Jim Bennett, Liverpool, is the managing editor and a poet of some distinction and acclaim.  
[www.poetrykit.org/jim/index.htm](http://www.poetrykit.org/jim/index.htm)

The 10 assignments in Poetry 1 were a mix of either: a) reading, answering questions and commenting on existing poems (classical or modern) then sending back your comments to Jim, and/or b) writing a poem in a particular style. Some assignments would be just to read poems, answer questions and make comments, while other assignments would be to write a poem. Several assignments comprised both reading, commenting and writing.

Jim Bennett knows his poetry, that is clear. He has a relaxed, easy manner and provides feedback that

is productive, encouraging and confidence building. I thoroughly enjoyed the course, from start to finish, so much so that I have now enrolled in 'Poetry 2'.

### **Duck Creek Road**

Dappled shadows play  
where the road bends

Mangroves pungent rising  
duck prints in mud

Six ducks cross  
bedraggled indian file

Sun's final effort  
halo's yacht masts

Seagulls wheel lazily  
shadows close the day.

### ***American Life in Poetry: Column 259***

By Ted Kooser. U.S. Poet Laureate, 2004–2006 (*Reprinted with permission*)

Wisconsin writer Freya Manfred is not only a fine poet but the daughter of the late Frederick Manfred, a distinguished novelist of the American west. Here is a lovely snapshot of her father, whom I cherished among my good friends.

### **Green Pear Tree in September**

On a hill overlooking the Rock River  
my father's pear tree shimmers,  
in perfect peace,  
covered with hundreds of ripe pears  
with pert tops, plump bottoms,  
and long curved leaves.

Until the green-haloed tree  
rose up and sang hello,  
I had forgotten. . .

He planted it twelve years ago,  
when he was seventy-three,  
so that in September  
he could stroll down  
with the sound of the crickets  
rising and falling around him,  
and stand, naked to the waist,  
slightly bent, sucking juice  
from a ripe pear.

American Life in Poetry is made possible by [The Poetry Foundation](http://www.poetryfoundation.org) publisher of *Poetry* magazine. It is also supported by the Department of English at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. Poem copyright ©2003 by Freya Manfred. Her most recent book of poems is *Swimming With A Hundred Year Old Snapping Turtle*, Red Dragonfly Press, 2008. Poem reprinted from *My Only Home*, Red Dragonfly Press, 2003, by permission of Freya Manfred and the publisher. Introduction copyright ©2010 by The Poetry Foundation.

The introduction's author, Ted Kooser, served as United States Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress from 2004-2006. We do not accept unsolicited manuscripts.

## MEMBERS' POEMS

### **As Soon As**

*(for baby Eleanor, who lived for just a few days before Christmas 2009)*

i)

Although the dusk's settled  
and the moon's appeared

a lone bird calls  
from the hill

this quiet so quiet  
save for that call

calling from  
the top of the highest tree

the moon rising  
into disquiet

ii)

The promised weather change  
never came

all afternoon the heat  
grew and grew

shrieks from the beach  
but no

shark no  
much more disturbing

that evening was so  
quiet

iii)

Words start and stop  
the clouds drift

writing comes  
then fades

there was a full moon  
on New Year's Eve

and now the wind sighs through the pines  
but we

can no longer  
hear



**this birthday ...**

winter lurks behind the hedge  
sun red leaves steady for flight  
washing hung at noon  
will be harvested at four  
to forestall the first fires

you are not obliged  
to like me or my words  
if you do it is  
a momentary warmth

sun and wind in the linen  
will season my sleep  
i may think of you  
with or without regret

*Lynn Frances*

**Real**

If I could capture real  
I'd be bleeding

I'd drop the trousers  
I'd offer thanks

But the real is off key  
and I disguise like  
all manner of humans

We bleep and on Sundays  
or during drunken bouts we bleat  
about what aches

but there's no real anymore  
just a butterfly membrane  
a fly screen awning

and bam  
we're hovering  
in between  
inside this or that

plaster tearing  
baked bread battered  
by bored bogans

and in the slipstream  
there's only mothers and  
gratuities and  
an overwhelming sense of unevenness

*Keith Nunes*

**postcolonial boy**

could never  
work out  
what god  
& the queen  
had to do  
with  
us

mooching  
through  
that  
bloody empiric dirge

every

morning  
in school.

neither came near  
us  
&  
our  
second-hand-me-downs,  
in  
Mangere,

as far as  
I recall.

could never  
comprehend  
why  
CompulsoryMilitaryTraining

- some crazy jingoistic suck-up –

dragooned us,

a d r i f t  
In Waiouru,

bleary-eyed,  
in  
jumbo  
overcoats,

gearing to  
fight  
viet cong

who didn't  
glean where  
we came from,

only

that we  
were too  
damned fat  
for their  
cunning  
tunnels.

just wanted to be  
a  
wild  
postcolonial  
boy

up  
back  
of  
Whetumatarau,

eating  
the blue sky  
for breakfast  
every  
day,

unfurling  
tino rangatiratanga  
from that  
spare-room  
drawer

&

floating  
it  
on the  
hang  
mouth  
c l o t h e s l i n e

for all  
the world  
to be.

*Vaughan Rapatahana*

## The Craftswoman

"Another beautiful dress!"  
my neighbour admires the latest example  
of my mother's handiwork  
pink umbrellas on grey cotton  
frilled around the hem and tied at the waist

tied at the waist my mother's apron is worn and thin  
the day she puts her head in the oven

"What a delicious spread!"  
my uncle and aunt and cousin tuck in  
to scones and éclairs and sponge cake  
which my father claims for getting cream and jam  
into his mouth is the perfect vehicle

is the perfect vehicle motoring along the Hutt Road  
the day my mother opens the door and steps out?

"Your mother makes such original jumpers!"  
my teacher inspects the intricacies  
of multicoloured patchwork wool  
knitted crocheted cajoled into  
child-sized shapes and patterns impossible to describe

impossible to describe the patterns and shapes in my mother's mind  
when she bombards her brain with a hundred pills

"Such a troubled childhood!"  
my psychiatrist pokes around in my skeleton cupboard  
examining my mother's handiwork  
the apron strings and the chocolate éclairs  
and the multicoloured patchwork of her love for me

of her love for me I never had any doubt -  
it was weaving her own soul she had trouble with

*Laurice Gilbert*

SEPTEMBER DEADLINE is 7th August