



a fine line

May 2009

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

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MAY MEETING

Chris Price, Wellington

Monday 18 May, 7.30pm

The Thistle Inn, 3 Mulgrave St, Wellington

Meeting begins with an open mic

\$2 entry

JUNE MEETING

NZ Poetry Society AGM

Monday 15 June, 7.30pm

The Thistle Inn, 3 Mulgrave St, Wellington

followed by a short poetry workshop:

your National Coordinator will present some exercises for stimulating new work.

Bring pen and paper and be prepared to join in.

There is no charge for this meeting.

Contents:

- 2 Feature Article: 'Six Tips For Introducing Students To Poetry' *Harvey Molloy*
- 3 From the National Coordinator *Laurice Gilbert*
About Our Contributors
A Warm Welcome To...
- 4 Notice of Annual General Meeting 2009
Congratulations
Publications – what's new on the NZPS bookshelf
- 5 Noticeboard
- 6 Surfing the Web
Workshops & Residencies
- 7 Competitions and Submissions
- 9 Regional Report – Windrift, Wellington *Linzy Forbes*
- 10 Reviews – *Collected Poems 1951-2006* by CK Stead *Laurice Gilbert*
- 11 *My Iron Spine* by Helen Rickerby *Anne Harré*
- 12 HaikuNewZ
- 13 KiwiHaiku

- Ten Minutes with... *Anne Harré*
- 15 Members' Poems – Work from Rosetta Allan, Fred (Fritz) Buijn, Alexander Lomakin, Janet Newman, John O'Connor, Julie Ryan.

Feature Article

Six Tips For Introducing Students To Poetry

Harvey Molloy

What's the best way of introducing secondary students to poetry? In this article I want to address this question by sharing six guidelines that I try to follow in my own teaching practice as a secondary school teacher. Hopefully, these will be of use to other teachers and anyone hoping to start a poetry reading group.

1. Start with what students know. In my introductory classes I ask students to complete a brief questionnaire. What poems do they know? What song lyrics do they like? What lines from poems and songs can they remember? Some students say they can't remember any poems at all. When I remind them of nursery rhymes they often remember a poem. I like this exercise because it reminds them that as children we love poetry and song— poetry is part of how we learn to play with language and sounds. It's not a complicated add-on that we learn at secondary school for NCEA; it's something that was there right from when we first began to learn speech.
2. Read the poem aloud more than once. Playing a recording of a poet reading a poem aloud four or five times, or reading the poem out aloud and then asking students to read the poem, greatly helps students to appreciate the poem. After a few hearings students will begin to hear the poem's subtleties. I try to avoid jumping to analysis without taking the poem for a few spins around the classroom. Don't rush: you'd be surprised what meanings come to mind once you've heard a poem for the fourth time.
3. Favour regular exposure rather than short sharp shocks. You don't have to analyse to death every poem you read in class. It's important to teach students a poetry unit, but it's best to season your school year with sprinklings of poetry. I sometimes spend less than 10 minutes on a poem. I read the poem and then say why I appreciate the poem or point out a feature of the poem that relates to the main subject of the class.
4. Introduce students to local contemporary poets. Some students still labour under the misconception that most poets are dead Europeans. I teach in a northern Wellington suburb and when I introduce students to Hinemoana Baker, Lynn Davidson, Alistair Te Ariki Campbell and Sam Hunt (even if it's just an occasional poem as a class warm-up) I let them know that the poets live, or have lived, just up the road on the Kapiti Coast. Poetry magazines such as *Jaam*, *Sidestream*, *Sport* and *Takahe* also help students to realise that poetry is alive in New Zealand.
5. Take risks with selection. You don't have to know all the poems you read in class by the selected author backwards. There's a temptation with senior classes to focus exclusively on a few select poems by an author so as to prepare students for their 'read short text' examination questions. As teachers, we are expected to explain the formal properties of certain key poems and their range of meanings. Teachers often perform dissections of a poem before a class on an OHP much in the same manner that surgeons perform operations before interns. Not all poems need to go under the knife and not all poems can be explained. Ideally, the class should select one or two poems for reading and discussion (in reality this all depends on how much time you have and how motivated the students are to bring poems to class). If you're studying Plath, ask students to find a poem by Plath for the class to read. Be willing to accept ambiguity and

mystery when you read poems you're unfamiliar with together.

6. Try to get a local well-known poet to visit your school. A good reading can make poetry come alive and many poets are available for school visits. Some poets will also run intensive writing workshops for select students after their reading.

I haven't mentioned close reading or analysis much in this brief article. These are crucial for students to appreciate the depth and nuances of what they read. I follow these tips, time permitting, in the hope of trying to create a classroom environment which has the atmosphere of a poetry reading so that my students can at least have the chance of *enjoying* poetry. I do feel that these tips are successful because students tell me that by the end of the year they feel more comfortable with poetry than they did when they first entered the class. This isn't a rigorous measurement of academic achievement but it keeps me going.

From the National Coordinator

Laurice Gilbert

Great news: throughout July, the NZPS will have an official presence in Wellington's newly-established Cuba Street Garret Writers' Colony (formerly known as the Pohutukawa Garret), courtesy of the colony's brilliant founder, Doug Wilkins. I plan to work there on weekday afternoons, and the office will be available for Members' use by arrangement at other times. This is a wonderful opportunity to become part of a community of writers, and if I can manage to get some funding I aim to make it a permanent base.

In the meantime, if you need a place to get some quiet writing done in July (or just want to visit) contact me at. The individual offices are loosely named for astronomical entities and I apologise in advance for naming ours Uranus (it's my ruling planet).

And in other news, our AGM is approaching. All committee members are required to resign each year, and most of last year's members are happy to stand again. The job is not very onerous, and only requires regular access to email, so members don't have to be in Wellington. Full details of the meeting and nomination requirements appear below.

Finally, a reminder that membership is due for renewal. The renewal form was included as an attachment with last issue's email. All members stay on the list until the competition closes on 31 May, so you can renew when you send in your entries. Please remember to fill out the renewal form, rather than using the entry form, as it can go straight into the membership folder, saving me extra work at a really busy time. Thanks for your consideration.

About our Contributors

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:

Kushla Haenen Te Puke

Natalie Fox Maketu

Susan Millar Christchurch

Colin Patterson Leeston

Bhadra Rajendren New Plymouth

Nick Williamson Christchurch

Shirley Deuchrass Dunedin

Notice of Annual General Meeting 2009

The Annual General Meeting of the New Zealand Poetry Society Incorporated will be held at 7.30pm on Monday 15 June 2009 upstairs at the Thistle Inn, 3 Mulgrave St, Wellington.

AGENDA

- 1) Apologies
- 2) Confirmation of the Minutes of the 2008 AGM
– These are available on the Members' pages of the website, or by sending a SSAE to the National Coordinator.
- 3) Matters arising from the 2008 AGM Minutes
- 4) President's Report
- 5) Financial Report
- 6) Proposed Budget for 2009-2010
- 7) Election of Officers –
 - President
 - Vice-President
 - Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Committee Members
- 8) General Business

All current committee members are required to resign at the end of their term, so nominations are now being accepted. Nominations may be sent by post or email, and need to be made and seconded by financial members of the NZPS. All nominations must be received by 22nd May, to allow for distance voting to be put in place. Post to: The National Coordinator, NZPS, PO Box 5283, Wellington 6145, or email to: info@poetrysociety.org.nz There will be no open mic on the night of the AGM, but at the conclusion of the meeting, and after a short refreshment break, the National Coordinator will run a mini poetry workshop. This will be open to the public, and there will be no charge.

Congratulations

Best New Zealand Poems 2008, edited by James Brown, has works by NZPS members: Johanna Aitchison, David Beach, Emma Neale, Kerrin P. Sharpe and Tim Upperton. Well done all of you! Brown had the unimaginable task of selecting just 25 poems from the many works which were published in New Zealand in countless journals, anthologies, personal collections and other sources during the year. Making it into the final selection is mighty impressive to those of us striving just to get published.

In addition, Jo Thorpe made it onto the "subs bench", a further 5 poems that Brown would have included, had his limit not been so strict.

Publications

New arrivals on the NZPS bookshelf since the last issue:

Push (Black Doris Press, 2008) is David Gregory's third poetry collection, available for \$18 from Black Doris Press, David Howard, 213 Purakanui Rd, RD1, Port Chalmers 9081 or order from davidhoward@xtra.co.nz

the blind singer (AUP, 2009) is Chris Price's third collection, a delicious set of poems ushered in by a Bill Hammond cover. Chris is a tutor at the IIML (Wellington) and will be our Guest Poet in May.

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

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. The Festival is a joint initiative of Wellington City Council and Asia New Zealand, and will give us the opportunity to promote both haiku as a poetic form and the NZPS. 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.

POEMS IN THE WAITING ROOM, DUNEDIN

Ruth Arnison of Otago has successfully established a local Poems in the Waiting Room scheme, under license and start-up grant from Poems in the Waiting Room UK. The initial summer print run in November/December 2008 was 500 cards; there were 1000 for autumn and she's looking at 2000 cards for the winter edition. The poetry cards combine classic poems, including many from UK PitWR earlier editions, with new work by New Zealand poets. They have been welcomed by Dunedin medical practitioners and rest homes, and supplies have quickly run out in a number of surgeries. Armed with the local license, Ruth is now looking forward to expanding the project to cover more of NZ. Contact Ruth Arnison at arnison@xnet.co.nz You can follow the progress of the project at <http://www.pitwrnz.blogspot.com/>

NEW ANTHOLOGY OF ILLUSTRATED SPECULATIVE POETRY.

John Irvine's *Anomalous Appetites* is live. "For those readers who like their horror and sci fi sautéed slowly with garlic and served up on fine china, then this anthology is for you. "... This is a collector's anthology ... We offer two hundred and nine pages of the best speculative poetry and art you will ever see from poets and artists from all corners of this creative planet." The book may be purchased by visiting the following link: <http://www.lulu.com/content/3236199>

FROM JOHN MAYFIELD, AUDIO BOOK RADIO (UK):

"I run and manage a UK-based Internet Radio Station dedicated to spoken word. We try to promote new writers wherever possible ... and we have a growing worldwide audience, which makes a wonderful showcase platform.

"If any of your members want to send me their work via MP3 they can do so via www.yousendit.com This is a free service for sending large files (you simply have to register) and it is very reliable. From my point of view the sound quality of the work is paramount otherwise it just sounds awful when it is placed next to other stories etc, so please bear that in mind. I can tweak things on my set-up here but I cannot perform miracles!

"I worked on audio books as a sound engineer / director in London for 10 years ... and I worked on more than 2,000 titles in that period, so I am well aware of the importance of spoken word /poetry. I am also aware how difficult it is to promote new work (especially poetry) to the mainstream, but thankfully television is so bad these days people are returning to the radio."

You can visit the ABR website at: www.audiobookradio.net

ECLECTICISM 8

Another instalment in the *Eclecticism* e-zine series is out, at <http://www.eclecticizine.com> The theme of this issue is 'Conspiracy', and it includes work from: Emma Furness and Keith Nunes.

JULY DEADLINE is 7th June

Writers on Mondays series presented by the International Institute of Modern Letters with the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.

The first event :

Ten poets whose work appears in *Best New Zealand Poets 08* read their work and share their favourite poems by other New Zealand writers. They are: Emma Barnes, David Beach, Jenny Bornholdt, Amy Brown, Cliff Fell, Chris Orsman, Lynn Jenner, Greg O'Brien, Tim Upperton and hopefully Johanna Aitchison. Joining them will be the shortlisted Year 12/13 students in the NZ Post National Schools Poetry Award.

Chaired by Bill Manhire.

Date: Monday 20 July

Time: 12.15 -1.15pm

Where: Te Marae, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa

Surfing the Web

<http://www.mykuworld.com/> This site uses a social-networking structure to encourage users to share four-line, conversational "myku," a more casual form of the traditional Japanese haiku.

Communication among users takes place on myku boards that let you link your myku to another writer's, creating a conversation.

<http://www.writersandfriends.com/?p=976> A blog entry on the possibilities of using Artificial Intelligence to write poetry. What would a computer write about?

http://www.usatoday.com/life/theater/2009-03-01-artsfeeds_N.htm A look at the impact of the recession on arts organisations around the USA. It's not going well.

http://www.columbusdispatch.com/live/content/life/stories/2009/03/01/2_ROSEN_BOOK.ART_ART_03-01-09_E3_ESD1BKC.html?sid=101 An interview with Michael J Rosen, author of *The Cuckoo's Haiku and Other Birding Poems*. An example of this fine unity of interests: "Q: You say that haiku and birding are similar pursuits. Can you explain? A: Both are fleeting impressions. Rather than whole stories and studied observations, these two arts usually offer snatched glimpses and surprising hints. Even when they address something familiar – for instance, a mourning dove or a backyard robin – a steady, long look through binoculars' lenses or a haiku's lines can turn that common sighting into something remarkable." [Sorry - you'll have to type in this link for the pdf version – it works in word!]

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/booknews/4863351/Internet-is-causing-poetry-boom.html>

Now this is music to our ears – "Rather than killing it off, modern technologies like email, social networking sites such as Facebook and online media players are helping poets reach new audiences."

Workshops & Residencies

Unlocking The Poet Within: Reading and Writing Poetry, Auckland

Tuesday - Saturday, 30 June - 4 July, 11.15am - 3.15pm; Room 336, Level 3, Building No. 810, 1 - 11 Short Street

Tutor: Majella Cullinane

Fee (GST incl): \$277.00

Class Limit: 16

Through the combination of practical exercises and the reading and discussion of poetry this workshop will focus on developing the craft of writing poetry. Each participant is encouraged to bring in one poem they have written for discussion or workshopping. "Unlocking the Poet Within" will encourage a creative, positive and enjoyable atmosphere and would suit more experienced writers who wish to enhance their experience and practice of reading and writing poetry. This workshop is one of four workshops in the 2009 Winter Writers Week programme. Your workshop registration fee

also includes attendance at the Guest Lecture Programme which takes place each morning from 10 - 11am. The final afternoon concludes with refreshments and readings of work produced during the week. Find out more about this course and enrol online at:

<http://www.cce.auckland.ac.nz/cce/continuing/index.cfm?P=8548&ClassNumber=47969>

International Institute of Modern Letters Trimester 2, 2009: poetry workshop with James Brown starts 13 July. Application deadline: 3rd June. Details and enrolment form at

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/modernletters/creative-writing/courses/CREW-253.aspx>

Competitions & Submissions

An even more extensive list of international competitions and other poetry opportunities is available on the Members' Pages of our website <http://www.poetrysociety.org.nz> (See Members' Pages in left-hand menu.)

Artists Embassy International Poetry Contest (USA). Postmark Deadline: 15 May. 3 Grand Prizes of \$100 each, and poems will be danced and filmed. 6 prizes of \$50; 12 prizes of \$25; 25 prizes of \$10. The three Grand Prize poems will be choreographed, costumed and recorded live on-stage at a Festival on September 26, in San Francisco. Entry fee: \$5 per poem / \$10 for 3 poems. (Poets outside the USA please send an international postal money order in US dollars, or US currency). 40 line limit. Send two copies of each poem: one anonymous, the other with name, address, phone, email address and where you heard about this contest (i.e. NZPS magazine). No limit on number of entries. Post to: AEI Contest Chair W Judy Cheung, 704 Brigham Ave, Santa Rosa, CA 95404, USA. Website:

<http://www.dancingpoetry.com/poetrycontestrules.html>

Tickled by Thunder (Canada). Deadline: 15 May. Quarterly contest from Canadian literary journal. Entries that miss the deadline for one contest will automatically be entered in the following one. Top Award: CAD\$75, publication, courtesy copy and one-year subscription to magazine. Entry fee: C\$5.00 per poem. Submit using online entry form.

http://tickledbythunder.com/TbT/Magazine/02_Contest_Info.html

Virginia Warbey Poetry Prize (UK) Deadline: 19 May. Awards: £800, £350, £200, 10 runner-up prizes of a year's subscription to *Orbis*. Winners and shortlisted poems may be published in anthology. Entry Fee: £3 per poem or £12 for 5 poems, in pounds sterling only. Payable to: CFW Poetry, Chandler's Ford Writers, P.O. Box 474, Eastleigh, SO50 0AN, United Kingdom. Guidelines at:

<http://www.poetrypf.co.uk/images/compwarbey2009.pdf>

Indigo Dreams Summer Collection (UK). Closing Date: 22 May. Three Winners will have an A5 Booklet (to 44 pages) of their poetry printed; each will receive 50 copies. Submission: Selection of 10 to 15 poems, poems to be max. 36 lines. Entry Fee: £18 per block of poems. Cheque payable to Indigo Dreams Press, and entries to Indigo Dreams Press, 8 Reynolds Court, Hildersley, Ross-On-Wye HR9 7NE, or PayPal from website. www.indigodreamspublishing.co.uk

PressPress Chapbook Award 2009 (Australia)

Closing date: must be received by 30 May. The Award is for an unpublished chapbook length manuscript of poems. The winning manuscript will receive \$500 and publication with PressPress. Judges are happy to see innovation and risks taken with the entries. Author's name and address must appear on the entry form (available online) but not on the manuscript. Send one copy of the entry, typed double or one and a half spacing on single-sided A4 with no borders, illustrations or fancy fonts. You might be asked for a digital copy if your submission is short-listed so make sure you can provide it if asked. Administration fee: \$AU15 can be paid online. Entry form on website at

www.presspress.com.au

Frogmore Poetry Prize (UK) Deadline: must be received by 31 May. Long-running contest for unpublished poems. Top Award: 200 guineas and lifetime subscription to *The Frogmore Papers*, the press's literary journal; 2nd 75 guineas and year's sub; 3rd 50 guineas and year's sub. Shortlisted poets will receive copies of selected Frogmore Press books. Winners and shortlisted poems will be published in *The Frogmore Papers*. Each poem should be on a separate sheet, without the name of the author. The author's name and address should be provided on an accompanying sheet of paper. Entry Fee: £3 per poem (cheque drawn on UK bank, British postal order, or sterling cash). Payable To: The Frogmore Press, 42 Morehall Avenue, Folkestone, Kent, CT19 4EF, United Kingdom. Guidelines at: <http://www.frogmorepress.co.uk/>

Spiritual Writing Competition. Closes: End of May. Judged by a church-based panel led by Pleasant Point writer Karalyn Joyce. Prizes: \$500; \$250; \$100. Up to 50 submissions will be published in a new 'Spiritual Anthology' to be launched in November 2009. For unpublished poems/fiction/non-fiction work with a 'words to inspire' theme; i.e., life; death; creation; peace; miracles; wonder; reflection. New and established writers of all ages. For entry form send a stamped self-addressed envelope to: "Spiritual Anthology", 4a Horton Street, Pleasant Point, South Canterbury 7903, or email: daphnej@xtra.co.nz

Edwin Morgan International Poetry Competition (UK) Closing Date: must be received by 1 June. For poems of up to 60 lines. Prizes: £5000, £1000, £500. Entry Fee: £5 per poem, max. 3 poems. Online entry only: Submit your name, postal address and email address and receive a unique ID; You will be asked to upload your poem as a Word document (.doc), Rich Text Format (.rtf) or Adobe PDF (.pdf) file; You will be asked to pay for your entry via PayPal Website: www.vitalsynz.co.uk/poetry_competition

Blue Mountain Arts Fourteenth Biannual Poetry Card Contest (USA) Deadline: 30 June. Free entry. Prizes: \$300, \$150, \$50. Winning poems will be displayed on the website www.sps.com. Poems can be rhyming or non-rhyming, although we find that non-rhyming poetry reads better. Poems are judged on the basis of originality and uniqueness. English-language entries only. Enter as often as you like. Winners will be contacted within 45 days of the deadline date. Post to: SPS Studios Poetry Card Contest, P.O. Box 1007, Dept. E, Boulder, CO 80306. Submit online at: <http://www.sps.com/poetry/index.html>

The Bridport Prize 2009 (UK) Closing date: 30 June

This is the richest open writing competition in the English Language with £5,000 first prize for a short story (up to 5,000 words) and £5,000 first prize for a poem (up to 42 lines). All prize winning entries will be published in the Bridport Prize Anthology 2009 along with judges' reports. The top four poems are submitted to the Forward Prize for best single poem, and the top thirteen eligible stories are submitted to the National Short Story Prize (worth £15,000). Anyone can enter, so long as the work is previously unpublished. Fee: £7 (story) and £6 (poem). Submit online at: <http://www.bridportprize.org.uk>

Poetry is impossible. You are trying to make your language do something it never did before. It's never done quite satisfactorily. It's a most extraordinary exercise.

W.S. Merwin

Regional Reports

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

WINDRIFT – APRIL MEETING

Linzy Forbes

The meeting at Sally Holmes' home was a foodie's delight. Sally offered exquisite dumplings that were scooped in no time, plus some wonderful miso soup and very tasty noodles.

As well as 'open' haiku for the bowl we shared haiku on the themes of autumn; and dusk, twilight or dim light. I have chosen haiku mainly from the open section. My personal favourite (having been there done that !):

hearing test
the audiologist's
loud mumble

Karen Peterson Butterworth

all day scrabble
she nods off
between moves

Nola Borrell

(this took me right back to playing scrabble with my late gran)

top prize
at the produce fair
her perfect bottom

Ernie Berry

(provided laughter and visual action!!)

cry above
shadow below
virtual gull

Bevan Greenslade

his proposal
by candle-light
flickers and dims

Irene Ruth

We also discussed Windrift's role in the upcoming Festival of Japan, on July 11 in the Wellington Town Hall. There were enough volunteers to hold the fort for the day, and it was decided to hand out cards or slips of paper or bookmarks with haiku printed on them to those folk who are interested.

The art of haibun was chosen as our June meeting exercise. After some discussion it was decided to limit the length of submitted haibun to 500 words.

Contact: Nola Borrell. Ph: 586 7287. Email: nolaborrell@extra.co.nz

Poetry is the one art that asks a person to tell, in words, in the first person, what it is for her or him to live here and now.

Galway Kinnell

Reviews

Collected Poems 1951-2006 C. K. Stead (AUP,2008) RRP \$60 ISBN 978-1-86490-418-5 RRP \$60

Laurice Gilbert

I ran out of time and room when I started this review (*a fine line*, January 2009), and overlooked the final poem from *Walking Westward* (1979), 'Uta'. Subtitled '*from the Japanese*', it's a charming and wistful tanka sequence. Stead describes it in his notes as, "The original fifty poems from *Walking Westward* ... culled, revised and rearranged here into the semblance of a narrative." It works well on its own terms, from its opening stanza:

First light
flickers
in the east
and we fumble
to dress each other.

through great love:

People
in this towered city
abound.
My heart has
one inhabitant.

and into separation. In true romance fashion the lover goes on a journey, seasons pass, the separation is long and unbearable, the suspense unremitting:

A sword
at my throat
I felt in my dream
An omen?
Will there be no return?

But all is well in the end:

By the stone store
dependable pine
when I stare at you
one long gone
stares back.

Summer mountains
my lover
crosses
and louder
the cuckoo sings.

The stanzas read for all purposes like translations, indicating how thoroughly Stead entered the spirit of the Japanese form. It strikes me as a true testament to his creativity (as if one were needed!), given that he knew no Japanese and constructed it using "scholars' ... transliterations, notes, grammars and glossaries".

You can read the complete review on the Poetry Society website, Members' Pages, at:
<http://www.poetrysociety.org.nz/aboutsteadreview>

The end of writing is to instruct; the end of poetry is to instruct by pleasing.

Samuel Johnson

Anne Harré

Helen Rickerby's second collection *My Iron Spine*, (HeadworX 2008) is an intriguing combination of poems. It is split into three sections and touches on deeply personal, deeply felt images and events. The first section, lilted along; entitled 'Flashes of déjà vu', it explores the realities and mysteries of childhood, what it means to be a child to see the world in a confused yet totally logical manner. The images are, at times, sublimely beautiful, yet manage to convey a deceptive naivety. In the poem 'Grows on trees' Rickerby writes, "the day/my brother told me/ that leaves could be used/ as money/ was the wealthiest day/ of my life". In 'Cold War, 1986' she begins with, "When the US bombed/ Libya, I thought/ it was the end of the world". In a later poem, 'Curtains', an older voice reverts to being a child and observes the mortality of her parents:

they'll never be slowed
or stymied by dodgy
hips or feet or hearts
...

I believe my parents will always be together
like a pair of curtains
that overlap
at their edges.

Ultimately the poems in this first section work because they are personal. It is the personal voice of the poet that cuts through deceptively simple narrative and grabs the reader's attention through to the end.

The second and third sections, for me, did not have the power and depth of the first. The second section titled 'Corsets and Comforts', and third 'Laughing at Ophelia', look at the imagined lives of famous women. Emily Bronte, Sylvia Plath, Katherine Mansfield and Marie Curie (amongst others) make an appearance. While entertaining, they don't hold the same sway as the first section. There is something verging on the frivolous that detracts from the writing, and subject matter. 'Housework with Linda and Elizabeth Barrett Browning': "whatever is a Roomba?" asks Lizzie/ quizzically/ 'A robotic vacuum cleaner, like a turtle/ that scoots around your room/ sucking the dust out of your carpet'".

This is alongside the quite lovely 'Emily Dickinson at Home':

the pane of glass cool against her palms
as she pauses, mid-sentence -
to watch what the world is doing
then a turn - a return
to her desk in her room
her almost whole world
Her room, an embrace
an encasement
...

the boundaries of her circumference
But from here she can navigate
further than she has travelled
further than she can see.

Overall, though, this is an accomplished collection. Rickerby has a strong poetic voice that draws the reader in and is well worth a read and a re-read.

Haiku NewZ

SITUATION VACANT

a fine line's Haiku NewZ column needs a coordinator. If you are willing to receive and put together submissions to include in this column every 2 months, please get in touch with me (Laurice) at info@poetrysociety.org.nz There's no cold calling, and you don't have to ask for or chase up contributors. The headings are all in place, and you simply need to fill in the gaps with what people send to you (Congratulations and Notices) and summarise information from the website (Competitions and Submissions).

The Haiku NewZ section of *a fine line* is a free service the NZPS offers the NZ haiku community, but it will languish and be dropped if no-one steps up to continue it.

CONGRATULATIONS

- to Nola Borrell, 2nd in Haiku 'Presence' Award 2008, with:

this wide sky
in the grass
a thrush's broken egg

- to Ernie Berry, whose art was featured at haigaonline in 2005: <http://www.haigaonline.com/issue6-2/bb/bb.htm>

- to Ernie again for remarkable success in the 2009 Anita Sadler Weiss Memorial Haiku Awards. First, with:

spring growth stepping stones to nowhere

Second Honourable Mention, with:

snake skin
the Indian summer
slips away

and Fifth Honourable Mention, with:

summer
my golden retriever
rolls in it

The results, with Judge Susumu Takiguchi's comments on each haiku, are at <http://worldhaikureview.googlepages.com/fifthannualaward>

- In the FreeXpresSion Haiku Competition, Ernie received a Highly Commended for 'landfill', and a Commended for 'fallen tree'. Two haiku were also selected as 'Worthy of Publication'. All 4 haiku will be published in the June edition of *FreeXpresSion*, an Australian literary magazine.

COMPETITIONS AND SUBMISSIONS

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

NOTICES

The International Festival of Haiku will be held in Constantza, Romania, on 22nd-29th of May, 2009. The Festival's theme is Haiku in the Context of World-wide Lyrics, and consists of seminars, discussions, book exhibitions, haiga, Power Point presentations (lyrical texts), performances of classic and folk Japanese-Romanian music, writing workshops, origami and ikebana demonstrations, book

presentations, ginko trips, and haiku and haiga competitions. To register, email:
laura.vaceanu@yahoo.com; or [mnt flora alexandra@yahoo.com](mailto:mnt_flora_alexandra@yahoo.com)

Advance notice, so you can book now: Haiku North America will have its biennial conference on 5th – 9th August in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

www.haikunorthamerica.com/

KiwiHaiku

helicopter shadow –
in the fountain
a starling pauses
Janice Giles

the teacher drones on –
summer is brought in
by a dragonfly
Steven Cordery

South Island koru –
walking stick
for the wind
Deborah Finkelstein

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

Tanka Reflections

- short songs of the human spirit –

After a break this column has been picked up by Patricia Prime, and is now open for submissions. If you are unsure of the form, refer to the website article *Tanka as a Diary*, by Amelia Fielden in the HaikuNZ section of our website, and give it a go: <http://www.poetrysociety.org.nz/node/392>

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

Ten Minutes With ...

Anne Harré

Welcome to a new series. This is where we have a small but (hopefully) interesting 'chat' with a working poet, and help to raise the profile of those who are working hard and producing poetry without the backing of the big mainstream presses. The inaugural poet for this series is Wellington poet Helen Rickerby. Helen Rickerby's first collection, *Abstract Internal Furniture* (HeadworX 2001), was described as "an avant-garde, indoor garden full of strange images and intriguing ideas where things turn topsy-turvy" (Harvey McQueen, *New Zealand Books*). Her second collection, *My Iron Spine*, was reviewed on p11. Helen was a co-founder of, and now runs, the small publishing company Seraph Press.

Much of your work reads as deeply personal, deeply felt. How important to you is the personal, and how do you deal with the vulnerability that poetry provides?

I find it kind of curious that people respond to my work in that way. Some of the poems in *My Iron Spine* are deeply personal, but most of them are biographical – about other people. Sometimes poems that are autobiographical are not that personal, and sometimes poems that seem autobiographical aren't. The more personal ones, I usually try to layer with other things, so they maybe don't seem so personal. And the poems I write that are *really* personal haven't seen the light of day.

This personal-impersonal thing in poetry is something that I've been thinking about a lot lately. I'm pulled in both directions. Part of me wants to write impersonal, opaque, imagistic poetry, and the other part of me wants to write about my personal feelings and experience and say things that we're normally too afraid to say. Sometimes poems become really universal by being very personal and specific – I'm not expecting people to be interested in me so much as find something that means something to them in my work.

Which writers inspire you, and why?

I'm inspired by heaps of different kinds of writers in different ways. In terms of poets, some I've recently been inspired by are Eliot for his gorgeous opacity and Sharon Olds for her honesty. Anne Carson and Anne Sexton have been inspirational in recent years. I'm also inspired by the poets and writers I know, as I see them change and grow and reach. I'm inspired by non-fiction a lot too, and lately I've been inspired by Alain de Botton's combination of philosophy and the personal. Lots of novelists have inspired me – Jeanette Winterson and Margaret Atwood probably being the two major ones.

Do you 'wait for the muse' or are you one of those disciplined writers that try to write something every day?

I guess I'm somewhere in between. I'd love to write every day, and I did during a halcyon period when I wasn't working. But in these days of full-time employment, that isn't working for me. I do need to make some time and space though, or the muse doesn't visit very often. I've found that going somewhere like a café, where I won't get distracted by home things, and just thinking and reading and writing rubbish in my journal often creates a space where poetry can come.

Robert Frost wrote that "to be a poet is a condition, not a profession", so for you is it one or the other (or a bit of both)?

It's definitely not a profession for me – sounds too much like I expect money from it. It's more like a condition or a vocation. For me it's something I do, or something I am, depending on how I'm feeling about it and how much I've written lately.

What's the point of poetry in the 21st century?

This is a difficult one to articulate. I've spent a bit of time thinking about the value of art, and I really do believe it is important, even in these days when we tend to value the utilitarian and the economic. And, while I think that art does have utilitarian and economic value, I think it's really important to have art as both creators and audience; to make us think about things differently, to give our lives meaning, beauty and something bigger than ourselves.

For many people, poetry in particular maybe isn't that relevant; but for me it is. The value and difference of poetry is its intensity of language. Probably more than any other art form, it works with metaphor and subtext – you say something, but you're also saying something else. It might mean it enables you to say or explore something you might not have otherwise been able to. Or, that you're saying multiple things at one time – for example, my poem 'Winters of discontent' is partly about the classical myth of Persephone and Demeter, partly about my own experiences of depression, partly the archetype of dying in winter and regenerating in spring, partly about the reader's experiences of sadness or loss, and so on...

What is the appeal of live readings (either as an audience member, or performer)?

Hearing a poem read is very different to reading it on the page. I enjoy both and, although a few poets are quite bad at reading their work and it's better to read it on the page, hearing the poem read can bring words to life in a different way. It's interesting hearing the rhythm and pace the poet envisaged for the poem.

In recent years I've come to really enjoy reading my work, probably as I've gotten better at it – though, being a shy person, I can still get a bit nervous. I enjoy it when you get a good response from the audience – turns out I quite like instant gratification, like everyone else. It's also helpful when it shows you that something isn't really working, or that something works better on the page.

Do you prefer crunchy peanut butter or smooth?

Definitely crunchy, and only with honey.

What are you working on at present?

The poetry project I'm working on is what I hope will become my next book, *Cinema*. They're poems that are loosely inspired by film – some specific films, some film technique, some film-related experience. And I'm still writing some more random poetry.

Inspired by the film stuff, I'm also starting to video poets reading their poetry, with the aim of sticking them on the internet and making them available to people. I've got several publishing projects on the way, including a new Seraph Press book (*Ithaca Island Bay Leaves* by Vana Manasiadis), and *JAAM*. And I'm blogging – <http://www.wingedink.blogspot.com/> – and I've recently joined Twitter. As well as twittering inane things about what I'm up to, I also 'tweet' short extracts from poems I like.

MEMBERS' POEMS

Tinnitus

He feels like
the man on the roof
beating nails through iron
biceps slippery with sweat

reaches for the warfarin
sees a turkey neck
of skin
from underarm to elbow

carries the groceries
to the car
the shop assistant's
can you manage that?

ringing in his ears.

Janet Newman

The short Russian stories from Sasha

During my life in Russia
I had my interesting friend Sasha.
He was very merry guy,
He could make the happiness for us everyday.
He knew the plenty of the short merry stories.
We said, for example, "secret, computer, glorious" ...
It was enough to say one word
And Sasha told us the new stories and old.

The computer (the short story from Sasha)

The father said: "My adult son,
There will be madness under Sun
When you'll be find wife through computer.
It's like to use not the road but the gutter!"
The son asked: "Why is it not good?"
The father answered: "All need to be as should.
Look, for example, I won my wife playing poker.
You can win your one through soccer."

The glorious choice (the short story from Sasha)

It was on the cross-road on the Heaven.
The Russian traffic inspector heard the God's voice:
"You made the kind and bad during your sixty seven.
There are two roads – to Hell or Paradise. It's your choice.
Decide!" The inspector said: "Oh my dear!
Please, my God, can I stay here?"

From the travel advertisement

The brewer German Gream
Had the ancient big dream.
He dreamt to see the Russian land.
His dream was realized. And
 Something surprised him,
 Something made very tipsy him,
 Than robbed and beat down him!

The different roads

 Something outraged him,
The way to our church is not very long
But the road is very wet and dull.
Let's go to the restaurant with song
Because we'll be walking careful!

Alexander Lomakin

Captain Aluminium and the Gull

"Toe toe
like the discarded arrows of the sun
bite at the wind
and heart
Here -
midst the gathered flax
rest, now -
The kuia, will weave your memory warm
Why awahi absence -
At river's end
At river's end.

Here
All your oceans ran full
and you -
this grinning Dutch walnut
half - cracked
running at the Gods
of moon and time.
Your kingdom -
a warm coke, a thigh-white cigarette -
and the tug of the net
on a turning tide.
I weave -
I weave -
I weave your memory warm.

Here
my Captain Aluminium
like a mosquito
on the skin of the night -
You uncover sleep
as a memory
and cradle me
in the quiet mantra of the gull -
Still.
Still.
Still you weave
You weave
You weave your memory warm".

Hutia te rito o te haraheke.
Kei hea te komako, e koe e ko?

Fred (Fritz) Buijn

Watercolour

The reading for today or any day
the same young blackbirds

reworking the lawn for the past century /
an endless reincarnation of worms

in patches of light / a shag sitting above
the inflatable pool / an impressionist

toddler waddling from its symbolist mum
toward the ducks

*

The Woolworths' Variety Club Band strikes up a stirring march!

John O'Connor

Home from Holiday - Nothing But Metaphor

Like one
of many
drops
landing
in a pool
of clear
rocked
bottom
we plummet
and bounce
back
forming
a little
circular
fountain
that spreads
out
back
flipping
and disappears
into molecular form
of the larger
body.

Rosetta Allan

Reefton 4WD

Anzac2008

Crossing creeks of china tea
bush thwacked
tracks flowing latte
some bottomless cups
bonnets frothing bow waves
heading for the 'Merjegt Hotel'
up Petrol hill

You need to know your diff locks
from diff lockers
the beauty of 35s not 33s
and on full examination of her body
a true 'man' just converses with his/'er beer.

"Take a line with Attitude"
up Napoleons
thrown broadside, tyres
skilither and skludge,
lay a strop to winch you
closer to sky where Lookout is
not about views

You need to know your diff locks
from diff lockers
the beauty of 35s not 33s
and on full examination of her body
a true 'man' just converses with his/'er beer.

You might well ask, why would you
joust 'n cracked
Big River loops to nowhere?
Take the wheel up stream
sluice old gold tunnels, from pitch
through sunlight arches plunge into
virginal bush .

Robynanne Milford

Messages from Guantanamo Bay

Allahihu I call in the night.
His peace spreads to every cell.
We bow in our separate submission.
Angels, not guards, observe us
Report our perfect observance.
Our treasure piles up in Paradise
In ramps to surmount these walls.

Noah Aswad, Written on a foam plastic cup

Julie Ryan