



Newsletter November 2004

New Zealand Poetry Society

Te Hunga Tito Ruri o Aotearoa

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χ Front Page Essay δ

Thanks, Miss Greenwood

by

Harvey McQueen

In the two-teacher secondary department at Akaroa District High School Miss Greenwood taught English, Geography, Art, Music and Horticulture. The school gardens won prizes for the best in Canterbury - she worked long hours in them and lessons saw our labour put to use. ("What do you do in horticulture?" Mum asked. "Shovel horse dung", I replied.) Miss Greenwood opened up new worlds of art, music, and literature. For a bookworm boy she was just what the life-doctor ordered. Here is a poem of belated acknowledgment:

Blast me for an idiot
when Miss Greenwood put on
Jesu joy of man's desiring
spurred by the rest
I sounded "yuk"

her look of pain
her brilliant student
a ZB upbringing no excuse
my audience built by challenging hers
never questioned next door, Sticky's H20

she had her revenge
she hustled us to orchestra
Strauss, Sibelius
& on the bus coming home
Finlandia bouncing in every bone
I was hooked and delivered scaled
She once said looking straight at me
"You're not fully adult until you love Mozart."

a teacher's success can never be measured
too late now, but I apologise Miss Greenwood
third movement scherzo (allegro vivace).

After playing seven-a-side rugby at Hagley Park we went to the National Orchestra. The bruises from the morning's rugby forgotten, I was rapt.

We had two poetry books, *Mount Helicon* and *Grass from Parnassus*. I still have them both - one bought school texts then. She took us through them, we chanted poems together, we chose a stanza, copied it out and illustrated it. I poured over them at night. Many lines remain, a layer in my literary midden:

'There's a breathless hush in the close tonight...'
'The Albatross fell off and sank like lead into the sea...'
'I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree...'
'Oh England is a pleasant place for them that's rich and high...'

Miss Greenwood's conviction that poetry counted proved contagious - it entered my bloodstream, though an opportunity was missed - we talked about the poems and ideas in them, but she never suggested I write poems nor did she give any creative writing lessons.

But she did something else that was important for me. There was only one New Zealand poem in the two anthologies - Pember Reeves' *God girt her about with the surges* with its borrowed diction. To make up that deficiency she put up on the blackboard - no Banda or Xerox in those days - for us to copy New Zealand poems: Dora Wilcox's *Onawe*, McKee Wright's *Arlington* and Blanche Baughan's *The Old Place*.

All deal with questions of displacement and change as well as reflecting the pioneer values of my childhood. (What I didn't realise was that they also contained their own indoctrination.) But they represented an attempt to speak the language of our place.

Poetry was not something from the other side of the world. And it could be about places I knew. *Onawe*, the pear-shaped peninsula at the head of the harbour where we fished for flounder, was where Te Rauparaha swept down from the north to capture and destroy the local pa:

'... Here once the haka sounded; and din of battle
Shook the grey crags,
Triumphant shout and agonised death-rattle
Startled the shags...
Tena koe Pakeha! within this fortification
Grows English grass -
Tena koe! subtle conqueror of a nation
Doomed, doomed to pass!'

Arlington - Granddad McQueen once managed a station like that and in his cups in his declining years bewailed the passing of that way of life:

'...The good old boss of Arlington was
everybody's friend,
He liked to keep the wages up right to the very end;
If diggers' horses went astray they always could
be found
The cow that roamed across the run was never in
the pound.
He was a white man through and through, cheery
and fair and plain,
And now he'll never ride the rounds of Arlington
again ...'

The Old Place was the world I knew - summer droughts and winter floods, the Bush Paddock and old-timers gossiping about the room where Mary died and John...

'...Yes well! I'm leaving the place. Apples look red
on that bough.
I set the slips with my own hand. Well - they're
another man's now.
The breezy bluff: an' the clover that smells so over
the land
Drowning the reek of the rubbish that plucks the
profit out o' your hand ...'

The slips that Miss Greenwood helped plant have lasted my lifetime.

Harvey McQueen is

Our Front Page Essay is a forum for the presentation of a writer's individual take on poetry and its meanings. The views expressed are always the writer's own, and not necessarily those of the New Zealand Poetry Society. If you'd like to contribute a Front Page Essay, please contact the Newsletter Editor.

χ Obituary δ

Maurice Shadbolt – 1932 to 2004

Maurice Shadbolt died in Taumarunui on Sunday 10th October aged 72. A highly acclaimed author, throughout his distinguished career he was presented with a long list of literary awards and honours, including the AW Reed Lifetime Achievement Award in 2002.

His first book of short stories, *The New Zealanders*, was published in 1959. His last book, *From the Edge of the Sky*, published in 1999, was the sequel to *One of Ben's* (his first autobiography).

Maurice Shadbolt, who began his career as a journalist, encouraged many New Zealand's writers. His contribution to literature will be greatly missed.

χ Letter to the Editor δ

From **Ern Berry**:

My suggestion for next year's Montana awards is that the NZPS, as New Zealand's only national poetry organisation, ask someone with knowledge of a wide range of varieties of Kiwi poetry – someone like Bernard Gadd - to set up a panel to sort out the best, say, 10, of the poetry entries to send off to the judges.

χ Upcoming Events δ

AUCKLAND

Maori academic to speak on 'indigenous' debate

Ani Mikaere, director of postgraduate law and philosophy at Te Wananga o Raukawa, will analyse cabinet minister Trevor Mallard's claim that Maori and Pakeha 'are both indigenous people to New Zealand now' in this year's Bruce Jesson lecture on 15th November.

Bruce Jesson Foundation chair Professor Andrew Sharp said Mallard's was the latest in a series of increasingly plaintive Pakeha pleas for Maori to 'trust' Pakeha (Mallard), to accord them 'mutuality of respect' (Michael King) or to accept that 'there is a limit to how much any generation can apologise for the sins of its great-grandparents' (Don Brash).

The lecture, *Are we all New Zealanders now? A Maori response to the Pakeha quest for indigeneity*, will be delivered in the Maidment Theatre at Auckland University at 6.30 p.m. on Monday 15th November. Entry is free, but seats cannot be reserved and the audience must be seated by 6.15 p.m.



WELLINGTON

Launch of NZPS Anthology: *The Enormous Picture*

Turnbull House Bowen Street 7.30 p.m.

Instead of guest poets at the 18th November meeting of Wellington NZPS, we will launch our new anthology, *The Enormous Picture*. All NZPS members, competition winners, anthology contributors, and their families and friends are cordially invited to attend.

Winners and contributors will be contacted directly about reading there, so expect to see a few well-known - and soon to be better-known - poets.

Anthologies and order forms will be available on the night (cash or cheque purchase only), and refreshments are complimentary so please RSVP to Margaret Vos via info@poetrysociety.org.nz or by phone, 04 478 5662.

And for those already eager for the next round of glory, we will, in keeping with tradition, launch the 2005 competition on that same night.

If you can't attend the launch, download order forms and competition entry forms from our website after 1st December.

Sharing the Poems No-one Will Publish NZPS Summer Workshop 6th -7th January 2005

If you're looking for some post-Christmas excitement, look no further. Back by popular request, Laurice Gilbert, poet and visual artist, will run a 2-day summer workshop, based on what to do with your rejected and unpublished poems, plus inspiring opportunities to creating new poems - and a few surprises, too.

As a workshop addict herself, Laurice values time set aside to write, and has some new and unusual ideas lined up. And being summer, paint will dry faster and we'll complete more projects.

Laurice completed a Diploma of Art & Creativity with Learning Connexion, Wellington, majoring in Creative Writing, which she has taught for over two years. Her approach is suitable for both emerging and seasoned poets.

The workshop fee of \$60 (\$75 for non-members) covers most materials, but to help keep costs this low, participants will be asked to bring a few extras to share. A list of suggested contributions will be issued once attendance is finalised. The venue has yet to be confirmed, but will definitely be in Wellington. Enrolment is on a first-in basis, with priority for members. Register by contacting us at PO Box 5283, Wellington, or by e-mail to info@poetrysociety.org.nz.

The IIML & creative writing

Shannon Welch's 2002 Iowa Workshop attracted a group that included graduates of other IIML workshops and some already published writers. All enjoyed the stimulation of a fresh perspective on poetry and the feedback of other writers. This summer the IIML is again offering the chance to do some intensive work on either poetry or fiction with two writers from the prestigious Iowa Writers' Workshop. Megan Johnson, winner of the 2004 Iowa Poetry Prize, will take the poetry workshop, and Earle McCartney will convene a workshop on long fiction.

Each workshop stream is limited to 12 students. The application deadline for both fiction and poetry streams of the workshop is 12th November. Further information at <http://www.vuw.ac.nz/modernletters> or from the IIML Office c/- VUW.

Haiku Festival Aotearoa

The Haiku Festival Aotearoa workshop will take place from Friday March 4th to Sunday March 6th at Stella Maris, Seatoun, Wellington. Accommodation and meals are available at this very attractive venue. Several well-known haikaijin will be tutoring sessions, and parallel sessions are planned for beginners and experienced haikaijin. Besides the art and history of haiku, sessions will include illustrating haiku, a ginko or nature walk, and a social evening with haiku readings accompanied by cellist Sue Robinson.

The Windrift Haiku Group is endeavouring to keep registration and tuition fees affordable. Day attendance will be an option for participants with private accommodation. We expect a brochure with finalised Festival details will be available this month and not last as we first advised.

Meanwhile, please keep expressions of interest coming, as there is a limit to the total number of both live-in and day attendance places available. Contact either Nola Borrell, (nolaborrell@xtra.co.nz, ph 04 586 7287, 177A Miromiro Road, Normandale, Lower Hutt) or Karen Butterworth (karenpetbut@xtra.co.nz, ph 06 364 5810, 27-29 Kirk Street, Otaki.)

Quotation of the Month

“Hope lies in a poetry through which the world
so invades the spirit of man that he becomes
almost speechless.”

Francis Ponge (France)

χ Other News δ

VUW's writer-in-residence

We're pleased to hear that the 2005 Victoria University writer in residence will be poet and memoirist **Stephanie de Montalk**, who is a member of the NZPS. Her first collection *Animals Indoors* (Victoria UP, 2000) was hailed as displaying 'a mature talent and impressive poise' (*Evening Post*), and won the NZSA Jessie Mackay Best First Book Award in 2001. A further collection, *The Unscientific Evidence of Dr Wang*, appeared to critical acclaim in 2002, and *Cover Stories* will be published by Victoria UP early next year.

In 2001 VUP also published *Unquiet World*, Stephanie de Montalk's memoir/biography of her famously eccentric cousin Count Geoffrey Potocki de Montalk, which has since been translated into Polish. *Unquiet World* was praised by Michael King as 'a book of outstanding interest and merit'.

Stephanie de Montalk has previously worked as a nurse, a documentary film-maker and censor. During 2005 she will tackle yet another genre, this time a novel comprising two factually based stories, one set in the Crimea in 1750, the other in Southern Russia in 1821.

We wish her all success and much enjoyment during her residency.

Randell Cottage Writers Trust

The Randell Cottage Writers' Trust is calling for applications from New Zealand writers for the 2005 residency. The tenure will be from early April 2005 to mid September 2005. The successful applicant receives a monthly stipend for the six months of the residency in historic Randell Cottage, located in Wellington's central city suburb of Thorndon.

Application forms and guidelines can be obtained by e-mailing af@paradise.net.nz, or by writing to The Secretary, PO Box 11-032 Wellington. Applications close on Friday 19th November 2004.

Additional information about the Trust and residency can be viewed on the New Zealand Book Council web site www.bookcouncil.org.nz

A passage to India?

Global Arts Village (New Delhi, India) announced its inaugural 60-day International Residency Fellowships program for literary artists. Budding and established poets, novelists, playwrights, screenwriters, journalists are invited to apply for this unique opportunity to reside on campus and realise their literary dreams. One fellowship and four partial fellowships are available.

The Village, on the outskirts of New Delhi, is run by a public trust that is dedicated to art, culture and consciousness. The fellowship includes full room and board on campus, use of facilities and an allowance of US\$100 for materials and supplies. A partial fellowship covers half of the residency costs.

Get full details from the NZSA National Office (nzsa@clear.net.nz) or from the website at <http://www.globalartsvillage.com/>.

χ Publications δ

Papertiger 4

HeadworX, the Wellington Poetry Education Trust and Papertiger Media held a celebration on October 12th at the City Gallery Theatre in Wellington for the publication of *Papertiger 4*, Australia's first international poetry journal in CD-ROM format. This included the New Zealand launch of *50 Poems by 50 Poets: Recent New Zealand Poetry* (ed. Mark Pirie).

Local poets read their work and a multi-media presentation of overseas poets was presented by Papertiger's editor, poet Paul Hardacre.

The Surface

The new issue of *The Surface* is now online at www.surfaceonline.org - with words, ideas and images revolving around the theme of Sound, with visual art and poetry as well as prose, plus 'Etcetera' which is described as 'a section featuring material not easily categorised.' They invite you to send them 'Postcards from the Edge ...'

The next issue is on the theme of America, and the deadline for copy and artwork is on or before 10th December 2004. Submission guidelines & a list of upcoming themes at <http://www.surfaceonline.org>

evasion

The past few months have seen a bevy of new material emerge on the site as *evasion* squirms around, turns over in bed and generally loses sleep in a nightmare world of lazy and inconsistent editorials. Are these just voices in our heads, or are we on the right track? Judge for yourself as things go from bad to verse for poetry editor Paul Vincent at Auckland's inaugural Poetry Slam:

www.evasion.co.nz/main/more/comment/06534f0a0c05fb98f6188ee74dcee377.html.

James McGoram joins the dots on Sylvia, Gwyneth, P Diddy and the Force, and Malcom Burgess survives screenwriting legend Robert McKee's horror writing seminar and regurgitates the culture of second-hand books. So enjoy, and sweet dreams, from Malcom 'Jamal' Burgess, barely managing editor, *evasion*.

Bravado

Bravado 3 is due out on 19th November in an upgraded format reflecting the addition to the Bravado Editorial Collective of graphic designer, eRiQ (www.deviantart.com). There's a regular new column, 'Sharp Point' from Bernard Gadd; an article on 'The Elusive Haiku' from Cyril Childs, 'What say ...' from poet and artist Cilla McQueen, and a story from BNZ Katherine Mansfield winner Tracey Slaughter, plus so much more. Details on how to subscribe (\$15 p.a.) & how to submit from info.bravado@xtra.co.nz, or send SSAE to Bravado PO Box 13-533 Tauranga.

HeadworX in Wales

Mark Pirie's selection of HeadworX poetry has recently been published in *Coffee House Poetry* (Wales). Entitled 'Time & Place' and dedicated to Allen Curnow, it spread over two issues and features most of the HeadworX stable exploring themes of national identity and the impact that British culture has had on many migrants living in New Zealand.

Poets included are Simon Williamson, Bill Sewell, Harry Ricketts, Vivienne Plumb, Riemke Ensing, Tony Beyer, Harvey McQueen, Helen Rickerby and Bernard Gadd. Details from the *Coffee House Poetry* web site www.coffeehousepoetry.co.uk

χ Submissions δ

Critical copy required

The Bruce Jesson Foundation is looking for people who want to take a critical look at some important issue facing New Zealand.

The foundation, set up after the death of journalist-politician Bruce Jesson in 1999, is offering up to \$3000 for 'critical, informed, analytical and creative journalism or writing which will contribute to public debate in New Zealand on an important issue or issues'.

It will help to pay for travel, toll calls or simply living costs for the time it takes to do the work.

Foundation chair Professor Andrew Sharp said the fund aimed to foster the kind of in-depth critical analysis that Jesson produced for many years in *Metro* magazine, in books and in his own publication, *The Republican*.

The fund is available for articles, reports, pamphlets, books, radio or television programmes, films, websites or any other publications which are aimed at, and accessible by, the general public of New Zealand or any part of New Zealand.

Applications for second round close on 21st January 2005. Details are available at www.brucejesson.com.

Wild Women call on you to submit

Wild Women Press is a not-for-profit collective of writers and artists based in Cumbria (UK) now inviting submissions of poetry, prose and artwork from women only for four upcoming anthologies. Each anthology focuses on an elemental force. The editors want work that shines and makes them sit up and listen.

Air

A Fine Frenzy: Creativity and the Winds of Change. (Editor: Victoria Bennett). Do we ride the winds of change or hide from them? Air represents the changeability of nature, an invisible and unpredictable force, but it also represents life, the element that sustains existence. Air is the carrier of inspiration - both creative and destructive.

Water

Stirring the Cauldron: The Power of Sexual Awakening. (Editor: Gill Hands). Water: the secret female mystery. We're particularly fascinated in the female perspective on sexuality, including so-called 'deviance', and 'perversion'. Does sex corrupt or liberate? We are looking to explore sexual awakenings in all its forms.

Fire

The Iron Sway: Women and the Art of Power (Editor: Rhiannon Hooson). Fire symbolises power, as Prometheus knew when he stole it from the gods. Here's your chance to play with that power. Would you shun it or seize your time in the spotlight? Are you a wielder or a yielder? Is it an outdated and patriarchal concept to be replaced or are you ready to seize it in your own right?

Earth

Through the Hag Stone: Earth and the Magic of Transformation (Editor Ruth Snowden). It is said that if you hold a hag or holey-stone up to the moon you can see spirits through the hole. The god Odin once slipped through a hag-stone in order to steal the 'mead of poetry'. How does 'rebirth' and 'transformation' lead to enlightenment? What's your connection to Earth and the Ancestors? Who is the Hag - the cunning and earthy woman?

Deadline: 1st March 2005.

We accept submissions from UK and overseas (so long as they are in English). For further details please visit our website on: www.wildwomenpress.com or send an SSAE to: WWP, 10 The Common, Windermere, Cumbria, LA23 1JH.



Family poems wanted

Bottom Dog Press are working on a new anthology and ask for submissions of poems dealing with the family to be published in 2005 (edited by Larry & Ann Smith.) Themes could relate to partners & marriage, lovers & mates, divorce, grandparents, parents & children, brothers & sisters, family struggles & values, family rites & rituals, class, ethnicity, diversity, etc. The editors favour the direct and vivid, sincere not sentimental. They will consider reprints if rights are cleared. Payment is \$US10 and one copy of the book. Send 3-5 poems with a self-addressed stamped envelope with IRC to Bottom Dog Press, PO Box 425, Huron, Ohio 44839, USA. Deadline is May 1st 2005.

χ Congratulations δ

... to writer **Kevin Ireland**, poetry recipient for the Prime Minister's Awards for Literary Merit, alongside **Maurice Gee** (fiction) and **Anne Salmond** (nonfiction). Also to the Poetry Society's patron **Vince O'Sullivan**, now the inaugural Creative NZ Michael King Literary Fellow. Kevin wrote a poem for the occasion, reproduced below with his permission:

A Thirteenth Poem

Nothing should be either
too strenuously here or there
in a poem: it should have drift

rather than meaning,
and collect itself trimly,
yet command room to hint

at attitudes and moods
that strike the most chancy
off-hand style.

This is the thirteenth poem
I have written since I set out
on a new journey to nowhere

in particular. This seems
in every possible way to be
a good omen for its success.

The pleasure of thirteenth poems,
is their casual ease.
They stir themselves

in the morning with a warm
lazy yawn. They move close
to you on the pillow.

They are willing to take you exactly
as you are. They don't expect you
to be anything other.

Congratulations also to poet **Tracey Slaughter** of Thames who won the BNZ Katherine Mansfield Prize this year with her short story, *Wheat*. Read the winning entries at: http://www.bnz.co.nz/About_Us/1,1184,3-34-482-2755,00.html.

New Zealand poets did well in the annual haiku competition by *Yellow Moon*, published in No. 15 Winter 2004. In the Haiku Section, **Nola Borrell** (Wellington), was Highly Commended, and Commended were **Patricia Prime** (Auckland), **Catherine Mair** (Katikati), **Ernest J. Berry** (Picton), **Veronica Haughey** (Wellington) and **Nyle James** (Blenheim) with:

silent travellers
warm themselves this winter night
stars in my tea bowl

In the Haiku Sequence, Ernest Berry was Highly Commended for *Love Story* and Catherine Mair was Commended for *Figure Work*.

And finally, more congratulations to Dunedin writers **David Eggleton** and **Lloyd Spencer Davis**, awarded \$35,000 each in The Copyright Licensing Writers Awards. Poet, writer and critic David Eggleton will use his grant to accelerate progress on his contemporary guide to New Zealand cultural history, which he describes as a 'kind of field investigation of the dawn chorus of the culture vultures'. Lloyd Spencer Davis is working on a science book – the unravelling of Darwin and Darwinism.

χ Reviews δ

A Routine Day by Diana Neutze

Curiously, these poems present ordinary sights and ideas, in a somewhat elevated state. I say this is odd because I do not see sparrows, sunlight, daffodils, trees, raindrops and gardens as particularly fresh material for poems. Also the spiritual tends not to be related deftly to the everyday often enough in my experience, but it works well here, at times.

Phrases like '...daffodil-surprised garden' and when the writer 'wears an injured moth like a jewelled ring' show how a good writer may skilfully renovate any motif or idea. More truly original writing could be evident, but some poems do offer a bright verdancy like flowers picked at dawn.

Neutze mainly points up how an immigrant sees their homeland, in this case England, and a new place, New Zealand, as overlapped in many ways. Foreign plants and birds are afforded large measures of fondness. One poem about a return to England and not quite belonging is long and detailed.



Overall simple and even-toned in predominantly traditional language, Neutze's poems concentrate much attention on nature apart from people, sometimes in a new way.

The book is well presented in a dramatic cover and the font suits this style of work.

It could have been rewarding to ask this poet to stretch her imagination further, however, since too many lines are cliché. Raindrops sparkle with light - what else would they sparkle with? Phrases like 'turn the clock back', 'dying casts a long shadow', and so on should not be in fine, modern poetry. Surprising, original language is a poet's domain.

An enjoyable read however if somewhat shallow or narrow in places. The daring approach of making routine shine has been attempted and quite a few of these verses do glow.

I also enjoyed the pepper of esoteric words such as pellucid, magnificat and carnagesis.

A mild collection in delicate light, with drastic weather now and again so I remembered who I am, an iconoclast native of skinny islands at the mercy of two vast seas, reading the poetry of a house-bound, English doctor of literature with a lovely garden.

(2004) NEUTZE, D. *A Routine Day*.
Hazard Press.

Review by Raewyn Alexander

Clung
by Sonja Yelich

Some readers will be familiar with Sonja Yelich's work from *AUP New Poets 2*. In that volume the special peculiarity of second language writing was strongly evident. Here it's less obvious, the games and tricks of language more subtly reflected upon. The prose-like storytelling element found in the earlier poems is also less pronounced. These poems have a sharper focus, and go more deeply into the aesthetic of each group of words, each poem:

you get the radio on
& hear the bird of the day
which sounds like any other
whistle being fed into the 9
o'clock beeps with news

It's as if the poet has integrated this language without forgetting the remarkable things she has found and observed, or needing to become overly self-conscious to notice it again. And if the poems seem slightly conventional compared with earlier work, it's a very relative comparison, with lines like these:

Where Crewcut your lawn crowd work
even in simple rain. Falling on the slant.

Sometimes the conversational tone lapses into over-familiar territory ('they have bread/ I said they have bread'), but she can use familiar language in provocative ways:

& all about us
people karori
& hutt & petone

Even when you're sure she's being ironic, there's a potentially beautiful image: 'people live in groups/ of smiles hooked to the same telephone by the same surname/ by the same wire.'

There's pop culture aplenty. The Sopranos feature in more than one poem - *yea*' stands out, with its surprising ideas and miscreant expressions.

Well worth buying.

(2004) YELICH, S. *Clung*. Auckland UP.

Double Jointed
by Jenny Powell-Chalmers
with Rob Allan, Martha Morseth, John Allison, Larry Matthews, Emma Neale, John Dolan, Peter Olds, Claire Beynon, Trevor Reeves & James Norcliffe.

I was delighted to see a writer and publisher venturing more seriously into linked writing. This can be an invigorating practice and, 'when the chemistry fizzes', as Catherine Mair puts it, a great read as well.

For me, the most satisfying combination is with Peter Olds. The work is exciting and rapid, especially in *It was a Tuesday Morning* Is Olds borrowing from Baxter? There are echoes, but there's also more humour. At the Post office we encounter Mike '(who wanted to be a BeeGee):

The rest of the day was a piece of cake.
After lunch (a beer & cigarette)

I hopped into a cab, drove up the Highway
to Halfway Bush, had an interview

with my psychiatrist, walked home
(my dreams temporarily revealed)

had baked beans on toast for tea,
listened to Schumann's Symphony No 3 in E,

pulled on my oldest cleanest denim jacket,
dropped a Panadeine, walked to the Town hall

. . . and so it goes on, like an Arlo Guthrie story you hope will never end.

Some selections give more than one take on the same theme. With Olds that approach is at its best. The second *Dreams of Hollywood* with Rob Allan is effective.



Unfortunately, this practice is much weaker in the work with John Dolan. He's one of my favourite poets, and though this combination doesn't fizz, who could doubt the talent of the man who wrote *Real People Don't Need Landscape?* Surely the best poetry book of last year – it would have got my vote in the Montanas, with Janet Charman's *Snowing Down South* coming second. A bit of wanton opinion there!

With Emma Neale the two voices merge as one to a much greater extent than in the other collaborations, with the possible exception of Claire Beynon's work. Powell-Chalmers works well with John Allison, especially in *Playing Mozart I* and the second section of *Symphonie Fantastique*, which sustains an intense communication between two imaginary characters.

I very much enjoyed the variety in this adventurous book.

(2004) POWELL-CHALMERS, J. et al.
Double Jointed. Inkweed.

Reviews by Owen Bullock

χ Out & About δ

NELSON

Nelson Poets

At the October meeting of the Nelson Poets there was a natural mixture of styles, from the light-hearted and hilarious (a debate about middle-aged plumpness), to landscapes (walking at Mount Cook.) We couldn't have planned a better balance.

The theme was 'javelin poems' - a poem pointed at both ends and thrown as a dart. Two crowd favourites were by **Panni Palasti**:

Bargains

In
the sale
of unclaimed articles
hearts go
cheap.

Dicing

Daily
I walk
on the faultline
toying with
fear.

Come and join us in November on Wednesday 12th November at Kafeine and add to the richness of the se occasions. We welcome poets passing through.

Report by Lesley Haddon

PICTON

Our October meeting followed the current tours down Memory Lane. This month our guide was Ernie Berry of haiku fame. Ernie has written cubic metres of poetry over the last thirty years, inspired initially by a chance encounter with Allen Ginsberg in Tuscon, and clearly his problem in this presentation was just what to select. Letters in verse from a hermitage on the beach in Mexico; longer poems later; now tapering off to one-line 'thots' and haiku that he shares with everyone, and specials for occasions such as birthdays.

Report by Sandy Arcus

TAURANGA

Pyes Pa U3A Poetry Group

The Pyes Pa Poetry Group was set up recently by Jose Melellieu and Keith Muir under the auspices of Tauranga U3A (University of the 3rd Age) for the reading and discussion of poetry. We meet fortnightly on Tuesday afternoons for around two hours, tea and biscuits included, to share our enjoyment and improve our knowledge of poetry in all its many forms.

As with many U3A groups, we have no tutor and set our own agenda, but will seek professional advice from time to time. In this context, the input from Jenny Argante at our last meeting was most useful in helping us create a framework on which to build our knowledge and enjoyment.

I anticipate that many of our meetings will centre on a particular theme: a poet, the seasons, forms of poetry, humour ... The list is endless.

Report by Keith Muir

Bravado @ Browsers

Hamilton poet Barry Smith made the trek over the Kaimais to be guest at October's Bravado @ Browsers reading in Tauranga - and it was fitting that he had to come over a mountain range as he was reading from his recently published collection of mountain poems, *Always a Little Further ...*

He declined the label "bloke poetry" and rightly so. Most of his audience on this Sunday were women who appreciated the vivid images and gentle humour in many of the poems. A keen outdoorsman all his life, Barry thanked editors, especially *Poetry NZ's* Alistair Paterson, for teaching him not to waste words in his writing.

He discussed the difficulties of having a collection published, a task he undertook himself in the end and which was, he says, a challenge he enjoyed greatly. One tip was to 'put your friends into your poems and they'll buy your book'.

The high places in this country are uncharted territory for many but Barry has done the hard work for us and reveals them in all their glory. He read in a straightforward manner that made his writing all the more enjoyable. His perfect little poem *Clemesias*, about a climbing friend who died, featured in Bowser's window as poem of the month:

Report from Sandra Simpson

WELLINGTON

NZPS Wellington October Meeting Writers International (NZ Group)

Amelia Nurse, Mark Pirie and Basim Furat, were our guests for October at Turnbull House's monthly meeting. The poets were representing the local writer's group Writers International in Wellington (formed by Susan Pearce). These three poets know each other well and have worked together, most recently on Basim Furat's book of translations from the Arabic *Here and There* (HeadworX).

Amelia, who also writes short fiction, is a natural storyteller – each poem was a step in her narrative. She grew up in Canada and moved here in her 20s. "They do all talk like my Dad," she discovered along with new sounds, new sights and a wind that tried to dislodge her. 'It thinks I need to wrap a/ Continent around me at night.'

A typically New Zealand love of the outdoors inspired the next poems beginning right outside her door in Melrose. Under the spell of midnight she listens to the small sounds of the garden close at hand and to the distant roaring of the lions at Wellington's zoo.

As Amelia was setting off to tramp in Queen Charlotte Sound next day we heard her love poem *Across the Strait*. She canvassed the audience for cat lovers before reading a series about the short, sweet life of her kitten Hilaire ('she'll sunbathe in my thoughts') and Meerkat, the brother who took her place. This poet has a sure grasp of poetic forms from limerick to lyric and a voice you want to listen to.

Mark Pirie made his entrance as an Edwardian gentleman, styled on Alexander Turnbull, no less, whose portrait hangs in the meeting room. He read from *Gallery* (2003), *No Joke* (2001) and some new poems, *Song of Flight*, and *Dove* about fifty-five deaths in Medellin – of gang-related deaths at the hands of those they knew. *Toy Love* was written in response to a SPAM message advertising weapons of destruction. 'So, what are you waiting for? A real war?... *let's do it!*' Mark often writes poems for friends. He read *Journeys*, written at the age of twenty-one for Paul Wolfram; a poem about ghosts for visiting Swedish

poet Karin Bellman; an Ogden Nash poem for animal-loving Amelia and *Jasmine* for Basim Furat:

You say poetry
is our lasting friend;
after our lovers and our friends
have gone, it will always be
there – it will never leave us.

Divested of his costume, Mark then read the English translations of Basim Furat's poems after we heard the Arabic versions from the poet himself. This is an aesthetic experience as the words lift off the page and reach us on rising and falling waves of sound and gesture, intricate and studied as the beautiful Arabic calligraphic script in which they are written. Rather than war and exile, Basim read poems about love, the subject that has inspired poets down the ages. The first was addressed to a ravishingly beautiful Bedouin woman he met in Jordan after leaving his native Iraq. The poems were unashamedly romantic, passionate and lyrical and his NZ publisher Mark Pirie was so much in tune with Basim's voice that he read the translations with sensitivity and feeling.

The love of poetry is strong in these poets. Their work is both contemporary and timeless which lent a real beauty to the evening's readings.

An open reading preceded the trio of guest poets. Among them, Linzy Forbes, a former NZPS treasurer, was welcomed back and made a sombre impression with his *Not a poem*. ('This isn't the beginning of the new millennium/ it's a descent into Hell!') Other who read included Laurice Gilbert, Karen Peterson Butterworth and Nola Borrell.

Report by Robin Fry



Wellington Windrift

Windrift meets again on Thursday November 18th at 58 Cecil Street, Wadestown at 1 p.m. Let Nola Borrell know if you'd like to receive the invitation and 'homework'. All welcome. Contacts: Jeanette Stace (ph 04 473 6227, njstace@actrix.gen.nz) or Nola Borrell (ph 04 586 7287, nolaborrell@xtra.co.nz).

χ Websites δ

Poems from Paris

Former Wellington poet and books editor of the *Evening Post*, Andrew Johnston has for some years been living in Paris where he works on the *International Herald Tribune*. He's still writing poetry, and now has a website where local readers can catch up on his literary life:

<http://mapage.noos.fr/andrew.johnston/>

And, for another view of what poetry is, read Tom Leonard's *100 Differences Between Poetry and Prose*:
[www.tomleopard.co.uk/tomleopard/access to the silence/100 differences.shtml](http://www.tomleopard.co.uk/tomleopard/access%20to%20the%20silence/100%20differences.shtml).

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χ Competitions δ

NZPS International Poetry Competition

Competition 2005 is about to begin! Yes folks, the event you have been waiting for is under way. As always, we have a shimmering line-up of enthusiastic judges, just waiting to read your best efforts and try to rank them in some kind of order. The prizes are fantastic (any money associated with poetry has to be a bonus), and the honour of being selected for next year's anthology is waiting in the wings as a consolation prize for those who don't quite make it to the cash.

Our latest crop of judges is:

Open: **John Horrocks**
Open Junior: **Pat White**
Haiku: **Bernard Gadd**
Haiku Junior: **Jeanette Stace**.

How cool is that list? The closing date for 2005 is 30th May – later than usual, to allow for the increased interest our former competition secretary cleverly managed to drum up in the schools around the country (generally just coming back from term holidays at our previous deadline date). Anything to foster a love of poetry in our young people is fine by me.

So the details and entry forms can be found on our web site: www.poetrysociety.org.nz - and as an extra service for our members, entry forms will accompany the first newsletter for the year, in February 2005. (See, it is worth paying your sub).

If you're anything like me, you'll put off sending in your entries till the very last minute, in case the muse strikes you with the perfect poem on the 29th May. However, while getting your entries in early doesn't guarantee a win, it does make the work easier at closing time for your hard-working committee member. Just kidding – keep those poems and haiku rolling in, poets, because the more we get, the bigger and better our anthology can be.

*From Laurice Gilbert
NZPS Competition Secretary*

Reminder from Kokako

Don't forget to enter the current *Kokako* haiku contest.
Mail to 43 Landscape Road, Papatoetoe, Auckland

1701 with \$5 entry fee for any number of haiku. The general topic is illness, disability, disease, physical/mental irritations, limitations, infestations - such as the striking works Basho wrote on fleas, Shiki on his spinal caries, etc. The topics can be dealt with in any way, including with a lighter touch.



The Inaugural Southword Editions Poetry Chapbook Competition 2005

1st Prize:

Euro1,000 + publication of a limited edition chapbook
5 runner-up prizes
Euro100 + publication in Southword

Submit 5 poems by February 28th. A shortlist of six poets will be announced on March 30th and they'll be invited to submit a manuscript of sixteen pages of poems. The overall winner will be chosen by April 30th 2005 and the chapbook of 300 copies will be published in June 2005.

The winner will receive one thousand Euros and twenty copies of the chapbook. Five runners-up will receive payment of Euro100 each and will have one or more poems published in *Southword No. 8*, June 2005.

Judges will be Patrick Cotter and Gregory O'Donoghue, editors of *Southword Literary Journal*.

Entry fee 10 Euros by credit card or 10 Euros, £10 or US\$15 by cheque.

The competition is open to original poems in the English language. The five poems must not have been previously published in book or chapbook form, but poems that have appeared in periodicals or anthologies are acceptable. Entries should be typed. The entrant's name and contact details must be on a separate piece of paper. Manuscripts cannot be returned.

Each entry must be accompanied by an entry fee of €10/ £10 stg/ US\$15/ AU\$18. Can\$16. You may submit as many entries as you want. Please make cheques and money orders payable to Munster Literature Centre.

An entry form is not needed. If you would like to pay by credit card please go to our website and use the secure Paypal button. You will be charged 10 Euros.

Closing date for Round 1 is February 28th 2005. All entries must be postmarked before or on that date (in plainer English, entries posted before or on this date will be accepted after February 28th provided they are sent by airmail).

Entries will be accepted by post only at the following address: The Munster Literature Centre, Frank O'Connor House, 84 Douglas Street, Cork, Ireland. (There is no post/zip code.)

A shortlist of six poets will be announced on March 30th. These short-listed poets will be invited to submit a 16-page manuscript by e-mail. An overall winner will be chosen by April 30th. Judges' decision is final.

It would assist us greatly if you let us know how you first heard of this competition, whether through a mail-shot, word of mouth, classified advert, flyer, newsprint story, link from another site or search engine. Thank you.

χ Poetry Advisory Service δ

Set up to provide writers of poetry with a written critique of a sample of their work, PAS offers focused and constructive feedback from an individual member of an experienced and published panel of poets selected for their proven teaching skills.

For further information, contact:

NZPS Poetry Advisory Service
PO Box 5283
Lambton Quay Wellington.
info@poetrysociety.org.nz

Please note: *PAS is open to all poets whether members of the NZPS or not.*

χ Poetry Gatherings δ

Updates

Please note that for reasons of space we are discontinuing our 'Regular Gatherings' in the Newsletter. Instead, this information will be displayed on the website www.poetrysociety.org.nz. A print copy can be requested from Administrator, NZPS, PO Box 5285 Lambton Quay Wellington. (enclosing SSAE.) Do please continue to send updates – new groups, changes of names and venue, a group that no longer exists, etc. – to the Editor. Thank you.

BALCLUTHA

The following correction should be noted: Contact person is Gweneth Williams and her phone no. is 03 4158-983.

MARLBOROUGH Poets' Corner

Poets' Corner, a new venture for poetry lovers in Marlborough, will meet initially at The Vines Restaurant, Redwood Tavern, Cleghorn Street, Blenheim. This pleasant venue has been booked for the next two meetings on October 27th & November 24th from 5.30 – 9 p.m.

Snacks & meals available at reasonable prices (from \$5 up). Come and go as you please either to read your own work or listen. These gatherings aren't intended as workshops but will occasionally invited speakers or put other poetical items on the programme.

Poets ... readers ... listeners – you're all welcome. For further information please contact: Fay (ph 03 578 3109); Neil (ph 03 577 8312), Julie (ph 03 573 8281), or Anne (ph 03 574 2757).

χ Talk Poem 10 δ

Not Ideas about the Thing but the Thing itself

Wallace Stevens
(1879 - 1955)

At the earliest ending of winter,
In March, a scrawny cry from outside
Seemed like a sound in his mind.

He knew that he heard it,
A bird's cry, at daylight or before,
In the early March wind.

The sun was rising at six,
No longer a battered panache above snow ...
It would have been outside.

It was not from the vast ventriloquism
Of sleep's faded papier-mache ...
The sun was coming from the outside.

That scrawny cry--It was
A chorister whose c preceded the choir.
It was part of the colossal sun,

Surrounded by its choral rings,
Still far away. It was like
A new knowledge of reality.

The title is better known than the poem, and has often been used as a guiding principle of poetry writing. It's very like another couple of lines from Stevens:

'poem is the cry of its occasion,
Part of the res itself and not about it'
(from *Collect* 473)

- res being the Latin root word of 'real' and meaning the actual thing, matter, or object. For the poem the title serves as a suggestion about how to read the poem. It serves to focus attention on the subject matter – a sound that's described as a scrawny cry, a bird's cry. It comes from outside the house, at daylight or before, carried on the March wind as winter ends. It's an actual bird call and not something imagined by a mind still muzzy with dreams. It is in fact perhaps the first sound of the avian bird 'choir' at dawn. It was like 'a new knowledge of reality' from the very fact that the speaker (whoever the 'he' is) insists on its independent reality outside the mind: it is the thing itself.

But Stevens has not written a poem to that tries to claim it's recreating an experience for the readers so that they can fancy that they're in some way re-experiencing it at second hand. Nor is he interested here or elsewhere to proffer ruminations prompted by hearing the bird.

The poem's six three-line stanzas are the experience that Stevens is offering us. He provides a series of images and metaphors to indicate what sort of a cry it was, when it was, and where. And he gives us some fun with his more over-the-top metaphors: 'The sunNo longer a battered panache above snow', the 'sun/ Surrounded by its choral rings', 'the vast ventriloquism/ Of sleep's faded papier-mache', and the puns of A chorister whose 'c preceded the choir' and was part of the sun's arrival.

Before our eyes the mind attends to what it has heard, makes sense of it - and we perhaps always end up making metaphorical comparisons - and has fun with metaphors. but there is never the least confusion that the metaphors are supposed to be the cry or its circumstances. And this is also part of the new knowledge of reality: the acceptance of the way that we make metaphor of things so that we can understand them . and in doing so realise that we can have immense pleasure in playing with that facility.

It's a very good sort of poem for Kiwi poets in the new century to read since Stevens is not claiming that any ideas, feelings, or associations which he has connected to the bird cry would make interesting poetry in themselves. He makes for us a poem whose reading is an enjoyment and an end in itself, and is not merely a platform on which the poet holds forth as some time-battered Romantic dishing out the supposed inspirations of the poet's feeding on honey-dew.

Of equal interest is the craft: every line with its three or four stressed syllables, every stanza with the same line-stress shape. There is no end rhyme but the fluency of the lines and the placing of alliteration and assonance give the effect of a rhymed poem . yet one that is anything but traditional in its approach to what could have been just another corny Spring-time lyric.

Bernard Gadd

χ KiwiHaiku δ

two hawks
gliding on thermals
big sky breathless

Sandie Legge
(Oturehua)

*Please submit KiwiHaiku to Owen Bullock PO
Box 13-533 Grey Street Tauranga. Preferably
but not essentially with a New Zealand theme.*

DEADLINE 20th FEBRUARY 2005