



# a fine line

November 2007

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

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

ISSN 1178-3931  
The New Zealand Poetry  
Society Inc.  
PO Box 5283  
Lambton Quay  
Wellington 6145

**Patrons**

Dame Fiona Kidman  
Vincent O'Sullivan

**National Coordinator &  
President**

Laurice Gilbert

**Contacts**

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

NOVEMBER MEETING

**Anthology Launch:**

*the infinity we swim in*

**Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> November 6pm**

at Turnbull House, Bowen St, Wellington

JANUARY MEETING

**Fleur Adcock, UK**

**Friday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2008 5.30 – 6.30pm**

Museum of Wellington City and Sea (Sponsor)

The Bond Store, Queens Wharf, Wellington

## Feature Article

### Rhyme and Rhythm: a Neglected Audience?

*Karen Peterson Butterworth*

In his September 2004 essay in the *Poetry Society Newsletter*, Bernard Gadd observed that "...[New Zealand poetry] sales probably average between 50 to 150 copies for a book, an assessment published about 30 years ago in the literary magazine *Outrigger* and which is probably still true." To my observation, it remains true in 2007, with a few notable exceptions like Manhire, Hunt, and Colquhoun.

The smallness of the New Zealand poetry market may be due to what I shall call induced poetry-phobia. Too many readers learned at school to unscrew a modern or post-modern poem's cogs and wheels, lay them out on newspaper, clean each part, then screw them back together. If that didn't kill it for them, the absence of lubrication by rhyme and rhythm surely did. Yet the majority of people who say, "I'm not interested in poetry," will quote with relish from the classics: "...The landlord's black-eyed daughter...", "Tiger tiger burning bright...", "...Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle/ The magpies said".

Lovers of rhyme and rhythm (which I will henceforth call R & R) have been sorely neglected by publishers. The modern market's gestures towards them are practically limited to greeting cards and 'Verse for the Day' inspirational books. Within these genres the verse tends to be shallow, sentimental and cliché-ridden. There are much better writers of rhyming, rhythmic verse out there. They regularly pop up at open mike readings, where the best of them can receive as much applause as the guest poet.

Before widespread literacy brought about the birth of the novel, minstrels were the ordinary people's storytellers. They used R & R to aid their and their audiences' memories, and to express the music of their shared language. Shakespeare incorporated R & R into his plays, which would have helped his players learn their lines as well as pleasing his audiences. Today's poets can learn much about writing unforced R & R from Shakespeare. Only

his clowns speak doggerel.

Love of R & R lingered into more recent, literate times, when eighteenth and nineteenth century poets picked them up and ran with them, often to the point of exhaustion. The move into free verse around the beginning of last century happened, I conjecture, largely because too many poets had come to use R & R as a cage rather than a scaffolding for their poetry.

Such misuse was no reason to throw out the baby with the bath water. It is admittedly much harder to write good poetry in structured verse forms than in free verse. But that is a poet's, and not an audience's, reason to avoid R & R.

A delight in R & R is shown by today's child audiences, whose favourite picture books are written in rhyming verse. I doubt that the appreciation of matching sounds and a musical beat disappears with maturity. Song lyrics employ R & R. Hip hop is a thriving popular verse form. But publishers too often tend to dismiss all writers in R & R as McGonagalls.

There are some accessible anthologies around, of which Bill Manhire's *100 New Zealand Poems* (Godwit Press, 1993) is a good example. Margaret Mahy's poem about a baby in a bubble is resplendent with richly enjoyable R & R, and sticks in my memory more than any other poem therein. The trouble is, accessible poetry books don't advertise their nature on their covers, and so may be regarded with as much suspicion as other poetry books by the buying public.

There's a ray of hope in the micropress movement, which was started by Gloria Yates in Queensland, and is carried on in New Zealand by Tony Chad, publisher of *Valley Micropress*. Micropresses differ from most other small poetry magazines in their frequency (10 times a year) and their cheap, simple, format. They have literary standards *sans* snobbery and will give most poets a go with or without R & R, provided there is some depth of feeling, wit, and original language in their work.

Micropresses, some anthologies, and pub and café readings have encouraged a bewildered poetry audience to hang in there, but just barely. A change of heart is needed now by major poetry publishers in order to woo back their audience and make it open its hearts and wallets. Is it such a fearful crime to heed the prevailing tastes of one's potential readership? Publishers of popular fiction and their bankers don't think so.

## *From the National Coordinator*

Laurice Gilbert

September was the month of the Great Computer Crash. I will spare you the details of my *mensis horrendus*, and merely remind you that when They say, "Back up your files", They mean it. The disaster was not a result of my lack of knowledge or experience - the hard drive simply failed, as electrical stuff sometimes does, and could not be revived - but the loss of all my data was, and I have learned the hard way. Fortunately, I always print out my poems because I like to see how they look on the page, and I didn't lose a decade of writing.

I now have a new hard drive and a nifty little back-up gizmo that I download everything onto every couple of weeks and keep outside the house, in case that burns down. (I'm not catastrophising - it happened to my parents back in the eighties.) It's one way of clearing out the email inbox clogged with things I might get around to looking at one day, but I don't recommend it. Please feel free to learn from my mistake.

My visit to Christchurch for a committee meeting and to emcee the "Five New Zealand Poets" event at The Press Christchurch Writers' Day in early September was both productive and enjoyable. It was such a pleasure to meet a number of people I previously knew only by name and through their poetry. I also had the delight of awarding this year's Lauris Edmond Award, for Distinguished Contribution to New Zealand Poetry, to Dinah Hawken. I bumped into Dinah around Wellington a few times in the preceding weeks, and knowing what was coming up added a secret thrill to the encounters. Many thanks to the Canterbury Poets' Collective for inviting me to participate in this excellent event.

My gratitude also goes to those of you who have been willing and forthcoming as I called for help with getting the magazine under way again without my records. I have been overwhelmed with your kindness and cooperation, and I think poets must be among the most generous people there are. I look forward to meeting more of you as opportunities arise to visit different parts of the country.

And before you move on to the always interesting members' contributions to the magazine, let me draw your attention to the very special meeting we are having in Wellington in January. Fleur Adcock, who will be honoured with a Doctorate by Victoria University in December, is visiting NZ to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her mother's birth. Irene Adcock, as many of you know, founded the NZ Poetry Society in 1973, and we are

privileged to have Fleur reading for us while she is here. A rare pleasure indeed.

### ***About our Contributors***

**Nola Borrell** is a Lower Hutt poet, practitioner of haiku, and past member of the NZPS committee. She regularly collates the Haiku NewZ.

**Karen Peterson Butterworth** won the 2001 BNZ Katherine Mansfield Essay Prize, and has published poetry, including haiku, in seven countries.

**Bernard Gadd** is an Auckland writer and publisher who contributes regularly, and is a committee member.

**Nicola Kimpton** is a Whakatane poet who currently holds the inaugural Kingi McKinnon Scholarship for Emerging Writers.

**Harvey Molloy** is a Wellington poet and secondary school teacher, who is a past member of the committee.

**Joanna Preston** is a Christchurch poet, currently editing the NZPS annual anthology, *the infinity we swim in*.

**Margaret Vos** is a writer, communications consultant, and mother. Born in the USA, she has lived in Wellington since 2000.

Poetry is life with the ray of imagination's power passing through it.

Simon Critchley

### ***Letters to the Editor***

#### *The value of poetry*

I don't think that becoming "mainstream" or being popularized, as Robin Fry (*Reviews*, September) suggests, are the most significant currents among New Zealand writers and poets. What is happening is that we poets too are feeling the pressure of the insidiously pervasive mindset in which activities are chiefly valued for their ability to earn money, whether or not we're aiming to be professional or semi-professional writers. The ancient tradition of poetry as a gift to share with others is under attack. And so we see poets offering even the slightest, smallest or read-at-a-glance poems for publication expecting a fee, and we see media attention and resultant sales becoming the criterion of poetic worth.

Of course any society in which virtually everything is commercialized and commercial values are dominant brings problems upon itself: tension, conflicts, hypocrisy, injustice, inequality. But just when you look to the poets to speak up, so many are fading into that "mainstream".

But fortunately not all; not even among the most famous and commercially viable are the impulses of Swift, Blake, Ron Mason extinguished.

**Bernard Gadd** (*Auckland*)

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

**Shelley Arlidge** Russell

**Mary Dennis** Wellington

**Whakakotia Emerson** Christchurch

**Ruth Harper** Wellington

**Jan Hill** Geraldine

**Lora Mountjoy** Wellington

**Rob McKibbin** Auckland

**Ivan Lauridsen** Hamilton

**Emma Neale** Dunedin

**Irene Ruth** Napier

**Elizabeth Smyth** Christchurch

**Roger Steele** Wellington

**Maria Turner** Auckland

**Patsy Turner** Akaroa

Correction: in the last issue Dilys Rees was incorrectly welcomed as Dilys Jones. Sorry, Dilys.

## ***Congratulations***

- to **Sue Wootton**, Dunedin, for winning second prize in the 4<sup>th</sup> Bravado International Poetry Competition;
- to **Tim Jones**, Wellington, for third prize in the same competition;
- and to **Michele Amas, Sarah Broom, Michael Harlow, and Sue Wootton** (again) for their highly commended entries. The competition was judged by **Elizabeth Smither**.
- to **Claire Beynon**, Dunedin, for securing a place in the Caselberg Creative Wilderness Residency, on board the Breaksea Girl, on Doubtful Sound, 1st - 6th October.
- to **Bernard Gadd**, NZPS Committee Member and regular magazine contributor, for a Highly Commended in the NZ Society of Authors' Western Districts Short Story Competition.

## ***Noticeboard***

For a complete rundown of regional events, and to find the poetry meeting in your town, please go to our website: [www.poetrysociety.org.nz](http://www.poetrysociety.org.nz)

## **IIML IOWA WORKSHOPS, WELLINGTON**

**Application closing date: 9 November.**

*Making Poetry Dangerous*, with Sam Reed

What is the difference between calling something 'pretty' and creating the sensation of blooming and dying on the page? This workshop will look at the craft of poetry for answers to this and other questions. Sam Reed's poems have appeared in journals such as *Colorado Review*, *Denver Quarterly* and *Beloit Poetry Journal*. The workshops run from 7 Jan to 24 Feb 2008, and are limited to 12 participants. They involve 2 x 3-hour meetings per week. Contact the International Institute of Modern Letters for further information: phone 04-463 6854, fax 04-463 6865, email [modernletters@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:modernletters@vuw.ac.nz) or visit <http://www.vuw.ac.nz/modernletters>

## **HELP WANTED**

Two or three people are needed to keep the [Poetry Cafe](http://www.poetrycafe.co.nz) (Porirua) running. If anyone is interested in keeping the poetry alive please contact the current organiser **Lindsay Forbes** at: [linzy@paradise.net.nz](mailto:linzy@paradise.net.nz) or through the website [www.poetrycafe.co.nz](http://www.poetrycafe.co.nz). The good news is that advance planning for the next few events is already well underway - two poets are almost confirmed for the November event and there is a very good chance that a big international name will be booked shortly for January.

## **CHRISTCHURCH READINGS, 2008**

If any poet is going to be in Christchurch between the middle of March and the end of April next year, and would like to read during the Canterbury Poets' Collective series of readings, please contact **Judith Walsh**, Phone 03 342 9881, or e-mail [njw@clear.net.nz](mailto:njw@clear.net.nz)

## **INTERNATIONAL ANTHOLOGY**

Three Kiwi poets have appeared in a collection of poems in tribute to or recollection of Che Guavara: *Che in Verse*, edited by Gavin O'Toole and Georgina Jiménez, published by Aflame Books. Among the many poets from fifty-three countries are some well known names: Pablo Neruda, Derek Walcott, Andrew Salkey, Allen Ginsberg, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Michael McClure, Robert Lowell, Thomas Merton, Edward Lucie-Smith, Adrian Mitchell. And **Bernard Gadd**, Mark Pirie, and Michael O'Leary! This anthology is one of the commemorations of Guavara's death in 1967.

## **SELF-PUBLISHING AS A CAREER CHOICE**

A Wellington member has completed a 36,000 line epic poem *The Alexandrians*, written from 21 June 1961 to 11 July 2007. The text and accompanying literature have been self-published in 770 books and booklets.

As at 4/10/07 the National Library on-line catalogue lists 770 books and booklets by **F W Nielsen Wright** under ISBN 186933, ISBN 978186933 and pre 1981 (ie before ISBN's).

Born in 1933, Niel began writing verse in 1943. His earliest publications appeared in prose in 1947 and in verse in 1950. The text of *The Alexandrians* was issued from 1961 on at an average rate of 770 lines a year.

*The Alexandrians* reflects the poetic tastes of New Zealanders in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s, as seen in recent

reprints of the poetry of Victor O'Leary and Charles Spear, and marks a retreat from the Modernism that has been prevalent in New Zealand poetry since 1970.

Taking off from the cultural moment of 1885 (when Tarzan was a boy), *The Alexandrians* uses highly formal verse in which each line carries rhyme (regularly on consonants) to review and enact human culture as centred on Alexandria in the light of modern historical and ancient documentary evidence, as a pointer to contemporary social and cultural problems that need answers.

*The Alexandrians* is made up of lyric, narrative, epigrammatic and discursive passages which can be read and understood in 8 line blocks and densely interrelate in a vast field of associations and analogues. (Source: [nielwright@xtra.co.nz](mailto:nielwright@xtra.co.nz))

## POETRY TREASURES ON RADIO

Anna-Kaye Forsyth, Auckland poet and musician, has entered the world of cyber poetry with a fortnightly online radio show: *Pounamu*. She is actively involved in Poetry Live and Guerrilla Poets, as well as publishing her work and entering poetry slams. Auckland has a vibrant poetry community and Anna-Kaye believes it's time to turn on the spotlights and widen the audience.

She was taken by the idea of Jam Radio, a resource website of arts community radio programmes made by Aucklanders. The online format is an international platform for the artistic community, and is another avenue for exposure for young poets and writers. Her programme delves into all aspects of the poetry life, crammed with interviews and readings. For her first outing as a radio show host, she invited Miriam Barr, Daniel Larsen and Renee Liang to speak about their travels and how this has affected their work.

Anna-Kaye has a multitude of young poets eager to present their works online. Future topics include: The Poet and His Stomach, Hot Sex, The Landscape of the Mind and My Heart on a Platter. Check out *Pounamu* at [www.jamradio.co.nz](http://www.jamradio.co.nz)

## POETRY LOVERS' TRIP TO IRAN

This is a bit of advertising, but it sounds so divine I couldn't resist including it:

Persian poetry is rich and its essence is being further discovered by the West as more accurate translations of humble giants such as Jalaladin Molana Rumi and Hafez is taking place. We are welcoming western poets and poetry lovers to come to Iran and engage in dialogues and poetry readings with Iranian poets and poetry lovers to honour our common desire for love and peace through poetry and fellowship. In cooperation with the Iranian Poets' Society and other poetry groups we are organizing poetry workshops and poetry nights during the tour. Poets and poetry lovers are encouraged to bring their selected poetry and read them in the group or publish it in our booklet to give out at the end of the tour or posted at our website. Our mission is to create a tour which serves our international guest participants in four ways:

1. Experience love, peace & fellowship through Iranian and world poetry
2. An enjoyable holiday
3. Experience poetic gestures of the Persian culture
4. See Iran's historic and natural points of interest

From: Roz Omid, Iranian Tour and Travel Agency

See <http://www.irantrip.com/iran-travel-itineraries/poetic-cultural-tour.htm> for details of the trip.

Ink runs from the corners of my mouth  
There is no happiness like mine.  
I have been eating poetry.

Mark Strand 'Eating Poetry', *Reasons for Moving*

## Surfing the Web

<http://www.poetrylibrary.org.uk/education/children/> The children's zone of the South Bank Centre's (London) Poetry Library. Includes an excellent page of advice for young poets.

<http://www.poetryproseandplays.co.uk/> A site for all seasons, including competitions, poetry ideas, and assignments to get you thinking.

<http://www.culturewars.org.uk/2007-09/burnsidegs.htm> A poetry review with a difference – it's presented in a graphic format.

<http://www.poetrykit.org/pkcourses.htm> Poetry Kit's on-line courses page, and not just poetry courses, either.

<http://allpoetry.com/> Sharing poetry on the web. It's extremely varied, and there are competitions as well. I plan to register when I've got some time (ha ha).

## **Publications**

New arrivals on the NZPS bookshelf since the last issue:

*A long girl ago* by **Johanna Atchison** (VUP) is her second collection, drawing on ten years of living, including three spent teaching English in Japan.

*echolocation* by Angela Andrews (VUP RRP \$25). Pregnancy and new life as experienced by a doctor/ poet.

*Open Book* by **Claire Beynon** (Steele Roberts, RRP \$49.99) This artist poet shows just how beautifully words and images complement each other.

*All Blacks' Kitchen Gardens* is **Tim Jones'** second collection of poetry (HeadworX, RRP \$24), and includes his poem 'The Translator', included in *Best New Zealand Poems 2204*. Tim is the guest poet at the final Poetry Café for the year (Porirua) on 12 November.

*The Sensual Anchor* by Victor O'Leary, *Stories I've Told* by Frances Cherry, *Uncivil Servant* by Gemma Rowsell; numbers 14, 15 & 16 from the Earl of Seacliff Art Workshop's mini series. \$5 each.

*Tributary* by Rae Varcoe (VUP RRP \$25) Another poet / doctor exploring the mysterious relationship between poetry and medicine.

## **Workshops & Residencies**

TASMANIAN ISLAND OF RESIDENCIES FELLOWSHIPS 2008, Australia

Deadline: 30 November 2007

Applications for the 2008 Island of Residencies program are invited from published writers living in each Australian state and territory and from writers from all around the world. Writers living on islands are particularly encouraged to apply. Residencies are available between March and November 2008 for writers who have published work on any subject, in any form including fiction, non-fiction, poetry, writing for children and/or young adults, and writing for the stage. Applications from international writers may be emailed to: [director@tasmanianwriters.org](mailto:director@tasmanianwriters.org)

OPENING THE POEM, AUCKLAND

Paula Green will again run this popular summer workshop daily 9.30am – 4.30pm from **7 to 11 January 2008** at the University of Auckland's Epsom Campus. The course fees are \$423 or \$619.80 (International Fee). The course is limited to 15 participants. For more information and registration details, see

<http://www.cce.auckland.ac.nz/cce/continuing/index.cfm?P=8548&ClassNumber=31416>

LEDIG HOUSE INTERNATIONAL WRITERS RESIDENCY

Omi, New York, USA

Applications close 30 November

"Writers and translators from all fields are encouraged to apply for a residence lasting anywhere from one week to two months. Up to 20 writers per session--10 at a given time--live and write on the stunning 300 acre grounds and sculpture park that overlooks the Catskill Mountains." I can't find any evidence that it costs anything to attend, as there is a long list of sponsors and endowment funds. See <http://www.artomi.org/>

WRITERS' COLONY AT DAIRY HOLLOW

Eureka Springs, Arkansas, USA

Applications close 1 December.

Scholarships ("Fellowships") are available for this colony – see <http://www.writerscolony.org/> and look at the "For Writers" section in the right hand menu.

ANDREWS FOREST WRITERS' RESIDENCIES

Spring Creek, Oregon, USA

Applications close 1 December.

The mission of the Long-Term Ecological Reflections <http://springcreek.oregonstate.edu/programs.html#LTER> program is to bring together writers, humanists and scientists to create a living, growing record of how we understand the forest and the relation of people to the forest, as that understanding and that forest both change over time. They even pay you a small stipend. See <http://springcreek.oregonstate.edu/residencies.html>

YADDO ARTISTS' COLONY

Saratoga Springs (New York), USA

Applications close 1 January. No residency fees, and grants are available to cover travel, living costs, loss of earnings. See <http://yaddo.org/yaddo/history.shtml>

ARTCROFT

Kentucky, USA. Applications open all year round. This one is fee-free, and offers a work exchange programme (max. 20 hours a week) for those in financial need of support while in residence. See <http://artcroft.org/index.htm>

## *Competitions & Submissions*

**Féile Filíochta International Poetry Competition 2007 (Ireland); Closing Date: 9 November** For poems on any subject, of any length, theme, or style. First prize 5000 Euros. There are 10 language categories: Irish, English, German, French, Italian, Welsh, Spanish, Scottish Gaelic, Swedish and Polish. Free Entry.

Féile Filíochta International Poetry Competition 2007,

P.O. Box 6983, Blackrock, County Dublin, Ireland

Website: [www.dlrcoco.ie/feile](http://www.dlrcoco.ie/feile)

**Torriano Poetry Competition (UK); Closing Date: 9 November** For poems of up to 40 lines. Adjudicators: Katherine Gallagher & June English. The winning poet will be invited to submit a pamphlet collection of about thirty poems to *Hearing Eye* with a view to publication. First Prize £250, Second Prize £150, Third Prize £75. A separate sheet of A4 should contain the titles of poems, name, land and email addresses and phone number of entrant. Entry Fee: £3 for one poem, £5 for two, £10 for five. Contact: email [june.english@btinternet.com](mailto:june.english@btinternet.com)

**Barnet Open Poetry Competition 2007 (UK); Closing Date: 15 November** For poems of up to 35 lines. Adult category and juniors (7-11 & 12-16). Judges: Fleur Adcock (general) and Katherine Gallagher (juniors) Entry Fee: £4 per poem for adults, £1 per poem for juniors. Contact: Website [www.artsinbarnet.org.uk](http://www.artsinbarnet.org.uk)

### **Call for submissions for anthology of poems**

#### **Deadline 30 November**

*Swings and Roundabouts* is the provisional title of an anthology of poems on parenting to be published by Random House (Godwit). Selecting Editor **Emma Neale** says the anthology is due for release in 2008, and is open to submissions from published and unpublished New Zealand and Australian poets. They want the anthology to focus on as many aspects of raising children as possible: the joys, the frustrations, the comedy, the challenges: the merry-go-sorry of tantrums and love. They are looking for everything from poems about childbirth to poems about dealing with adult children. Authors are welcome to submit published or unpublished work, although new work will gain preference. Poems may be up to 100 lines long, and must be printed in size 12 font on one side of A4 paper, the author's name and contact details clearly provided on each page. If the poem has been previously published, these details must also be provided. Email submissions are not acceptable. Submissions should be addressed to Emma Neale, Selecting Editor, Swings and Roundabouts c/- Random House, Private Bag 102950, North Shore Mail Centre, 18 Poland Road, Glenfield, Auckland 1310, New Zealand (*Source: NZSA*)

**The New Writer magazine (UK); Closing Date: 30 November** Single Poems and Collections - single poems up to 40 lines and collections of between 6 - 10 poems. Single poem entries must be previously unpublished; previously published poems can be included as part of a collection. Collection: 1st prize £300, 2nd £200, 3rd £100. Single: 1st prize £100, 2nd £75, 3rd £50. Entry fees: £4 per single poem; £10 per collection. Payable online, through their secure site. Further information including guidelines and entry fees at

<http://www.thenewwriter.com/prizes.htm>

**Plough Prize 2007 (UK); Closing Date: 30 November**

The Plough Prize invites entries in two categories: Open poem - up to 40 lines, any style, Judge: Andrew Motion UK Poet Laureate; Short poem - up to 10 lines, any style. Judge: Andrew Motion. 1st prize £500, 2nd prize £200, 3rd prize £100 in each category. Entry Fee: £4.00 per poem, four poems £14, £3.50 thereafter. Enter online or postal but payment must be in sterling. You can use PayPal. Website [www.theploughprize.co.uk](http://www.theploughprize.co.uk)

**foam:e 5**

**Deadline: 30 November 2007**

See the website at: <http://www.foame.org> foam:e 5 will be published in March 2008, edited by Louise Waller. Please use the word foam:e in the subject line and send your poems as text in the body of an email to the editor at: [editor@foame.org](mailto:editor@foame.org) Entries must be in English. No corrections can be made after receipt, nor fees refunded.

**The Karen Fredericks and Frances Willitts Poetry Prize (USA); Closing Date: 25 December**

Submission of only ONE best poem. Please also submit photo in jpg format and Bio. Poem must be unpublished but simultaneous submission is accepted. Notify if accepted elsewhere. Prize is \$350 & publication. There is no entry fee. Type "Poetry Prize" in subject line of email and send your poem to BOTH [Carole Sineni sea7@comcast.net](mailto:Carole_Sineni_sea7@comcast.net) AND [Martin Willitts Jr.mwillitts01@yahoo.com](mailto:Martin_Willitts_Jr.mwillitts01@yahoo.com)

**2008 Griffin Poetry Prize (Canada)**

**Deadline: 31 December** (post marked)

This is a CAD\$100,000 Prize for books published between January 1 and December 31, 2007. If you've published this year, persuade your publisher to enter it. For entry conditions see the website <http://www.griffinpoetryprize.com/rules.php>

**Euphoria Annual Poetry Contest (USA)**

**Closing date: 31 December**

Free entry poetry contest offers modest prize and online publication. Enter by email only. Previously published poems accepted, though notify if accepted elsewhere. Good contest for emerging writers. Top Award: \$100; Winner also published on website. Based on the work on their site, traditional rhyming verse is likely to be welcomed here. Read past winners on website at: <http://www.jlabriola.com/id1.html> Submit by email to: [bowmanj8@aol.com](mailto:bowmanj8@aol.com) - 1-5 poems, 50-line maximum, one submission per entrant, either published or unpublished. Submit your poems in the body of the email (no html or attachments). Include your name, address, email address and bio. If you send more than one poem in the email, be sure that you separate each poem and be sure to add a copyright date for it also, to protect your rights. Winners will be announced on their website in February.

**Franklin-Christoph Poetry Contest (USA); Closing date 31 December.** *Sponsored by Franklin-Christoph, Ltd.*

Free contest from seller of luxury pens and desk accessories offers prize for unpublished poems - the sponsor is more commercial than literary. Top Award: \$1,000 and publication on website. Other Awards: Five Merit Award winners receive a 1901 Fountain Pen (\$290 value), or alternate Franklin-Christoph product of their choice of equal or less value. Submit by email: [scott@franklin-christoph.com](mailto:scott@franklin-christoph.com) Include your MS and email address for notification, and notify if accepted elsewhere. Length Limit: 1-3 poems, maximum 100 lines each. One submission per entrant. Guidelines are at: <http://www.franklin-christoph.com/Writing/PoetryContest.html>

## **Regional Reports**

*Readers are invited to submit reports on local events as they occur. Email to: [editor@poetrysociety.org.nz](mailto:editor@poetrysociety.org.nz)*

### **WINDRIFT**

*Kerry Popplewell*

The August meeting began with the welcome news that Jeanette Stace's family has given \$5,000 in her memory towards the publication of the forthcoming haiku anthology. **Nola Borrell** and **Karen Peterson Butterworth**, the editors, told us that **Cyril Childs**, **Ernest Berry**, **Catherine Mair** and **Barbara Strang** are making the initial selection

of haiku for the anthology.

This time the free topic haiku were widely varied from the humour of Nola Borrell's

Verdi concert  
we read the translation  
in the dark

to the pathos and wit of Bevan Greenslade's

an old soldier's belt  
slips down  
exposing his cover

Bevan said he had in mind not only an incident he had once witnessed but also Ernie Berry's 'Vietnam' haiku. We liked the immediacy of Karen Butterworth's:

my tongue out  
to catch it -  
long awaited rain

Someone suggested she drop "long awaited" and Karen is still deciding what she wants to do with the final line. (Haiku taken to Windrift meetings often undergo changes!)

Our host this month was **Sally Holmes**. One of her haiku read:

absolutely fabulous new kitchen  
china from Salvation Army

Sally indeed has a "fabulous new kitchen" and she used it to prepare what she called "small tastes of Japanese" - a most delicious selection of food for us to sample as we drank our miso soup.

Then we moved on to read and discuss haiku on the set topics. On the first topic, (late) winter, **Penny Pruden**, a welcome newcomer to our group, wrote:

wrong time of year  
the flax  
blossoms with sparrows

and Ernie Berry sent us:

winter-solstice  
one tomato  
still ripening

On the topic of 'light', **Irene Ruth** (who has recently moved from Wellington to Napier) wrote:

leave long loved home -  
from a brand new apartment  
I watch the sunrise

We appreciated the optimism of the ending, the sunrise suggesting hope in a fresh start.

Contact: Nola Borrell, 04 586 7287. Email: nolaborrell@xtra.co.nz

## Reviews

*Villon in Millerton* James Norcliffe, Auckland University Press, 2007. \$25.00 ISBN 978-1-86940-383-6  
*Harvey Molloy*

**James Norcliffe's** sixth volume opens with 'Villon in Millerton', a long poem in which the fifteenth century troubadour Villon, exiled from France for his crimes, hides out in the West Coast town of Millerton. Villon—who has been translated into English by Rossetti and Pound—is perhaps best known for his 'Ballade des dames du temps jadis' ('Ballad of yesterday's women') which ends with the line "Mais ou sont les neiges d'antan?" ("Where are

the snows of yesteryear?") and for the imaginary wills (bequeathing his soul, his stolen wine, his love etc) of his Testaments.

Norcliffe's Villon is the kiwi man alone; "tired of screechy voices/of brotherhood and sisterhood"; he's "tired of chipped Formica" and "sick of the Feltex floors." He's in exile from domestic life and on the run from the cops. Employing the imaginary wills of Villon's Testament, he bequeaths a "thundering yellow fart" to the helicopters, "astigmatism arthritis" to the cops and the "crock of shit that is the past" to the future. Like **Vincent O'Sullivan**, Norcliffe has a great ear for New Zealand English and like O'Sullivan's, Norcliffe's poetry combines intellectual concerns with visceral impact. It's a staggeringly good poem: bitter, humorous, middle-aged and angry.

The book ends with another long poem 'Samuel Marsden in Glory.' Marsden is Villon's opposite or other. If Villon is the condemned criminal, Marsden is the judge (in a vital note to the poem, Norcliffe focuses on Marsden's reputation in Australia "as the 'flogging parson', a man of violence, prejudice and cupidity" who "despised the Irish and looked down particularly on women convicts.") If Villon is bohemian then Norcliffe's Marsden reminds us that in the catalogue of bastards there might be no bigger bastard than a respectable one. And whilst Marsden sees himself and his life experience in Biblical terms comparing himself to Daniel and Noah, the Villon personae has a less grandiose view of his own life as "just a mad ripple." What Villon gains from lacking Marsden's sense of order and purpose (and brutal conviction) is a sharpness of perception and a more imaginative way of thinking about his own experience through—dare I say it?—poetry.

Between these two engaging long poems are shorter works of many delights. I especially enjoyed the Anglo-Saxon half-lined alliteration of 'Boiled Sweets' and the prose poem 'Squeegee.' *Villon in Millerton* is an accomplished work by an established poet who continues to entertain and delight. The simple, striking jacket design by Christine Hansen perfectly complements the poems.

*the Pop-Up Book of Invasions* Fiona Farrell, Auckland University Press, 2007. 94pp, \$25, ISBN 978-1-86940-388-1  
*Bernard Gadd*

This collection was written while Farrell held the 2006 Rathcoola Writers' Residency in Ireland, from which her forebears had migrated. Farrell tells us that 'The Book of Invasions' – *Lebor Gábala Érenn* –, collated in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, is a mythic history of "the discovery of Ireland following the creation" by its successive 'invaders'. The best of these poems in her book – nearly half of the 51 – capture what Farrell indicates are the qualities of the *Book* ...: fantasy, the mythic, the surreal mingled with exactness of fact. It makes for an enticing and fascinating kind of poetry with something of the vigour and imaginativeness of early Modernist poets. But fundamentally, as Farrell observes, the collection as a whole is a response to being in ancestral Ireland and, at times, looking over the landscape with the ancient Irish version of the Aboriginal Dreamtime in mind.

This is actually a 75 page book of poems ... the rest are notes. Farrell sensibly comments that "Poems should stand by themselves" but can't resist passing on information about the inspiration or setting of individual poems. I ignored these except for the poem subtitled a translation of 'The Lament of the Nun of Beare' to learn that it is based on a literal English version of the ancient Irish and suggests something of the original's form. Farrell in this poem portrays a woman lamenting not only old age but finding herself, after a youth of being powerful in the pagan world, just another old woman imprisoned in a nunnery of a misogynistic church:

My body is fearful  
of this Son of God  
and the judgement  
he'll make when I'm  
under the sod.

'The Hag of Beare' offers a creation myth from those pagan days of the landscape of one locality:

Squat in a rocky field  
Each wrinkle laced with  
gold coin begging favours.

Old rock, blown in  
molten from this air

Old woman from whose  
apron these mountains  
tumbled like fresh eggs.

Who could resist the depiction of ancient Celtic splendour and squalor in 'Gold'?

How they must have shone,  
barefoot on stone, their ear  
lobes pierced to hold these  
golden boxes with their rattle  
of golden peas

It's by no means all ancient history which Farrell sparkles into life. 'Crop' with its lists of the magnificent names of kinds of potatoes deals with the famine:

On the last day  
they swell. They  
seem plump and  
well. Then the  
belly splits. They  
burst. Then they  
are tossed out.

as are the people who depended on them. There are one or two sharp jabs at the people and economics which have allowed the famine and other appalling things to happen. I think 'Politics and economics' is worth quoting in full as a model to all us poets of poetically disciplined rage:

It's all politics, isn't  
it? This patch of rough  
ground where 9000  
lie buried like spuds.

That's politics.

And this: the act of  
writing. A hundred  
years ago, these  
fingers held a sacking  
needle. My lungs  
choked on jute.  
Dead at 50. And a  
needle in my hand,  
not this sharp pen.

That's economics.

Farrell's stanzas may appear a little strange on the page to readers new to them ... lines often end in unimportant words: the, of, a. It's not that she's trying to create lines of a particular size or quantity of syllables, it's the strong cadence which is important, and short lines are often important to that ... the anger in the poem above could be smothered by the words of longer lines. She quite often employs repetitions of words or thoughts or phrases and I think these are a reminder of the ancient prose and poems of Farrell's sources, and in the nature of such devices, they may work well or less so.

There is a sense in some poems and some lines of a sense of obligation to produce enough poems for a collection, and one or poems are very slight. Occasionally the metaphors and personifications are over-used or even cliché: "tussocks tossed/their tangled hair", "cows sing/their canticles". and at times the artifice is a shade obvious.

But when all is said and done this is another strong contribution to our kiwi body of poetry which speaks to us of our past with bravura, skill and passion.

I just couldn't resist adding to this review my own stumbling effort inspired by this collection with the observation that it's the sign of good collection if it can fertilize poetry in other minds:

an Irish stroll

you step off the path and you're among them ...  
five tons of earth won't hold a one of them in,  
or rock slabs, corbel walls, ash sealed in a pot

they pace the length of their burial:  
heroines, half gods, rulers of kingdoms small  
as dairy farms, saints, judges, singers,  
and they're talking soon as you're spotted -  
though you can't make a syllable out

you pass by or through them wondering  
if you miss something could re-  
jig the you in your mind

*Here Comes Another Vital Moment: a Writer on the Road* Diane Brown, Godwit, 2006. 173 pp. \$24.99. ISBN 1-8692-119-0

*Karen Peterson Butterworth*

This book is written in Diane Brown's trademark mixture of poetry and prose, and is about the journey she undertook with her partner, Philip Temple, when he was awarded a six-months' writer's residency in Berlin. The title arose, she tells us, from a sign painted in English on an old fruit box outside the Berlin apartment where she and Philip stayed. Brown has doubts about going but Philip is persuasive, and "who can resist the I love you madly imperative," she muses as she packs.

As the story unfolds her doubts seem well-founded. Philip has been to Germany before, speaks the language, and has friends and an ex-lover there. His award gives him an identity and status within the Berlin literary community. Brown has none of these assets, and so exposes herself full-on to a maximum of culture shock and dislocation. She faces her challenges in true writerly spirit – by making a book out of them. The journey places strain on her relationship with Philip and often takes her out of her comfort zone.

"Memoir, poetry and travel intertwine..." begins the blurb on the back cover. There is travel, plenty of it, but it is travel through time, relationships, and feelings as much as through geography. For instance there is an episode about the couple's cleaning lady, aged 79 and from Weimar, where "...after the war the remaining local women were forced to walk through Buchenwald... I could trace no residue of horror on her face." The poem that follows begins, "Of course we see what we expect to see," and plucks an illustration from her New Zealand life.

The book is divided into a Prologue and six Parts, and takes us from Dunedin to England, Germany, the Czech Republic, Rome, and home again. Many of the part and section headings are like lines from poems – 'How did I come to be here anyway?' 'I would tell them how if they asked,' 'Relationships break up here,' 'The beast within,' 'And now for my own ghosts,' 'The cackle starts.'

Brown employs a poet's prose – condensed, layered and allusive. Readers will get the most out of it by treating the whole of it as they would a poetry book (look for it first in the poetry section of your library). For me that meant reading it in short episodes – Brown's division of it into parts and sections was helpful – and pausing frequently to roll the story past my interior vision.

At first I was slightly embarrassed by Brown's exposure of her relationships with her partner and son. Some of Philip's remarks that she quotes suggest a failure on his part to understand her feelings – yet when re-read, many could equally express a baffled attempt to comprehend. The feelings others invoke in the writer are, of course, legitimate and necessary ingredients of a memoir. I found myself hoping the couple's relationship was ultimately strengthened by her honesty; and felt it most likely, since both are writers.

Apart from her poetic prose there are two main kinds of poetry in the book. Each Part is prefaced with a poem headed 'Vital ingredients.' These poems are a feast of contrasting images, concrete and abstract, with glimpses of, and ricochets from, the story to come. From three different poems:

...  
An ancestor's breath on your skin.  
Gaping holes in the roof of your story.  
Parkin cake to sustain your romance on the moors...

...  
A dirty story settling in your water bottle.  
Gloves for your children to inherit.  
Duckling and rain to save the day...

...  
Pink roses and an all too brief life.

A voice knotted up and matted.  
A bathroom flooding with the unsaid..

I love that bathroom, and have one in my own life.

The other kind of poem serves the same purpose as a haiku does within a haibun; it crystallizes the preceding prose episode with clarity and specificity. In Rome, for example, in a prose passage: "...the suspicious men who inhabit the local bar. Mafia, we're told, and we believe it."

Then in the poem that follows:

...two women  
their breasts bouncing  
are laughing loudly.  
A man is standing feet  
apart in front of the woman  
who runs the Mafia bar  
his fist opening  
and closing in her face.

This passage is typical of the liveliness of Brown's sensory images: 'vital moments' indeed, which constantly punctuate her more thoughtful and sombre passages.

Poetry Society members will comprise Brown's most appreciative readers. We are pre-conditioned by poetry to disengage our frontal lobes from 'What will I cook for dinner?' preoccupations, and take her words into deeper layers of our minds. We can perhaps more easily bridge her frequent lacunae and read the message suspended between them. That is not to say that other discriminating readers won't equally appreciate this book. It is not a facile read, but I found it a rewarding one.

*into the vanishing point* Helen Bascand, Steele Roberts, 103 pages, \$20.00 ISBN 978-1-877448-02-7  
Nola Borrell

Helen Bascand once said, "I must step aside to let you enter the poem". She wants her readers to "hop on board and travel" with her and make their own connections ('A Metaphorical Presence,' *Bravado* 7). In no time at all, that was just what I was doing.

*into the vanishing point* is the second collection of poetry for this Christchurch poet, her first being *windows on the morning side* (Sudden Valley Press, 2001). Her work has been published in many journals and anthologies, and she won the 2000 NZPS international haiku competition.

There are six sections - five for 65 poems, one for 22 haiku - with evocative titles: 'memory perches on stilts', 'if I shut one eye', love falls in slices', 'time on the edge of land' and 'we loom our stories'. Family history, childhood, young love, time passing, our human stories. Two short haibun fit into a poetry section: crisp and succinct, the everyday and intense feeling artfully paced. There's a bonus haiku at the beginning of each section; e.g. "in the shed/ calendars/ of cobwebs" for memory.

In the haiku section are mainly senryu, sharply focused and with an undercurrent of tension: "bring and buy -/ her cake left over" and "teenage daughter/ beyond the policeman at the door/ the street light". Happily, the concision, clear images and contained feeling extend to the longer poems. Helen's haiku voice flows on. Moment after moment. A monarch butterfly shakes off its cocoon:

but it's one breath and I need  
another

a string of them threaded into  
a lifetime  
(Moment)

Indeed, strings of moments. Several poems are very simple, short, one image poems; e.g. a camellia falling ('Calligraphy'). Others delve into the riches of pre-history and myth and human art, are multi-layered.

Nature, including human nature, is this poet's territory. She especially delights in sea and flight images. 'Bush path' poses the dilemma of how to see the bird which was, and is now no longer:

Flick of a flash of the wing - gone  
like the twitch of a horse's ear.

Scent above the wet-mould damp,  
gone - as quickly as a passing girl.

Bell-note and I'm looking for sound -  
it's gone in the twang of our voices.

Helen never lets her love of the beautiful blind her to reality. She moves from: "We come from the east to the west coast/ travel beside the complete rainbow" to "two hawks bombard a magpie ..... and flying becomes black-and-white-falling/ into the rainbow" ('Opposites'). One of the few ostensibly political poems uses ravens as metaphor for stealth bombers over Iraq. I jumped at the fierce concluding lines:

*this is the bread in its beak,  
offered to saints -  
this is the blood it will drink.*  
(Raven)

The poet catches human moments which we recognise, though don't always name. Have you met the hospital patient who tells a joke to cheer you up? Here are lines from 'Even Now'. Apt title!

He says, *Have you heard the one  
about the sparrow?*

His rock-pool eyes flood  
with laughter

waves tide-wash over us.  
We laugh before we know why -

laugh into memory beyond the joke, ...

I delight in Helen's rescuing of words as in "*fender, scuttle, davenport and scone*" in 'Great-aunts'. But she also acknowledges that the natural world doesn't need words: "sandpipers gleaning/ on the edge of tide and land/ being/ simply sandpipers gleaning" ('Tide'). In 'Sea' this idea is repeated with the implicit parallel of human relating.

words are flowing in and out  
sea has no need of them -

listening, we walk and talk about  
words, flowing in and out

*'spume & slap, boom & lap* - we doubt  
there's any wisdom

in words that flow in and out  
sea has no need of them.

Moreover, Helen's writing is cohesive, whether a five word senryu, a poem of several stanzas, or, indeed, her whole book, which is well-structured and presented. Poems are thoughtfully sequenced and juxtaposed. The appeasing of the gods with lemons and daffodils in a blue bowl "on the altar of the coffee table" ('The colour of lemons') is opposite 'all of a sudden I feel uncertain', which concludes:

I am this bird in full flight  
winging straight into trees  
existing in a window

*the one that breaks its neck*

The poems in the final section are more adventurous, wider in their sweep and style. Surprises in subject too: 'How to build a dry stone wall' and 'Londinos'. I found the following lines, especially the final image, from 'Robin Hyde - five photos - & a poem' particularly striking.

Persephone in her Winter  
cradles jonquils.

The dark downward stair  
swallows all her shadow

until day is only  
the memory of day  
is only

the colour of jonquils - and night  
is the haunting weight  
of jonquils in her bare arms.

The cover image is by Jane Bascand, the design by Dave Bascand - both complementing the poems. (One ever so minor point: there are two poems with the same title: 'Sea'.)

Overall, a delight. Find quiet wisdom and beauty, music and rhythm, vivid images and honed writing. The final poem is called 'Finishing the book and starting all over' - which is just what I did.

*Dear To Me: 100 New Zealanders Write About Their Favourite Poems* Random House NZ, 2007. \$36.99, royalties to Amnesty International NZ. ISBN 1-869418-32-8

Joanna Preston

*Students at Auckland Girls' Grammar School sent letters to 100 "well-known New Zealanders", asking them to nominate a favourite poem, and say why that piece was "dear to them".*

It's an interesting proposition – what do you choose? And what does it say about you? A poem that makes you look erudite? A comfortable classic that everyone will be able to relate to? Do you make some sort of disclaimer (“Alas, I have not spent nearly as much time reading poetry in recent years as would have been good for me”) and then offer a lesser-known poem by an ‘interesting’ poet? Do you make a political statement?

In this case, the “what” is less interesting than “why”. And many of the poems selected are above criticism – good, safe, well-written pieces. Baxter (an obvious choice) is represented by eight poems; but would you have expected Lynley Dodd? There's one by Wordsworth, and two from Spike Milligan. There are a couple of song lyrics, and three poems that were the choice of more than one person. (I have a mental image of Helen Clark and Sir Geoffrey Palmer having a slapping contest over who gets *Kubla Kahn*, but that may just be me.)

A number of people responded with a poem of their own, or with a poem written by a family member. Not a problem if you're Fiona Farrell, or Alison Wong's uncle. But Bernice Mene “hunted through [her] poetry books”, and offered a poem she'd written as a child. (You really couldn't find anything else? Anything at all?) And too many poems were written by children. Sorry, but there are no Laura Rangers here, and I'm not emotionally rewarded by the whimsy of someone else's kids.

The explanations that accompany the poems are quite varied. Some obviously enjoyed the process, and took time to engage with the poem and offer an explanation of what made it work for them. Owen Marshall, for example: “... would prefer that my favourite poem was not as conventionally popular as this, and almost everything I have read about Dylan Thomas suggests a personality that I would dislike, nevertheless I cannot deny the power I find in this poem ...”

Sir Robert Jones declares that poetry “forms no part of [his] reading” (Boo, hiss!), but admits that Shelley's *Ozymandias* managed to stick, and gives an interesting explanation of why.

A few others consist of little beyond a salutation and a signature – a pity, as the book was intended to be a window into their poetic consciousness. All we learn from Steve Braunias is that he was slow to reply!

I wanted to like this book. This should have been an intriguing anthology. But too many things have been done poorly – most annoyingly, no attempt was made to edit the accompanying letters, so you're routinely distracted by the personal salutations. Some contributors were given length limits, and others either weren't, or disregarded them. And too many of the contributors were allowed to ignore the question of why the poems were important to them, when this was the whole point of the anthology!

Disappointing. Make a donation to Amnesty International instead.

**Ed's Note:** Apologies to the rest of our reviewers who efficiently met the deadline, but whose reviews are not here. I promise they'll be in the next issue.

## *Haiku NewZ*

Nola Borrell

### CONGRATULATIONS

- to **André Surridge** who won the Kaji Aso Tanka Award, Boston, USA
- to **Ernest J Berry** who won Kukai #7, and also gained a 2nd=
- to Andre Surridge, **Janine Sowerby**, Cyril Childs and **Nola Borrell** for three haiku each in Sea Shells, anthology of the Constantza Haiku Society of Romania, 2007, in English and Romanian.
- to Ernest J Berry for 3rd place in the Penumbra Haiku Contest 2007, Tallahassee Writers' Association, Florida. Ernie and also André Surridge each had a haiku in the finalist section.
- to André Surridge for 3rd place in the Ukiah Haiku Festival, USA
- to André Surridge for two Honourable Mentions in the Tokutomi Memorial Haiku Contest 2007
- to Ernest J Berry for an Honourable Mention in the 2007 Haiku Society of America's Brady senryu competition

### COMPETITIONS AND SUBMISSIONS

**November 30.** James W Hackett Award. Print or type each haiku on 3 125 x 75 mm cards. Name and contact details on one card only. Cost: £3/ \$US6 for up to 3 haiku; £1/\$US2 per additional haiku. Include 2 IRCs or \$US1. Cash prize and free sub to BHS. Publication in Blithe Spirit and BHS website. Hackett Award, Newton House, Holt Rd., North Elmham, Norfolk, NR20 5JQ, UK.

**November 30.** The Betty Drevniok Award. Print or type each haiku on 3 125x75 mm cards. Name and contact details on one card only. Cost: \$US5 for up to 3 haiku. Limit of 3 haiku. Include SSAE and \$US1. Cash prizes. Winners announced May, 2008. The Betty Drevniok Award, c/o Ann Goldring, PO Box 97, 5 Cooks Drive, Leaskdale, Ontario, Canada L0C 1C0.

**December 1.** Turtle Light Press Haiku Chapbook Competition. 12-24 pages with 2 haiku/page. Unpublished collection or sequence. Electronic copy also required. Cost: \$US30. Cover page with MS title, name, contact details. Winner announced Feb. 2008. Rick Black, Turtle Light Press, P.O. Box 1405, Highland Park, NJ, USA. For full details: [www.turtlelightpress.com/chapbook.shtml](http://www.turtlelightpress.com/chapbook.shtml)

**December 15.** 10th Annual Suruga Baika Literary Festival Contest. Limit of 3 haiku. Senior Division (college age and up) and Junior Division. Cost: Free. Can be sent by email: [baika@daichuji.com](mailto:baika@daichuji.com) Winners published in anthology. Publishing rights revert to Daichuji Temple. Notified February, 2008. Daichuji Temple Baika Office, 457 Naka-Sawada Numazu-shi, Shizuoka-ken, JAPAN 410-0006. For full details: <http://www.daichuji.com/>

**December 31.** White Lotus Haiku Competition. 13 years up. Unlimited entries. 3-line haiku only. Cost: \$US5/ 3 haiku or \$US2 haiku. SSAE with \$US1. (No IRCs.) Cash prizes, publication. Winners announced February, 2008. Shadow Poetry, White Lotus Haiku Competition, 1209 Milwaukee Street, Excelsior Springs, MO 64024, USA. [www.shadowpoetry.com/contests/rules4.html](http://www.shadowpoetry.com/contests/rules4.html)

**January 31, 2008.** White Lotus Anthology. Up to 20 pieces. Previously published and unpublished. Haiku, senryu, tanka, haibun, haiga, linked forms. Subject: lily ponds. Submit, with subject line: 'Lotus Anthology'. to [whitelotus@shadowpoetry.com](mailto:whitelotus@shadowpoetry.com) White Lotus Anthology, 1209 Milwaukee Street, Excelsior Springs, MO 64024, USA. SSAE required. [www.shadowpoetry.com/lotus.html](http://www.shadowpoetry.com/lotus.html)

### HAIKU AOTEAROA 2008 (Barbara Strang)

A conference for writers of haiku and related forms will be held 18-20 April, 2008 at Bishop Julius Hostel, Waimairi Road, Christchurch. Live in, or stay elsewhere and attend the sessions during the day. Three members of The Small White Teapot Group are working hard on assembling a programme to appeal to beginners and experts. We have just confirmed that **Cyril Childs** will deliver the keynote speech at the conference, and have plenty of other exciting

events and tutors lined up. We hope to publicise the prices for the conference shortly. Places are limited so don't miss out, and let any of us know if you would like to register or be kept informed. Barbara Strang, [bhstrang@yahoo.com](mailto:bhstrang@yahoo.com), Judith Walsh, [njw@clear.net.nz](mailto:njw@clear.net.nz), or Anne Edmunds, [aged@paradise.net.nz](mailto:aged@paradise.net.nz)

## EUCALYPT

"We often hear that it is the custom in Japan for poets to write either tanka or haiku, but not both," says Beverley George, Editor of *Eucalypt*, a tanka journal. "... it is obvious they require a different approach; a separate mindset." She invites viewpoints about the possibility of including them together in a collection. See E-News, an occasional newsletter to accompany the print magazine, *Eucalypt*. [www.eucalypt.info](http://www.eucalypt.info)

## *KiwiHaiku*

in the viewfinder the photographer's eye  
*Catherine Mair*

cemetery drive the length of his sigh  
*Ernest J Berry*

the smell  
of thin roll-your-owns in dad's shed  
sunbeams  
*Elaine King*

Please send your KiwiHaiku submissions to Richard von Sturmer, 18 Crocus Place, Remuera, Auckland 1050. Email address: [rvonsturmer@yahoo.com](mailto:rvonsturmer@yahoo.com)

## *Tanka Moments*

how beautiful the unison  
of the line of men  
passing buckets of concrete  
four stories up  
at dusk in Dubai

Sacré-Coeur, white basilica  
on a plinth  
a girl poses  
in gold paint  
those black empty eyes

*Suzanne Vaassen*

Members are invited to submit unpublished tanka, even if you've never tried one before, to [bernard.gadd@xtra.co.nz](mailto:bernard.gadd@xtra.co.nz) for *Tanka Moments*. "The essence of classical tanka was 'aware', a feeling evoked by things which are transient, finding beauty in fleeting existence." (Hisashi Nakamura). Those published will also appear on the Anglo-Japanese Tanka Society on-line site alongside well known poets from around the world. <http://www.geocities.jp/nichieitanka/tanka.html>

## *How it is*

### **In Good Hands**

*By Margaret Vos*

I first heard of the School for Young Writers when I was editing the NZPS anthology *tiny gaps*. When I learned the identity of the author's school for the haiku I had selected, I remember thinking what a great idea it was to have a

school devoted to young writers. I was delighted to find recently that they produced a magazine, *Write On*, “for young people who want to go further with their writing”. Another wonderful idea, to give writers a place to publish within their peer community – much as the members’ pages in *a fine line* serve its readers.

There has been a clear selection and editorial process in the Winter 2007 issue. The editorial gives it a good focus, clear and simple but not too dumbed-down for young writers. I like how the poems and haiku have been gathered under a suggestive title which is taken from one of the works in the section (shades of the NZPS anthology again?).

As might be expected, there is a general improvement in the quality of the writing by older students – but not always, and not really in the quality of the writers’ voices. Indeed a few of my favourites were by quite young writers and here are two haiku that are anthology-worthy:

corn cobs  
sleep in freezers  
Antarctica melts  
Ben Foster, Year 5

cherry blossoms  
in winter  
Grandma’s cheeks  
Elaine Vernel, Year 5

Brilliant stuff – haiku has an assured future in New Zealand.

It was great to see short stories too, including the Whakatane Short Story Competition winners. But I rather want to highlight the genuine quality of the difficult horror/fantasy genre stories. In particular, I loved *Gathering Darkness* (Kirsty Plowman, Year 11) and *The Room Was Dark* (Rebecca Hawkes, Year 8) – honestly, the titles were the only weaknesses I found in these stories. Succinct, and scary. And Soliana Admasu (Year 8) really captured the fear of probably every schoolkid in *Through the Door*. Stephen King, take note!

Imagination isn’t limited to the short stories, of course. I found ‘The Fortune Teller’ particularly intriguing:

A fortune teller  
lives in the kitchen  
hidden in a dark drawer

speaks Chinese  
to fork followers  
and knife soldiers.

Juice squeezed  
from teabags  
creates the elixir of life.

The future is cloudy.  
Danielle Terris, Year 6

Did anybody I went to school with ever write like that? Did I?

One jarring note was to see advertising sprinkled throughout the pages of the Winter issue. Too bad, like so many arts magazines, it has to take advertising dollars to support publication.

It was so refreshing to read *Write On* after ‘adult’ arts magazines ...I felt I had returned to some clarity and simplicity and immediacy, to a focus on what is at hand in life. These young writers have recognised what is surely as worthy of writing as some of the self-consciously complicated and obscure works appearing in arts journals.

Well done, School for Young Writers. Wish I had you and *Write On* when I was young...

## ***Mini Competition***

In the spirit of this issue’s feature article, please submit a modern poem (i.e. no archaic words or mangled grammar) incorporating rhyme and rhythm. The subject is “Journeys”, and the prize is Bryan James’ *E. Mervyn Taylor Artist:Craftsman*, generously donated by [Steele Roberts](#). As well as being on the *Listener’s* list of great art books in 2006, it smells good. Post your poem (one per entrant) to: Mini Competition, PO Box 5283, Wellington 6145, by 30 November. Winner published in January.



“remembers.” As the father “adjusts” his wife’s “pack,” we get a sense of the literal weight and also the metaphorical weight of their grief.

The language reflects the power of grief to alter perceptions; the forest is brutal and ominous; the mountain “disappears” amongst the beeches and trees close in with “needle leaves,” to “brush against” the family. The forest becomes an “under-storey,” a “starless world,” devoid of brightness without their daughter. It’s as if they are entering another realm, like their child who has passed away. Their “jackets damp with dew,” implies their sorrow.

Yet simultaneously, nature is vulnerable. The speaker notes “saplings” wondering “which ones will grow up/which will not,” suggesting nature is subject to the same uncertainty as human existence.

In stanza four, the speaker address Jane directly, noting her “skates still hang on a nail/in the shed.” This detail performs double duty; it captures the lively, youthful child untimely taken and also her parents’ unwillingness to accept she’s gone.

Then, with stanza five, comes a change, as the family “turn the bend.” From here onwards, the language becomes more optimistic and animated; with verbs like “darting,” and “leap.” As the “air fills with wings of little moths,” the reader senses a lightness, a clearing of the air as the family turns a corner, putting behind their mourning.

Imagery and form are utilised well in stanza six. The cricket that has “over-wintered” is a metaphor for parents who have been bound up in grief for too long. The line itself “stretches out” like the cricket, “readying for a leap/towards summer.” Enjambment to the final stanza is a literal leap and metaphorical leap for the cricket and the family towards better times.

The poem concludes with the image of harebells flowering “white in the grasses,” suggesting purity, faith, and, against all odds, hope.

For all who experience grief, this poem helps us to turn that corner too.

## MEMBERS’ POEMS

### Machinery

Yes they do, many men like noise,  
the percussion of hammers,  
the busy bob-cat which the boys  
sometimes take to with their spanners  
when it trundles off the truck.  
They like the world to know  
& from the revved up air they pluck  
a solitary sharp note, like a blow.  
Is it a piston driven back & forth  
or is it a crankcase with allied parts?  
This section lies to the north,  
a lie of land which captures hearts.  
The woman puts up with the noise.  
The men re-fuel & tend their toys.

*Catherine Mair*

### Recipe For A BΩMβ

1. oppress the people
2. repress the people
3. suppress the people
4. depress the people
5. compress the people
6. press the people

be patient  
and wait

the people  
will build it for you.

*Lindsay Forbes*

### **Dismantled**

Our crumbled lives  
have been picked-over  
piece by piece.

Bits remain.

Old shoes at the door  
reminding of wet garden days.  
A towel, shredded in a bitter wind.  
Bought to cool passions  
a never- used fan.  
Brittle stems  
in sour soil.

Only the pink petunia  
hangs in.  
Two small, spiraled buds  
of pink continuation.

I take my big bits  
and leave him little  
except love  
and a longing to be touched.

I leave him to himself  
and his memories.  
I wish him time to heal.  
Time to know that what we had  
was more than most.  
We grew and made together  
What greater love is there than that?

*Barbara Bailey*

### **On the Napier/Taupo Road**

I loved your photograph a year ago  
and here it is for my birthday.

These totara fence posts in the foreground,  
split with age and red with lichen.

The barbed top wire is the only one still taut.  
The others sag below in gracious loops.

From the straw coloured grass at the  
posts' feet to the ridges and shadowed  
valleys, to the foothills of the snow –

covered mountain range. It's here.  
I'm glad the old fence takes precedence.

*Catherine Mair*

### **Sign Language**

The sign reads  
'Please Put Your Rubbish in the Bin'  
-as if there could be  
no greater sin  
than a Snickers wrapper  
which was not put in a bin.  
Another wall yells  
'No Smoking' here  
so that every man  
shall fear  
the toxic cloud  
drawing near;  
the nicotine bomb can't go off here  
where perfect people dine  
and drink red wine  
and carelessly chat  
of their jobs and lives and  
'Did you hear the news?  
They're sending away more troops,  
Oh! Darling...are those new shoes?'

*Eva Vemich*

Members are invited to submit their published or unpublished poems to [editor@poetrysociety.org.nz](mailto:editor@poetrysociety.org.nz) Maximum length (including stanza breaks): 40 lines. Please include details if your poem has been published previously.

**January DEADLINE is 7th December**