



Newsletter October 2005

New Zealand Poetry Society
Te Hunga Tito Ruri o Aotearoa

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☞ **This Month's Meeting** ☞
Turnbull House Wellington
Thursday 20 October
7.30pm start
open mic. session
Readings by Vivienne Plumb, Robin
Fry and Scott Kendrick

Anna Livesey talks to Vivienne Plumb about the Iowa Writers' Workshop

In late 2004, Vivienne Plumb spent three months in Iowa City, home of the famous Iowa Writers' Workshop and the International Writing Programme, which gathers together writers from places as diverse as Azerbaijan, Bolivia, Kiev, Georgia, Korea, Brazil, Chile and Argentina. Vivienne's latest book, *Scarab: A Poetic Documentary*, is available from Seraph Press (seraphpress@paradise.net.nz)

AL: *Could you start by describing the Iowan landscape?*

VP: People had told me it was totally flat but actually it's a bit undulating. It has a distinctive look about it because of things they grow, all this corn and they have these corn silos which have a particular shape, rearing up on the landscape. They'll be the only thing standing right up above the ground.

The Bolivian writer and I, towards the end of our time we were sent for two weeks to a residency in Nebraska, and Nebraska is even more strange. It's really flat and there seems to be a lot of history of murderers in Nebraska, maybe something to do with the geography of the country getting to people.

AL: *You'd think if it was so flat you'd be able to see murderers coming and get away ...*

VP: You'd think so, wouldn't you, but apparently that's not the case. The place we stayed in, Nebraska City, had obviously been a much larger town originally. It's actually a dying town and they've tried very hard to keep it going,

and the arts residential centre is one thing they're doing. They also have a big apple farm, which is the centre of the Arbor Day festivities in the whole of the States. I think Arbor Day started there or something ...

AL: *... Oh I thought Arbor Day started in Featherston. Featherston has a sign up saying that Arbor Day started there.*

VP: Oh they'll have to have that out with Nebraska City. I was told the story about the apples about six times but I seem to have managed to forget it. I would say 'Oh, that's interesting because where I originally come from in Sydney is where the Granny Smith apple comes from.' They would look at me strangely and they would not want to talk about that, because I think they thought, That sounds like a lie, that the Granny Smith apple came from Australia [*laughs*].

AL: *A lot of the people in the Midwest haven't been to either coast of America, and their view of the world really does stop somewhere short of New York and then somewhere short of California on the other side.*

VP: Yes, oh yes, I thought they were quite naive actually. They have a kind of friendly naivety. A woman who I thought was a very nice, very well read (she worked in the bookshop), she told me how shocked people had been about 9/11. They all said, 'We couldn't believe that that would ever happen.'

AL: *Were there things that you read whilst you were there that made a big impression on you?*

VP: I was reading quite a bit of Gertrude Stein because the Polish writer who I became friends with, he loved Gertrude Stein. He would write in the morning and then he'd knock on the door and say, 'Let's go for a walk: I want to go and look for Gertrude' and we'd go to second-hand bookshops ...

AL: *It sounds like your time in Iowa was fun and interesting in lots of ways. Was it the kind of writing experience you expected?*

VP: It was different from how I imagined it. I was

determined to enjoy it because I thought it seemed like such a wonderful thing to be given, but when I first arrived, I did feel a bit strange. There was just that initial thing; I could see that Iowa City is in the middle of nowhere...

AL: ... *Corn for eight hours on every side* ...

VP: ... Corn for eight hours on every side, unless you hit Des Moines, which looks like it's even worse. Iowa City hasn't even got a professional theatre company and it's the cultural capital of Iowa State, so I was feeling a little bit nervy, a bit toey, but I could see that all the other writers were thinking the same thing.

I met some wonderful people there, and really, for a writer it isn't just a social experience, because any writer that you meet you'll be talking about your writing work in all sorts of ways, smaller or larger. There were quite a few Chinese writers there, and they talked about how they don't have freedom to write anything they want. The Polish poet told me about the sort of work people like in Poland. He said to me, 'You know, in Poland, you can be as depressed as you like.' It's hip to be depressed, to write work that's all about how you're going to slash your wrists. I said these are things that we're not really allowed to talk about in New Zealand. That's my feeling, you can say a little bit, but if you say too much then people say, 'Oh, that's like a really black depressing piece of work.' They were interested to hear about this place at the end of the world where you weren't allowed to be depressed.

AL: *How do you think that fits with the traditional view of the darkness of New Zealand writing? Do you think we're allowed to be dark, but only obliquely, or something?*

VP: I don't think we're as dark as people think we are. Since I came back from Iowa I've read a couple of Polish books and they're much blacker than work that's written here.

AL: *And what were you working on whilst you were there?*

VP: I've been working on a novel, which I'm still working on. I started a playscript too.

There were other things I'd do ... I'd walk a lot around Iowa, because it's an easy place to walk around and that was all interesting. I liked going to the mall, I had hilarious times when I went to this big indoor mall ...

AL: *Largest mall in the Midwest, right?*

VP: In the winter you see people jogging in there. They go there and jog and do their physical activity, which seemed very strange to me, because we do live very outside lives here in New Zealand. Some of the writers loved the mall and got quite obsessed with it, like my Bolivian friend, she said, 'I looove going to the maaall. Let's go to the maaall.'

The other place the writers liked was Wal-Mart. You had to walk along the highway to get there, and they'd go

on these sorties over to the Wal-Mart. One of the writers from Azerbaijan, he was buying loads of things from there, clothes for his children and things like that. Another writer, from Tbilisi, he would buy alcohol from Wal-Mart. He offered me a Wal-Mart whisky one night and it tasted ghastly. But that's all part of the American experience, I think.

Anna Livesey is a Wellington poet who, like Vivienne, has studied at the Iowa Writers' Workshop. She has published two collections of poetry, Napier (Pemmican Press) and Good Luck (VUP).

☞ From the Editor ☞

I've been driving a lot lately. In and out of Wellington for work. To and from the airport to drop people off and pick them up again. Up the coast to buy milk powder for an orphaned lamb called Jimmie. Back to the airport, this time to go somewhere myself. I wonder if maybe this is an exciting life. It's only when I get out of my car and sit in my study that I remember about my exciting life; the exciting life of writers.

To the observer it wouldn't look very thrilling, but it happens when the wheels on the office chair are completely still and the fingers are typing; remembering. The American writer Annie Dillard wrote in her book *The Writing Life* that 'It should surprise no one that the life of the writer – such as it is – is colorless to the point of sensory deprivation. Many writers do little else but sit in small rooms recalling the real world.' Sometimes the hardest thing for a writer is to get out of the car, ignore the lamb bleating on the front lawn, cancel the weekend in Queenstown, and sit in their study to live their life, as Dillard puts it 'in the company of pieces of paper'.

Lynn Davidson

☞ Upcoming Events ☞

The Whanganui Summer School of the Arts

Brochures are out for the famous Whanganui Summer School of the Arts, 8–14 January 2006. Once again, this Summer School will provide people from New Zealand and abroad with the opportunity to participate in a week of intensive workshops.

Summer School tutors are leading national and international artists selected for their special knowledge and their ability to inspire others.

Nationally and internationally published Maori poet, storyteller, playwright, novelist, actor and painter Apirana Taylor will take a workshop entitled 'The Power of Words.' This workshop will get you writing poetry. You will not only develop and improve your writing; you will develop

your senses and become aware of how much poetry there is in our daily lives. You will play with words and learn their power. You only have to hear Apirana recite one of his poems to be sure of his power source.

Apirana has written several books of poetry and short stories, a novel and several plays. He has won awards for his poetry and short stories. His poetry has been translated into German, Italian and Russian. His work is published in most major New Zealand anthologies. He has also written for radio and television. Canterbury University Press has just published his latest collection of poetry *Te Ata Kura*, and he has recently released his second poetry CD *Footsteps in Tears Thumbprints in Blood*.

Class sizes are limited and enrolments are due by mid-November. If you are interested, get a brochure and get enrolled. For a brochure or more information contact Summer School Coordinator, Jodie Dalglish at Whanganui UCOL, phone (06) 905 3800, email: j.dalglish@ucol.ac.nz, or go to www.ucol.acv.nz to download a brochure and enrolment form.

Excellent night of Poetry Readings for NZPS Gathering at Turnbull House

Three polished and entertaining poets will read their work at the NZPS meeting at Turnbull House on Thursday 20 October.

Robin Fry has worked as a broadcaster and editor. Her poetry has appeared frequently in New Zealand literary magazines over the past 10 years. In 2001, she won first prize in the New Zealand Poetry Society's annual poetry competition. Her first collection of poetry, *Weather Report*, was published by Inkwell Press in 2001. It was described as 'informative, but with some murky undercurrents, and striking imagery' (Southern Ocean Review). Robin's second collection *Daymoon*, will be published by HeadworX in October. It will be launched by Stephanie de Montalk, with Harry Rickett's latest collection, at Unity Books on 11 October.

Vivienne Plumb has received a number of awards and fellowships, including the Buddle Findlay Sargeson Fellowship in 2001 and an international writing residency at the University of Iowa in 2004. Her published titles include: *The Wife Who Spoke Japanese in Her Sleep* (Hubert Church Prose Award), *Love Knots* (Bruce Mason Playwrighting Award), *Secret City* and *Nefarious*. Her work has been described by Poetry New Zealand as 'Sinuous, energetic yet casual poetry that grips the imagination and holds the eye'; and by the Dominion Post as 'Sensuous and inviting, sinuous to read, dexterously put together.' Vivienne's most recent publication, *Scarab: a poetic documentary*, published by Seraph Press, was launched on Daffodil Day. This unique and special collection uses

poetry to trace her journey through the illness and death from cancer of her son Willie.

Scott Kendrick was born in 1969, raised in Otaki, and spent four years overseas before returning to take up temporary employment within Wellington's vibrant construction community. Twelve years later, he has a wife, a degree in politics and media studies, a book of poetry, less hair, more debt, and still works within Wellington's vibrant construction community. He has also edited and published *The Babylon Express*, a corrosive satirical publication. His poetry has been described as 'a surreal train wreck of urban reality and politicised violence, tapped by rhythm and wrought with desperate humour'. He finds no good reason to disagree.

☞ A warm welcome to ... ☞

Philippa Crutchley-Wallis – France
Eric Dobson – Tauranga
Judith Priest – Palmerston North

☞ Other News ☞

Five NZ Poets and the Lauris Edmond Award

The Five New Zealand Poets reading was held on 31 July as part of Applaud (the Christchurch Arts Festival). The five readers were Hinemoana Baker, Jenny Bornholdt, Fiona Farrell, Jeffrey Paparoa Holman and Kevin Ireland.

With so many top performers I can't say much more than the obvious – it was an exceptional evening. An indication of the quality of the poetry was given by the first four verses of 'Eel', a long poem by the brilliant Fiona Farrell:

my youth was glass

*pip of my heart
threaded
on gut and vein
for all to see*

*dark currents bore
me west then south
to a place where waves
shattered at a wall
of grey shingle*

*I wriggled through and
dropped into my life*

*bird pipe
flax rattle
mud suck
green leaf
spinning on water ...*

Towards the end of the reading, the MC, Christchurch poet Victoria Broome, presented the second Lauris Edmond Memorial Award for Poetry – for distinguished contribution to New Zealand poetry – which is sponsored by Canterbury Poets, the New Zealand Poetry Society and the Christchurch Arts Festival. At present, the award is made biennially, the inaugural recipient being Bill Sewell in 2003. To the real pleasure of the audience, the 2005 presentation was made to Jenny Bornholdt. The following is an extract from Victoria's introductory remarks:

Jenny can be charmingly playful with language, her poems evocative of place and time. Whenever I read 'Instructions for How to Get Ahead of Yourself While the Light Still Shines', I am on the bike, chasing the light, on Happy Valley Road. Jenny has a wonderful ear for dialogue and her poems are surprisingly, unexpectedly, funny and witty. Her poems of family and travel and the extraordinary in the everyday are graceful and enchanting. She has major integrity. In her latest book, *Summer*, her work has deepened and, in the powerfully elegant poems on the death of her father, she has allowed more darkness in. She is one of our most accomplished and highly read poets.

Report by John O'Connor

Windrift

Spring and rain, gulls and fish dominated haiku and tanka at the September meeting. More spirits that are adventurous branched out into Hiroshima Day, an eye operation and even botox.

*eye operation –
I sign my consent
on the bottom blur*

Karen Peterson Butterworth

*a one-legged gull
swoops high
with his prize
my crutches
grow lighter*

Nola Borrell

We experimented with the 'Sea Shell Game'. In this, merits of two haiku are compared. Basho, in 1672, published a book under this title. The rationale is to improve critiquing skills. This proved more difficult than we predicted – especially when haiku were on markedly different subjects. In her first haiku, Annette de Jonge used a delightful image of native pigeons and in her second, improved crafting. Conclusion? Divided opinion. Here's Annette's second haiku.

*in the night
tapping on the roof
long-awaited rain*

Annette de Jonge

Next Meeting: Thursday 17 November, 1pm, at Jeanette Stace's home, 58 Cecil Rd, Wadestown. All welcome. For further information contact:

Jeanette Stace 04 473 6227, njstace@actrix.gen.nz
Nola Borrell 04 586 7287, nolaborrell@xtra.co.nz

David Rosen

David Rosen, visiting American haikin, will speak about his book of linked haibun, *The Healing Spirit of Haiku*, at WEA, 59 Gloucester Street, Christchurch, 7.30 pm, 12 October. All are welcome. Hosted by Small White Teapot Group. Enquiries to Barbara, phone 03 376 4486.

Haiku in the Hills, Hokitika, 22–24 October

Tramping and haiku moments go together. See previous newsletters for details, and contact Donald Buglass ASAP. Phone 027 482 1983 or email buglassd@yahoo.co.nz

Webpage Update

This month's haiku webpage offers some pointers on haiga ('illustrated haiku' is a rough and ready definition) and links to some of the best websites for writers and artists to visit or submit pieces. Read the final part of Jane Reichhold's valuable article on haiku techniques and catch up with the latest competition news. Thanks to the good offices of the Poetry Society, webpage visitors now have access to articles from previous months – go to the bottom of the page to find monthly archives.

www.poetrysociety.org.nz/haiku.html

Is Your Name Here?

The number of student places available in the MA in Creative Writing for the Page expanded to 20 for the first time in 2005. We're pleased to again be able to offer 20 writers the chance to work on their fiction, poetry and creative non-fiction manuscripts under the guidance of Bill Manhire and Damien Wilkins in 2006. Another 10 writers will have the opportunity to take the Scriptwriting MA, which includes 80 hours of industry placement along with the requirement to produce a full-length script to third-draft standard, with Ken Duncum. The deadline for all MA applications is 1 November.

For further information visit: modernletters@vuw.ac.nz or download the application form:

<http://www.vuw.ac.nz/modernletters/documents/application-postgraduate>

Report from IIML

Looking for info on Poet Librarians

If you know of any, please can you email as much information as possible to henenterprises@xtra.co.nz for an article about librarian poets, e.g. Elizabeth Smither in New Zealand, Philip Larkin, famously, in the UK. I want

to ensure I don't miss anyone and your help will be very much appreciated.

Sunday Star-Times Books Editor Iain Sharp:

A Sonnet With Your Latte

I felt envious when I read that a branch of Starbucks in the heart of Edinburgh is providing poetry books for its customers to browse through. Verses by the country's most famous bard, Robert Burns, are inscribed on the walls and every month the Scottish Poetry Library adds new poems by contemporary poets to a noticeboard in the cafe. I wonder if any of the New Zealand branches of Starbucks can be tempted to try something similar here. I'm happy to donate some poetry books (no, not just my own) to get the idea off the ground.

Report from AUP

Poetry and Medicine

NZ Doctor reports that poetry has found its way onto the medical curriculum in the United Kingdom.

In an effort to turn out doctors who are whole human beings with empathy for their patients, the Peninsula Medical School at Exeter and Plymouth University has introduced a Poetry and Health special study unit designed to help students get in touch with their creative side.

According to their tutor, poet, novelist and photographer Ann Kelley, the students find it liberating, 'I teach them to be creative, use their imagination, and open the door to deeper feelings, which in turn helps them understand their patients' anxiety and fears,' Ms Kelley explains. 'They can't do that just knowing about the mechanics of the body.'

Report from AUP

☞ Publications ☞

Miranda Harcourt, at the Wellington Arts Centre Gallery on Friday 26 August, Daffodil Day, launched **Vivienne Plumb's** new collection *Scarab*. A small Wellington publisher, Seraph Press, published the collection: seraphpress@paradise.net.nz

Scarab documents Plumb's son's 10-year struggle with cancer, assembling a selection of previously published poems as well as some new and unpublished ones. Plumb completed both the Original Composition course and the MA in Creative Writing at Victoria University.

Also new on the shelves this month is **Jill Harris's** *Sil*, published by Longacre Press. Harris, who was a member of the IIML's poetry workshop in 2002, jumps the tracks to children's writing with her first book, which features a tui particularly gifted in song. *Sil* was launched by Stephanie de Montalk, who taught the 2002 poetry workshop, at

The Children's Bookshop in Kilbirnie at the beginning of September. Longacre Press have described it as 'a New Zealand classic in the making'.

Report from IIML

Richard von Sturmer's new release *Suchness: zen poetry and prose*, his third book, is a major collection spanning the last decade. HeadworX says, 'Haiku notebooks and imagistic poems underlying his Zen teachings produce striking poems of power and grace. Lyrically spare, they form meditations on the world and life. Also included are essays and prose poems further exemplifying the skill and craft of one of our leading poets.' Orders to: HeadworX, 97/43 Mulgrave St, Thorndon, Wellington, phone 04 473 4111 or email: mpirie@xtra.co.nz Price: \$34.99.

Alan Papprell has published *Snapshots of a Mind*. 'The poems are an evocation of a childhood growing up in Wanganui and its environs and a celebration of life of family events and treasured memories. Available from Alan Papprell, 6 Franco Lane, Dannemorra, Manukau City. Price: \$10.

Stu Bagby's new collection, *As it was in the beginning* includes the poem 'Glinks Gully sonnet (Circa 1959)' from which this excerpt is taken:

A just young Convent boy on the last evening of his holidays, drawn out to play with a girl and her brother in the mounded softness of sand swelling between the chatty baches and the tide-licked flank of the beach.

Available from all good bookshops or from the publisher Steele Roberts, email: info@steeleroberts.co.nz Price: \$19.95.

HeadworX published **Robin Fry's** book *Daymoon* in September. *Daymoon* is Fry's second collection of poems following her earlier book *Weather Report* published by Inkweed in 2001. This new book continues the development of her first collection. Fry's poems are very wide-ranging. The poems vary from poems of place, written for family and friends, poems about the garden, to poems taking on 'big' world issues, of politics and social conditions affecting foreign places.

Your Secret Life published by HeadworX is the first full-length collection of **Harry Ricketts'** poems since his selected writings, *Nothing to Declare*, was published in 1998. As well as a number of new poems written since his mini collection *Plunge* (Pemmican Press, 2001), several earlier hard-to-find poems are included.

In these poems, Ricketts' subjects include the underrated rewards of failure and loss and the secrets and lies we tell ourselves. Harry Ricketts was brought up in Malaysia, Hong Kong and England. Since 1981 he has lived in New Zealand, where he teaches English literature and creative non-fiction at Victoria University of Wellington.

Jan FitzGerald's book *Against the Arrow*, is a collection of 42 poems – for which her earlier book *Love Poems*, was a sampler – most published in the last year, from short love poems to longer narrative poems. It will be available through Books a Plenty, Grey St, Tauranga, or by sending your postal address and cheque (\$24.95 inc. p&p) to Jan FitzGerald, 35B Emmett St, Greerton, Tauranga 3001. Enquiries to Jan at haneti@orcon.net.nz

Red Leaves by **Diana Bridge** – The sources of her poetry and her spare, elegant style give Diana Bridge, a voice unlike any other. This collection teems with vivid images often drawn from Indian or Chinese influences, but at its emotional core are the deaths of her mother and brother in a single year – these dominate one section but pervade the whole book in a way that is subtle, restrained but deeply moving. Published by Auckland University Press. Price: \$21.99.

The Rooster Crows by **Pat Bellaney** celebrates the year 2005, the Chinese year of the rooster. The poems include political comment and wry comments on life. This is Pat's first published work. Copies are currently available and have been popular locally. *The Rooster Crows* was published by the Earl of Seacliff Art Workshop. Their website also contains full details of their publications and how to purchase the book. www.earlofseacliff.co.nz

Jenny Clay is launching her first poetry book, *Take a Leap*, on 1 November at Poetry Live, Grand Central, 126 Ponsonby Rd, Auckland. Celtic musicians and singers Tamzin Wood and Wendy Andrew, known as the Strumpets, begin the evening at 8pm.

Hallard Press has a handful of copies left of *Pokeno Opposes the Kaiser*. Priced at \$7 (postage included), this 32-page collection of poems is a major contribution to New Zealand poetry on the First World War because of its quality, its readability and approach, looking more at the human aspects of warfare than the military.

There are also a few copies of the anthology *Manukau in Poetry*. Although the poems are based around Manukau City and harbour, there is plenty to interest anyone, anywhere in New Zealand, including work by some of New Zealand's best known poets. Send your orders to

Hallard Press, 43 Landscape Rd, Papatoetoe, Auckland 1701. Priced at \$20 (postage included).

☞ Quotation of the Month ☞

George Oppen, in a letter, said of a mediocre poet that he was not afraid enough of poetry.

Eliot Weinberger from his essay, 'Karmic Traces'

☞ Submissions ☞

Turbine Calls for Submissions

The International Institute of Modern Letters is calling for submissions of original poetry, short fiction and creative non-fiction to be considered for the 2006 edition of the online literary journal *Turbine*.

The submission deadline is 20 October 2005. Submission guidelines and past issues are available online at www.vuw.ac.nz/turbine

Victoria University's International Institute of Modern Letters at www.vuw.ac.nz/modernletters has a newsletter, which you can sign up to.

Journal of Young People's Writing 2006

Attention, young poets and Year 1–6 teachers! Learning Media is publishing, for the Ministry of Education, a collection of writing by Year 1–6 students, to be distributed to New Zealand schools in 2006. Teachers, please send in your students' best writing by the end of Term 4 2005 (20 December). For details: <http://www.learningmedia.co.nz/>

Authors and artists

Contributions from freelance authors, illustrators, photographers and performers are a highly valued source of material for Learning Media Te Pou Taki Kōrero. Many New Zealand authors have had their first work for children published in our resources and we are keen to encourage new authors and artists. For submission guidelines see: <http://www.learningmedia.co.nz/nz/online/authorsartists/>

Tenth Annual Dana Awards

The Dana Portfolio Award is \$3,000 for a body of work. This may be made up of three manuscripts in a single category or three manuscripts in any combination of our three categories (Novel, Short Fiction, Poetry).

The Dana Award in the Novel is \$1,000 for the first 50 pages of a novel, either completed or in progress (in-progress submissions should be as polished as possible).

The Dana Award for Short Fiction is \$1,000 for the best short fiction (no memoirs).

The Dana Award for Poetry is \$1,000 for the best group of five poems.

Entry fees range from \$15 to \$65. For fees and rules check the website: www.dannaawards.com

Email danaawards@pipeline.com with questions only. No email submissions. We hope to name winners and notify all entrants by late April each year (though this may vary based on number of entries and judges' schedules). Postmark deadline 31 October 2005.

Writers Cafe UK

Writers Cafe UK is seeking submissions from New Zealanders of any ethnic origin to feature on a Kiwi writers web page. Stories of no more than 500 words (though links to longer pieces will be considered), poems and other frippery can be sent to: kiwiwriterscafe@yahoo.co.nz

Goody Two Shoes

Text/image wanted for new zine:

<http://tbi.co.nz/tbi/opportunity/1708>

Poetry, photography, reviews, rants, comics, stencils, essays, recipes, crafty things ... shove it all in a dodgy photocopier, stitch 'em together and the result shall be a zine called Goody Two Shoes.

∞ Congratulations ∞

Tusiata goes to Honolulu

Since Tusiata Avia completed her MA at the IIML back in 2003, she has hardly stayed still for a moment. She has performed her one-woman show, 'Wild Dogs Under My Skirt' (based on her book of the same name), throughout New Zealand and in American Samoa, Germany, Austria and Hawai'i. Earlier this year, Avia was an artist-in-residence at the Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies in Christchurch, and since then she has attended poetry festivals in the Netherlands, Belgium, Moscow and Morocco. Now her globe-trotting is set to continue with the assistance of Fulbright and Creative New Zealand. She has been awarded this year's \$40,000 Pacific Writers' Residency at the University of Hawai'i, where she plans to work on a collection of poetry and new theatre work. http://www.leafsalon.co.nz/archives/000747aloha_avia.html#more

Report from IIML

Haiku and money!

Congratulations to Jeanette Stace of Wellington who has won an award in the 16th Ito En 'Oh-I, Ocha!' New Haiku Contest. She will receive 20,000 yen (c. NZ\$250), a set of green tea products with her haiku engraved on them and two ballpoint pens – not to mention the honour. Here it is:

*in the park
looking up at the tree
the same age as me*

International Calendar Results

Congratulations also to Ernest Berry from Picton, a runner-up in the Haiku Calendar Competition 2005, the seventh annual contest.

*warm day
the cooling whoosh
of a wood pigeon*

689 entries were received from 171 entrants living in 18 countries. 'Each poem entered faced one simple criterion – its quality as a haiku. The short-listed haiku were then judged according to their originality and relevance to their assigned months, with regards to seasonal references' – John Barlow.

Full results are available on the Snapshot website at www.snapshotpress.co.uk/haiku_competition_results.htm#calender_comp

Janet Frame Literary Trust

On Sunday 28 August, veteran poet Peter Olds and novelist Kelly Ana Morey were named as inaugural recipients of the Janet Frame Literary Awards, worth \$10,000 each. Kelly Ana Morey's first novel *Bloom* won the NZSA (PEN) Hubert Church Memorial Award for a best first book of fiction. Her second novel *Grace is Gone* was short-listed for the prestigious 2005 Kiriyama Prize. She is currently working on a third novel and a short memoir, *How to Read a Book*, to be published in November this year.

Peter Olds is something of a legend as the V8 poet of the 70s and 80s. After some years of silence, Olds has recently returned to performing and publishing his poetry. Reviewing *It Was a Tuesday Morning: Selected Poems 1972–2001*, David Eggleton described Peter Olds as 'an old master already; one who has kept the faith'.

A third grant of \$10,000 to a writing scholarship fund administered by Victoria University was reported earlier in the week. The fund will cover the living expenses of promising writers after they graduate from the university's creative writing course, while they prepare their work for publication.

In 1999, the late author established an endowment fund to be known as the 'Janet Frame Literary Trust'. She bequeathed her literary estate to the Trust with the instruction to use the ongoing net proceeds to benefit New Zealand writers. Family and supporters gathered at Janet Frame's childhood home in Oamaru for the announcements and to celebrate her birthday. They were also able to admire the first volumes of *The Janet Frame Collection*, a reissue series to be released by Vintage over three years. Also on show was an advance copy of a new edition of Frame's

children's book *Mona Minim and the Smell of the Sun*, illustrated by Dunedin artist David Elliot.

The restored former Frame family home is now owned by the Janet Frame Eden Street Trust, which has revealed plans to open the house to the public from November. The local community also hope to utilise the house as a centre for literary events and creative writing courses.

∞ Reviews ∞

Afternoon of an Evening Train, Gregory O'Brien, VUP, \$24.95.

Greg O'Brien is a man of many parts, and this latest collection gives ample evidence of his wide interests: as painter, art curator, art writer; as essayist and critic. A mind well stocked and widely read lies behind this vigorous and inventive collection, and there is a lot of pleasure to be had in it, poems for all moods, from the playful to the quietly meditative.

The contents are laid out in five parts, with an opening sequence of 'Sixteen places in New Zealand' and 'Eight places in Southern Europe' separated by a two-poem rejoinder, an update of Fairburn's famous Dominion sequence of the Depression era. The New Zealand place poems collect poems written over the last few years, and much of it is vintage O'Brien. 'Walking Woman', subtitled *a street photograph of my mother*, is a lovely poem of invented remembrance fused and sustained by warm emotion and the peculiar O'Brien gift of floating an image and then tethering and untethering it in the course of the poem:

*her
spectacles containing everything
a suburb might contain:*

*footpath weighted down with gulls
floral dress tucked neatly
over the lives of her children.*

The poem's ending is a masterful, warm ballasting:

*Of her life then, only details are given away –
these afternoons, among others when I join her –
this time of year, a shade of skin. Her youth
a plenitude or lonely place –
evenings, we carry each other there.*

'A Stack and a Coyle for my grandmother' works in a similar vein, and the result is a thoroughly satisfying poem that could be anthologised anywhere.

There are readers and critics who have had trouble sympathising with some of O'Brien's characteristic devices: the floating image, the impressionistic sequences and near-personifications of say, 'Water, you are unwell/ a

stone falls through/ your battered embrace ...' ('Boneless, limp fluency ...' was David Eggleton's description in one review.) But I think that when you understand the painterly engagement of the poet, the rich visual memory he draws upon (rare in a New Zealander) and the conviction he has that all things have ultimate meaning, then the difficulties somewhat disappear and the width of sympathies becomes apparent. The sequence 'Eight places in Southern Europe' is an excellent example of this. What in other hands might have ended up as merely a flavour of French vanilla, has emerged here as an extension of well-established preoccupations.

'Two apostrophes' is a sequence addressed to Te Whiti O Rongomai and Tohu Kakahi, two central figures jailed by Pakeha in the Parihaka debacle. If the book has a keel, this is it – a wise, rhythmic, clear-eyed address that out-manoeuvres the ambiguities of a shared history and establishes a vantage point from which 'the lights of Parihaka/ stammer onwards/ into the new millennium.'

Here, as in the following sequence 'Afternoon of an evening train' we again encounter a poet of linguistic inventiveness and energy, a poet who understands the line as the unit of poetry, and builds into his verse those crucial structures of imagery and rhythm that are the mark of the true poet.

Chris Orsman is a Wellington poet. He has had two main collections of poetry published, Ornamental Gorse and South, and is presently working on a new collection of Antarctic poems.

A Box of Bees, Emily Dobson, VUP, \$17.95

Emily Dobson is a winner. Her awards include, the 2002 Takahe Poetry Competition, the 2004 Adam Foundation Prize for best folio from Victoria's MA in Creative Writing, the 2004 Aoraki Festival Poetry Competition and the 2005/2006 Schaeffer Fellowship to Iowa University's Creative Writing Program. Her poems have appeared in a range of publications, from literary magazine *Brief* to the *New Zealand Listener*. Dobson's first book is an assured debut and, of course, a real winner.

Damien Wilkins aptly describes *A Box of Bees*: 'On one level there are the deeply appealing facts about bees, and on another level Emily offers a wonderfully suggestive account of family and personal life. Her work is sunny, lyrical and beautifully controlled.' It is not just the academics that are falling for her work. NZPS members in Wellington were charmed hearing Emily read back in March this year.

The first thing I noticed picking up *A Box of Bees* was another perfect Sarah Maxey cover. The poems are quiet little vignettes and at first glance a gentle read, however they sneak up on you like bee in the garden. Deceptively

simple and beautiful, they juxtapose pleasures with very real dangers:

*he'd received thousands of stings.
Only a beekeeper
could have survived that many.*

It is a sign of a good book when you have a pile of juicy little quotes you want to cram into a review. For instance, '... they will become / Queens, but for now / they are only the size / of commas.' Dare I say it? Perfect.

Nostalgic without being saccharine (despite all that honey), the long sequence of couplets provides a sensuous journey beginning with her childhood and youth at Arataki honey, her family's business in Havelock North. The poems are at once factual – cleaning pollen and harvesting royal jelly – and sensual; the taste and smell of honey and; the sound of bees permeates the sequence.

A Box of Bees is a family history of sorts: her parents' romance in the honey factory; her own first love; her grandparents' grapevines; her mother's poetry; her grandfather's orchard tree with 101 different apple species grafted onto it. From honey sheds in the Hawke's Bay, the poems travel to Crete and back. Quite sexy at times, they always come back to the honey:

*The beeswax in the tank
is dark and liquid and aromatic,
hot beneath my face as I lean over
to fill a jug. I can feel him behind me.
We find ourselves
in the honey shed. Fingers dig
into fresh honeycomb – warm and
sticky. He brushes
a smudge
from the corner of my mouth.*

Spread throughout the book is an eclectic mix of quotes: from her poet mother; from Sappho; the Upanishads and others. Happily, Dobson makes them her own. She weaves them into her work effortlessly to great effect. The whole sequence is absorbing and clever but she doesn't take herself too seriously. There's an undercurrent of quiet humour and, as I closed the book, I realised I had a small smile on my face.

Helen Heath is a Kapiti Coast poet and founder of Juicy Press.

∞ Out & About ∞

DUNEDIN

Upfront – Spotighting Women Poets

Our guest poets for August were Martha Morseth and Cynthia Greensill. Martha has been widely published in magazines and journals. Her collection of poetry *Staying*

Inside the Lines (Inkweed) appeared in 2003. She read a sequence of moving – and sometimes very funny – poems, linked by the themes of migration and resettlement. This is an extract from 'Stranger in a Strange Land':

On arriving in Dunedin and facing a new land

*Words were the same but full of cunning.
Metaphors tripped me up. I knew nothing
about the joy of life as seen from underneath
a kowhai tree or passing through a doorway
of a manuka hedge into a paddock of turnips
or swedes. In Minnesota Swedes were friends
whose grandparents, with their alien inflections,
stumbled over idioms that strangled common
immigrant intercourse in their new land.*

Cynthia Greensill's poem *Madonna and Children* was published in the NZPS competition anthology *The Big Picture*. Cynthia's work is characterised by clean, striking imagery. Here is her poem:

Moonshine

*There's this bobby-dazzler moon
burning over the hill
through the early morning dark*

*She's a Harley Davidson headlight
roaring out of the night,
brroom, brroom, motorbike moon.*

*She's a bowling ball
rumbling down the alley,
skittling me for a row of sixes, moon.*

*Cow, jump for joy,
moo, moo, over this
one hundred percent dairy fat, full moon.*

*Round cartwheel, cheesy moon,
let me cut a big slice out of you,
to eat tonight with my bread and glass of wine.*

Once again we had a full and appreciative audience and a lively line-up at open mike. We are, I think, achieving our aim of providing a forum for new poets to read alongside more established and confident performers. We welcome new faces, whether as part of the audience or as part of the show, so if you're in Dunedin on the last Tuesday of any month, join us at the upstairs lounge at Cobb & Co. Open mic. kicks off at 7.30pm.

Report by Sue Wootton

PICTON

Picton Poets

A small group this month, we were honoured with the presence of two guests from the over The Elevation. I'd recently discovered Boyd Glassey's *Poetry From Everyday Life*, which was generally voted a good find. Elisabeth, in

the hot seat with an open brief, had set us all to write a modern nursery rhyme. By coincidence, (perhaps?) three of them included cats; Anne's was especially topical:

"Pussy cat, pussy cat, where have you been?"
"I've been to the Beehive to visit the 'queen'."
"Pussy cat, pussy cat, what saw you there?"
"I saw a big nat bite her derriere."
"Pussy cat, pussy cat, what happened then?"
"The queen got real mad and called for her men."
"Pussy cat, pussy cat, what did you do?"
"I left them all to it; well – wouldn't you?"

Report from Sandy Arcus

∞ Competitions ∞

Griffin Poetry Prize

The deadline for the \$C100,000 Griffin Poetry Prize is approaching. Books must be submitted postmarked no later than 31 December 2005, for books published between 1 January and 31 December 2005. Please remember to complete all necessary customs/duties paperwork when shipping your entries to ensure that delays are avoided. If you have any questions regarding the rules, or would like to download an entry form, please visit our website, at www.griffinpoetryprize.com Send entries to: Ruth Smith, Manager, The Griffin Trust for Excellence in Poetry, 6610 Edwards Boulevard, Mississauga, Ontario L5T2V6, Canada.

Ashiya International Haiku Festival

The Japan Traditional Haiku Society is holding its fourth Ashiya International Haiku Festival on 11 February 2006. Professor Hoshino Tsunehiko will be the judge of the Haiku from overseas, together with Ms Inahata Teiko, President of the society. View www.kyoshi.or.jp/e-index for entry form and details.

The Betty Drevniok Award

First prize \$C100; second \$C50; third \$C25 with the top 10 haiku distributed with the *Haiku Canada Anthology*. Each haiku must be printed or typed on three separate 3in. x 5in. cards. Entrant's name, address and phone number, in the upper corner of one card only in each set of three. Closes: postmarked, 30 November 2005. Winners will be announced in May 2006. Cost: \$C5 (in Canada) or \$US5 (outside Canada) for up to three haiku, payable to Haiku Canada. Entries to the Betty Drevniok Award, c/- Ann Goldring, 5 Cooks Drive, Leaskdale, Ontario, Canada L0C 1C0.

British Haiku Society Haibun Anthology Award

Haibun, including haiku, should be between 100 and 2000 words long. Three copies of each haibun must be submitted

with one copy only showing the entrant's name, address, phone number and email address. That copy should also carry a signed declaration of originality. Closes: in hand, 31 December. Cost: £5 or \$US10 for the first haibun entry, £2 or \$US4 for every additional haibun to a maximum of six entries per person. Sterling cheques and money orders (payable to British Haiku Society) with entries to Stanley Pelter, Maple House, 5 School Lane, Claypole, Newark, Lincs. NG23 5BQ, UK.

New Writer Magazine Prose and Poetry Prizes

One of the major annual international competitions for short stories, novellas, single poems, poetry collections, essays and articles; it offers cash prizes as well as publication for the prize-winning writers in *The Collection* – the special edition of *The New Writer* magazine – each July. Closing date 31 October 2005

Further information including international guidelines visit: www.thenewwriter.com/prizes.htm

For a free recent back copy of the magazine send three IRCs for Europe or 5 IRCs from elsewhere to: *The New Writer*, PO Box 60, Cranbrook, Kent, TN17 2ZR.

Yellow Moon Search for a Sonnet – 30 Closing October 2005

Open to Australian and New Zealand poets only. This time, the Yellow Moon Search for a Sonnet competition is in two strands – A Shakespearean and B. Petrarchan. In each strand, there will be a first prize of \$100 and a second prize of \$70. Guidelines for writing these forms will appear in *Yellow Moon 17*, 2005. Available online from mid-year 2005. Entry forms are essential. Register at www.yellowmoon.info/ or send long SSAE to PO Box 37, Pearl Beach 2256, Australia, for an entry form. Entries are \$A5 per entry or \$A10 for three entries. Theme: open.

Yellow Moon Nutshell – Closing 19 October 2005

Open to Australian and New Zealand poets only. Four categories A – Cinquain (1 cinquain = 1 entry) first \$A70, second \$A40 B – A poem on an element of Taoist Cosmology – wood, fire, earth, metal, water 11–24 lines first \$A80, second \$A40 C – Humorous/nonsense poem (12–24 lines) first \$A70, second \$A40 D – Tetractys (page of 2 = 1 entry or one double 'diamond' tetractys = 1 entry) first and second \$A60 each. Register at: www.yellowmoon.info/ or send long SSAE to PO Box 37, Pearl Beach 2256 for an entry form. \$A5 each entry or \$A10 for three entries. Cheque or money order payable to B M George. Send entries to: Beverley George – Yellow Moon, PO Box 37, Pearl Beach NSW 2256.

Swift Poetry Competition

The Kilkenny International Swift Society invites submissions of an unpublished satirical poem, in the spirit and style of Swift, on a topic of current and relevant social/political interest. The competition is both a celebration of Swift as one of Ireland's greatest satirists and a move to promote political and social commentary through satire. Entries will be accepted from 1 October 2005. First Prize: €1,000 Closing date: 28 February 2006. Further details are available on www.swiftsociety.com

∞ Residencies ∞

Ursula Bethell/Creative New Zealand Residency in Creative Writing

Vacancy number: GO68-05A. Closing date: 21 October 2005. This position has been created to foster New Zealand writing by providing a fulltime opportunity for a writer of fiction, poetry, scriptwriting or literary non-fiction to work in an academic environment. The appointment will be made based on published or performed writing of high quality.

Applicants should be authors of proven merit, normally resident in New Zealand, or New Zealanders temporarily resident overseas.

The position is tenable for up to twelve months at the University of Canterbury at the rate of \$47,895 per annum, funded jointly by Creative New Zealand.

For detailed information and to apply online visit <http://vacancies.canterbury.ac.nz/> or for further assistance contact the HR administrator, College of Arts, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch. Phone: + 64 3 364 2426 or email: hr@arts.canterbury.ac.nz

Lillian Ida Smith Award

The Lillian Ida Smith Award was started when Lilian Ida Smith, a music teacher of Wanganui who had a keen interest in the arts, left part of her legacy to the NZSA (PEN NZ Inc.) to 'assist people aged 35 years or over to embark upon or further a literary career'.

The first award was made in 1986, and until 1990, awards of \$1000 each were made for poetry, fiction and non-fiction. From 1992 it was decided to make a biennial award of \$3000 to assist a writer over 35 with a writing project in either non-fiction, fiction, poetry or drama; for children or adults.

The amount of the award is obtained by accumulating interest on the capital of the bequest. Therefore, the award is only given when there are sufficient funds available. The last award was made in 2003 and the next award will be made in December 2005.

The award is only open to financial members of the

NZSA (PEN NZ Inc) who are aged 35 years or over.

Applicants are required to submit: a CV containing their writing history, an outline of their project and a brief extract from the work in progress or a sample of previous work.

Contact the NZSA office: email (nzsa@clear.net.nz) for more information and an application form. Deadline for applications is 30 November 2005.

Report from NZSA

Global Arts Village Residencies

Global Arts Village is an emerging international residential art center in New Delhi, India. We encourage diversity and multicultural exchange among creative people of all kinds. We practice community living, sharing meals and evening activities.

The Village enables artists to experience a natural, eco-friendly environment for creative work. The Global Arts Village is a three-acre property that includes gardens, a multi-purpose studio, sculpture workshop, a meditation and performance hall, a common building, a dance studio, performance spaces and accommodations. The buildings are in accordance with the ancient wisdom of Vastu, which harmonizes man-made structures with their natural environments.

The Village offers residency programs to emerging, mid-career and established artists in all major creative disciplines. We are building a community that blends art, culture and consciousness. Individuals with exploratory spirits are invited to join.

Fellowships / Artist-in-Residence

The Global Arts Village offers full and partial fellowships, several specific fellowship opportunities and an artist-in-residence programme.

All programmes include accommodation (standard or duplex), laundry service, three meals per day, studio or workspace (shared or private), initial welcoming celebration (presentation of past work and project plan to local artists and other fellowship recipients), concluding exhibition opportunity and other benefits dependent on the fellowship program and the dates of stay. All recipients are asked to donate fellowship specific hours of community work per week (cooking, researching, organising, leadership of a workshop, assisting or teaching a class, promotion, event planning). Partners of artists are invited to stay for \$US15 per day. (Includes accommodation, meals and laundry).

Forty-five-day residencies begin on 17 February, 3 April, 19 May, 3 July, 18 August, 2 October, 17 November and 1 January of each year. Ninety-day residencies begin on 17 February, 19 May, 18 August and 17 November of each year. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis,

there is no deadline. The application can be submitted via email info@globalartsvillage.org or post: Global Arts Village Mehrauli, Gurgaon Road, Utsav Mandir, Gitorni, New Delhi, 110030, India.

Details: www.globalartsvillage.org

☞ Talk Poem 17 ☞

Whenua (2)

*They go out to see the whenua expecting
nothing, no tree, the weedy, neglected
Friday dusk ceremony. It's a beautiful day
they take a picnic, sandals, insect repellent
down the track they last pieced together*

*like a game at the museum, dinosaur bones
clacking in a black bag. It's a beautiful day
the waterfall, its pool of glass breaking and breaking
like the bush burning but still extant, still
there, and there is her tree. The cabbage tree.*

*It's straight, unmistakable among the
low flax, taller, like a big sister, taller even than
herself, and poised, nodding now and then
unaware of its perfection. They cry and cry out
Look! Look at her tree! Their voices*

*bouncing like unaccustomed smiles off the
stern rock behind the waterfall. They make
a dam, the father and the children and the
mother grateful the father likes making dams
sits and watches the girl concentrating on
stopping the flow of water.*

Anne Kennedy

When I first read this poem from Anne Kennedy's collection *Sing-Song* I thought it was the kind of poem I would like to have written. The poet is observing a family's return to the place where the daughter's placenta (whenua) was buried. There is no real hope that anything will have survived the earlier visit, least of all the tree that was planted. But surprising discoveries are made.

There are all kinds of discoveries. Our land has been discovered, more than once, and we discover and rediscover things on a personal level throughout our lives. This is a poem about our land and a few of its inhabitants. The repetition of words and phrases emphasises the theme of generational findings.

Despite the lack of expectation, the day presages achievement, and behold there it is, 'straight, unmistakable among the / low flax, taller like a big sister'. The cabbage tree.

I found this poem accessible. It spoke clearly to me immediately, but it also made me do some work. It rewarded me on later readings because there are layers of meaning and subtle shades between the phrases. At only one point was I left slightly flummoxed. I was not sure what to make

of the 'game at the museum, dinosaur bones / clacking in a black bag'. I am still trying to tease that one out.

I found this to be a poem of celebration, of renewal and of hope. It is hard to write of such themes without indulging in sentimentality. But the simplicity of this language saves it. It says no more than I want it to say and it lets me into a scene of intimacy without fuss. I am left to take it or leave it. Any parent will be struck by the description 'unaware of its perfection'. The tree becomes the child. We do hope for perfection, but are aware of the 'stern rock'.

The last stanza leads gently to the last line of the poem. I finished reading the poem believing that the cabbage tree will grow, like the daughter and the family, in grace and dignity, despite any possible impediments. The dam will not stop the natural flow of water. It is, indeed, a beautiful day.

Many of the poems in this collection are about families, children and daily events in their relationships. There is a quotation before the prologue, attributed to both Janet Frame and Sinead O'Connor: 'These are dangerous days.' The poet writes of mortgages, Shortland Street and eczema (among other things!). As in 'Whenua (2)' the poems resonate with our times, with our country. Good poems to read in an election year. The joys of parenthood are portrayed, along with the hard and dangerous bits.

Peter Speers is recently retired from a career in teaching and vocational counselling and guidance. He lives in Nelson and enjoys reading, writing, gardening and travelling. Five grandchildren provide extra amusement and delight

KiwiHaiku

*dulled
the shining blades
grass and mower*

Sandie Legge
Oturehua, Central Otago

Please submit KiwiHaiku, preferably, but not essentially, with a New Zealand theme, to the Editor at PO Box 5283, Lambton Quay, Wellington.

November DEADLINE is 17 October