



Newsletter

September 2005

New Zealand Poetry Society
Te Hunga Tito Ruri o Aotearoa

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New Zealand Poetry Society
PO Box 5283
Lambton Quay
WELLINGTON

Patrons
Dame Fiona Kidman
Vincent O'Sullivan

President
James Norcliffe

Email
info@poetrysociety.org.nz

Website
www.poetrysociety.org.nz

✎ NZPS Competition – an insider view ✎

Our International Poetry Competition has recently concluded for another year. How did you do? Were you amongst The Chosen Ones? I wasn't and, as usual, I consoled myself with the thought that maybe I'd be in the anthology again this year.

I've been entering the NZPS competition for a long time, and this year I got to see how it works, after agreeing to take on the role of competition secretary. The first thing I discovered was that the work starts in November, when the anthology is launched and the new competition opens. My first job was to promote the competition overseas – which involved many hours on our new computer (as our old one could not connect to the internet). The first entry arrived in January, and I was very excited. I opened my record book, entered the details, and trotted off to the bank with the cheque. What a doddle this is, I thought.

Things were dry for a while, so I used February (spotty entries) and March (a bit of drizzle) to get on with some other promotional jobs – schools (more than 2,600 of them) and libraries.

In April I visited the bank three times with multiple cheque deposits, entries flowing freely. My instructions said this month's job was to send press releases to the newspapers, a month ahead of deadline. I got some nasty bugs from the Australian websites, but NZ editors were accommodating. Except, I discovered too late, the Christchurch papers. They published a week out from 30 May, omitted vital information, and led people to request entry forms on the final day without supplying self-addressed stamped envelopes. Most of them missed out, I'm afraid, as I was too busy.

What can I say about May? There was a torrent. During the final two weeks I emptied the post box every day and visited the bank every second day. May 30 was a Monday, and I emailed the judges telling them I would courier the entries on Thursday, so they could start looking

at them over Queen's Birthday Weekend. Then I went to the Post Office. I should have been suspicious when the door opened too easily. The box was empty, except for a small yellow card. The yellow card is what appears in your box when there is too much mail. There was a flood. I received from the Post Shop counter a sack containing 81 envelopes, about half of them from schools and containing multiple entries. For the rest of the week I worked until midnight every night, processing envelopes. Several took more than 1½ hours *each*. A few were requests for entry forms – too late. The slowest part was twinkling out names on school entries submitted by teachers who didn't read the instructions.

I sent what I'd managed to get through to the judges on Friday, warning them there'd be more. I returned to the Post Office on Tuesday. And Wednesday. It finally stopped raining on Thursday – no more entries. Apart from a European who had used last year's entry form and sent it to last year's secretary. I kept checking until that one was redirected as well. All the late arrivals were postmarked on the closing date so I just kept on processing, and eventually they all made it to their respective judges. A month later I had the pleasure of notifying the winners.

So now it's a matter of thanking everyone, working closely with the anthology editor and getting paid. Until it all starts again in November, when I'll enter my poems for next year. (Get the hint?)

Laurice Gilbert
Competition Secretary

✎ From the Editor ✎

There is a lovely second-hand bookshop where I live. The aisles are narrow, the books reach up to the ceiling, it's quiet and the air is soft with that old paper smell. Perhaps because the books are a little blurred with age, they seem to merge together slightly. It almost seems possible to see

the ebb and flow of ideas and themes and lovely, shiny images; to see and feel how each writer is informed by the writers that have gone before them. Not copying – there's no fun in that. I like the truth in both of these statements: T.S. Eliot's 'Immature poets imitate, while mature poets steal' and Bill Manhire's 'Voice is simply the unmistakable, distinctive sound that a writer makes on the page... The problem is to find that voice, and to speak in it, in a world filled with noise.' In the second-hand bookshop, I can hear the individual voices *and* the 'thefts' that form them.

☞ Upcoming Events ☞

Regular Poetry Gatherings 2005

These listings are updated annually in the March and September newsletters and on our website: www.poetrysociety.org.nz/events If you belong to a group not listed here, or you need to change the information shown, please send an email to info@poetrysociety.org.nz

AUCKLAND

Poetry Live meets at the Grand Central, 126 Ponsonby Road on Tuesday nights from 8 p.m. Contact: Judith McNeil ph. 09 360 2510, co-ordinator of Poetry Live and four-by-two publishing.

The Glad Poets of Henderson meet at the Waitakere Community Resource Centre, Ratanui Street, Henderson on the last Sunday of each month at 2 p.m. All welcome. Contact Barry ph. 09 832 4605.

Auckland Poetry Nights 6 p.m. First Monday of every month at Baxter & Mansfield's Bookshop, 54 Wellesley St, Auckland. BYO work or someone else's – Bloomsburys, beatniks, punks and post-modernists all welcome. Email: books5@hardtofind.co.nz or ph. 09 307 7889.

BALCLUTHA

Meets every first Wednesday of the month from 7 p.m. at The LumberJack Café Owaka (15 minutes down Southern Scenic Route). Information: Gwyneth Williamson, ph. 03 418 983.

BLENHEIM

Poetry Corner @ The Vines Restaurant, Redwood Tavern, Cleghorn Street, Blenheim, on the third Wednesday each month, 5.30–8.30 p.m. Readers, writers, performers, listeners – all welcome. Contact: Fay ph. 03 5783109, Anne ph. 03 574 2757 or Julie ph. 03 573 8281.

CHRISTCHURCH

The Airing Cupboard Women Poets meet at 10 a.m. every two weeks at The Quiet Room YMCA Hereford Street. Contact Judith Walsh ph. 03 359 74330 or Barbara Strang ph. 03 376 4486.

The Live Poets' Society meets the second Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Linwood Community Arts Centre (corner of Worcester Street/Stammore Road). Contact Alan McLean ph. 03 389 0908.

A haiku group, **The Small White Teapot**, meets upstairs at the Mainstreet Café, Colombo Street at 7.30 p.m. every third Tuesday of the month. Contact Barbara Strang: ph. 03 376 4486.

CROMWELL

Cromwell Writers meets on the last Tuesday of the month in the homes of members on a shared basis. Contact Tom Llandreth ph. 03 4451352 or email: tomal@xtraco.nz

DUNEDIN

Fortnightly readings are held at 8.30 p.m. at the Arc Café, 135 High Street. Check with the Café itself for dates and times.

Upfront – spotlighting women poets – meets on the last Tuesday of each month at Cobb & Co. (first floor lounge) from 7 p.m. Open mic reading promptly at 7.30 p.m. followed by featured poets. Contact Sue Wootton, email: david.sue@xtra.co.nz

GOLDEN BAY

Joe Bell from Milnthorpe is the convenor of the **Golden Bay Live Poets Society**. This society has a monthly performance night at the famous Mussel Inn Bush Café at Onekaka. (For dates go to www.musselinn.co.nz) Visiting poets are most welcome. For news of meetings contact Joe ph. 03 524 8146, fax 03 524 8047, or email: gabaybell@xtra.co.nz

HAMILTON

Poets Alive meet about every six weeks on a Friday from 7–9 p.m. We meet at the Continuing Education satellite campus of the University of Waikato on Ruakura Road, Hamilton. Contact Celia Hope poetsalive@xtra.co.nz or ph. 07 856 3686. Meetings for the rest of this year are 7–9 p.m. Friday 5 August, 6.15–9 p.m. Friday 23 September: Pot Luck Tea and visiting Poet/editor Jenny Argante, 7–9 p.m. Friday 4 November.

HAWKE'S BAY

The Hawke's Bay Live Poets' Society meets at 8 p.m. on the second Monday of each month (except January) at the Cat and Fiddle Ale House in Hastings. Contact Keith Thorsen ph. 06 870 9447 or email: kthorsen@xtra.co.nz

KAPITI

Mahara Poetry Group meets at Mahara Gallery, Mahara Place, Waikanae, at 7.30 p.m. on the last Tuesday of every month.

LOWER HUTT

Poets Pub. A free entry community-sponsored poetry reading happening. First Monday of the month from 7 p.m. at Angus Inn, Murphy's Bar, Waterloo Road. Bar is open and food is available. Free coffee and tea. Guest reader plus open floor mike session. For more information contact convenor Stephen Douglas ph. 04 569 9904 or email: douglassr@xtra.co.nz

NELSON

The Nelson Poets meet on the second Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. in Kaffeine, New Street, Nelson. New poets welcome. Contact: Martina ph. 03 548 2989 or Gaelynn ph. 03 546 8434.

OPOTIKI

Opotiki Writers meet at 10 a.m. on the last Wednesday of the month at the Opotiki Hotel, for chat, support and motivation, all loosely based on our writing experiences. Contact Ann Funnell ph. 07 315 6664 or email: timann@paradise.net.nz

PICTON

Picton Poets (founded by Ernest Berry in 1996) meet at The Cottage, 75a Waikawa Road, Picton at 10.30 am–12 on the second Wednesday of each month. New poets welcome. Contact: Anne Barrett ph. 03 574 2757, wheezyanna@msn.com or Sandy Arcus ph. 03 573 5442, aces2@xtra.co.nz

PORIRUA

Poetry Café meets monthly in the function room upstairs at Selby's Sports Café, 1 Selby Place, Porirua on the second Monday of the month. Free entry.

ROTORUA

The Rotorua Mad Poets meet every Monday night at the Lakes Hotel, Lake Road, 7.30–9.30 p.m. Contact: Colleen ph. 07 347 9847 or Kay ph. 07 349 0219.

TAURANGA

Bravado @ Browsers Poetry live at Browsers Bookshop, 26 Wharf Street, every second Sunday at 1 p.m. Featured poets and open mike.

Poets' Parlour is a workshop meeting monthly on the third Sunday, 12.30 p.m. in the Robert Harris Café, State Insurance Arcade, off Grey Street. Bring copies of work in progress for constructive feedback. Contact Jenny Argante ph. 07 576 3040 or email: jenny.argante@xtra.co.nz

TIMARU

If you are interested in the **Timaru Poetry in Motion** performance poetry group contact Karalyn Joyce ph. 03 614 7050 or email: karalynjoyce@xtra.co.nz

WANAKA

Poetry Live at the Wanaka Arts Centre, first Thursday of the month at 7.30 p.m. Contact Pip Sheehan ph. 03 443 4602.

WELLINGTON

The New Zealand Poetry Society meets on the third Thursday of each month (except for this September and each December and January) at 8 p.m. at Turnbull House Bowen Street.

Poetry Studio, every Sunday afternoon from 2–4 p.m. at Bluenote, corner of Cuba and Vivian Streets. Free admission, ph. 04 801 5007. Also at Bluenote, performance poetry most Sunday evenings at 8 p.m. Contact Blaise Orsman cellphone 025 616 04 53 or Bluenote ph. 04 801 5007 after 4 p.m. to confirm.

Poesis: Poetry and Religion Forum A forum to discuss religious poetry (international and national) will be held every five weeks in the WIT Library, Anglican Centre, 18 Eccleston Hill, Thorndon. All enquiries to antonin@wn.ang.org.nz

WEST COAST: HOKITIKA

Contact Don Neale, ph. 03 755 7092 or email: startledworm@paradise.net.nz for news of the winter meetings of the **Hokitika Wild Poets' Society**.

WHAKATANE

East Bay Live Poets meet at 7.30 p.m. on the third Monday of each month in the Craic. Contact: Mary Pullar ph. 07 307 1126 or email: jwpullar@wave.co.nz

WHANGAREI

Poetry, Prose, Tea & Talk. Last Sunday of the month, 2.00 p.m. at 18a Vale Road Whangarei. Contact: Rosalie ph. 04 388 913 or email: chtoomer@xtra.co.nz

☞ A warm welcome to... ☞

Eric Dodson – Tauranga

Janine Sowerby – Christchurch

Rachel McAlpine – Wellington

Iain Sharp – Auckland

Harry Ricketts – Wellington

Frances Edmond – Auckland

☞ Quotation of the Month ☞

‘Aim for the chopping block. If you aim for the wood, you will have nothing. Aim past the wood, aim through the wood; aim for the chopping block.’

Annie Dillard, The Writing Life

☞ Other News ☞

Haiku Report – Windrift

Emailed haiku almost outnumbered live haiku at our July meeting. The full haiku bowl was packed with variety: from brimstone and birds to craft and cappuccino, spiders and spinach. Here's a haiku from Veronica Haughey:

*after the gale -
an old spider's web
twisted round a rosebud*

Winter haiku triggered memories (four feet of snow in New York for Vanessa Proctor) and a favourite winter haiku. Vanessa sent this haiku by John Stevenson.

*winter morning
the long commute
from a dream*

The line 'awake at night' sparked imagination and deviance from Ernest Berry.

*day job . . .
we organise
a wake at night*

Our business for the day. We voted to help Evan Keats fund the haiku website he is developing. The money comes from the profit unexpectedly made from the very successful Haiku Festival earlier this year. Next Meeting: Thursday, 15 September, 1 p.m. at Jeanette Stace's home, 58 Cecil Rd, Wadestown, Wellington. All welcome. For further information, contact: Jeanette Stace ph. 04 473-6227, email: njstace@actrix.gen.nz or Nola Borrell ph. 04 586 7287, email: nolaborrell@xtra.co.nz

Kokako & Spin – Good News

Kokako will be published twice per year at a subscription rate of \$20. The editors are Patricia Prime and Owen Bullock. The next issue is going to press shortly. The deadline for *Kokako 4* will be 1 March for the April publication. The editors intend to phase out the section of longer poems to focus more clearly on haiku and related forms. They would particularly like to see more submissions of tanka for issue 4.

Spin, edited by Owen Bullock, will also be appearing twice per year from next year onwards, and will sell for \$25 per year. Current subscribers to *Spin/Kokako* under the old system of one of each title per year will continue to receive both titles alternately until their subscription runs out (unless you let us know a preference for one title only). We'll send out new subscription forms for both titles with the next *Kokako*.

Richard von Sturmer's Tanka

'Work in Progress' is Richard's DVD exhibit of tanka in Main Trunk Lines, the historical exhibition of NZ poetry at National Library, Molesworth St., Wellington, 22 July–30 October. (See the August issue of this newsletter.) Tanka are read by Richard accompanied by exquisite close-up photos, for example of blue-tongued lizard or a morepork.

*continuous rain
as a moth is sleeping
on the stem of my razor
I decided
to remain unshaved*

(Visiting American Haijin)

David Rosen

David Rosen is on a six-month sabbatical at the University of Canterbury. He and Joel Weishaus wrote *The Healing Spirit of Haiku*, a book of renga in the form of an ongoing conversation in prose and haiku. They explore the potential of haiku for healing. The book is illustrated by Arthur Okamura. David is keen to meet local haiku writers. See davidhrosen225@yahoo.com

*A field of deep grass,
Its vibrant eruption
Of orange-red poppies.*

Haiku Webpage

The September post on the New Zealand Poetry Society haiku webpage contains information about even more contests, a pointer to a delightful bashoo tribute website and part two of a fascinating article by Jane Reichhold on the techniques of writing haiku. See all this, and much more, at www.poetrysociety.org.nz/haiku.html

Haiku News contributed by Nola Borrell and Sandra Simpson

A Request

With the recent 60th anniversary of the ending of World War II, I unearthed my small book of poems entitled *WHIMS OF A WAAF* published by Pelorus Press in 1945. Some of the verses had appeared in the Air Force magazine *Contact*. However, they are not confined to the Royal New Zealand Air Force, but take a look at all three services and at civilian life as well.

I wonder if any readers know of a comparable publication written by a WAAF, or indeed by any other service-woman, or man for that matter, during the Second World War. Any reaction to this request would be appreciated. Please contact: Rosalie Carey, 18a Vale Road, Whangarei, tel/fax: 09 438 8913, email: rosalie.carey@paradise.net.nz

Recent Poetry Collections

Stephanie de Montalk: *Cover Stories* (VUP, \$24.95), the third volume of poetry from this year's Victoria University/Creative New Zealand Writer-in-Residence. See www.vuw.ac.nz/vup/recenttitles/coverstories.htm

Peter Dane: *Past Present* (Hudson Cresset).

Hone Tuwhare: *Oooooo.....!!!* (Steele Roberts, \$29.95), see www.steelroberts.co.nz/books/isbn/1-877338-69-9

Bill Manhire: *Lifted* (VUP, \$24.95), see: www.vuw.ac.nz/vup/recenttitles/lifted.htm

Greg O'Brien: *Afternoon of an Evening Train* (VUP, \$24.95), see: www.vuw.ac.nz/vup/recenttitles/afternoonoofaneveningtrain.htm

Jill Chan: *Telling Them Apart*, Jill's second collection of poetry, is now available as an e-chapbook. See: www.lulu.com/content/146768

Ron Riddell: *Leaves of Light* – an award-winning new book of poems (\$24.95 or \$19.95 at the launch – see below under LIVE). Available from Casa Nueva Trust, 70 Wilkie Cres., Naenae, Lower Hutt. For more information ph. (04) 577 1747 or email: poetfest@paradise.net.nz

Bill Oliver: *Poems 1946–2005* (VUP, \$29.95), see: www.vuw.ac.nz/vup/recenttitles/poems1946-2005.htm

Emily Dobson, 2004 Adam Prize winner: *A Box of Bees* (VUP, \$17.95), see: www.vuw.ac.nz/vup/recenttitles/boxofbees.htm

Elizabeth Ischiei: *Stoptide* (Steele Roberts, \$24.94), see www.steelroberts.co.nz/books/isbn/1-877338-64-8

Magazines

Blackmail Press presents . . . *bmp13* – the 36-inch-bust issue bursting with modern New Zealand poetry from 36 new and established female poets, with guest editor Tania Brady. It features poems by: Alison Eastley, Bronwyn Bryant, Annabel Henderson-Morrell, Carole Nelson-Phillips, Catherine Kelsey, Cherie Barford, Elaine King, Isha Wagner, Gaye Sutton, Heather Talbott, Helen Lehndorf, Holly Edgecombe, Jacqueline Crompton Ottaway, Jan FitzGerald, Jane England, Janis Freegard, Jenny Argante, Jenny Clay, Jessica Le Bas, Joy Green, Karisma Vala-Blackmore, Lydia O'Dwyer, Marie Cameron, Martha Morseth, Mary Cresswell, Raewyn Alexander, Renee Liang, Phillipa Reeve, Sheila MacKinnon, Shelley Trueman, Siobhan Harvey, Sue Emms, Sue Fitchett, Sue Wootton, Victoria Stace, and Yvonne Eve Walus. See: www.nzpoetsonline.homestead.com/index13.html

Report from AUP

Earl of Seacliff Art Workshop

The Earl of Seacliff Art Workshop publishes a range of New Zealand literature, including fiction, non-fiction and poetry. The website www.earloffseacliff.co.nz contains details of its publications and how to purchase them. Currently the Workshop is the sole distributor of these titles. If you have a problem obtaining any title contact them directly at sales@earloffseacliff.co.nz or PO Box 42, Paekakariki or 7 Atkinson Avenue, Otaki.

Recent Publications

Resistance by Meg Campbell

Resistance is a new collection of poems by a significant Kapiti Coast writer. It is edited by Mark Pirie. This is Meg's fifth volume of published poetry following the earlier collections *Orpheus* (Te Kotare Press) and *The Better Part* (Hazard Press, 2000). She explores personal themes such as her recovery from mental illness, poems of aroha written for her friends, family and Alistair. \$15.

The Manuka Tree

A collection of poems celebrating the Winter Readings at St. John's Church Community Room, Wellington, presented by HeadworX, E.S.A.W., and Kwanzaa – The Afrikan Shop in conjunction with Writers International (the first multi-ethnic writers group), 4–24 August 2005. Edited and compiled by Mark Pirie, the anthology is dedicated to the Irish band U2. It features 21 poets, including Alistair Te Ariki Campbell, Meg Campbell, Bill Dacker, Niel Wright, Michael O'Leary, Mark Pirie, L E Scott, Iain Sharp, Joy MacKenzie and Richard von Sturmer. (44 pages \$10.)

London Notebook by Mark Pirie

An all-new collection of poems by prolific Wellington poet Mark Pirie. Following hot on the heels of his selected early poems from ESAW, *Giving Poetry a Bad Name*, this new book presents a witty artist's sketchbook of his time in the UK from March–April 2005 when he attended the London Book Fair and various poetry readings around London. Briefs, letter-poems, postcard snaps and the occasional aperçu – like a passing messenger-bird snatched from the air, comprise an album of observations and reflections that remind us how travel can sometimes return you to yourself. Pirie, at the top of his form, can be sharp-witted, tender and is found sometimes loitering with the best intent at the very edge of the ordinary. (Paperback, 80 pages, includes photos, \$30.)

JAAM 23, JAAM Tracks edited by Mark Pirie

The front cover by John Girdlestone is modelled after The Animals' *Animal Tracks* album cover and features the Earl of Seacliff himself, Michael O'Leary, ESAW author Mark

Pirie as Eric Burdon, Apirana Taylor, Kakariki Bookshop partner Irving Lipshaw and Adrian Kenneally. Content includes work from the major European poet Richard Burns, Czech poet/photographer Katerina Rudcenkova, leading Arab poet Saadi Yousef and much more. (\$15 ISSN 1173-633X 182 pages.) *JAAM 23* is available from Unity Books, 57 Willis Street, Wellington.

Loud Quiet Song (second edition) by John Ellis

This successful chap-book of poems has been completely reset and is available now. (\$10)

Make Love and War by Michael O'Leary

Make Love and War is Michael O'Leary's first all-new poetry collection for several years. This new collection is sure to please fans old and new alike. (\$20) The first printing has sold out. There will be a temporary delay in supply while more copies are printed.

Giving Poetry a Bad Name by Mark Pirie

This new book collects, for the first time, the complete 'replugged and uncut' picture of his early experimental output. 'The Mark Pirie juggernaut rolls on...' – Jack Ross. The first printing has sold out. There will be a temporary delay in supply while more copies are printed. (\$30)

✎ 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 has a newsletter which you can sign up to at www.vuw.ac.nz/modernletters

The 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; 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 can be found at www.thenewwriter.com For a free recent back copy of the magazine send 3 IRCs from Europe or 5 IRCs from elsewhere to: *The New Writer*, PO Box 60, Cranbrook, Kent TN17 2ZR.

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, 20 December 2005. For details see: 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: www.learningmedia.co.nz/nz/online/authorsartists

✎ Congratulations ✎

Picton Poet featured in Electronic Poetry Network

Congratulations to Ernest Berry, who on 2 August was the featured poet on the Shreve Memorial Library's Electronic Poetry Network. The companion site to the EPN is on their library's web site at: www.shreve-lib.org/images/Poem.htm

On the poet's featured day, his/her poem is printed on the left and right-hand sides of the page. In addition, the network's 'Poem of the Day' is emailed to poetry lovers in their 21-branch library system. Ernest's featured poem was:

*Monday
wedding day
she unlaces
her changing shape*

(Ernest J. Berry)

Winning Haiku and Haibun

Here are the leading New Zealand awards from the Yellow Moon Seed Pearls competition (March, 2005), now published in *Yellow Moon 17*. 'NZ did brilliantly,' said Beverley George, the editor.

*jagged crag
the starlit cry
of a gannet*

(Ernest J. Berry, 1st, Haiku Section)

*the godwits leave
she puts a blanket
on the bed*

(Andre Surridge, 2nd, Haiku Section)

Beach Road

This morning the trees are loaded with cicada song just as the air is heavy with heat. In the rest home the old lady fastens a cotton gown over her new bathing suit. The women crowd around her with their walkers. 'Going swimming. You lucky thing!'

*cresting the wavelet
her white bathing cap –
my 92 yr. old mother*

The beach is fringed with sea grass. Even after bathing in the cool water, her hand is warm in mine as I guide her through the shallows. From the car to the changing shed I gather up her trail of dropped clothing. 'I'm the luckiest woman in the world,' she says.

(Catherine Mair, 1st, Haibun Section)

Andre SurrIDGE also gained 4th in the UK Creating Reality haiku competition with:

*stealing centre stage
the idiot who forgot
to turn off his phone*

∞ Reviews ∞

**Cover Stories Stephanie de Montalk, VUP, RRP \$24.95
ISBN 0 86473 499 9**

The first poem in Stephanie de Montalk's new book is 'Working Days'. It describes the life of someone who changes clothing and behaviour because she is in pursuit of 'information / my commanding nirvana'. She finishes this poem by saying that information is 'my stock in trade'. Whether the worker is a poet or researcher is not clear, but the image is effective in suggesting how de Montalk herself transforms and shapes her memory and knowledge to produce these confident and eloquent poems.

She knows about many things. She writes with ease about cloud formations seen from an aeroplane, the technology of a medical procedure, the Egyptologist, Sir Richard Francis Burton, or even the packet of preserving agent supplied with a florist's flowers. She selects details which are fitting and which suggest more than they actually say. In 'Elizbieta Serves Dinner', for instance, a whole fish is on the menu. The armour of its scales, together with the perfect spine and fine bones of the pike Elizbieta has selected, match and suggest Elizbieta's own cool elegance. de Montalk can also write with dazzling simplicity. In 'The Hour', a four-lined poem that ends the first of the book's three parts, a question and a possible answer comprise

the whole poem. Her answer to the question is at once mysterious and satisfying.

The second of these three parts is about a trip the writer made to France for surgery for an injury. Though these are stand-alone poems, taken together they form a kind of narrative of the travel, the diagnosis and attempts to cure her. To write with grace about sickness and surgery is a difficult thing to do. To write about Lourdes without being sentimental or cynical is not easy either. de Montalk manages both with a lightness of touch and also by the way she uses dialogue or metaphors to convey the experience of illness. She is well informed about European history and geography. She also can write about scientific ideas such as black holes with assurance. She carries her understanding lightly.

If I had to choose one poem from *Cover Stories*, I would probably settle for 'Warsaw'. I like the directness of the opening. I like the way she uses the new scarf she has bought in a particular Warsaw street to let her take the reader through different parts of the city. Each of the fragments that make up the poem is precise and evocative of an aspect of her experience of Warsaw. Its statues, river, shops, music and history are suggested in a series of quick verbal sketches.

Cover Story is de Montalk's third book of poetry in six years. She has a voice that is distinct, but also adaptable. Her poems combine a controlled energy with curiosity and wit. These thoughtful poems are well worth reading and reading again.

Review by Rachel Bush, Nelson writer

**Fire-Penny Cilla McQueen, University of Otago Press,
RRP\$29.95**

Her poems on the lives of ancestors who lived in now deserted St. Kilda, on the remote coast of Scotland, have become McQueen's finest poetic achievement. And so is this collection. These new poems add nothing to the range of topics and feelings of her previous St. Kilda works, but once again demonstrate a masterly sureness of craft with no wasted words, no metaphorical frills, no posturing emotion. They are poems that leave the reader's imagination at work long after their reading:

*telling the bones beneath each knoll,
following the shadow of the mountain
as it draws across the Plain of Spells.*

(Rite)

It is hoped that all the St. Kilda works will eventually be collected together. The rest in this book are mainly

light poems (without necessarily being light-hearted), even poems that could work as children's poetry. There's also a little play and a page of having fun with dictionary definitions. A poem like 'A Door' has something of an intriguing Michael Harlow surrealism to it.

Some of these others catch the sparseness of the St. Kilda ones and their strength. 'The Company of Poets' imagines (and perhaps gently spoofs) Baxter: 'I hope, he said, in heaven, to come among the company of poets' but he's also 'collecting for the Salvation Army' taking the narrator's last dollar. The best of the final section of 'Widow's Songs', grieving for her partner, also keep company with the St. Kilda lines, notably 'Starlings' and 'Bread':

*I think of you
riddling the fire,
enjoying my bread
and cannot make it*

It's a collection of readable, enjoyable poems with some that will long retain their appeal. The cover is a cheerful design by the poet. But an old-fashioned hardback format with page marker is an expensive format for what is basically a chap-book with 40 pages of poems.

Review by Bernard Gadd, Auckland poet and regular newsletter contributor

☞ Out & About ☞

Montana Poetry Day in Dunedin

The Public Library has become almost synonymous with Montana Poetry Day in Dunedin. This year it hosted two events. The first in the morning, for children, was run by Jenny Powell-Chalmers and the feedback was great. The second event, also in the library, was a reading in the evening by six poets who shared two things (apart from poetry!): each lives in the Otago region and each had a book published in the past year.

Elizabeth Isichei and David Howard each distributed the text of a poem as a gift to members of the audience. In Elizabeth's case, it was a response to a print by John Drawbridge, *Interior no 2 1979*, from her collection, *Stoptide*. David gave everyone his wonderful reflection on 'The Theology of Beetles' (which is, I am reliably informed, as popular among beetles as it is among readers of poetry)

*God is inordinately fond of
beetles: they cover all
parts. Comprehensive arguments
for design, they cannot
comprehend the foreign*

*heavens! ... Our footsteps
move them but do not
call it wonder.*

Diane Brown's readings from *Learning to Lie Together*, included, by special request, the poem first sent to Philip Temple, marking the first step of her journey to Dunedin, five years ago.

*one a.m. in Quay St
a small black balloon
waits unaccompanied
on the footpath, taking
my heart for a minute*

*away from the language
of the evening
was it significant
his leaning towards me
and do I want it to be so?*

*no such doubt exists
for the balloon*

Michael Harlow lives in Central Otago; his home is called Alchemy House – a fabulous name for a poet's abode. (Wish I had thought of it first.) He read from his new collection, *Cassandra's Daughter*. The original Cassandra, of course, spoke with a prophetic voice but no one listened. Now it is her five-year-old daughter who speaks with a different kind of insight.

*. . . I can hear
that she knows, Priam's daughter,
all her years to heaven –
that every word was once
a poem, isn't it?*

Sue Wootton read from her forthcoming collection, *Hourglass*. 'Posh frock' is a memory of a time when she wore a newly bought gown to a ball, only to find someone else wearing its twin.

*She never
gave a sign that she had noticed
yet the night passed without a single
violation of the no-go zone,

she moving in her circles, me
in mine. I cursed the specials rack
that had brought us to this tense peak
of instinct . . .*

Since publishing her first collection, *Sweet Bananas Wax Peppers* in 1998, Jenny Powell-Chalmers has been extraordinarily productive (as has Diane, over roughly the same time period). Powell-Chalmers' recent book, *Four*

French Horns deals with themes drawn from family, music and art, as well as with local landscapes. 'Mask from the Birds' is short enough to give in full:

*filling the air
is a flying carpet
of birds, a heavy chorus
of chortles and chirps*

*each beak presses
a feather kiss
on to my face
i am wearing the fine lace
of flight.*

I shall soon become, not a Dunedin poet, but a Bay of Plenty one. I shall miss the poets of Dunedin very much indeed.

Elizabeth Isichei is a Dunedin poet (for now)

Montana Poetry Day on the Kapiti Coast

An evening of poetry treats was held at Paraparaumu Library to celebrate Montana Poetry Day, on Friday 22 July. It featured actors Tina Regtien and Jed Brophy reading poems by well-known, mainly New Zealand, contemporary poets. The Kenyan actor-poet Wanjiku Kiarie also performed her recent work.

Montana Poetry Day in Whangarei

Whangarei made a major effort this year for Montana Poetry Day. Classics Bookshop held a quiz in conjunction with Whangarei Library. Three libraries held poetry competitions. Oherahi and Kamo had morning teas and poetry readings.

Whangarei District Library's competitions for three age groups drew record entries. Following the announcement of the winners at 2.30 p.m. on 22 July, octogenarians Joyce Mowbray-Irving and Rosalie Carey presented their programme *Classic Favourites* – poetry, prose and a little drama – especially appreciated by older citizens. It was repeated on Sunday in Kensington (Whangarei) and on Tuesday 29 in Pahia (Bay of Islands), and will hopefully find more venues in the future.

In the evening, at Mokaba Coffee House at the Whangarei Town Basin, a very successful evening was organised by Rosalie Carey in conjunction with the Society of Authors Northland Branch and the Whangarei Writers' Workshop. As well as a popular open forum for poets, there was music on keyboard and drums, and two singers who not only composed both words and music, but also played keyboard and guitar respectively. Outlying districts also held functions to celebrate Montana Poetry Day.

Report by Rosalie Carey

Montana Poetry Day in Tauranga

Tauranga City Library has been a good friend to poetry in the past and this year was no exception. Once again, they were pleased and proud to present Montana Poetry Night, and the celebration of poetry that took place on Friday 22 July was better and bigger than ever before – with at least 150 present.

The evening was planned and compered by Sharon Daniel and Diane Taggart, who also set up a poetry display window in the Library and for a week beforehand put up dozens of poems by local and national writers.

Poets Parlour is a local self-help poetry writing group in Tauranga that meets monthly. Members of that group opened the evening, performing like pros. Thanks to Margaret Beverland, Owen Bullock, Thomas Bullock, Don Campbell, Richard Cornelius, Jan FitzGerald, Judy Hayes, Marilyn Hilton, Leonard Lambert and Sandra Simpson. You set a high standard for those that followed.

We were then treated to four poems by Rumi, a 13th-century Persian poet and Sufi philosopher whose poems continue to reach out to a deeply appreciative and ever-increasing audience. Rumi's long companionship with Shams led to scandal – and some of the finest love poems ever written. His influence resides mainly in the poetry where he engages in a dialogue with God, sharing with us observations on the moral and spiritual life. The whirling dervishes are a Sufi sect, and Rumi often created or spoke his poems while going into a dance-induced trance of ecstasy. Four dancers from Belisha, dressed in the costumes of the period, interpreted poems by Rumi as a choreographic homage to the man and to the spirit of Eastern dance.

The first guest performer, back by popular demand, was the Bard of Brookfield, Marcel Currin, who has been writing poems and songs now for 15 years. Marcel's work is witty, engaging and to the point. He says that the first songs he wrote tended to be funny because he wanted to be sure his audience was laughing at them, and not at him. Though he has passed his Performer's Certificate for piano, he plays most of his songs on guitar, with a bit of harmonica thrown in. Marcel is also a published poet and well-known coffee addict, and co-ordinator of Poets Parlour in Tauranga.

Marcel was followed by another open-mike session and among other readers, first-timer Hamish Williamson, a self-confessed 'Kiwi bloke', surprised us and himself with two fine poems, one written for the occasion. Deb Gracie shared a lyrical song she had composed and Sam Goodliffe, aged eight, introduced us to 'The Sorrow of Socks' by Wendy Cope. We also heard from Mal Bidois who takes poetry into prisons, and from Paddy Hoban, warrior poet – and also the library's business manager.

Paddy looked bodacious in skin-tight black, showing us a wild side that was definitely X-rated.

Next came the celebrity guest poet, Raewyn Alexander from Auckland, who for ten years has enjoyed a wide audience for her performance poetry. Raewyn has published hundreds of poems and attracted critical acclaim for her novels, non-fiction and an Auckland University Press poetry sequence. Raewyn is featured on the New Zealand Electronic Poetry Centre website and was most recently published in New York's *Short Fuse Anthology of World-wide Performance Poets*. Raewyn lives in Western Springs and edits *Magazine*, published annually as a compilation of poetry, fiction and artwork. But performance poetry that is Raewyn's forté – she trained as an actor – and this night she floated poems on paper planes to an enthusiastic audience. That's certainly one way to get your message across.

Tauranga Writers also organised a writing workshop with Raewyn, sponsored by Montana, and were surprised at what was achieved in two hours, especially from the exercises on communal writing and a treasure hunt. These are featured in Raewyn's manual *Writing Poetry: Fireworks, Clay & Architecture* (available for \$10 including p. & p. from brightsparkbooks, 45 Ivanhoe Road Western Springs Auckland, or email: bright_com@xtra.co.nz) Raewyn also has a new collection out from Bright Spark – *It's a Secret: selected poems, 1993–2005* (\$10).

This wonderful, free evening then concluded with Elan as Paddy Hoban, returned for a surprise finale – a reading of a previously unpublished poem 'Song of a Mad Old Man' by James K. Baxter, fully authenticated and in manuscript form. The poem was provided by the owner of the manuscript, Des Mitchell, and permission to read it was given by the copyright holder, Baxter's widow Jackie. What a magnificent way to end the evening – something new from a New Zealand master poet that put a gold seal on an evening exploding with energy, enthusiasm and expertise.

Report from Jenny Argante

Writers at Tauranga Arts Festival

Appearing in the Readers' and Writers' Programme are UK author and foreign correspondent Christina Lamb, journalist Michael Field, international relations expert Paul Buchanan, food writer Julie Le Clerc, Good Man project author Celia Lashlie, children's writers and illustrators Gavin Bishop and Lynley Dodd, winemaker, special Olympian and mountain climber Mark Inglis, Australian writer for young adults John Marsden and award-winning poet Glenn Colquhoun.

The events range from meet the author to writer discussions and run from Thursday 27 October to Sunday

30 October. For more information on the festival, the writers and how to book, see: www.taurangafestival.co.nz

Picton

Responding to a casual suggestion by E. (Haiku) Berry that we have a go at something 'Sam Huntish', Earnie himself came up with a poem beginning with, 'So oftentimes I stay at home and write', while Anne's verse we felt was not only in Sam's genre, but also a nice reflection on the Queen Charlotte Sound scene:

*The Morning mist,
Slowly lifts,
Above the clear water.
Boats are revealed,
Still,
At their moorings.
A lone shag
Flaps off to fishing grounds,
And Anakiwa
Gradually appears
Across the bay.*

Sandy

☞ Competitions ☞

Aoraki Festival of the Arts Literary Awards

Applications are being called for the *Timaru Herald*/Aoraki Festival Short Story Award of \$1,000, the J. Ballantyne & Co/Aoraki Festival Poetry Award of \$1,000, and the Elworthy Family Memorial Poetry Award of \$500 and greenstone/pounamu bookends. Enquiries to: mary-meehan@paradise.net.nz or the rules are available from Literary Awards, Aoraki Festival, 77 Strickland Street, Somerfield Christchurch. Applications close 30 September 2005.

Yellow Moon

Nutshell. Four categories: Cinquain (one cinquain = one entry); Poem on an element of Taoist cosmology (wood, fire, earth, metal, water) 11–24 lines; Humorous/ nonsense poem, 12–24 lines; Tetractys (page of two = one entry). Money prizes. Deadline: 19 October 2005. Cost: A\$5 per entry or A\$10 for 3 entries. Entry forms from website or: Yellow Moon, PO Box 37, Pearl Beach, NSW 2256, Australia.

Search for a Sonnet

A. Shakespearean and B. Petrarchan. A\$100/70 prizes for each category. Cost: A\$5 each entry or A\$10 for three entries. Theme: open. Address and entry forms as above. Deadline: 30 October. See www.yellowmoon.info for additional information.

Haiku Poets of Northern California

Categories include haiku, senryu and tanka. Prizes of \$100, \$50 and \$25 in haiku contest. Deadline: 31 October. Cost: US\$1/poem. Cheque/money order (US dollars) with entry to: HPNC, c/o Lane Parker, 578 3rd Ave, San Francisco, CA 94118, USA. For more details see the North American Poetry Website.

James W. Hackett Award

Prize of £70 and one year's free subscription to the British Haiku Society. Winning (and commended) haiku will be published in Volume 16 No. 2 of *Blithe Spirit*. Deadline: 30 November. Cost: £3 or US\$6 for up to three haiku, and £1 or US\$2 per haiku thereafter. Entries to Hackett Award, Newton House, Holt Rd, North Elmham, Norfolk NR20 5JQ, UK. For more details see the British Haiku Society website.

Zen Garden Haiku Contest

Three-line haiku only, unlimited entries. Cash prizes – US\$100 for first. The top 20 haiku will be published in the spring/summer 2006 edition of White Lotus Magazine. Entries must be postmarked by 31 December. Winners will be announced on 1 February 2006. Cost: US\$2/ haiku. Contestants may enter via PayPal or to: Shadow Poetry, 1209 Milwaukee Street, Excelsior Springs, MO 64024, US. For more details see: www.shadowpoetry.com/contests/zengardenhaikucontest

☞ Residencies ☞

Ursula Bethell/Creative New Zealand Residency in Creative Writing 2006

This position has been created to foster New Zealand writing. The deadline is Friday 21 October 2005. Organisation: University of Canterbury. See: http://vacancies.canterbury.ac.nz/vdownloads/2728_20050711102125.pdf

Wild Creations Artist Residencies

Artists interested in taking part in the 2006 Wild Creations artist residency programme, part of a partnership between Creative New Zealand and the Department of Conservation, have until Wednesday 31 August 2005 to submit their applications. Artists should contact Anne McLean ph. (04) 471 3143 or amclean@doc.govt.nz for more information about the residencies or see: www.doc.govt.nz/Community/Sponsorship-and-Partnerships/Wild-Creations/Information-for-artists.asp

Watermark Fellowship for Writing on Nature and Peace

The Watermark Literature Society has adopted the Australian Council's definition of an emerging writer,

and the International Nature Writer's Muster is awarding a fellowship for an emerging New Zealand or Australian writer on nature and place. Website: www.ozco.govt.au/grants/literature/new_work2004 Writers applying for the Watermark Fellowship can download eligibility and application forms at www.watermarkliterarysociety.asn.au/fellowship.htm

What Artist Doesn't Want a Cool Studio?

Written proposals are sought from artists and writers for the 2005/2006 Antarctic Arts Fellowship, a joint award supported by Antarctica New Zealand and Creative New Zealand. Application forms and criteria are available from Antarctica New Zealand's website www.antarcticanz.govt.nz A written proposal must be received at Antarctica New Zealand by 30 September.

☞ Websites ☞

Rhyme & Unreason: How a website purporting to uncover fraud shook up the world of poetry contests: <http://chronicle.com/free/v51/i37/37a01201.htm>

Poetry for Beginners The 2004 Neustadt Lecture, ADAM ZAGAJEWSKI www.ou.edu/worldlit/onlinemagazine/2005mayaugust/WLT_May-Aug05-4ZagEssay.pdf 'Poetry must be written, continued, risked, tried, revised, erased, and tried again as long as we breathe and love, doubt and believe.'

Poetry is hot again: www.philly.com/mld/inquirer/news/magazine/daily/11848232.htm

Poet Laureate Motion critical of 'missing' poetry in UK schools: www.books.guardian.co.uk/news/articles/0,6109,1515731,00.html www.books.guardian.co.uk/news/articles

The Emily Dickinson cake www.poetrysociety.org/journal/articles/dickinson-cake.html

Wellington Writers' Walk www.catherinegriffiths.co.nz/01%203.WWW1.html

August Kleinzahler www.nytimes.com/2005/08/02/books/02poet.html?pagewanted=print or www.griffinpoetryprize.com/speeches.php?t=2

The UK–NZ Continuum

Learn how the British Council in NZ supports the arts, cultural exchange, and interesting global dialogue www.britishcouncil.org/nz-arts-culture-faqs.htm

Hub in Oz www.artshub.com.au
www.taurangawriters.org.nz

An instrument for measuring shadows, Croagnes
for Bill and Pip Culbert

*A time of day the smallest village
covers a province
and a lone figure fumbles sleepwards
or leans across a table
holding a wine-bottle which is both
the evening's newest invention
and oldest relic. A time of day the top
of his wise head
touches Spain, the shortest glass holds
the longest drink,
and so the day must end, 'as a man goes
to his long home'
light-bulbs singing to each other now in an
old Roman vault
as the bodies of two have been known
to reside in one shadow,
as each day recovers
in the arms of the next.*

Gregory O'Brien

Found in Translation

Not trained in the profession, I was both flattered and terrified by the request to translate some 80 pages of New Zealand poetry for festivals in Belgium and the Netherlands. I had introduced the poets in the first place, and it seemed only logical to the organisers that I would do the translations as well. I want to briefly relate some of my experiences in translating one poem in particular, 'An instrument for measuring shadows, Croagnes', one of my favourites from Gregory O'Brien's powerful new collection, *Afternoon of an evening train*.

The semantics of the poem translated rather well, I thought. As far as I could see, there were no hidden New Zealand references. In fact, the depicted scene was decidedly European, set in the south of France. It wasn't clear to me which instrument actually did the measuring – the wine-bottle, the glass, or perhaps the lone figure's wise head? But the riddle would remain equally mysterious in Dutch. I also thought of a gnomon, and I even suspected that the visual layout of the poem – with groups of two lines, one short, one long – was intended to evoke or reinforce the image of a stick and its shadow. On this reading, the final two lines of equal length present a perfect example of iconicity, with a visual form that beautifully matches its content, an object merging with its shadow. These effects easily survive in Dutch.

What gave me a hard time was the subtle music of these sentences. Reading the poem out loud, I found there was an unmistakable rhythm that combines metric sections

with slightly dissonant moments when the beat changes. The first line, for instance, basically consists of an iambic tetrameter that builds a very explicit cadence, and this is made even more dominant with the stresses on 'covers a province' in the second line. But then, as if the sounds anticipate the fumbling of the lone figure, we stumble upon a string of three unstressed syllables: the second syllable of 'province', followed by a marked enjambment that further heightens the expectation of a stressed syllable – which is violated by the ensuing 'and a'.

The best way I can describe this music is by saying that O'Brien sings and thinks at the same time. The moments when the rhythm changes are those when a new semantic unit enters the picture, or when the poetic mind receives a new image. My objective in the translation, then, was to create a conceptually similar 'hesitant music'. I found it particularly difficult to come up with good analogues of the metric bits in the poem. To compensate for this, I relied slightly more heavily on alliterations and assonances, trying to create a poem that was as intermittently musical as the original by whatever means were available to me in Dutch. Whether this worked, though, is less important to me now than the observation that, by travelling back and forth between the two languages, I've come to know this lovely poem extremely well.

Jan Lauwereyns is a Wellington-based poet and neurobiologist. In June, Gregory O'Brien and four other poets took their work to festivals in Antwerp and Rotterdam. Jan did the translations of their work. Jan is considered one of the leading young Flemish poets.

☞ **Kiwi Haiku** ☞

strapless gown
the moon-washed hills
of Otago

Ernest Berry, Picton

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

Correction:

Helen Bascand's haiku (August 2005) was printed as:

*over the garden wall –
'wedding day'*

whereas it should have read

*over the convent wall –
'wedding day'*

which is quite a different proposition.

October DEADLINE is 17 September