

a fine line

THE MAGAZINE OF THE NEW ZEALAND POETRY SOCIETY

Te Hunga Tito Ruri o Aotearoa

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NEW ZEALAND POETRY SOCIETY
Te Hunga Tito Ruri o Aotearoa

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WELLINGTON MEETINGS
Poetry @ The Thistle Inn
3 Mulgrave St, Wellington Central
Starts at 7.30pm with open mic.

To find out who the Guest Poet is, please see:

<http://www.poetrysociety.org.nz/comingevents#nzps>

**DEADLINE FOR
NOVEMBER ISSUE:**

7 OCTOBER

Inspiration through Collaboration

Kirsten Cliff

I never thought I'd need a prompt to get me writing. I always seemed to have new ideas, and could easily draw from what was happening around me. Then some dark days arrived – cancer, mostly – and it seemed that the act of writing got harder. I was writing less. Maybe that was okay? But being generally uninspired in my play with words did not feel good. So when a haiku friend (who'd also survived cancer) asked if I wanted to write with her, I welcomed the opportunity to expand my writing world.

Cara Holman and I started writing *rengay* together: a modern form of linked haiku verse. I found that writing to the prompt of her haiku lead me to write poetry that I wouldn't have penned otherwise. On really hard days – when the chemotherapy was stripping me bare – collaborating was what helped me get out of bed in the morning. Why? Because I knew that the next link in the poem would be waiting in my email inbox.

I quickly became excited about writing again. I was inspired in a way I hadn't been before. My writing was taken in new directions. It was still my writing voice, but it was brought to life through the links of my poetry with Cara's. I got instant feedback on my work, often in the form of her next haiku verse. This was highly positive as it meant I had inspired my writing partner, too. We were on a roll.

The Scent of Pine

Cara Holman & *Kirsten Cliff*

evening sky
the moon cradled
in the ginkgo's branches

*the scratch of pencil
on paper*

hushed dawn
bird tracks
in the snow

*fallen fence post
counting out pills
for the day*

a hawk scatters
the flock of starlings

*cloud cover
the scent of pine
from the wood pile*

Our first two rengay, 'The Scent of Pine' and 'Turning a Corner', were quickly accepted for publication, appearing in the on-line journal *A Hundred Gourds* (June 2013). Over the course of that year we wrote 13 rengay together, including four on our joint experiences of cancer, and all were well received by editors. Every time we completed a rengay, we'd start another. It was addictive. And so much fun!

Then I got the itch to try a tanka sequence and asked another writing friend, Margaret Dornaus, if she'd like to work with me. We quickly found a subject we could both get stuck into: our overseas travels. We took inspiration from photos of our journeys abroad, and wrote our first sequence of tanka linked by that travel bug. Margaret and I have since written together several times and I find her feedback invaluable. I'm learning all the time in this world of poetry and she is one of my teachers.

So the positives of collaboration continued, and the desire to do more never waned. After each project I'd feel the need for a break – it was time to return to my own writing. But these 'breaks' never lasted long. My hunger for this new type of inspiration would rapidly grow, and before I knew it I'd be emailing a friend with a new idea for a rengay or tanka sequence. I soon grew bolder and began asking others to write with me. I've now written with six different people.

Lost & Found

Margaret Dornaus & Kirsten Cliff

crossing the river
into this new year, alone
I stop
to look at every turn
before I carry on

*first dream of the year
diagnosing her pain
as leukaemia . . .
could I find the strength
to do it over again*

on the bench
at the foot of her bed
a clutch of tissues . . .
abandoned like the words
she can no longer recall

*I hear her say
she's lost the will to live . . .
the waves
keep on cresting
keep on breaking*

winter fog—
the lighthouse steps
we climb
to see whatever
we might see

*all day long
the peacock's cry
once again
I fail to listen
to my intuition*

- Part of a tanka sequence published in *LYNX* (March 2013)

Experimentation was part of the joy. Cara and I played with the rengay form, creating what we called 'rengay sequences': four rengay linked together. This developed from that drive to keep writing with one another, and wanting to explore all avenues of a particular theme. Now I'm breaking new ground with Seánan Forbes: we are writing tanka sequences using repeating lines. This occurred the first time naturally when I was so inspired by Seánan's starting tanka verse that I wanted to use one of her lines in my linking tanka. It can be quite a challenge to use your writing partner's first line as your third line, for example, but, once again, I can't seem to say no!

A very different experience was my first time writing face-to-face, and as part of a group, at the June 2012 Haiku Festival Aotearoa in Tauranga. It was a session filled with laughter, and where I realised I wasn't too good at writing haiku under pressure! Sandra Simpson lead ten of us in writing a junicho: a longer and stricter form of Japanese linked haiku verse. It was also a 'competitive' write, which meant that we all contributed verses for each new spot, and Sandra choose the one that linked best. Although this began in real-time, it was completed on-line, which gave me more space to become inspired by the preceding verse. The experience of working face-to-face in a group setting is one I would definitely repeat, though. After all, it is how linked verses were traditionally written in Japan.

I've since gone on to create collaborative haiga (putting haiku with a photographic image) with two of my haiku friends. I was also part of Ruth Arnison's 'Poems in the Waiting Room' fundraiser, which saw the haiku of North Island poets paired with South Island artists. In this collaboration I was a silent partner, but was excited by the artists' interpretations of my haiku. I look forward to future collaborations with other people outside the world of haiku, as well as those within it.



From the National Coordinator

Laurice Gilbert

Since I last wrote to you we have held our Annual General Meeting, and I am pleased to introduce our new Committee. **Gillian Cameron** is an 'old hand' and past President who remains co-opted to the Committee as a cheque signatory; **Carmen Downes** will take over the Membership Officer role; **Sandi Sartorelli** is interim Treasurer; **Lonnard Watkins** (Vice-President) is going to be looking at our website and what we can do to jazz it up a bit; and **Jack Wood** is our welcome expert on all things technical with regard to compliance and governance. I remain grateful to retired Committee members Anne Faulkner, Janis Freegard and Tim Jones who have all provided sterling service to the Society and support to me over the last few years.

You can read the AGM Minutes in the Members' area of the website, by email on request, or by snail mail if you send me a SSAE. The President's Report appears later in this issue.

Our annual competition is well and truly over, and we congratulate all the prize winners and place getters. Later in this issue you will see the full list of prize winners, and the report from Open Section judge (and one of our Patrons) Vincent O'Sullivan [News Flash! Vincent is the new Poet Laureate]. At the time of writing this, I have just supplied anthology editor Owen Bullock with the names and contact details of all the poets whose poems he has selected for publication. So even more of you will be feeling successful, as well you should. It's no mean feat to have work selected from among nearly 2000 assorted poems and haiku.

If you're not included this year, there's always next year, when we'll have new judges and a new editor. I entered one of my favourite poems three times before it struck a chord with an editor and finally made it into the anthology. It's the same with any submission: if you're satisfied it's your best work but it can't seem to find a home, keep sending it out into the world. There is an unimaginable number of publishing opportunities available, and you never know when you're going to strike The One.

The other opportunity to look out for is the outside-the-box one. I had the immense pleasure of being Poet in Residence for the Asia-Pacific Model United Nations Conference, here in Wellington, at the beginning of July. The e-book of poems I produced at the end of the experience will probably never be seen by anyone other than the Conference attendants, but what a lot of interesting things I learned while collecting notes! And I met some seriously interesting people by doing it.

If you're a reader and not a writer of poetry, you too can look beyond the obvious journals and magazines by searching for poetry online. I have a Google Search set up that emails me a weekly summary of news with the word 'poetry' in it. Not all of it is of interest, but a lot of it is. I am

never short of inspiration!

This issue of the magazine will arrive at your place while I'm in Canada, visiting a much-missed daughter. I'll be attending poetry events while I'm in Ottawa and again in Vancouver, when I drop in on my cousin on the way home. Never one to miss a poetry event in NZ when I'm travelling, I'm looking forward to expanding my horizons while I'm out of the country. I'm so thankful for the internet!



About our Contributors

Kirsten Cliff is a writer with a love of all things haiku. She was the 2013 NZPS competition judge for the junior haiku section, and has recently featured in *A New Resonance 8: Emerging Voices in English Language Haiku* (Red Moon Press, US). Be part of her creative journey at Swimming in Lines of Haiku: <http://kirstencliffwrites.blogspot.co.nz/>

Mary Cresswell is a Kapiti poet whose work appears in a variety of print and online journals.

James Norcliffe is a poet, fiction writer and educator. His writing has been featured in many journals and anthologies, as well as his own collections, and he has also worked widely as an editor. He is a past President of the NZPS.

A Warm Welcome to:

Nicolas Grenier France

Noticeboard:

WELLINGTON POETRY WORKSHOP

Saturday 28 September, 10am-5pm in the Community Room, Toi Pōneke Arts Centre, 61 Abel Smith St. The venue is completely accessible to those with physical disabilities, and there is on-site parking. Cost: \$70 (\$60 for NZPS members, who have priority).

A full day to explore **Spunky, Funky Love Poetry** with Anne M Carson (www.annemcarson.com). We'll closely examine a range of relevant texts including poems from the recently published *Australian Love Poems 2013* (Inkerman and Blunt) relating to love, including love of animals, children, the natural world, the beloved, the ineffable. The emphasis will be on moving beyond sentimentality to find your own authentic expression. We'll also look at developing a personal lexicon and original imagery to bring your work alive, imbued with originality. We'll use a range of exercises, group discussion and workshoping.

Copies of *Australian Love Poems* will be available for purchase (pre-ordered) from the tutor at a special price of AUD20 (RRP AUD27), which is roughly \$NZ23 at the moment, but it is not compulsory to buy this to do the workshop. Book now at: info@poetrysociety.org.nz

FREE TO GOOD HOMES

We have 17 poetry art posters looking for public display. The posters have been produced by Graeme Lindsay, a New Zealand-born poet and photographer currently living in Tasmania. Graeme has been working for several years on his '100 Years from Gallipoli Poetry Project'.

Last year he ran a competition called 'Behind every war there are good women', which some of our members participated in, as either competitors or selectors. Then Graeme travelled all over both NZ and Australia, taking photos of War Memorials.

The posters each have one of these photos, in full colour, and the collection as a whole features the poems of 22 female writers; 14 from across Australia (3 from NSW, 4 from Tasmania, 4 from Victoria, and one each from Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia) and 8 from New Zealand.

They were destined for exhibition as a touring collection ahead of next year's 100th Anniversary commemoration of WWI, and Graeme has successfully done this in Tasmania. However, the plan hasn't come to fruition in New Zealand. We already have the posters, unframed, and are hoping they can be shared around the country, perhaps in RSAs, libraries and Community Centres.

You can see the posters at: <http://www.ozzywriters.com/index.php/exhibitions/behind-every-war-there-are-good-women-gallery> You can also learn more there about the '100 Years from Gallipoli Poetry Project'.

First preference, of course, is for the posters to be shown as a collection, but failing that, I'm willing to send them individually to anyone who can find a way to share them. Please contact me at: info@poetrysociety.org.nz

WINDRIFT HAIKU ANTHOLOGY: PRICES FURTHER REDUCED

Wellington's Windrift Haiku Group is pleased to announce a further reduction in the price of *the taste of nashi: NEW ZEALAND HAIKU* (Windrift Haiku Group 2008: ed. Nola Borrell and Karen P Butterworth). It remains the only comprehensive New Zealand haiku anthology published since *The Second New Zealand Haiku Anthology* ed Cyril Childs (NZ Poetry Society 1998).

the taste of nashi, published with generous assistance from the Jeanette Stace Estate and the Hutt Minoh Friendship House Trust, is an offset-printed real book with handsome design and good-to-handle durable paper. Its contents, chosen by a panel of master New Zealand haiku poets, form both a record of, and an introduction to, the uniquely New Zealand practice of this ancient poetic art. Windrift hopes it will inspire more New Zealanders to sample, read, and create, haiku.

Prices (\$NZ):

- Anthology poets and NZPS members – direct sales: \$8
- Anthology poets and NZPS members – posted: \$12
- Non-members – direct sales: \$10; – posted: \$15
- Overseas, library, school and trade purchases negotiable.

Order by contacting: Nola Borrell: nolaborrell@xtra.co.nz ph. 04 586 7287 or Karen Butterworth: karenpetbut@xtra.co.nz ph. 06 364 5810

BELLAMYS AT FIVE, DUNEDIN

Open 12-5 daily until 22 September, at Bellamys Gallery, Macandrew Bay, Dunedin. The exhibition is a celebration of the fifth birthday and 20th edition of *Poems in the Waiting Room*.

Associated with the exhibition:

Four Poets - Brian Turner, David Eggleton, Emma Neale and Kay McKenzie Cooke are reading at Bellamys Gallery on **Sunday 15 September from 1.30 -3pm.**

plus:

Questions and Artists - Janet de Wagt will be chatting to Pauline Bellamy, Claire Beynon, Pamela Brown, Laura Gregory, Peter Gregory, Kate Fitzharris, Ella Knapton, Cathy Shemansky and Lew Walsh about their exhibition work, the poem they chose to interpret and more ... at Bellamys Gallery on **Sunday 22 September from 1.30-3pm.**

Seats are limited for these two events so you need to book in advance: waitingroompoems@gmail.com Entry is by koha/donation to *Poems in the Waiting Room*.

"We'll also have for sale, *the art of poetry* - a booklet featuring all the artworks alongside their inspirational poems." *Ruth Arnison.*



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Results of our International Poetry Competition 2013

Congratulations to all our winners and place getters. Owen Bullock has made a start on the annual anthology, to be titled *Given an ordinary stone*, and all entries not selected may now be submitted elsewhere. The report of the Open Section judge Vincent O'Sullivan follows the list.

OPEN SECTION (Judge: Vincent O'Sullivan)

1st: Carolyn McCurdie, Dunedin: 'Making Up the Spare Beds for the Brothers Grimm'; 2nd: Laurice Gilbert, Wellington: 'Interview with an assassin'; 3rd: Greg Bartlett, Wellington: 'Postcards'.

Highly Commended - John O'Connor, Christchurch: 'Lollipops', 'Jungle: A cryptic enigma', and 'The brief Value of Life'; Bonnie Joy Etherington, Palmerston North: 'That Summer'; Tim Roberts, Paraparaumu: 'Two'; Sandi Sartorelli, Upper Hutt: 'immerse me'; Amanda Hunt, Rotorua: 'Three dozen excuses for touching'; Catherine Moxham, Palmerston North: 'bright'.

Commended – Greg Bartlett, Wellington: 'In Paris I shaved my head'; Rob King, Wellington: 'Waiting for Birds'; Natasha Dennerstein, Wellington: 'Breathing in petrol'; Johanna Aitchison, Palmerston North: 'Psychotherapy'; Margaret Vos, UK: 'Scene from a boat'; Wes Lee, Wellington: 'Fortune'; Cherry Hill, Christchurch: 'A way with words'; Carolyn McCurdie, Dunedin: 'The Best Thing Since ...'; Suzanne Frearson, Auckland: 'Teller of Stories'.

HAIKU SECTION (Judge: Nola Borrell)

1st Prize, and Winner of the Jeanette Stace Memorial Award: Ernest J Berry, Blenheim: 'scimitar moon'; 2nd Prize: Sandra Simpson, Tauranga: 'drought year'; 3rd Prize: Katherine Raine, Wyndham: 'from my hand'; 4th Prize: Earl R. Keener, USA: 'dawn light'; 5th Prize: Kirsten Cliff, Matamata: 'drifting evensong'.

Highly Commended – John O'Connor, Christchurch: '6.40 a.m.' and 'outdoor caff -'; Marion Moxham, Palmerston North: 'mound', 'snow on a sheep's back', and 'blue sky before dawn'; Margaret Beverland, Katikati: 'Kaimai mist'; Katherine Raine, Wyndham: 'prison skin-heads' and 'rising wind'.

Commended – Scott Mason, USA: 'a ladybug'; John O'Connor, Christchurch: 'rock climbing'; Ernest J Berry, Blenheim: 'trackless desert'; Thomas Powell, UK: 'dandelions'; André Surridge, Hamilton: 'sharing the hilltop'; Amitava Dasgupta, USA: 'job interview'; Kirsten Cliff, Matamata: 'full morning moon'; Cynthia Rowe, Australia: 'kayaking'; Seren Fargo, USA: 'eviction papers'; Sandra Simpson, Tauranga: 'autumn wind'; Barbara Strang, Christchurch: 'bird survey'.

OPEN JUNIOR SECTION (Judge: Frankie McMillan)

Overall Winner: Pratibha Singh, Wanganui: 'waiting for the sun'; Runner-Up, Secondary: Gemma Bell, Auckland: 'caught'; Runner-Up, Primary/Intermediate: Phoebe Young, Wanaka: 'Ideas Blossom'.

Highly Commended – Pratibha Singh, Wanganui: 'beautiful boy'; Eva Tinga, Wellington: 'The Tabby and the Fly'; Juliet McLachlan, Christchurch: 'Monet's wedding'; Amelia Kendall, Auckland: 'Daydream'; Sophie van Waardenberg, Auckland: 'How to Drink a Sunny Day', 'to the children of teachers', and 'time difference'.

Commended – Haro Lee, Auckland: 'In Bed'; Megan Kivell, Christchurch: 'As Lions Are Not'; Zoe Little, Auckland: 'Vegas'; Callia Newnham, Auckland: 'Music of Home'; Juliet McLachlan, Christchurch: 'I would walk through Christmas in Poland'; Sophie Gardiner, Auckland: 'Disconnect'; Anna Doak, Christchurch: 'anger for an angel'; Lilith Sangrouber, Palmerston North: 'praying mantis'.

HAIKU JUNIOR SECTION (Judge: Kirsten Cliff)

1st Prize, Secondary, and Winner of the Jeanette Stace Memorial Award: Harry Frentz, Tauranga: 'sand dune'; 2nd Prize Secondary: Hannah Hudson, Christchurch: 'in shallow water'; 3rd Prize, Secondary: Ruby Murray, Christchurch: 'after the storm'; 1st Prize, Primary/Intermediate: Philipp Hoeper, Christchurch: 'rainfall'; 2nd Prize, Primary/Intermediate: Ema Xharra, Auckland: 'sitting on the edge'; 3rd Prize, Primary/Intermediate: Anna Doak, Christchurch: 'midnight'.

Highly Commended – Harry Frentz, Tauranga: 'a ladybird's spots' and 'rain in his cough'; Zoe Smith, Christchurch: 'mother's day'; Gabby Dodd-Terrell, Christchurch: 'anzac sunset'; Chloe Harrington, Christchurch: 'poppy'.

Commended – Haro Lee, Auckland: 'the charcoal on your canvas'; Jake Parsons, Christchurch: 'a church steeple'; Gabby Dodd-Terrell, Christchurch: 'autumn wind'; Nathan Penrose, Christchurch: 'shadowed moon'; Meg Longley, Christchurch: 'full moon'; Moe Gath, Christchurch: 'foggy morning'; Ashwini Raazesh, Christchurch: 'windy morning'; Kane Xie, Christchurch: 'midnight'; Isaac Heaps, Christchurch: 'I open my violin case'; Stella Hoeper, Christchurch: 'I scream'.

Open Section Judge's Report

In approaching what at first seems an Everest of poetry, with more than six hundred pages to be scaled and assessed, one soon realises the judge too is under scrutiny, quite as much as those he sets out to rank as fairly as he can. It can hardly be otherwise. These hundreds of writers are faced with one's own taste, one's own prejudices even.

There are some poems one simply is not going to find appealing - poems, say, that exclaim too loudly

about nature, or about being in love, in ways that have been rather conventional for a long time; poems that assume you will be interested simply because someone is confiding in you, irrespective of how that confiding is done; poems drawing on a language that is never heard outside what the writer thinks verse calls for, as if the reader is opening a book a hundred or more years old. Poems after all arise from lived experience, and they have to convince of that.

Or there are those pages which assume that so long as lines are broken up and arranged in a way that obviously isn't prose, then this must be poetry. Not that a judge questions the sincerity of what a poem attempts. But poetry, like the proverbial road to hell, can be paved with good intentions.

I know it's a big generalisation, but how important it is to keep in mind as we write a poem, that its language and form has to earn the reader's interest, quite apart from the fact that it may be emotionally fulfilling to write. The excitement has to be there in the lines you have crafted, which by the time the poem is read, are going to be a long way from where or why they began. After all, readers can't experience what the writer does.

What they do respond to is the effectiveness of how you talk about it in writing that does not record so much as make something quite new that must stand by itself - which means how you put things to engage us, and the images you select, and the range and variety and freshness of the words you use. Just how various that can be, poem after poem made clear in so many of these entries.

There are many ways to define good poetry, but mostly they come down to something like this - it gives us a delight and charge that can only come from language itself, and how it is arranged. In however modest a way, a successful poem gives you something that is not quite expected, and that you have not heard said quite like that before. And there is this too about poetry, which at times we too easily forget: even the most serious of poems, poems brimming with desire or religious praise or anger or regret, are also something of a game, in the sense that they are written simply because we choose to, that we find it satisfying to find patterns and expressions that please us, with no-one compelling us to do so. However much poetry may instruct and delight, as an old Roman saying puts it, there is no convincing argument to think poetry isn't also fun.

What came home to me time and again as I read these poems, as well as that variety I've just alluded to, is how there is no subject which is intrinsically 'poetic', or 'unpoetic'. Anything we experience or that interests us can stake its claim. And so you'll find in my commended lists that there are poems I admired for their stark grimness, because they were 'made' in that sense all satisfying poetry is - they tell us something in ways that may not have occurred to us, and that hold our interest, even if the subject, if presented without that skill, may simply have disturbed.

But there are poems here too of frank celebration, like the simple act of making bread, say, linking us in an endless human chain. There are poems whose effect depends principally on wit, or on how to turn a moment of pathos so the commonplace shines out as unique. Among the Highly Commended there is a simple list declaring an entire life, and another poem whose unevenness is turned by a fine set of lines on the moon, among the hardest things surely to write of freshly. There are love poems that side-step cliché and come at us with compelling force, and poems that succeed because they move what may seem a traditional subject in slightly unexpected ways.

And so to the final three poems. What I admired in 'Postcards' was its putting so neatly that experience many travellers have had yet are wary of speaking of, that sense of intense loneliness that may be part of overseas travel. Here are place-names that usually carry the frisson of being in famous places, but the 'magic' is drained from them by the distance they insist on from the people, the places, that more deeply matter to us. The weighting of the lines, the situation, is tonally spot on. The concluding lines of each of the two stanzas are tellingly direct about that unlikely topic, disappointment.

I liked the similarly hard-edge, hard-eyed 'Interview with an assassin', and the way its question and answer format rocked our assumptions about what, at first mention, we might quickly label disturbing. It reminds us that what we are dealing with, in Hannah Arendt's famous phrase, is 'the banality of evil', the fact that the perpetrator can be so close to what we might say about ourselves. The conventions of interviewing are deftly turned on their head, and the last line, which in fact is not a line at all, shifts the burden back from the questioned to the questioner. And how impressively controlled the precise language is - no melodramatics, no stage effects of the kind that evil so easily carries with it, but low-key clear-thinking with its own troubling turns, its witty undermining of what we expect. It is a poem as contemporary and unsettling as what we watch so often on TV News, but with a chilling thrust of its own.

Then what a leap we make, to the brilliant 'Making up the Spare Beds for the Brothers Grimm'. It tells a story we may have thought ourselves at ease with in its early stanzas, but this impression is so adroitly undermined by the poem's end. The dark uneasiness of Grimms' so-called fairy stories seeps into the telling, the foreboding, the details lifted from the tales themselves, the stanzas infused with their own casually ambiguous sense of dread. The rhythmical finesse of the lines I found stunning, the sheer force of a long poem so beautifully controlled.

She brings extra blankets. Snow is forecast for later.
This is the room where weeping lives in the
darkness,
like a child, soft, surreptitious. If the weather
keeps its word the sound will be gathered in by
the moans of the midnight wind. But the light
in the hallway - she could leave it switched on.

Only a very good poet writes lines as effectively as that.

Or so direct and elusive at the same time. In one sense, everything is so in place. Shift focus a little, everything carries threat. And that sense of apparent domestic order - there are cracks, stains, puzzles, that don't allow us to believe a word of it, even as we cannot rationally say why. All we are sure of is where the poem entirely directs us - the world is not as we see it, even when it is.

Vincent O'Sullivan, July 2013

The remaining judges' reports can be found at: <http://www.poetrysociety.org.nz/2013competitionresults>



Regional Report

WINDRIFT, JUNE, 2013

Penny Pruden

Five members defied weather forecasts and joined Bevan Greenslade at his welcoming home, where we could watch the evening storm! Open section contributions began with one by Nola. The Group agreed it was perfect as it stood.

A haiku from Bevan needed to be read aloud to appreciate the alliteration. At the suggestion that there was "more than one haiku there", Bevan protested: "I was expressing one!"

waxeye at late fig
soft twitter, beak full
a leaf and some seeds fall

On the second theme of 'explosions', a beautiful haiku by Kerry Popplewell about the night sky was discussed at length. It was generally agreed that the third line was better omitted, leaving:

in the night sky
a thousand flowers
explode

A sample with its own interpretation of an explosion was:

midwinter
she holds her phone receiver
to the storm

Nola Borrell

Different reactions and emotions emerged for the third theme - reticence, shyness - again involving children, and older adults' observations of different genders. In this case, a teenage girl was observed,

avoiding looking
noticing his everything
the school bus arrives

Bevan Greenslade

Caution was suggested in the non-human world with:

above the bird-seed
a single sparrow
hovers

Kerry Popplewell

And, saying far more about conditions in a 'cleared forest' than just the reaction of a hare:

cleared forest
a hare dives
into montbretia

Nola Borrell

The following corresponding writer was immediately recognised for his usual touch of mischief!

chaos i google god 4 a clue

Ernest J. Berry

An experience familiar to many prompted:

walking in a dream
forced a stranger to dodge me
- too confused to say sorry

John Ross

With such a clear meaning, it was felt that this could be expressed in fewer words.

Other pieces which members found pleasing were:
last leaf
try not to blink
it's gone

Lynn Frances

fragile flowers
challenge
stark roadsides

Jenny Pyatt

And what was agreed was the most immediate and vivid picture of John's contributions:

winter afternoon
on my lawn a small hedgehog
investigating

John Ross

During the afternoon Harumi Hasegawa was asked about the five-line tanka style, and about the use of English vocabulary. As a rare member with Japanese as her first language, who at times is puzzled by the excess of words in English efforts, Harumi explained that a whole concept could be expressed in one Japanese word, making the tanka or haiku more succinct.

"In Japanese, one word could explain several ingredients, or layers, in English. 'Sketching' is important," said Harumi. A reminder to ponder as we went on our way home.

Matariki Poetry Competition

The New Zealand Poetry Society in association with Printable Reality recently celebrated Matariki with a special competition, judged by Laurice Gilbert (NZPS) and Gail Romano (PR). The theme was 'New Dialogues and New Beginnings'. Here are the winning poems.

First Prize:

Three Firsts

One

He takes the baby out. Alone on the back seat for the first time his son begins to cry. Thrusts his legs out straight and throws his arms wide - like a panic-stricken starfish. A scarlet flush rises with his screams. White knuckles lock onto the steering wheel. It seems further than one kilometre. He would kill for a cigarette. It's been six weeks since he quit. Finally he stops, kneels, leans into the anxious silence as their eyes meet.

Two

He arrives with the baby. Alone in the garden she is planning the first section of a walk - Te Araroa: The Long Trail - 3,000 kilometres from Cape Reinga to Bluff. She kneels, gathers up her grandson, folds him in a familiar fit. She sways and sings to him - just as she had with his father. His eyes sink to slits that widen in warning if she stops, or shifts, their shared rhythm. Finally, with a long sigh, he flops like a boneless jellyfish. Sleeps.

Three

He takes the baby out. Alone, for the first time since their son's birth six weeks before, she stands in the silence. Meanders to the garden. Meditates on the basil. Kneels into it. Inhales it. Crushes it. Chews it. Gathers it all. The sun slants onto the bench as she mixes the pesto's ingredients: fresh basil leaves, grated Romano cheese, extra-virgin olive oil, pine-nuts, garlic cloves and seasoning. As her milk comes in smells rise with her anxiety.

Maris O'Rourke, Auckland

Second Prize:

'hey Delilah, what's happening in New York City?'

social media from Bettendorf.
'wish I knew,
been thinking about those staggered streets
neon plunges,
my head rocked
watching yellow taxi cabs roll;
thoughts steamed in MOMA's pressure colour.
instead I'm holed up
where the earth's edge teeters
between rain storms and earthquakes,

raw flood days
editing wishes into fiction
shaping characters from starlight.
living half my life in songs.'
didn't mention the homeless
waving a sock all day,
crouched by his piece of iron fence
Lower East Side hunker of blacks;
or the young Irish escapee from pole-danceland
his laugh close to wounded,
the religious girl who sold their sex life to
magazines.
saved silences for home;
air rushes through the open window.
found your sharp hints cut the paper
into a snowflake,
how cool our pretty ideas.
the spin of holiday kisses,
this wish drift of tapping a seance.

Raewyn Alexander, Auckland

Third Prize:

That Night

That night you were undying
grabbing for breath, hooked
to metal and tube
all that time where was I?
Being domestic, tending pots,
with your drama
playing out elsewhere.

Unaware, just an ordinary
non-crisis night with stars and
moon and wind
like all the other nights.
Forgive me.

And was there a tunnel and how
could I have
not been at the other end
tight on the tug rope pulling
and pulling and pulling
like the Amazon
I am not? But I would've
I would've I would've
had I been there to witness your
fighting to live or even unlive.

But I, I would have been
the one of the two of us
to make that decision,
dug in hard, yanked, sworn,
wrenched every bone in my body,
sweated, with my hands bleeding
and raw not hands to stroke
and soothe you. They had
other, harder things to do.

Haul you roughly
back to a world
where you had other,
harder things to do.

Gill Ward, Kapiti

Commended (in no particular order):

Like eels

*giz a look nan
yeah nan, nan show eh?*

slitherin' round my jandles
all shiny, flapping in out under me
bloody tiring eh

Marney in the city banging on
chaos theory butterfly effects
shit eh - like he would know!
should get his hairy arse back
back here to his kids
then he'd know chaos theory eh!

arrch! git outta here!

aeeee
They'll all bugger off soon enough.

Come home babies.
Catch kai from Wairere
crouch on your river of stones

-see the eels-
don't go

Carol Maxwell

doin it in the dark

if god existed
and was indeed christian
so the story goes
first he turned on the sun
in his workshop
then started his work
had a moment of singular genius
that created this world
we move through
with violent macho
cocksure certainty

but
if i was to think on it
taking Everything into consideration
i'd prefer
to tell the story thusly:
first they did some work
had the wānana
with the silvered dark
of a waxing moon
then on the last day
flicked the switch
that separates light out of the dark
realities out of potential
and surveyed the results

such a story
would explain
to my satisfaction
at least
much about the topsing turving
fucked up crazy beautiful world
we move through mystified
as fleeting as
snow at sea level

awaiting the first rays
of the sun

Kani Te Manukura

Don't write the kind of poetry you think people want to publish. Write the kind of poetry you want to read.

Mark Haddon

Cool

Okay so everyday
She reads about painting
Or photography
She practices a lot, too.
It's cool.

And weekly - usually on a Sunday - she will update
her music
What's new?
New is cool.

She's current with events.

Likes material things.
ooooooooooh clothes.
ooooooooooooooooooh shoes.

She doesn't have a lot of cash.
She's a forager.
Lives off cheap white wine.

Yeah she's on Pinterest.
She blogs.

Sold a painting, once.
But never a poem [sad face]

She knows it's not cool to be in love
or happy
But he's God's gift to her
and pretty hip himself.

He says, what's new?
She says, I want us to buy a kitchen tap together.
He says, that's cool.
She thinks,
It's a beginning.

Katie Kenny



Congratulations

Aalix Roake won an Honourable Mention in the Kloster Ivanic Haiku Contest in English, had a poem shortlisted for the SFPA Dwarf Stars prize and then published in *Star*Line*, has twice had work in *Chrysanthemum*, and has appeared in *Blackmail Press*, *Kokako*, and *one hundred gourds*. Upcoming is more work in *Kokako*, and in *One Hundred Tanka by One Hundred Poets*, The World Haiku Association: *A Vast Sky* and NZPS anthology 2013, *Given an ordinary stone*.

haikai café

Your bite-sized serving of haiku, senryū, tanka and haibun

Kirsten Cliff

relapsing . . .
I wrap my father's
jacket around me

~ Haiku by Anne Curran

against the glass
a small wet frog
crouching
I hold it
in my cupped hands

~ Tanka by Maureen Sudlow

lace edged
a bridal veil left behind
the sea's ebb

~ Haiku by Debbie Williams

Submissions: Please send your best three unpublished haiku, senryū, tanka and/or short haibun for consideration to kirsten.cliff@gmail.com with 'HAIKAI CAFE' in the subject line.



Reviews

The blue coat Elizabeth Smither (Auckland University Press, 2013) ISBN 978 186940 736 0 NZ\$24.99 p/b

Mary Cresswell

These poems are about clothing – about gardens – about music – about people dealing with major events in their lives. They are like netsuke – carefully carved, ostensibly domestic. But what seems small and domestic can take up the same amount of space as something bigger.

At the edge of the herbaceous border
into which you disappear, the transistor sends,

crackling a little, a Bach Brandenburg
or some Mahler lieder. ...

(‘Virginia: gardening with transistor’)

And again a part stands in for a whole which we have to guess at:

Why put such work by rush- or candlelight
into tucks and pleats and slits that open like flowers
when the important shoulders inside fall to dust?

...

Inside, the shoulders stiffen a little, then relax.

(‘Engageantes = detachable sleeves’)

In the title poem, ‘The blue coat’ covers and – as a good coat should – protects the past:

Too early. I stand in my long blue winter coat
a little distance from the publisher’s office
which is a converted corner shop.

Half an hour to stand and stamp my feet
rub my gloved hands together, wonder
which look I shall wear: ...

There is a lifetime of clothes here:

A grey sky like a governess
in a calf-length coat
and a skirt longer than that.

(‘Governess sky’)

and ‘The bra fitting’ – wedding veils – ‘The birth dressing gown’ – a dress for leaving the hospital – ‘Ruby’s heirloom dress’:

... the sleeves gathered in

with ribbons and rosebuds, the floating hem as if
great-great-grandmother was sailing around the world
stopping at islands with fruit and palm trees
and a soft sea with waves the way the hem falls.

There are so many parts making up the whole – the garden, the clothes, the music. And the whole is what? – It’s a lovingly carved collection of poems from a poet who is putting her wardrobe in order, leaving us with

A scent that blows from bones picked clean
in the subsiding, unsettling earth
where walls of clay and stone
with chiselled writing do their work

(‘Tazetta daffodils in midwinter’)

Schisms Vaughan Rapatahana (Stonethrow Poetry, Nevada, 2012) available via Amazon ISBN 9781300886990

James Norcliffe

Somewhere in the middle of this large format and generously proportioned book, Vaughan Rapatahana includes ‘Surely’, one of a number of self-referential poems giving his views on the materia poetica and what a good poem should do:

surely
good poetry is
an unsolved murder

While this line is as arresting as many others scattered throughout the book, we are a little relieved when reading on to find that it is the murder mystery the poet is referring to and that, later still, in the clinch line, the poet “just wants to be the best killer in town”.

This is a pretty good measure of both Vaughan Rapatahana’s approach and his ambition. He comes across in the poems as a larger than life character, not suffering fools gladly, admonishing and castigating where necessary on “death & love & lust & war” albeit leaving the pulpit from time to time to engage more tenderly in the nave.

The book’s A4 dimensions give Rapatahana the space to free up his lines, to let them range over the page in structured abandon. The book contains poems not included in recent volumes – the poet has been nothing if not prolific recently – and are in the characteristic style used in his Proverse and Kilmog Press collections. The collection under review comes from Lazarus Media, a US publisher, and they have chosen to turn the phrase ‘slim volume’ on its head and have also allowed the poet full rein to his stylistic tics and tricks of graphonics: angled words, vertical words, split words, fonts of various sizes and occasional styles.

The volume’s use of colour and visuals has also added to the poet’s repertoire and Rapatahana exploits this quite often and colour itself and coloured illustration are not mere adjuncts to the poems but become part of them. Rapatahana gives us a hint of what e. e. cummings might have attempted had the full range of the modern computer been available to him.

All this is and is intended to be unsettling to the reader. Part of Rapatahana’s intention is often to disconcert his audience, to cause them to question their assumptions and attitudes, not merely their notions of what poetry should look and sound like, but well beyond poetry into assumptions about race, culture, politics and language.

There are few New Zealand / Aotearoa poets who write polemical verse with such gusto. Vaughan Rapatahana does not so much wear his heart on his sleeve as plaster it over your face and, while it is often uncomfortable, such uncompromising in-your-face poetry is challenging and invigorating. In this sense, too, Rapatahana is adopting his poet as killer mode.

It is the poem ‘surely’’s other implication that poetry should be an unsolved murder, “keeping you awake at night” and “making your sweat as you read each line” that is interesting in terms of the book. Rapatahana criticises those other poems that “leave far too many clues”. It suggests that in his ars poetica the poem should be an elusive beast, withholding easy solution, and that the best poem is written by the best killer, that is, the slippery one, the one who cannot be identified, the one who gets away with it.

This suggests mystery and ambiguity, and the need to “queue in advance” to get a handle on what is going on. The fact is, however, that many of the pieces in *Schisms* are plain speaking, despite their idiosyncratic layout: poems

of place, of people, of observation. These are for the most part vivid and appealing, oils rather than watercolour. Similarly, the messages in the more overtly political poems are appropriately unmixed. These are the poems that in another *materia poetica* piece 'poem should' are designed to "...seize YOU / roughly... shake you / like / a / Christchurch / earthquake..."

These poems are, for the most part, too red-blooded for the niceties of ambiguity and irony. The intensity of feeling, of mystery perhaps, does inform some of the later poems where the poet laments the loss of his son, treats his parents with candour, and his own spiritual situation with open eyes. It is in these poems that the schisms of the title, the dissociations, are more clearly explored, and these more nuanced poems more than hint towards a poet who could yet become the best killer in town.



Competitions and Submissions

The Pre-Raphaelite Society Poetry Prize (UK) Closing Date: 10 September Entry Fee: £2. First Prize: £50 and publication in the *Review* of the Pre-Raphaelite Society. Poems entered may be up to 100 lines in length, and must relate to the Pre-Raphaelites, their successors, and their work - for example, inspired by their paintings, poetry or lives. Poems must be accompanied by a brief (100 word) explanation of the poem's connection to the Pre-Raphaelites and their work. Poems must be submitted with a cover sheet which includes the entrant's name, address and email address, and the title of the poem. Poems must also be accompanied by an entry fee payable by cheque or postal order to 'The Pre Raphaelite Society'. Only one entry per person. Please send entries to the Editor, Serena Trowbridge, 21 Shaw Lane, Stoke Prior, Worcestershire, B60 4DP, England.

The Salopian Poetry Society's Open Poetry Competition (UK) Closing Date: 12 September Entry Fee: £3 each, 4 poems for £10, 6 poems for £15. First Prize £200 - Second prize £100 - Third prize £50. Six consolation prizes of £25, and all 9 winners will receive a copy of the Winter 2013 issue of *Salopeot*, which will contain all nine winning poems. No limit to number of entries. Entries unaccompanied by an entry form will be accepted provided the rules are adhered to. Max 40 lines. For further details on rules and entry see: <http://www.thesalopianpoetrysociety.webeden.co.uk/#>

Princemere Poetry Contest (USA) Deadline: 14 September Literary journal from Gordon College in Wenham, MA offers prize for unpublished poems. No fee. Online entries accepted. Prize: \$300. Gordon College is a nondenominational Christian school in Wenham, MA. Guidelines at: <http://www.princemere.com>

Live Canon International Poetry Competition (UK) Closing Date: 21 September Entry Fee: £4.00 per entry, £3 for £10. For a poem of any length, in the English language, on any topic. 20 Shortlisted poems will be published in an anthology and performed by the Live Canon ensemble at a prize giving event in November 2013 at The Greenwich Theatre. The overall winner will receive £1000. There is no limit to the number of entries one person may send. More details here: <http://www.livecanon.com/Competition.htm>

The Basil Bunting Poetry Award (UK) Closing Date: 30 September Entry Fee: £8 for one poem, up to 10 poems, see pricing on website. Judge: Andrew Motion. First Prize £1000 Second Prize £500 Third Prize £250. Up to three commendations of £50 each. Enter online at: http://basilbuntingaward.co.uk/w13/?page_id=32

Carpe Articulum - call for submissions (USA) Deadline: 30 September Submit your work online at: <http://www.carpearticulum.com/submissions/>

Cinnamon Single Poem Competition (UK) Closing Date: 30 September Entry Fee: £4 per poem or £10 for 3 poems. Prizes: £1,000, £250 & £50 + publication. Judge: Philip Gross. Website: www.cinnamonpress.com/competitions/

Flash 500 Humour Verse Competition (UK) Closing date: 30 September. Line length: Up to 32 lines. Entry fees: £3 for the first poem, then £2.50 for each poem thereafter. Prizes will be awarded as follows: First: £150 plus publication; Second: £100; Third: £50. The results will be announced within six weeks of the closing date and the three winning entries will be published on the website: http://www.flash500.com/index_files/humourverse.html

Poetry Kit Summer Poetry Competition (UK) Deadline: 30 September. Entries received after the deadline will be discarded. Poems on the theme of 'stories' (this can be broadly interpreted). There are no style or length restrictions, but it should be stressed that a short poem is just as likely to be selected as a longer one. All shortlisted poems will be published as a 'Poem of the Week' on the PK Blog and the top five will be invited to be part of our CITN Featured Poet series. Online entry only, by email to: comp@poetrykit.org after an appropriate fee is paid via PayPal to the account of info@poetrykit.org First prize is £100 and the winning poem plus those selected for special commendation will be published at the Poetry Kit website. Entry fees: 1 poem £3.50; 3 Poems £8.00; 5 poems £10. For more details: <http://www.poetrykit.org/comp2013.htm>

Rialto Magazine - Nature Poetry Competition (UK) Closing Date: 30 September Competition is run in partnership with the RSPB, and will be judged by poet and broadcaster Ruth Padel. The poetry magazine and Europe's largest conservation charity are encouraging poets to submit work in response to the competition theme, 'Nature

Poetry'. Prizes: Publication in *The Rialto*, 1st Prize £1000, 2nd Prize £400, 3rd Prize a place on a creative writing course at Ty Newydd in 2014 (worth £540). Entry Fee: £6 for the first poem and £3 for each subsequent poem. For rules and to enter visit: www.therialto.co.uk

Sentinel Literary Quarterly Poetry Competition (UK)

Closing Date: 30th September. For original, previously unpublished poems in English language, on any subject, in any style, up to 50 lines long. Poets of all nationalities, age and gender living in any part of the world are eligible to enter. Prizes: £150 (1st), £75 (2nd), £50 (3rd), £10 x 3 (High Commendation) + publication in *Sentinel Literary Quarterly* magazine. Fees: £4/1, £7/2, £9/3, £11/4, £12/5, £16/7 and £22/10 poems. Enter online at: <http://sentinelquarterly.com/competitions/poetry/>

Tongues & Grooves 10th Anniversary Poetry

Competition (UK) Closing Date: 30 September Prizes: £250, £125, £75. Entry Fee: £3 or £5 for 2 or £10 for 5. Website: www.tongues-and-grooves.org.uk/

Troubadour International Poetry Prize (UK) Closing

Date: 21 October Entry Fee: £5/ 6 euros/ 8 dollars per poem. Prizes: 1st £2,500, 2nd £500, 3rd £250, 20 prizes of £20 each - plus a spring 2014 coffee-house-poetry season-ticket, a prize-winners' coffee-house poetry reading with Deryn Rees-Jones & George Szirtes for prize-winning poets. Up to 45 lines. See full entry details at www.coffeehousepoetry.org/prizes/

Ariadne's Thread Poetry Prize (UK) Closing Date:

31 October Entry Fee: £3 each. Prize: GBP300 for the winner, a yearly subscription for 3 high commendations. The winning poem and the 3 commendations will be published in *Ariadne's Thread* issue 9; the shortlisted poems will be published either in the same issue or afterwards. Judge: Armando Halpern, the editor of *Ariadne's Thread*. The winner, commendations and shortlisted authors will be informed by email, in December, of the judge decisions. Enter online: <http://www.ariadnethread.net/index.php/ariadne-s-thread-poetry-prize>

National Poetry Competition (UK) Closing Date: 31

October Entry Fee: £6 for first entry, £3.50 for subsequent entries. Prizes: First: £5000, Second: £2000, Third: £1000, Seven Commendations: £100. The top three winning poems will be published in *Poetry Review*. The winner is also invited to read at the Ledbury Poetry Festival in July 2014. Up to 150 entrants will also be offered a discount on selected activities from the Poetry School. Winning and commended poems will be published on the Poetry Society website when the competition prizes are announced in spring 2014. Judges: The judges of the 2013 National Poetry Competition are Julia Copus, Matthew Sweeney and Jane Yeh. The National Poetry Competition is an award for individual poems that are previously unpublished. Enter online: <http://www.poetrysociety.org.uk/content/competitions/npc/>

Sunken Garden Poetry Prize (USA) Closes: 31 October

(postmark or online submission-date) The Sunken Garden Poetry Prize is a prestigious poetry prize for adult writers. Final judge: Mark Doty. The winner receives a \$1,000 cash prize, an introductory reading at the Sunken Garden Poetry Festival, and publication of a chapbook by Tupelo Press. Manuscripts are judged anonymously and all finalists will be considered for publication. Guidelines at: <http://www.tupelopress.org/sunkengarden.php>

NorthWrite2013: Collaboration Competition. Runs: 6 September to 15 November.

The Northland Branch of the NZ Society of Authors is holding an online writing festival so all NZ writers can participate. They will: interview authors of successful collaborative projects from NZ, and from around the world; review books written collaboratively; and also take a look at some online collaborative work. Interspersed with this will be ideas on how to produce a piece of work written by two or more people. "While we want this to be fun, we are not talking about party games, and the ultimate aim is a well-honed story from the pens of numerous participants." The festival will culminate with a collaborative competition. Here are the details so you can start planning: Judges are Michelle Elvy and **Tim Jones** and there is a minimum prize pool of \$500. Entry is \$20 per entry, which is \$10 per person as each entry must be a collaboration between two people. The competition is open to all New Zealanders so start thinking about who you would like to work with and get collaborating. Entries can be in story or poem form, or a combination of the two:

- Story: Either one story (maximum 750 words) written collaboratively, or two stories (total word count not to exceed 750 words) where one has been written as a response to the other.
- Poem: Either one poem written collaboratively (maximum of 60 lines) or two poems (total number of lines not to exceed 60) where one has been written as a response to the other.
- Combination: One poem (maximum 30 lines) and one story (maximum 325 words) where one has been written in response to the other.

Examples will be posted online so you can get a feel for what is meant. Visit online and join the festival at: www.northwrite.co.nz

i-SHOT Pamphlet Award (UK) Deadline: 18 November

Submissions are invited for the 2014 iOTA SHOT Pamphlet Awards for Short Poetry Pamphlets. * Up to three overall winners * Publication by Templar Poetry in quality pamphlet format * Live launch events, including the Derwent Poetry Festival * Option to submit a full collection * Option to record and transmit your poetry online **Full guidelines & online entry at: <http://templarpoe.com/pages/iota-shot-awards-submission-guidelines-2014> or email for full guidelines: info@templarpoe.com

Other Opportunities

University of Waikato/Creative New Zealand Writer in Residence 2014 Closing date: 27 September School of Arts, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Vacancy number: 330206

The University of Waikato invites applications for the position of Writer in Residence, tenable for twelve months, normally from February. The emolument is currently \$48,500 jointly funded by the University of Waikato and Creative New Zealand, the Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa. The position is open to poets, novelists, short story writers, dramatists, and writers of serious non-fiction. The appointment will be made on the basis of a proven record of publications of high quality.

The Writer is required to live in Hamilton during the tenure of the award. There are no teaching or lecturing duties attached to the award, the sole purpose of which is to give the Writer the freedom to write. It is expected the Writer will participate in the cultural life of the University. The Writer will be able to make use of the Michael King Writers' Retreat in Opoutere for a period of up to two weeks (market value \$3,000).

Enquiries can be made to Dr Sarah Shieff, telephone 07 8562889 extension 8425, email: sshieff@waikato.ac.nz For more information and to apply, visit www.jobs.waikato.ac.nz

Auckland Residencies - Call for Applications; Closing date: Friday 4 October The Michael King Writers' Centre is calling for applications from New Zealand writers for four supported residencies in 2014, with stipends ranging from \$8,000 to \$30,000. The residencies are at the Michael King Writers' Centre which is based in the Signalman's House, a heritage villa on Takarunga Mt Victoria in Devonport.

The residency programme, which is open only to New Zealand writers, aims to support writers and promote the development of high-quality New Zealand writing. Writers who are selected for the 2014 residencies receive free accommodation at the Michael King Writers' Centre in Devonport, use of the writer's studio and a stipend:

Summer Residency, eight weeks from January 6, 2014 (\$8,000)

Autumn Residency, eight weeks from March 10 (\$8,000)

Maori Writer's Residency, eight weeks from May 12 (\$8,000)

The University of Auckland Residency, six months from mid-July 2014 (\$30,000 stipend/salary)

The eight-week residencies are open to emerging or established writers, while the six-month residency offered in partnership with The University of Auckland is for an established author who may benefit from an academic environment. Writers must be working on a specific project in fiction, poetry, drama, creative non-fiction or non-fiction. Writers who live in Auckland are welcome to apply. The

residencies are offered with the assistance of Creative New Zealand.

Application forms and further information are available on the centre's web site: <http://www.writerscentre.org.nz/supported.php> or from the centre. The selections are expected to be made in November.

Twenty-six New Zealand writers have held residencies at the centre since 2005. The current writer in residence is novelist Sarah Laing. Writers who do not qualify for the supported residency programme are able to apply to be a visiting writer on a paying basis.



Mini Competition

I have just discovered a new form I hadn't heard of before: a tritina. It consists of three three-line stanzas with a fixed word-at-the-end-of-the-line scheme - ABC CAB BCA - and a final line (the envoy) using all three words. I'm going to have a go at it myself, and see if it's any easier to write than the more common (here in NZ, anyway) sestina. (It can't be harder, I'm sure.)

You can read an exquisite example where I discovered it, at: <http://www.prolebooks.co.uk/page6.html>

I'll bring something back from Canada to give away as a prize. The deadline is 14th October, and you can send your entries to: editor@poetrysociety.org.nz with 'Tritina' in the subject field, or post to: Editor, 'a fine line', PO Box 5283, Wellington 6145.



President's Report, July 2013

As always, my first job is to thank all those who make the work of the New Zealand Poetry Society possible. We remain grateful to our Patrons, Dame Fiona Kidman and Vincent O'Sullivan for their ongoing support. Heap big thanks is due our Committee members Tim Jones, who is also Vice-President, and Janis Freegard as well as cheque signatories and providers of many cups of tea, Gillian Cameron and Anne Faulkner. The Creative Communities Local Funding Scheme was invaluable in allowing us once more to pay our guest poets the generous reading fee they deserve, along with importing Sue Wootton from Dunedin for a reading. There were no international poets passing through for us to nab this year, but all our local readers were excellent value.

The web development company Signify continues to host our website for free, for which we are most grateful, and the Thistle Inn remains a comfortable and welcoming host venue for our monthly meetings. I thank manager Richard Walsh for his support.

At the end of the 2013 financial year we had 263 members, a reduction of 1 since 2012. Wellington remains the biggest membership area, with Auckland and the Far North in second place, followed by the Canterbury region.

Overseas membership dropped from 21 to 14. It is rare for international members to continue after a one-year look-see, but about half are long-term members, and several of the international subscribers are ex-pats.

Contributors to a *fine line* continue to send in interesting and lively work, and the feedback from readers is generous and satisfying. This is such a successful aspect of our activities that I suspect some readers think it's all we do. It's certainly a useful showcase for New Zealand poets and poetry, thus amply fulfilling the aims of the Society.

Despite no longer receiving any sponsorship, the competition once more made a tiny profit, and I'm ever grateful to the Jeanette Stace Poetry Trust for continuing to offer supplementary prizes in the haiku sections.

Our 2012 editor, Owen Bullock, did an excellent job of the annual anthology, *Building a time machine* (named for the winning poem in the Open Junior Section), and it sold out fast and also made a profit, despite several copies being lost in the post and having to be replaced to purchasers. There were even requests for a reprint (which were declined).

The website continues to tick over, though I wasn't able to update it often as I'd like. If someone out there is willing to find and approach a Grant organisation that can pay for an update of the Content Management System, it would be possible to modernise its appearance. It's long overdue for a makeover, as it still looks the same as it did when I took it over in 2006 – a century in IT terms. Sandra Simpson is still doing a magnificent job of using it to keep the NZ (and international) haiku community well-informed and educated.

This year we were able to run a weekend workshop, thanks to the presence of ex-President Vivienne Plumb as Writer in Residence at Wellington's Randell Cottage. This was really successful, and we had no trouble filling the places available, again with a small profit.

The financial situation continues to deteriorate overall, however, and as usual we ran at a loss. We definitely need someone with the skills of a dedicated fundraiser or sponsorship negotiator, but we're hanging in for now.

Signing up to Xero for our bookkeeping proved a lot more challenging than I anticipated, and I didn't really come to grips with it until well after the end of the financial year. I didn't quite get there in the end. I remind members that we have out-sourced our bookkeeping since the Great Treasurer Fraud of 1999, and while it still makes sense to keep this aspect of running the Society separate from the day-to-day work of the National Coordinator, having the accounts in the Cloud is at least some protection for all of us. It's possible to register more than one administrator, who can then check up on it regularly and keep the Treasurer accountable.

When I added this job to my National Coordinator responsibilities after the departure of our last Treasurer, I arranged for the bank statements to be sent to Gillian Cameron for checking before she passed them on to me for filing. Gillian is also an administrator for the Xero

account, and has managed to pick up the odd mistake I've made in coding. Thank goodness for backup.

Conclusion

This is pretty much the same as last year; ie the Society runs reasonably well as it is set up, though there is little room for growth while it is necessary to employ someone to carry out most of the day-to-day work. Nevertheless, that work is well-supported and appreciated by the members, and I'm truly grateful for all the positive feedback I've received in that role.

I can't finish, however, with no mention of the fact that I have tendered my resignation as National Coordinator, effective after the launch of the 2013 anthology in November. I am still running for President for the 2013-2014 year, as I have the kind of institutional knowledge that makes it a lot easier for new people to move in, and I'm hoping that this AGM will result in a new governance model that fulfils our Constitutional requirements, but maybe costs less and earns more.

Thank you all for your confidence in the committee's work, and may you continue to enjoy the benefits of membership.

Laurice Gilbert, President, July 2013



Only on the Internet

http://www.npr.org/blogs/13.7/2013/07/09/200064088/physics-and-poetry-can-you-handle-the-truth-what-does-it-mean-when-a-poem-is-hard?_r=1 - One man's answer.

<http://www.iol.co.za/scitech/technology/internet/poetry-in-140-characters-1.1548077> - poetry for short attention spans? Or good discipline for learning to be concise? You decide.

<http://www.writersdigest.com/whats-new/wednesday-poetry-prompts-229> - a poetry prompt site I use myself from time to time.

http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/07/25/living-with-cancer-a-quilt-of-poetry/?_r=1 - using poetry to deal with something difficult, a method that would work for other subjects as well.

<http://www.openculture.com/2013/07/bill-murray-reads-poetry-by-billy-collins-cole-porter-and-sarah-manguso.html> - entertaining, and there are links to more readings, including:

<http://www.openculture.com/freeaudiobooks#Poetry>

<http://www.thehollywoodgossip.com/videos/sesame-street-parodies-sons-of-anarchy/> - exactly what it says.

<http://jezebel.com/awesome-texas-abortion-testimony-poetry-if-my-vagina-717474146> - just because I like it (and you can listen to it as well).

Members' Poems

Angel of the East

Light-years have passed since his leaving.
He lands. Was there a message
to deliver? An Annunciation? On the coldest
night of the year, the ambiguous angel crouches
on the roof of the Dresden shoe factory,
awaiting enlightenment, for why he has
come and what is now expected of him
he can no longer remember.

Throbbing wing-beats
dissolve to a mere tinnitus of memory;
celestial sky-dazzle of sun, stars, moon
spill through the back of his eyes.
He sucks snow to refresh his soured breath,
brushes flakes from his eyes like tears.
But in the coming he has cast a fine figure:
burnished halo levitating over golden tresses,
the pearly gloss of his outstretched wings.
And the air rush as he plunges, the joy of it.

Diana Brodie

The Last Time

The last time I saw her, I told her
he was dead. But this morning,
surrounded by wedding guests
in the sun-speckled churchyard, she -
spectacular in her white dress,
fizzing with lace and happiness - forgets,
and wonders why he is not with me,
where he is today.

It seems wrong to spoil the moment,
and despite the tombstones
that surround us, inappropriate to say.
He's travelling, I say, which
perhaps is true. To lie well, you must
first convince yourself. But when I
come home I am not prepared
to find him sitting in his favourite chair,
rocking gently, smoking,
reading Flaubert.

Diana Brodie

Both poems from: *Giotto's Circle* (Poetry Salzburg,
University of Salzburg, Austria. August 2013) slightly
modified.

Wind Shift

I was sleeping
on the sea then I heard
you pause -
pirouette 80°,
NW to SE.

Your song up until midnight
had refrains of tropical climes
but now I catch
a note with splinters,
stretched out all the way
from Antarctica,
a low cool southern timbre
coloured baby blue
with a touch of ice.

Kristina Jensen

Young girl's promise

Westinghouse, Maytag, Chrysler car,
Find a husband, you'll go far,
Jump rope, Jump rope,
Don't trip,
How many children will you have
25 30 45 50 95

Seventeen magazine
Dream dreams in your Maidenform Bra
Handsome boyfriend handsome car
Sparkle sparkle
Floor tiles windowpanes
Benchtop electric range
Stars stars
Gleaming dishes gourmet dinners
Glory glory glory
Ain't the music grand

Lies! Lies!
Second hand fridge
Beat-up car
Crying babies
Three so far
Wrap them up in tissue paper
Put them in the elevator
First floor, Miss
Second floor, Miss
Third floor, Miss
And out, skidoo!

Beverley Teague