

# Federation Magazine

The magazine of The Federation of Worker Writers and Community Publishers £1.50

## FEDfest03 Report and Pictures



**INCLUDES  
BROADSHEET  
NO. 12  
INSIDE!**

### Issue 26 - Summer 2003

- What do we mean?
- Great Labor Arts Exchange
- Liberating the literary world
- DIY Publishing - part 1
- Book Reviews



[www.thefwwcp.org.uk](http://www.thefwwcp.org.uk)

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## The Federation of Worker Writers & Community Publishers

The FWWCP was formed in 1976, and now has a Membership of over sixty-five independently organised writers' workshops, community publishers and organisations in Britain, and around the World. It is an umbrella organisation for those who wish to share their skills and work with their communities.

The FWWCP aims to further working class writing and community publishing, and the Membership share a belief that writing and publishing should be made accessible to all.

The FWWCP publish this Magazine and Broadsheet of writing; we run an annual Festival of Writing; organise training; develop networks; encourage people to express themselves; offer advice, work with other literature organisations; fund-raise to help support people attend events and participate.

To become a Member of the FWWCP contact the address below. Membership is for groups only. Individuals can take a valuable role by becoming a Friend of the Fed, and get involved in all our activities. We would like to hear from you.

By post, write to:

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By e-mail: [thefwwcp@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:thefwwcp@tiscali.co.uk)



# F E D I T O R I A L

From within a group like the Fed it is often difficult to gauge the impact its work has in the wider world. The Fed works mainly through volunteers, and its funding, although increasing, is relatively small compared to that of other arts projects. Often because it is a voluntary activity, what we do seems like a way of life. There are people around who always seem to have been involved in community publishing and working class writing. It is valuable to us, because in this context we have invested a lot of time and energy, but is it important to anyone else?

This issue deals with questions of how our writing and publishing is represented. The testimony of Temple University students, for example, shows that our message is getting across, that there is an important role for the Fed and its members in showing people how they can own and facilitate their own cultural representation, rather than conceding the presentation of community to other interpreters. This is the message conveyed by the homeless Speakout recipes organised by Groundswell, and permeating this issue's Broadsheet.

If we don't Speakout then more credence will be given to the bowdlerised, sexed-up and sentimentalised versions of community life offered in popular culture than to the reality of our own experience. We'd not know ourselves if we saw ourselves coming down Coronation Street or down the market at Walford. Our diversity cannot be confined to a convenient box in the corner of the cultural living room, we have much more to offer, much more to engage with through active participation. You can't maintain a passive recipient role in the Fed. This issue also begins a 3 part DIY publishing guide, which may give some pointers to being active - but which is also intended to offer you a challenge. The guide is not comprehensive - and contributions with other practical experiences are needed.

*Nick Pollard, Editor*

## New Exec Elected



The 2003 AGM elected a new Executive Committee. We have a new Chair and Honorary Secretary, as well as some new members. The Committee consists of: Roy Birch (Stevenage Survivors), Dave Chambers (Newham Writers), Sue Havercroft - Chair (Grimsby Writers), Roy Holland (Survivors Poetry), Fiona Johnstone (Lockerbie Writers), Ashley Jordan - Hon Secretary (Shorelink Writers), Anne Lambie (Dumfries and Galloway Survivors), John Malcomson - Hon Treasurer (Heeley Writers), Amer Salam (Gatehouse Books), Pat Smart - Vice Chair (Pecket Well College).

Members of the new Executive Committee are pictured left, at the first committee meeting held at Pecket Well College in May.

## Return to Alsager in 2004

The 2004 FWWCP Festival of Writing will take place at the Alsager Campus of The Manchester Metropolitan University, about half way between Stoke-on-Trent and Crewe, over the weekend of April 16th to 18th 2004. many of you may remember we had a very successful time there in 1999. The delegate prices will be announced in the Autumn and should not be very much greater than in 2003.

In previous years The FWWCP has applied for and obtained bursaries, to help people attend. Due to the changes in funding criteria at The Arts Council of England, these are not now available to The FWWCP. But you can apply in groups or individually through your regional offices, please contact them, or contact Tim Diggles at FWWCP on 01782 822327 or thefwwcp@tiscali.co.uk, to discuss applying.

# FEDfest03

The FWWCP's Festival of Writing took place at The University of Sheffield the weekend after Easter, a mix of workshops, meetings, performances, and a gathering of members and others from around the country. Using the words and pictures by those who attended we have tried to capture something of the feel of the weekend.

After food and a few drinks, a few friendly nods and smiles from people I'd not seen for 12 months or longer, a laugh and a joke in the bar, I started feeling good. News of Arthur's death got me thinking about my dad. His ghost is here too, with me. He'd have liked it here, in his element. Wish I'd had the chance to share it. Wrote a sonnet but too private to share just now. *Steph Prior*

I miss the train from Manchester and arrived late, and there were quite a few well known friendly faces for me and that was nice. *Dorothy Blake*

Thoroughly enjoyed fish and chips. Why do they always taste better up North? Went to the Warm-up. You can make a song of anything, and not one word repeated! *Shelagh Aldworth*

I always enjoy Friday Night - it brings everyone together. *Billy Cryer*



Got lost again. Left foot sore, thumping headache; Good food, even better company getting better by the minute. Networking at these events always enjoyable. Brill work by Pecket Well - very moving. *Sue Havercroft*

I hated the Festival. Altogether unsatisfactory and irritating. *Jaclyn Hagan*

It felt like brothers, sisters, aunts and uncles and even pleasant grand parents all getting together catching up on gossip. I love it! *Lindsay Walker*

After a long journey (10 hours!) we were somewhat Motorway Weary. However we soon perked up in time for the evening performance. *Robert Brandon*

Warm up with Rosie and Tim - excellent way to get chatting with other participants. The song was amazing! Pecket Well College - wonderful friendly people giving hope and encouragement to those needing help to learn basic skills. *Shirley Drummond*

Performance by Pecket Well moved me. *Rob Hanlon*

I met Jcy Mcphee at 12.30am in E floor kitchen and talked for half an hour - sometimes the funniest of places but the best of conversations. *Sue Havercroft*

Went for an early morning stroll to stretch my legs! Didn't realise town centre was so far (never made it there!). *Robert Brandon*



One word to describe Saturday afternoon with Kala Sangam, MAGICAL. The time passed far too quickly. *Shelagh Aldworth*

Always so many good things going on it is difficult to fit everything in. *Maria Garner*

AGM: It was good it didn't go on too long. *John Malcomson*

AGM: Very informative. Agree with the idea the Fed would benefit from having younger people involved. Also feel an injection of new people would prevent feelings of exclusivity and cliques. *Juliet McKenzie*

Alison's Character Workshop - very illuminating in ways I wouldn't have expected. *Steph Prior*

I was really disappointed when Rosie Garland's workshop was cancelled, so much so I was overcome with tiredness and had to take a nap! I really enjoyed the Bengali Women's Support Group and Roger Drury's presentation! Fedfest is exciting and exhausting!! *Juliet McKenzie*

Voices from the Past: I will never be able to walk through a graveyard without inventing a person to fit the name. *Jan Holliday*

Alan Brown's workshop was so inspiring. *Shelagh Aldworth*



1. A revelation of a workshop - Alvin Culzac - he made it all look so easy this performing.... 4. Celebratory Reading - Yes, Alvin converted me and I performed a piece in public for the first time (and I did stick to the 3 minute rule!). *Rob Hanlon*

Renewed old acquaintances. Made new ones. Attended two workshops and the Readings. Went for a walk. Did a fair amount of networking. Played and sang. Encouraged others. Drew massive inspiration from the whole thing. Renewed my vows to my larger Creative Truth. *Roy Birch*

Kala Sangam, fantastic. *Jcy McFee*

My first FEDfest for several years - good to see familiar faces. I didn't think Nick Pollard would



remember me but he does. We're both in the Career Development session - probably looking for the same thing. Lots of new faces too. *Julie Ward*

Free association didn't work for me - the lost part of my soul is still lost. All the same, I enjoyed the workshop, well done Brigitte. Shirley Drummond

Lovely tribute to Arthur. *Jim White*

Roger Drury's poem for Arthur at the Reading is perfect. Exhorting us to make a noise to fill the gap Arthur has left. *Julie Ward*

In the light of this Fedfest, it would be good if writings to be performed could be heard in advance to check on length and screen out any offensive material. *Steph Prior*

Celebratory readings - left some problems of where should people draw the line on self censorship! *Sue Havercroft*

The Festival consists of pretentious and arrogant 'writers' who don't care about listening to other people's work, opinions or anything you have to say if you are under forty. I was thoroughly disgusted. The only positive element to come from my experience of the FEDfest was the realisation that I am a much better writer than I thought, the standard of writing at FEDfest was dire, as was the attitudes of most attendees. *Jaclyn Hagan*

I was in Gordon's workshop. I thought it might be too difficult but it was excellent. He gave us writing exercises and I was able to write in my mother tongue, Bengali. *Safuran Ara*

I had the opportunity to read my work. *Billy Cryer*



Great Breakfast - appear to be less (book for sale) this year - Brigitte's workshop was inspiring. Thursday Club presentation was wonderful! *Jim White*

Make a much bigger thing of the bookstalls - don't run anything at the same time. *Paul King*

Am amazed that everyone is up and about (despite *poets punch* on Sat night) and so busy! *Lucia Birch*

The weekend was very inspiring in its diversity of workshops and readings. *Fitz Lewis*

More variety of workshops please and they could be advertised better. *Martin McDowell*

I very much enjoyed my first FEDfest - I would say to keep the event to a single building is a high priority. *Caroline Burton*

Things people hadn't done before:

- Amarjit Takhar - Talked and listened to people of different ages, background and culture.
- Maria Garner - I played one of my own songs to a group of people - it felt good.
- Lucia Birch - Read a poem I've written at Pat's workshop - I think I'm actually a writer at last.
- Sue Havercroft - Stood up and said what I personally believe and hope for the future of the Fed.
- Dorothy Blake - Gave a talk about a play I did.
- Shelagh Aldworth - Reading behind a microphone.
- Julie Ward - Found some quiet time for myself by not attending everything all the time.

Thanks to all who attended for their contribution!



# What do we mean?

At a recent Executive Committee Meeting, the point was raised that the current Constitution requires updating, probably shortening, and rewording. The discussion encompassed the definitions we have of 'Working Class', 'Worker Writers' and 'Community Publishing', and whether we need to change these definitions (see box below). This naturally brought many other issues to the fore, and we would be interested to hear your ideas. Below are two e-mails which followed that discussion, and some statements from Bottom Dog Press' website (Bottom Dog Press publish oral histories by working class people in the midwest of the USA). Join in the debate, send your opinions by E-mail to thefwwcp@tiscali.co.uk, or post to FWWCP, Burslem School of Art, Queen Street, Stoke-on-Trent ST6 3EJ.

*To Nick Pollard*

just a thought for Fed mag... pour encourager debate... Dear Sir!...  
"Socialist in material - Anarchist in intellect" - Kautsky 1917, viz Essentials like food, water ... education - to cost as little as poss. whereas what I think is what I think. BUT communicating your thoughts needs taking into account others' sensibilities whilst still challenging accepted thought.  
Voltaire - The artist is the enemy of the state and should refuse all baubles and trinkets thus - "what exactly is a "worker"?"  
I see it in terms of background, desire for change ... embracing the 'state' ... which is ours and which will eventually wither away as we all accept our responsibilities for those rights we maintain are ours.  
Is it the worker-writer or vice versa or a combination of both of what we strive to achieve?... re. working @ writing or writing from a specific standpoint.  
Community publishing I comprehend .. not clear where the fed membership stands on worker writer...  
And - how many are members of a political party/supporter/activist ?  
Should the Fed have a party line.... politics being the art of the possible and as Churchill said ...hmp Democracy? It's the only one we got.  
somebody respond svp asap  
Eric the red (the very well read Eric Davidson)

*Hi Eric*

I think the Fed has survived for as long as it has because it does not have a party line. There have been points in the Fed's history where it has had strong influences from various groups within the left, but these have never dominated. To develop a party line would work against the inclusive and international nature of the organisation we currently have; party lines always require that people choose between their sense of what is right and the line the party (or a small group in it) wishes to take. The capacity for debate, for exploration, and for creativity is ultimately limited in these circumstances, and the Fed's writers would be only able to produce a kind of proletkult literature. This would be ironic for an organisation which is concerned with developing unorthodox writing by unorthodox means, and the natural thing for the Fed's members to do would be to set up *another* unorthodox organisation. We have, however, withstood the internecine conflicts raging through the left, argued over various separatisms and issues, remained pretty democratic and retained our sense of fun and enjoyment.

Where does this leave us as worker-writers?

## Extract from the FWWCP Constitution

### 2. Definition of Terms

2.1 The term "Working Class" is open to various definitions and this is a matter essentially for Member Organisations to determine, subject to the right of other Members and The FWWCP as a whole to question and debate. We favour a broad definition.

2.2 By "Working Class Writing" we mean writing produced within the working class and socialist movement or in support of the aims of working class activity and self-expression.

2.3 By "Community Publishing" we understand a process of producing and distributing such writing in co-operative and mutual ways rather than competitive and private.

Michel Ragon's history of French working class writing discusses a key issue which is probably encountered in every publication produced by a Fed group. The problem of working class writing is that it is directly about experience, it is about witnessing, which means that while it provides a testimony, it is compromised artistically by its truth. Not that the worker writer should always be confined to

the truth, but that truth is a key component of the intention behind writing - leaving a legacy so that family members know what you did, telling your community about who you are. Writing (and the Fed's inclusion of oral testimony underlines this) of this sort is rooted in the experience of the community, and while there are communities which are middle class or upper class or which transcend class, the process of depicting community for and by its own members is a very different process to the depiction of a fictional community in a soap opera and claiming that this is working class writing. It's not somebody else telling other people who we are, or what we do, or are about, it's us, sharing with each other the story of who we are, and what we're about. For me this is a really significant part of the Fed. Unlike anywhere else, and, as far as I know, any other literature, you can read the book, meet the person who wrote the book, the consequences will feed your own writing, and you might later get to discuss the result with other people who in turn decide to write something about the issue themselves. You get to know people very well, and if you read a lot of Fed books, a lot of people. In fact, on the basis of your mutual Fed membership, you can approach people who you know are Fed members but have never actually met, and take the process on, but the community of writing (in the loose sense that the Fed employs the word) is the basis for this. As a consequence of this communal process of knowledge sharing and human experience, we have between us built up a mass of social observation, historical detail, folk psychology. The Fed is an amazing data resource on ordinary lives. This is part of the original purpose - who will record the lives of the workers (or socio economic classes 4-5 and their sympathisers to use a more ungainly term) if we don't. An academic research process delving into the social field of the working classes won't make it any more authentic or objective than if we do it ourselves - and broadly speaking, the people doing the writing are probably the best to determine what is most significant. Another significant aspect of being a worker writer is the scope for experimentation. You can try stuff out in a safe environment. People can go on stage for the first time. You don't have to be a great performer, it's enough to want to have a go, and your audience will appreciate that. This is perhaps because while people take their writing seriously there is a strong ethic of giving everyone room. By giving everyone access to writing and publishing there might be some rivalry and competition, but there aren't any losers. There can't be, because you can't take away from a witness the quality of the experience they are witness to.

Cheers, Nick

## Some General Values Of Working Class Culture

(These are some observations of general cultural values and tendencies, and are not meant to be cultural stereotypes but recognitions.)

### 1. COMMUNICATION:

- To the Point, Direct (even blunt), sometimes impassioned, accepts arguing
- Functional (not reflective)
- Story Telling - Passing on values, history
- Speak the truth (Yet keep it in the family)
- Humour - Laugh to survive - Getting Down to it

### 2. FAMILY:

- Blood Ties
- Support each other
- Stay close to home
- Parental rule - Often Patriarchy
- Persistence and Ingenuity: Making do - Getting by
- Sacrifice

### 3. COMMUNITY:

- Neighborhood
- Mutual Respect and Cooperation
- Democratic and Egalitarian
- Treat others fairly, especially the "little guy"
- Often denial and anger
- Difficulty is seeing multiple perspectives

### 4. WORK ETHIC:

- Work as fabric of life
- Providing for family
- Hard work and Follow through
- Respect for tools & maintenance
- Having a good job
- Functional and Practical - Get things done
- Time is money - Work sets schedule

### 5. EDUCATION:

- Get One
- Value basic education - as a means of achieving "a good life", as a means of achieving "freedom of choice"
- But not too much education - "Don't forget where you came from."

*Taken from the Bottom Dog Press Website - <http://members.aol.com/lsmithdog/bottomdog/>*

Do you agree with the above? What are your values? Let us know.

# Great Labor Arts Exchange

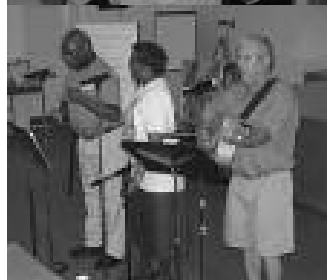
In late June, Fed Co-ordinator Tim Diggles and Rosie Garland (aka Rosie Lugosi) attended the Great Labor Arts Exchange, organised by Labor Heritage Foundation, at the George Meany Center in the outskirts of Washington DC. Tim reports.

Wow! That is my reaction. The Great Labor Arts Exchange (GLAE) is a remarkable event. This was the 25th time that people had gathered from all over the USA to sing, share skills, work together. It all started with about 20 people gathered together to exchange songs, now it encompasses many art forms, and includes a parallel conference on Creative Organising.

Most people attending had union affiliations, and use their creative skills to help the struggle to survive in the increasingly vast corporate America, highlighting the plight of low paid immigrant workers, the poverty ridden communities in the South, the decaying industries of the Rust Belt. This sounds grim, but it was far from that. GLAE is a celebration of communities and people, by singers, writers and artists of great skill. Many were professionals and there were some legendary names there!

When we arrived it had been unseasonably cool and wet, but as the days went on it got hotter and hotter, but luckily not too humid. By Monday it was in the 90's, beautiful sunny weather. We had a little time to look around Washington, and everywhere looks just like it does on TV! I revisited the Vietnam memorial, one of the most moving places, lists of the young Americans who died, on grey/black marble, hundreds of people were there, but an audible silence. Is there something similar in Saigon?

In the evening we attended a poetry performance gathering at Elise Bryant's house. Elise was someone we met in Youngstown a few years ago, and encouraged us (The Fed) to attend the GLEA. Lots of singing, food, plenty to drink and some very lively work! The GLEA started properly on the Sunday. Most events taking place in the Main Hall at George Meany, which once used to be a chapel. The three days were a mix of talks/discussions, workshops, and



what they called the Arts Exchange. Arts Exchanges were sessions where people performed or talked about their work, only one piece from each person was allowed, but nearly everyone who attended took part.

At the Sunday evening Exchange I talked briefly about The Fed and read John Hirst's *Son of a Mining Man* (see Broadsheet 10), which seemed apt for the occasion. As always the words of our members went down well. Rosie performed on Monday evening, and stunned the audience! No one got a greater response and nothing over the few days was quite like what she did! Rosie did her PMT song to Mozart, and that was why I asked her to attend, because it would be so different and very lively. Most of what we saw was in the great American tradition of singing with guitar, group singing and so forth, great stuff and upholding and developing a long tradition. But we offered something different and highly memorable!

Sunday included sessions with Rick Flores, a former car worker who now paints and draws cartoons about work and struggle. It was great to see and hear someone talking about their paintings. The session on *Preserving Labor Heritage* was equally interesting, we heard about the preservation of a prison, where miners had been kept during the 'Matawan' disputes in the 1920's; about a school which has been named after Mother Jones (the great supporter of hundreds of strikes and disputes); and about a labor heritage walk in Boston. Then we heard about the singer John Handcox, who was born in the South and whose life was spent fighting oppression and racism. He was a wonderful singer and wrote many famous songs. And that was only by the evening meal time!

After further Exchanges we heard from Francisco Herrera and Rosa Zarate, who sang about the plight of Mexican workers. They spoke of the struggle to gain their rights, and the struggles the current



generation have for proper working conditions and pay. Each day ended well past 10pm!

Monday started with a session I took part in, about involving working class communities in the arts. I talked about our Member groups, the Festival and publications. Others talked about festivals and projects they ran. We were followed by a wonderful session called *Work and Freedom: The Roots of Black Music*, with Alex and Harriet Bagwell, who sang an amazing selection of different styles of music.

Workshops followed on song writing, choir singing, and organising community film festivals. We then had lunch! At each GLAE they gather together to support a local dispute. At this we went out to a clothes store to support workers who had gone on strike because their health insurance was being changed by the company, offering a poorer deal. We marched up and down, sang songs, and people from the Creative Organising Conference did a piece of street theatre. Afterwards we heard that the company had given in, and retained the much better option, partly because of the support we had given! One of the very thoughtful organisers, was very worried about the intense heat on my bald head, and gave me a pig hat to wear (part of the play!), and I had to oink in a very reserved English manner!

More workshops followed, with an exchange of songs, more choral singing and Shaggy Flores running a workshop on performing poetry. The highlight of the evening (other than Rosie!), was a film about the amazing singer Hazel Dickens, who was then awarded the Joe Hill Award. The evening ended with an open mike for poetry as well as music jamming in the bar. Another hectic day!

Tuesday was the final day. We ran a workshop about the Fed, reading from peoples writing, talking about the history, then running a writing workshop. After lunch there were further Exchanges, followed by a wonderful session with legendary singer/songwriter Joe Glazer (Labor's Troubadour) on *Songs and Stories of the Anthracite Coal Miners*. This was followed by an Ice Cream Social under



the trees on a blazing hot afternoon. Joe Glazer auctioned some of his memorabilia and I bought a battered baseball hat reading "God, Guns, and Guts formed the GMWA" (the US Miners Union). It was then time to prepare for the evening concert.

This was held under the trees on a hot evening. Many people contributed, with the priority going to those who hadn't performed in previous years. About 200 people came to watch. It was a wonderful event. The Choir performed; people read and sang; Rosie performed and there was a feeling of great togetherness.

GLAE was a good event to attend. I learnt a huge amount about the traditions



Wiktor Szostalo with his travelling sculpture, *The Big Business Politician and the Little Man* for more see [www.wsart.com](http://www.wsart.com)

of song, and the strength of the unions in communities around the US. I was privileged to meet some wonderful people, see and hear fantastic music performed, see fabulous artwork, and participate.

This visit was an opportunity to see how our Membership could be involved in future years, and what they would gain from it. I would like to get enough funds together to take over a 'show' in 2004 or 05 so that people from around the USA can see our work, and some of our Members can gain as much as I did.

For more information see [www.laborheritage.org](http://www.laborheritage.org) and to hear some of the songs performed [www.labornotes.org](http://www.labornotes.org)

# Liberating the Literary World

On a course called English 50, all first year undergraduates at Temple University, Philadelphia, learn how to write academically. As part of the course they use the classic FWWCP books *The Republic of Letters* and *Once I Was A Washing Machine*, to compare how the Fed works, alongside a US social study and an oral history project of Philadelphia. Below are a few extracts from assignments.

This form of writing is truest to heart and pure in form; it is neither a fictional portrayal of life nor one that has been cured to be received by the public en masse. It is this fact alone that makes these works valid to the readers. They allow the writer to build upon his original work with subsequent books, and other writers to respond with their own works. These books are “worth reading” in that they allow the reader to experience something through another’s perspective.

The FWWCP encourages the “socially excluded” to read these works creatively. They are a new version of intellectualism, and while they may relate to traditional scholarship, they offer a different classification. While traditionally, people attained scholarship through conventional modes of learning, these writers obtain scholarship through their life experiences, and how they choose to relate them on paper. They embody scholarship in that they put forth an historically correct, unbiased view of their culture. Their works can be used in college course which study different types of literature, as well as social studies courses. They are not, and are not trying to be scholars “in the traditional sense.”

They are, however, offering written accounts of their lives and personal experiences. Like all scholars, they provide knowledge on a subject that has previously been neglected or little known, and incite a response from their audience.

The writing community of Philadelphia would be greatly benefited by an organization like the FWWCP in that it would allow young writers the opportunity to be read and published. It would give this community a voice to raise issues that they feel are important, as well as having a medium through which they could express their ideas to their individual communities. Having an organization such as this would give them recognition as talented writers. As they gained recognition, they may be able to change the ways in which intellectual writing is viewed. There are a variety of on-line resources which help writers obtain publication, such as *Recursive Angel* and other literary magazines to which submissions may be sent via E-mail. At Temple University, *Hyphen* literary magazine also publishes the submissions of students. Through these mediums, writers obtain the power to give young intellectuals a voice within the community.

The boundaries on intellectual thought and scholarship are beginning to shift. Through the publication of works such as *The Republic of Letters* and others, readers may be able to recognize and identify with “intellectuals” in their own communities. This alone will give people the power to start viewing themselves as scholars in their own right. Writing today has become a lost art, quite possibly due to the fact that mainstream literature has become a dump bin of works which do not inspire the readers to react in any way. If groups like the FWWCP continue in the backing of talented young writers, and make the dream of publication a reality, then perhaps these boundaries will make a more rapid shift.

Meredith B Lindemon

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The FWWCP encourages the works of all types of people: labourers, mothers, homeless, prisoners, and other citizens. They want all of mankind to be given an opportunity to have their literature published. They believe that people should be given access to all writings, not just the works of “professional” authors. This organization believes that everyone has the ability to “write”; intelligence comes in many forms and is not always found in scholastic aptitudes. From a political standpoint, the FWWCP is fighting for literacy equality; they believe that stories should not have to embody stereotypical “classic novel” characteristics in order to be published. The reader should be the ultimate judge of a particular writing.

This is shown through the FWWCP’S statement, “we have come to believe within the federation that it is vital that we should develop alternative values and other contexts by which to celebrate the achievement of writing, in order that new writers may feel that there is proper recognition of all the efforts and very hard work required to produce a manuscript”

They do not want potential writers to feel discouraged by standards embedded in the mainstream literacy community; these regulations include proper schooling, social ranking, and the support of a major publishing company. An individual who is illiterate may still hold the potential to write an astonishing story concerning his or her struggles in society. The FWWCP is not trying to

degrade the works of prominent authors, but instead wants to draw an equal amount of attention to the attributes of working class writers. Having this in mind, their utopian goal would be to create equality between both “professional” and “nonprofessional” literature.

Every person has a different opinion of what great literature may be. For example, not everyone favours Chaucer, yet he is known as being England’s second greatest protege next to Shakespeare. Works can be classified by numerous amounts of scholars; however, the reader determines the ranking of the author, regardless of popularity.

Each FWWCP writer has a different audience depending on the topic at hand. If an author is writing about an experience with rape, her readers may consist of fellow sexual assault survivors, or those interested in the topic.

I believe the FWWCP is in a sense, somewhat of a support group. I believe the work of the FWWCP is astonishing. Their position on composition offers a freedom that I have not yet experienced. As a college student, I am required to write according to a certain format. However, these individuals have complete control over how they want to arrange their writings; these features include grammar, dialect, structure, and context. I admire their philosophy that as long as the writer’s purpose and motive for constructing the composition is fulfilled, it is a success and deserves to be published.

Reading works by a student making the transition into college could be quite beneficial for me. I support the FWWCP; in my own opinion, the quality of literature depends on the reader’s interests, social background, and personal character. Since this organisation has over 80 members around the world, they can offer enjoyable compositions for many types of people.

The FWWCP would be a tremendous asset to Philadelphia, since it is such a diverse city. The organisation would help represent the voices of all different types of citizens, especially those living in poverty and other harsh conditions.

Having autobiographical tales from Philadelphians would be a great way to show how much culture the city has. In *The Republic of Letters* the FWWCP states, “language has been for many centuries one of the main forms in which class and cultural differences have been expressed” some writings may be about the stress of being a high quality lawyer at city hall, while others may deal with the embarrassment and frustration of bagging for change near the subway. These writings could give Philadelphians “power” by writing and reading these works citizens may gain a better understanding of each other. City problems such as poverty, welfare, pollution, and job- related issues may be brought to the attention of a reader that could better the situation for many of the venting writers.

The community of authors may also gain a sense of wellbeing knowing that other people are experiencing similar hardships in their daily lives.

This organisation would be great resource for Temple University and many other learning institutions. Students would be able to write about their feelings on leaving home, fears of the future, and troubles with school. Writing may even turn into a coping strategy that students may use when they are undergoing emotional upheaval. Readers will also be able to relate to these undergraduate authors, since they share education as a commonality. The FWWCP may also unite diverse groups of people that did not realize they shared similar interests until reading the stories of their fellow students. This may create intermingling between certain social groups that would normally never relate to one another.

In general, this organization unveils the hidden truth behind real “intelligence.” It is not something that is necessarily found in the classroom. Intelligence can be acquired through experiences and the challenges that life presents us with. Sharing these stories of success, joy, and even failure help the author and the reader learn about the world.

To further ones intelligence, he or she must understand the matter being presented; this may be found in literature, scholastics, or on the street. The FWWCP acknowledges intelligence as one large definition that can be interpreted in many diverse ways. There may be many different classifications of this mental skill; however, they all diverse credit and should be treated with dignity, equality, and respect.

*Christina Rosato*

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This type of organization is extremely productive for a community. It shows support for the average people who go out and work hard everyday. In my immediate community, there is no organization like the Federation however there is one that includes all communities of the boroughs of New York City. This organization is called Youth Speaks and its primary concern is to give youth in New York City an open forum to express themselves the best way they know how. It runs workshops for children to improve their writing skills and explore other aspects of writing. Although the government really has no control over the literature and speech in America, there are still some similarities in the way the works of well known authors. However, as time goes on faculty is beginning to incorporate some of these works into their class lessons. They also encourage students to write about everyday things and their everyday feelings and what is going on around them. This helps my community significantly because problems are addressed and instead of the youth of America acting out their frustrations in unproductive ways

## Liberating the Literary World cont'd

it provides them with the opportunity to discuss these problems with people who understand and are experiencing the same problems, the same fears, and who hold the same concerns.

In conclusion, I believe that the project of the Federation is definitely one that is worthwhile. The working class citizens of Britain should be heard, their works should be respected and recognized because these people who will bring about change in society. If everyone chooses to ignore the ills of society and continues to leave their voice unheard there will never be any change and without change there is no progress.

Renee Whiskey

effort to correct a system where very few are acknowledged and viewed as good authors.

However, this is not just limited to literature. The Federation addresses the systems of those with power versus those without power and the rights that each group receives. This may be just the first step in breaking the class systems that create the glass ceilings for so many people. This new found inspiration can motivate those who are used to pressing their faces up against that glass ceiling to grab a hammer and break that glass. The FWWCP is telling us all that we don't have to be born into royalty or be extremely rich or to fit into any of those stereotypes that come with being a good writer or a good anything. It seems that it is time that all our voices are heard.

Sherley Legerme

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The effect of this federation on communities could be very positive. There already exist places such as open mic's where people can share their works with others, especially in Philadelphia. There are numerous bars or coffee shops that host literacy performances. The fact that these people's works could be acknowledged on boarder horizons through publication could provide more motivation and incentive to those interested in literature. There are so many people who feel that their voices don't matter and nothing will ever change that. This federation provides a tint of hope. In my hometown, there are relatively few places that host any literary events. This is not because there is a lack of "sense of purpose". Many feel there is no sense in sharing their work because no one really cares. They are convinced that their work really is "irrelevant and of "no literary merit" (as *they*, the ones who run the literary systems would put it). The expansion of this Federation would certainly enrich the intellectual persons of my community, Philadelphia's community, or any other community. The term "intellectual" would no longer have to be associated with high academia.

Furthermore, had the authors of *Philadelphia: Neighbourhoods, Division and Conflict in a Post – industrial City* been able to scrutinize the work of the FWWCP, there is no doubt that they would be very delighted. They would recognize the effort of the Federation correcting something that needed correction. Writing is on a road whose destination is a place where literature is all about selling books rather than the quality of writing. The Federation works on creating roadblocks and detours for this road. The authors of *Philadelphia*: focused largely on depicting faulty areas of Philadelphia's systems and bringing them to the attention of the people. I can see Adams, Bartelt, Elesh, Goldstein, Kleniewski, and Yancey applauding the work of the Federation, which made the

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This group of writers has 'power' because they have the ability to produce an effect.

They generate an effect on people like themselves by accepting them into their federation, and they have an effect on readers because many people, like themselves, can, relate to their writings.

In traditional sense, the members of this federation do not want to be scholars; they would simply like to be accepted for who they are. Clearly, they are aware that they are different than the typical writer, who generally has a prestigious occupation or a well – known reputation

This is shown in words by Ron Barnes on page 59 of the *Republic of Letters*. He writes ' Being one with those who wore those shabby clothes and broken shoes, but a different mind drives out the old, replaced by different views... The price you pay each day, to dare to think another way.'

As someone who has been thinking a lot about the community and writing, I think that this union could come together and give the community a "voice". Together they can express their thoughts to a large number of people through publication. They can communicate how they feel about being part of the working class and what it is like to be regarded as inferior. Since the authors of *Philadelphia: neighbourhoods, division, and conflict in a post-industrial city* are concerned with problems and changes in Philadelphia, they would also presumably support a group similar to the federation of worker writers and community publishers since they are taking action in forming a union to include all kinds of people. This action could indeed change the city and make its future brighter.

Kristina Sullivan

When people submit their work to the FWWCP, it is obvious that their approach to their writing and even their actual dialect is very different than what some people might be accustomed to. For example, the piece entitled *Once I Was a Washing Machine*, written by Olive Rodgers, shows how language varies depending on the individual. When first read by us as a class, this particular piece of writing had to be analysed, this was not necessarily an easy task to perform. The style of writing was not familiar to the class, nor was the use of metaphors. This proves that language isn't universal, or neutral, because this particular poem was not as easy to understand as it might have been for someone else. Someone that might have come from the same environment, or has dealt with the same issues as the person in the poem, would probably have been able to understand the author's writing style and dialect much more clearly. However, a contrast in language doesn't mean one's work is turned away from the Federation's magazines and books. After all, "Language isn't neutral." Throughout the world, everyone has a different way of speaking. Another example was presented in the class about individuals that wrote *The Republic of Letters* and why the letter 'Z' doesn't seem to be a part of their vocabulary. Essentially, the only reason we notice their not having 'Z' exist in their vocabulary is because we as Americans are so familiar with it existing in ours. We're simply not accustomed to not seeing it in literature. Someone from Britain might vary well read something of an American author and not understand why we spell 'criticize' with a 'Z' and not with an 'S'. Language will not be the same in every part of the world, but yet people find ways to accept various ways of speaking, and somehow incorporate this new dialect into their own. Consider an example that can be found right outside your front door. The concept of slang has been floating around the United States for centuries now. At first, it was not accepted into our society because it was considered 'improper' to speak in such manner. The proper English language was the only language recognized in the United States, but who is to say what should be considered proper? The word "gonna" has been used so often that many don't even recognize it anymore as a slang term. This just proves that throughout the years, pieces of other languages are incorporated into our own. Different ways of speaking often require different forms of language that one might not be familiar with. Language is never going to be the same, no matter where one might go. The beauty of it all is that these different forms of language allow various kinds of writing to be published. This is what the FWWCP is trying to say, that "different work, reflecting popular experience; different writers, whom you may know and can certainly meet; different distribution, through local centres and face – to – face contacts – all these have created a new reading public" (*The Republic of Letters*)

Another statement that the FWWCP makes that seems to have a lot of validity is that "We cannot talk about literature without talking about literacy." Literacy is defined as being able to read and write, so of course it would be impossible to have any type of literature if literacy wasn't established. If people were unable to write, then literature would not be able to be produced, and of course reading that literature would be out of the question as well. It is important to know that the FWWCP doesn't describe literature as the works of Shakespeare or Mark Twain, but rather just the concept of having ordinary, working class people having their voices heard. In that sense, the amount of literacy one might have is not significant. After all, the FWWCP states, "New readership can become new writers" (*The Republic of Letters* 42), which means that any small quantity of literacy that one might attain, is enough to produce literature by different individuals that didn't believe they could ever be any form of a writer.

It provides encouragement for a young adult such as myself that literature doesn't have to be produced by amazing, well – known writers to be considered worthy. Rather, any sort of literature can attract some type of audience. The working class in Philadelphia and all over the United States are able to express their opinions through the FWWCP just as any politician is able to express his opinion on television. The only problem is these opinions might very well go unacknowledged. They might very well be printed in the FWWCP magazine, but who is to say that anyone will actually read these articles? One must have hope when it comes to writing. They must go out and advertise their writings through parties, group readings or any other way possible, in order to get their stories heard. The FWWCP states that "Those with power have always tried to restrict access to, and control over, the means of communication" (*The Republic of Letters* 65), but it is that very power that might make someone's piece of writing a much more recognized piece that ever imaginable. In the meantime, the FWWCP provides a small step for mankind and provides the hope for many people that one day someone with that "higher power" will recognize their work and that it will mean as much to someone as it has meant to them.

Marta Gershman

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The Federation promotes writing workshops where people of any age can learn to write or to develop skills they may not even realise they have. Writing federations such as this one are helping people all over the globe recognize their own talents. Not only that, but they are also helping to build a new way of writing for a new generation.

## Liberating the Literary World cont'd

Many ideas portrayed by the Federation should be taken into account here in our community and in the United States. I believe that to produce a variety of literature, educational facilities should open their department up to more literature options. "There is a struggle which goes on inside university literature departments, as well as outside; there is a constant resistant to the inclusion of modern works to study"

Even after the start of a new millennium students are still studying only the works of authors who have survived us in the past. I agree with the federation in the belief that the addition of modern works to a schools curriculum would be extremely beneficial to its students. A question people should ask themselves is "how are students supposed to relate and look up to authors who lived in a completely different era, and spoke in a language that is so different it is almost foreign?" Students are forced to read the classics written by Dickens, Bronte, and Chaucer, before they can even appreciate the authors' stories for what they are.

The Federation is concentrating on "how literature today is being produced, by whom, and in what conditions and with what support." Many do not even make an attempt to write because "the critical heights of university English often convince young writers that the sights are so high its of no use trying." How can students of English feel as if what they are saying is legitimate when what they are striving for is so alien to them. In our society, instead of attempting to create brilliant intellectuals shaped by the authors before us, educators should encourage individually and creativity.

*Renee Bowe*

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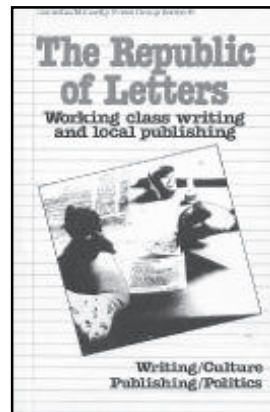
Essentially the Fed is a publishing organization for the working class of Britain.

The main audience of the FWWCP is the local community of which the authors who publish their work are from. These publishers print literature by the working class people and distribute the work into the working class communities. It has started a new group of writers.

The people who read the work of previous authors reacted by writing about a similar experience or by writing a direct response to the authors writing. Obviously, this is a positive effect as a result of the FWWCP'S work because it causes new literature to form and possibly exerts pressure on the traditional view of literature. Traditionalists, meaning those individuals who believe in the traditional value of literature, criticize the writing of the working class by pointing out their poor vocabulary or improper slang terminology and degrading their style of how they portray their thoughts. The working class counters this opposition by using their

roots to dialect in their writing and by using unconventional techniques. There are other factors that contribute to the unorthodox writing of the working class. The FWWCP does not want people to think the working class is one single mass of people collectively working together for a common goal; they would like to remind everyone that these people have many other identifying factors such as race, gender, sexuality and religion. The endless factions that are found in the working class are important to cultural development because each one of these can bring something new to the table of literature while still failing into this category of working class.

*Randall MacTough*



## The Books

The Republic of Letters (1982), and Once I was a Washing Machine (1989), are two classic books from the history of The FWWCP. Both are available in limited numbers from The FWWCP, for £5 each including p&p in the UK, add £3 for p&p abroad.

Send cheques, made to FWWCP, to FWWCP, Burslem School of Art, Queen Street, Stoke-on-Trent ST6 3EJ.

## Thank You

A big thank you to the students who allowed extracts from their assignments to be published. We were unable to print more because of space.

If the writing above has stimulated you to think and write about the FWWCP, please send it to us for consideration for our future issues.

## **I made it through the rain**

The rain has fallen since I was a child,  
whether cold or whether mild.  
It has fallen during nursery school games,  
with John in the wendy house,  
and with Janice just the same.

It fell too during primary school,  
much bigger and much wetter.  
It fell during sing songs in the playgrun'  
Falling through a sunless sky.  
In the huts we played hide and seek  
like the Andrex puppy,  
keeping out the rain  
- drying off with tissues after.  
Boy, when we were kids we had such laughter.

We played in puddles splashing round –  
we did not care about muddy ground.  
We splashed in lakes of oily water  
like cheeky riverside otter.  
I waved goodbye to a friendly aunt  
after such a day of play,  
when Aunt Jeanette flew far away,  
across a bigger ocean  
than we could fathom as a child.

It fell during secondary school –  
in bucketloads, a monsoon.  
But haste ye back, listen close,  
this was not its swansong.  
It fell and flooded many times  
the football pitch and classrooms.  
It fell during adulthood.  
And continues to this day.  
But remember this all ye readers,  
whether tapped or whether metered.  
I made it through the rain.

*Grahame Gemmell Thompson*

## **What is your religion?**

To sit next to the snowdrop,  
and cry a while,

While other religions soak in the sun.

Me and the Snowdrop  
I think are one.  
We do the little  
That can be done.

*Carol Batton*

Broadsheet publishes  
writing by members  
and supporters of  
The FWWCP.  
Broadsheet 12 has  
been selected by  
Lockerbie Writers  
Group, with some late  
inclusions.  
If you wish to have  
your writing included  
in Broadsheet 13,  
please send it to us  
by October 31st 2003,  
if possible attached to  
an e-mail, and send  
to  
[thefwwcp@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:thefwwcp@tiscali.co.uk)  
or by post to  
**FWWCP,  
Burslem School of  
Art, Queen Street,  
Stoke-on-Trent  
ST6 3EJ.**  
If you belong to an  
FWWCP member group  
and would like your  
group to make the  
selection for a future  
issue, please contact  
Tim Diggles on 01782  
822327, and arrange  
how you can  
undertake this  
important role.  
We look forward to  
receiving your writing  
for consideration.

**B  
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Saturn was falling  
 Like the old man he was  
 He was floating  
 in the Pacific  
 His rings were crumbling  
 but the rest of him  
 was still there  
 Floating in the bluest water  
 you'd ever see  
 Saturn had fallen  
 so still he was  
 He looked like a dream  
 a beautiful dream  
 the colours, the might  
 a giant ball of gases  
 floating in the Pacific  
 I made my way there  
 Someone said  
 the world was ending  
 what a way for the world to end  
 what a sight for sad eyes.

**Tayo Doherty**

**Sun and Sadness**

surfaces made gold  
 in a constant sun  
 offer me renewed  
 hope of love

despite my breaking heart  
 the trees are works of art  
 the blazing designer leaves  
 although I was brazenly deceived

I walk around the park  
 when inside me all is dark

the ducks are on the pond  
 as I mourn at not having belonged  
 in pain from all the lies  
 I see the sun glisten through my tear—filled  
 eyes

and after the trials and tribulations  
 nature in the park  
 holds a sweet pang of consolation.

**Dee Light**

**But Is It Different Instead?**

[Ode to 11th September 2001]

It's gotta be said -  
 Take stock of the score  
 Beyond the scribes of doom or merchants of dread  
 It's gotta to be said -  
 As the ashes of too many welcome us warm  
 Love flies unburied in the dream to be born  
 It's gotta be said - *is there more.*

As the leaders and lawyers and the generals decide  
 And the volunteers struggle in the eye of the world opened  
 wide

It's gotta be said -  
 With plaudits for punters and all what shall we do  
 We've never been here anyway which way are you -  
 It's gotta be said -  
 Delusion confusion, secrets and lies by the spread  
 Shame agents who dance with polemics instead  
 It's gotta be said -  
 By life coach guru's and scriptwriters who raid  
 It's time the blame bankers full measure are paid.

It's gotta be said -  
 Will the world order shift move the armies of man  
 To discern something within that's gotta be better than -  
 Feeding on fear for survival akin Hollywood's shore -  
*It gotta be said - is there more - but is it different instead?*

**David Lloyd-Howells**

**Treasured Friendship**

What makes you become a friend?  
 As many people get to know you.  
 But many friendships draw to an end,  
 But special friends are always true.  
 As the clock ticks by  
 Our friendship grows.  
 Secrets are told in gossiping sigh,  
 Gaining in strength like a budding rose.  
 No questions are raised, only loving care.  
 No answers are given, just genuine support.  
 Through good and bad you are there -  
 As time rushes by waiting to be caught.  
 My most treasured friend became my foe  
 For what reason I have yet to know.

**Fiona J Johnstone**



**Forecast**

Here is today's forecast  
a combined 'weather or not' report  
incorporating our travel update.

A deep depression will pass over  
the head around mid-day, causing it to  
cloud over, bringing with it outbreaks  
of gloom and despondency.  
These will gradually clear by late  
afternoon following Diazepam.

Congestion is expected to continue  
on all routes leading to the chest.  
Air-ways are currently restricted  
to one passage, a build-up of phlegm  
is unavoidable, these will lift and disperse  
later in the day following nebulised Ventolin.

Intermittent pain is forecast for  
the central back region, particularly  
in the weak vertebrae districts.  
Travel over these areas with care.  
Regular dosages of strong pain-killers  
will ease the trouble-spots.

A flood warning has been issued  
for the kidney and bowel areas.  
Heavy bleeding will continue throughout  
the day and on into the night.  
Water retention may well cause some  
damage as high pressure builds up.

General circulation will be erratic,  
clammy with flushes in the mid-regions  
but cold and numbing in the extremities.  
The picture for tonight is expected to remain  
restless, followed by a lull of Temazepam.  
Tomorrow and the rest of the week  
will remain unsettled.

The long-term forecast is changeable,  
bringing mood-swings in from the north.  
Overall the outlook is bleak  
Morphine is on hand in cases of emergency.

**John Hirst****He's an Alcoholic**

Walked round the corner, he was there  
I blocked him out, image a blur  
Painting the fence, he tries to pretend  
By missing my cheek, calls me his friend  
But he is Satan in disguise  
With drunken words and bloodshot eyes  
Buys flowers, all around he'll spread  
While his poor mother quakes with dread  
She knows he's only smoothing the way  
Because he'll get blind drunk again today  
He'd got the shakes and I knew why  
But he's in denial, and would sooner lie  
I asked him 'Did you eat anything today?'  
He just turned his hack, then walked away  
Like phantoms that roam the night  
He keeps his habit's secrets tight  
Contriving, twisting each word he utters  
Upon his lips the truth comes spluttered  
All his excuses, have been heard before  
With deceitful cunning, he's rotten to the core  
Doctors despair, yet they're constantly trying  
Giving help when he's down drunk and crying  
'I can't help it,' sadly he tries to explain  
His need for drink, his inward pain  
He battles on each supervised detox plan  
To reduce his drinking as best they can  
Many times I've felt hate towards this man  
But he's my brother, so I have to do all I can.

**Ann Hathaway****Mile High Club**

Delicate jewels  
stitched over the blue pool  
dragonflies mating

**Mike Hoy**

### **The King's Shilling**

Yesterday in my garden I found  
 a shilling of George III  
 and thought I heard  
 My Grandad - the one that wore  
 corduroys and smoked a clay -  
 say

Damn the Duke of Wellington  
 and Napoleon  
 and Nelson too  
 for my Grandad  
 now sadly dead  
 had always said  
 his own grandad had fought  
 at Waterloo.

It's probably true.

Grandad himself had been up the Nile,  
 had a close encounter with  
 a crocodile,  
 got drunk, tattooed,  
 made sergeant twice  
 had too much sun.  
 too many lice,  
 kept an ostrich egg and a spear  
 on his wall  
 and really that's all  
 he brought back from Sudan  
 where he fought with Kitchener  
 at Omdurman.

His son, my Dad, joined up at eighteen  
 and fought with Lord Haig  
 in nineteen canteen  
 at Ypres and Cambrai, but I  
 know he disliked the whizzbang  
 and mortar  
 and impersonal slaughter  
 for he once shared a hole with  
 two Jerries he said  
 one live and one dead  
 and after the rattle of battle had (alone  
 each took up his gun and went away  
 and lived to hide another) lay  
 except for the corpse.

In N.Africa in '43  
 I soldiered with Montgomery  
 and because I'd nothing much to do  
 he sent me up to Mersa Matruh

where I didn't do much to help the fight  
 though I might  
 if they'd asked me nicely.

That King George III shilling I found  
 was 'valued at round about £4  
 but it's now in a jar  
 with my N. African Star  
 and the family medals got for our share  
 of just being there  
 by accident  
 with Lords Wellington, Kitchener,  
 Haig and Monty,  
 and that reminds me of that poster  
**YOUR COUNTRY NEEDS YOU**  
 well that's fine  
 but I do sometimes wonder  
 which part of it's mine.

*Ken Baldwin*

### **Our Lady**

The earth, as we say  
 as a human body  
 as a bosom of the earth  
 as buttocks of the hills  
 or valleys of the cleavage

Female though she is  
 in the way of things

Yes, she curves right  
 rounded, as a woman shall be

And the surface of her self  
 is covered with a loose grain of rock  
 and crushed crustacean  
 and bone centuries old

Over this, like a ragged coat  
 she wears the dank and dark turf and leaf mold  
 of her fancy clothing

Rich this is with expectation

And from it comes our dreams  
 and our succour  
 that we till and fondle

A body, yes, if you wish

*Sally Jordan*

### **River Esk Grand Prix 1954**

There were me wheelie bins at farm gates  
In those eco-innocent times.

Tins and bottles clang against knee-length shorts  
On the weekly jaunt to the riverbank.  
Feeble spring sunlight sparkles on the Douglas Fir  
Whose looming shadow provides the starling grid.

Fangio, Moss, Ascari, Collins and others  
Smack the Esk's swirling surface.  
Hawthorne, the sauce bottle, takes an early lead,  
But that foretells little in such devious currents.

Scampering downstream, bare legs leap  
Over young and unforgiving nettles.  
A furlong run, then a chest blowing wait.  
Moorhens scatter as the shrieks begin,  
Raymond Baxter's phrases in treble tone  
Compete with an early lamb's anxious plea.

Hawthorne still spins erratically in front  
But syrup tin and Dettol bottle are close.  
Names of Salvadori and Moss are screamed  
To twittering, looping, overhead swallows.

A hug bursting sprint to. the chequered flag,  
Where Megget penetrates Esk's quivering currents.  
Here, their rumbling ecstasy is challenged  
As the refuse flotilla elicits more screeching.  
Salvadori surges by in Tate and Lyle's green  
This week's champion in Ferrari colours.

The commentator lingers, wet-shoed and hoarse.  
Next week, will it be Fangio's turn?

***Huisdean Beattie***

### **Crude Prestige**

Prestige - A giant vessel  
Carried a payload of fuel oil  
Disaster strikes -  
Tanker splits  
Leaking its hazardous cargo

The Prestige sinks  
Lying torn -  
Battered on the sea bed  
Pollution spews out  
Eco systems suffer  
Birds, mammals, fish die

Slicks like treacle on the tide  
Sandy beaches turn black  
Silence falls  
The clean up begins  
All for what  
Money, Power, Prestige!

***Fiona J Johnstone***

### **Dylan Thomas Centre, Swansea**

Mike's still dynamite on long legs  
as he was in Memphis  
hanging out with Willie Mitchell  
and other Hi cats.  
Finius, unsurpassed piano supreme  
waited for us on the corner,  
Otis shared my joint.

Mike's a dad now, brings son,  
Johnny B Goode, to gig.  
Swamped with memories  
We're late back to Brecon  
Where Susan, still marvellous  
And mumsy makes me feel  
We parted yesterday.

Time has turned waterfall  
but we're not yet washed away.

***Mike Hoy***



**Off the Peg**

Job not made to measure; not a perfect fit.  
Tongue is cross stitched in my mouth.  
Fingers argue and discuss next step.

Quality tailoring here is bespoke.  
Worsted is not trusted to the newcomer,  
Mohair a distant aspiration only.

If I work here till the Second Coming  
I'll still be cutting a poor figure  
Thirty six waist, twenty nine inside leg and no turn ups.

I'm in a tight jacket, buttoned up, serviceable, cheap;  
There is no room in the pockets for ambition;  
Dreams are swept up each night by the janitor.

Above the machine, a glimpse of sunset.  
The inner lining of my material self  
Decides to cut my cloth and try another suit.

*Gerard Melia*

The gentle slopes, the velvet sides  
the tumbling of the waterfall,  
the peak that reaches for the skies  
the mist that seems to hide it all.  
The glint of sun on distant trees,  
the sheep, the foxgloves and the bees:  
The small neat houses trim and white,  
the fir trees marching out of sight,  
the tingly bouncy river stream  
awakens us from morning dreams  
while distant clouds float through the skies,  
and hide the mountains from our eyes.

The waterfall comes tumbling down  
reaching for the plain.  
The sunlight's kiss on mountain tops  
that takes away the rain.  
The raindrops chase each other  
up and down the glass,  
the coach slows up a little bit  
to let the others pass.  
Some folk read the papers  
and others go to sleep,  
to dream about those mountain tops  
those high mysterious peaks.

*Pauline Murdoch*

**Memories on a Breeze**

I like talking with the wind  
sometimes I tell of you  
how we danced with the trees  
and raced against lightning

Circles of light  
surrounding protecting  
patterns painted  
upon a pond

I saw the rising sun  
and remembered the girl,  
with the moon in her eyes,  
starts on her jeans and a spliff to share

Smirnoff fuelled our imagination  
flickering lights on the ground  
and in the sky  
like some celestial disco

now I'm walking the street  
trying to look nonchalant  
but all my thoughts  
are just barbecue

*Jeff Brooks*

**Tricked**

Every single night is Halloween  
For my friend the Prozac Queen  
Temazepam treats trick her mind  
Thinks its a sweet!. Not very kind  
Barbiturate with Pheno's a bad brew  
Turns a brain into Mad-House stew  
Calmer's only trigger vivid dreams  
Bat-caped faces force livid screams  
Now on a high. Believes she can fly  
In a tormented trance she leaps to try  
Only the missing mystical bush broom  
Prevents her from fleeing the bad room  
Every single night is Hellish Halloween  
For my cell-mate... The Prozac Queen.

*John Hirst*

**For Daniil Kharms**

Apart from the reflected glory  
I've never seen the point of  
writing poems for dead poets

I've tried hard but  
I can't seem to get my head round  
the idea of you  
sitting there starving  
in the prison hospital thinking:

"One day  
some spotty kid from England's  
going to write me a poem  
That'll be nice

It almost makes up for the fact  
I'm starving to death"

*David Floyd*

**Read Only Memory**

My CPU's on overload, fragmented memory can't  
hold out much longer. Tried to run a full  
diagnostic check, remove viruses, compress  
memories to lost file, but it didn't work... I tried  
clean sweep, un-install, restart, but same file  
pops up... And up... And up... I was going to ring  
technical support, but didn't think they could  
help, and didn't want to tell them the problem,  
sure they would have referred me, to the  
manufacturer.. My utilities are overstretched,  
slowly shutting down, as file takes over system,  
posting notes everywhere, so I can't run and  
hide... I removed the phone line to stop on-line  
access, to memory, and operating systems, but it  
knows other methods of manipulation.

Should I give in to it?  
Should I give in to it?  
Should I give in to it?  
Or is it just testing me?  
Should I give in to it?  
Or is it just testing me?  
See how far it can take over.  
Before I collapse.  
Or crash.

*Paul King*

**MOTOR-CAR-US-REX**

The dinosaurs  
the wild animals  
huge brontosaurus  
T Rex come  
hurtling round the  
                    roundabout  
Snorting, breathing  
fire of blatant  
aggression  
their drivers -  
                    mindless  
                    headless  
                    crude barbarians  
care not a  
fig for  
other car—less  
                    humans  
They sit in  
their  
                    Ford Mondeos  
                    their Granadas  
                    Their Nissans  
glued to their seat  
soul less phantoms  
Creations of the  
                    Multi national  
                    giants  
Perhaps soon  
                    Like the dinosaurs  
they too will have had their day

*Geoffrey Clamp*

**Me, diagnosing...**

If you have an Hallucination -  
Say "Hello"

If it says "Hello", back...  
It's OK

*Carol Batton*

## The Old House

The house that I grew up in was knocked down  
And even though the memories remain  
I don't feel quite at home in my hometown.

A child's quick smile has turned into a frown  
And what was once a blue sky threatens rain.  
The house that I grew up in was knocked down.

The flowers are dead, the lawn has turned to brown,  
The old oak tree has made way for a crane.  
I don't feel quite at home in my hometown.

It's easy now to just dismiss it as a mound  
Of broken bricks whose soul can't be regained.  
The house that I grew up in was knocked down.

Yet there's another view; perhaps I've found  
That my apparent loss is some child's gain.  
I'm still not *quite* at home in my hometown,

But some of what I felt here is retained,  
A new home rising on this worthy ground.  
And though the house I loved has been knocked down  
There's still a space for me in my hometown.

*John Andrews*

## Typical Saturdays

Mornings.  
Fait accompli - a hat trick of sherbet UFO's  
delicacy on apricot Formica,  
puffed-up like Biafra bellies.  
The Addams Family will be on time  
then The Jackson 5,  
a colour-disk animation of buffoonery.

Afternoons.  
Not for long  
my consciousness is a full crew of freighter,  
the lie-still strain of fin keel,  
neat weight on the ocean floor.

Significantly it's a tanning heatwave,  
we'll air the jazz band through bent grass  
and kazoo the midges into staggers,  
eyeing the tug of ferry landings,  
kerplunking sea gulls drowning for carp.

*Christopher Barnes*

## LIGHT

The call from the nursing home  
Came in the middle of a dream,  
Leaving it exposed like a hip bone  
On an archeological dig  
Silently, we dressed in magpie-black  
Snapping a waiting jacket from a coat hanger  
Like the release of an animal-trap  
Thinking only of returning to bed

Stepping outside,  
The sky was a dark knot of stars  
Above the burrowing roots of the city,  
But we paid no attention  
As we cleared the snow from the windscreen  
And compacted it underfoot,  
Like the sound of frozen ice  
Aching under the strain of a deadweight.

Sister was waiting for us at the door  
(So we wouldn't need to ring the bell)  
And led us through the maze of entrail-corridors  
Until we reached his room.  
"The only problem is," she whispered, "he shares  
With Frank - so you'll have to be quiet".  
Exchanging glances, we let a grain of light  
Slip through the egg-timer crack of door and  
frame,  
And went inside.

Looking back now, it's funny  
Because we almost picked the wrong one -  
Cyril looked better in death than his companion.  
But the zipping-rasp of his breathing  
Gave the game away.  
Shrine-quiet and whale-heavy,  
We cradled him towards the light.

V Breathing heavily inside the car,  
We turned for home as the melon-sky split open  
Spitting the first seeds of rain.  
Quietly we reflected how the one advantage  
Of a night call, is the lurching tonnage  
Of slow lane traffic is thankfully avoided,  
As the first healing light  
Soothed the angry scars of the horizon

*Andrew Detheridge*

**Love and Darkness**

Pat O'Connors white washed cottage,  
Looking over Bantry Bay,  
Brilliant Sunshine mixed with showers,  
Ireland now I'm home to stay.

He loved a girl in old Killarney,  
Stunning looks at seventeen,  
Met her at the church on Sunday,  
Love at first sight, Barbera Jean,

Love was growing fast and furious,  
Wedding bells, come soon, said he,  
Father Dooly, came to see him,  
"Marry soon" he said with glee,

Carl Von Haken, wealthy banker,  
Gifts and flowers to Jean sent he,  
Then Pat called all full of Sunshine,  
Arranged to pop in for his tea,

The shock of seeing Carl Von Haken,  
Jeanie sitting on his knee,  
"I'll kill him soon,  
Said Pat with temper,  
Crashing from the room, went he.

Two months later Pat erupted,  
Berlin bound I soon shall be,  
Semtex tightly packed in parcel,  
Death to Carl, I want to see,

So it was a big explosion,  
Little left of Carl to see,

Dearest Jean sobbed on the doorstep,  
Can't think who would kill, said she,  
As she gazed along the strasse,  
Pat O Connors face we see  
Come back home my Dearest Jeanie,  
Back to Ireland, home and me,

Pat you killed my lovely German,  
No more of you I want to see,  
Clear off back to bloody Ireland,  
Life has nothing more for me.

**George Hirst**

**IF**

If ye fell off a roof ye'd be splattered  
If ye were hit by a bus ye'd be shattered  
If a cow ate yer clothes ye'd be tattered  
Whit a terrible thought

If ye fell in the rain ye'd be muddy  
If a dog bit yer hand ye'd be bloody  
If ye ran for a mile ye'd be ruddy  
Whit a life

If ye worked a' the time ye'd be weary  
An' yer eyes would be bloodshot and bleary  
But it wouldn't take long  
If ye sang a wee song  
To forget 'a yer woes and be cheery  
If ye sang like a lark it would never be dark  
And the future would soon look quite deane

**Marlene Home**

**EU Bread and Butter**

Queuing for breakfast  
we see  
trade union leaflets  
on canteen tables.

"Mug'er tea an' two sugars  
dog roll an' bacon roll please."

Leaflets spell out  
our EU right to twenty days  
paid holiday.

"Yeah!  
Twenty days!  
Of red wine, sunshine an' olives.  
Feta cheese an' Paella  
An' two slices of bread an' butta!"

**George Fuller**



## Who Are These Beggars?

I often wonder what  
it would be like  
living as a Beggar  
on the streets of London  
I see them every day  
whenever I'm down that way  
and morbid curiosity  
makes me slow down  
and take notice  
when all around me  
stony-faced People  
are hurrying away  
they haven't the time  
nor the inclination  
to see how sad and lonely  
People just fade away  
However, it's a fate  
that awaits the careless  
and the un-wary  
anyone can become a  
victim of The System  
because it stinks of  
respectability and that  
obviously is what  
makes it so scary  
try focusing through that  
supposed bumper package of  
job security and you will see  
staring back at you the  
piercing eyes of poverty  
Child sex abuse is endemic  
The C.S.A is a shit  
The police are Tossers  
and no one can hear  
the kids moan  
when paedophiles are  
running their home  
The clergy have slammed  
the church door  
The unfortunates are not  
welcomed by God any more  
selfishness is the order  
of the day  
"I'm all right Jack  
get out of my way"  
if you have a problem  
solve it yourself  
no one will listen  
not if you can't pay

all Politicians are mad  
and care in the community  
didn't save one red cent  
These Nutters escaped first  
then closed all the asylums  
releasing onto the streets  
the mad and the insane  
to slaughter and maim  
the innocent  
Nothing is sacred  
nothing is divine  
when Politicians come  
gunning with statistics  
you too might end up  
in a doorway, supine.  
"Where do Beggars come from?"  
"Where do Beggars come from?"  
  
"Fuck me!"  
"You haven't been listening?"  
"have you?"

*Alvin Culzac*

## Sunday Morning Mrs. Marcos

I could swear she was singing,  
ruby-cut rim of lips  
pearled with uninterrupted teeth,  
raised arm gloved for power  
one quiver zagging below her bosom  
vibrating to a ruffle of flustered curls  
outward to the wallpaper,  
unsettling that chair,  
the whole scene made other  
by the picturing of the window frame.

I look again, beyond speckles of dried rain  
restructuring the glass, look again  
as the sunlight changes  
inching flat shadows  
watch pain push lines across her face,  
hear the scream.

*Christopher Barnes*

### **Caring for Mum**

She listens to hear pins drop in the next street  
 Her spectacle-less vision searches for minute  
 deficiencies in her ground floor world  
 Her cream skin is covered by a French cotton  
 nightdress with the logo 'English Bone China'  
 The three buttons on the neck do nothing to hide  
 her ageing dignity  
 She calls my name prompted by her bladder  
 weakness  
 I prepare tasty morsels of food to tempt her  
 tasteless palate  
 The only thing she wants and needs I cannot give  
 her; it's not on the menu  
 She tells me she is sorry because I see things she  
 thinks a son should not see  
 She wants to spare me the pain of caring  
 She is unaware of the privilege she has bestowed  
 on me  
 She prays to her God and asks him to take her  
 home  
 I pray to my God and ask him for a washer/dryer  
 I try to massage her muscles but the bones get in  
 the way  
 Old age anorexia has taken its toll on her stiffened  
 body  
 No Max Factor adorns her still smooth skin  
 The spikey plastic brush brings her silver hair  
 shimmering back to life and thirty minutes before  
 she gets too tired, she is her old self; sharp and  
 witty  
 I tell her she must eat all of her porridge if she  
 wants to see me get my medal from the Queen  
 Her retort is "I am not going all the way to  
 Buckingham Palace just to eat porridge."  
 We share the laughter  
 I am instructed to pick up a tissue that has  
 snuggled itself behind the back leg of the Queen  
 Anne armchair, so far out of sight; only on my  
 creaking knees with outstretched arm can I reach  
 the offending product of wood pulp  
 I ask "How could you see that."  
 She replies "I know it's there and while you're at  
 it, switch off the kitchen light; the Government is  
 not made of money."

**Anthony Rice**

### **Some guidelines for sending work for consideration for publication in Broadsheet**

We welcome receiving all forms of writing for Broadsheet, and would appreciate more short stories, life histories, essays, and other prose. Illustrations are also very welcome!

The size of Broadsheet necessitates that we usually cannot publish anything longer than one A4 page.

We generally have a policy that no more than one piece is published by any writer, in each issue. However we do keep on file writing not published, and consider it for later publication.

We try and publish something from everyone who submits writing to us, it is our aim to encourage people in their writing. Being published and sharing writing is an important part of that process. However if the writing is viewed as contravening our Equal Opportunities Policy, or the 'spirit' of the FWWCP, it will not be published.

The contents of Broadsheet are chosen by members of an FWWCP affiliated group. It is open to their interpretation what is suitable. In this issue you will read pieces by people previously unpublished, alongside some well-known names.

If possible we appreciate writing sent by E-mail, or on disk, which saves us considerable time and cost retyping. If that is not possible, please ensure that the piece is clear to read. We accept cassette tapes, which we will transcribe. Ensure you put your name, address, and contact number on each piece, so we can refer any query regarding your text, and credit your writing.

We do not return writing sent for consideration, so please do not send the only copy you have.

Copyright remains with you, however, by sending a piece of writing for consideration to us, you agree to giving us the right to reprint the piece at any time, for non-profit making purposes, such as in an anthology, or read as part of a talk about the work of the FWWCP. You will be credited and where possible notified of these occurrences.

*We look forward to receiving your writing.*

**Tim Diggles, FWWCP Co-ordinator**

# DIY Publishing Part 1

Nick Pollard begins a three part series offering advice on publishing, workshop and performance organisation, and looking at its history and background in The Fed, based on papers given at the 4th Groundswell *Self-Help Forum*, Sheffield 2002, and *Developing Meaningful Lives*, Birmingham 2003.

If you want to get your message across directly, without fitting into someone else's interpretation, DIY publishing may be for you. For over 25 years, members of the Federation of Worker Writers and Community Publishers (Fed for short) have been doing this with their own poetry, adult literacy materials, and publications on a wide range of issues. Nick Pollard who is editor of the Fed's magazine and also works with people with long term mental health problems, offers information on DIY publishing (which even can be done without the need to go into print!). This information is especially aimed at those who might not have thought they could make a publication.

## DIY Publishing

One reason for forming a group is that a number of people realise that their interests are not being represented by anyone else. One of the problems they have is finding out who else shares the same interests, how many of them there are and whether they have formed any other groups, another is the business of actually representing the group you've formed. One of the easiest and accessible ways a group do this is through print.

This discussion deals mainly with print publications, although it will mention using performance, the web, and audio publications, which you may want to consider as additions or alternatives to print.

The Fed was formed in 1976 by 8 groups of people from London and Liverpool who were involved in adult education and writers' workshops. They were writing but had not discovered any other working class writers – so they decided to set up a group that would campaign for the recognition of working class writing. Today the organisation now has 70 plus member groups in 15 countries, representing some of the same groups it did then but many new ones, with publications ranging from poetry to local history, from books by those caring for people with strokes to campaigning books about local politics.

## Poems by Vivian Usherwood

One of the first Fed publications was produced by Centerprise, a café, meeting place and bookshop in Dalston, London. Called *Poems*, by Vivian Usherwood, it started as a duplicated collection of a schoolboy's work so that everyone in his class could have a copy. This little book grew in popularity until eventually it sold 10,000

copies in many different small editions. This is no mean achievement for any book of poems, let alone by a 12 year old black boy from a deprived area, who was often in trouble for skiving.

It followed on another small publication, called *A Hackney Half Term Holiday*, put together by a couple of teachers, who wanted a book which would interest kids who had little to read in school which reflected the life of their own community. They simply took some kids over into the fields around the school and created a kind of photo-comic around which other children wrote a story. The result was photocopied. It wasn't sophisticated, but the children involved enjoyed making it.

It has been said that the accounts of community life which are found in community publishing often do not reflect images of disability, and show social cohesion rather than differences. However, from the early days of the Fed's groups, a diverse approach to what can be reflected in the community is clear. For example some of the earlier publications by Fed groups included accounts of homelessness. Bristol BroadSides produced "*Toby, the story of a Tramp*" in 1979, which was an autobiography supplemented with photographs. Charlie Potter's "*On the Tramp in the 1930s*", published by Nottingham Writers Workshop gave an account of several months living rough while looking for work, and QueenSpark in Brighton produced a book in which several writers gave accounts of their experiences of homelessness in the 1980s.

The two volumes of *Bristol Lives* (Bristol BroadSides), ambitious perfect bound compendiums from the early 1980s, feature contributions from a wide range of people, including accounts of mental illness in their representation of 'community'. Today, groups of survivor poets are in the forefront of the community publishing revolution with innovative works in performance and print.

## Voices

A publication which was the precursor of this magazine I now edit was called *Voices*. It predates the Fed, and the earliest editions indicate the maxim by any means necessary. It consists of a stapled collection of sheets of paper, in various sizes, with duplicated poems and short stories on them. The then editor, working in a printers' shop, but without resources, made the publication from whatever he could scrounge. It didn't matter what it looked like, the important thing was to get the writing out from voices which had not been heard before.

Today, making things look good is easier. We are now used to glossy publications with sophisticated layouts. When beginning to develop our own efforts it is easy to be disheartened by the thought that we cannot equal 'professional quality'. It might not matter that much, actually – as long as the text is clear; even with basic resources you can produce a publication which looks good, given enough thought and care.

### Planning

Deciding to put out a publication can often reveal splits in an organisation. Publications can use up resources quite quickly. Resources are not just money and equipment, but also the time and the goodwill of the volunteers who are doing the co-ordination, the collation, the distribution.

It is important to plan, give the organisation a bit of time for things to change, people to find they've taken more on than they would like, and for mistakes to be corrected. What you want to avoid is committing yourself to a publication which takes 18 months to put together, by which time it is out of date, there have been faults in the printing and no-one can be bothered to sort them out, no-one in the group ever wants to speak to each other again, all the money is tied up in books which can't be distributed or sold, and having the funders on your back because they've seen nothing for their money.

So first of all: What do you want to publish, and who is going to read it? How are you going to interest people in your publication – or what is in it which is going to make it interesting?

This can be badly misjudged (A dictionary of the meanings of all the street names in Stevenage being one example I came across: "Baker Street – pertaining to the trade of baking") but it sometimes happens that a good idea is not properly marketed.

Publications can be let down by a combination of factors like price, not getting to the audience, and design problems. However, as we've seen, a book of poems by an educationally disadvantaged black 12 year old can sell 10,000 copies, many of them cheaply printed with a duplicator. More commonly community publishers may expect to shift between 200 – 1,000 copies of a book or magazine. This is still a respectable distribution – a group of ten people will be selling twenty to a hundred copies each.

### How much money have you got and what can you do with it?

You can photocopy 500 copies of a one-page leaflet for around £40. You might just hire a room in a pub and invite people to listen for less money, you might make a cassette tape with a borrowed mike and distribute 40 copies for the same money. You can get more material on tape and into a performance than you can on the leaflet, but reach less people.

If you do 500 copies of the leaflet you have to think about how and where you are going to distribute them. Not all the leaflets are going to be read, but you might still reach more than 500 people.

### Talking to the printer

If you've enough money to do a book or a magazine then you might be spending £1,000 on say a 16 page publication, 1,000 copies. The printer will tell you that once the magazine has been set up the greater the number of copies the less each copy costs.

The cost of a printed publication will depend upon the quality of the paper and the number of pages, the number of colours in the printed copy, and the illustrations used. If you want your printer to work on the design costs will be increased. Be sure that if you are working with a desktop publisher programme that you are familiar with it, and that you have a hard copy for the printer to work from as well as the disc.

It is best to get some rough quotes and then work out how much you can do for yourself. Get several quotes, prices can vary considerably, and have a look at finished samples of work. The cheapest is not always the best option.

You might already know how much material you have to print. 1,500 words is about 4 A4 pages with subheadings in 12 point type (this size). The size of the publication will be either single sheet, or in multiples of 4. If you are producing a poetry magazine then you might decide to work out the pages on the basis of a page per 40 line poem, roughly (you can use columns to get more than one poem per page to compromise if this eventually becomes too expensive). You may decide to give yourself more room in a magazine by printing material on the cover, or certainly the insides. Columns will also save space, and are actually easier to read.

Pictures, advertisements, and large headlines will also affect the amount of copy you can fit in, and you will find that you might have to allow for another 4 pages more, or less. Other design aspects, such as having wide margins, page headings and footers (for example many magazines have the title of the magazine on each page so that when it is photocopied the title is copied too) also compromise space.

At this stage you might not know exactly what you want to do, so get a quote which tells you a price for several sizes of publication (12, 16, 20 pages), and for escalating numbers of copies, e.g 200, 400, 800 copies. Ask for how much spot colour (i.e. one colour) costs in addition. Some printers may have a price list, but many don't due to the variety of things people want.

Make sure that you are using software which is compatible with the printers software, and check that your fonts will download. Sometimes the printer doesn't have the same fonts you have, and this can alter the way your

magazine looks. Though the printers' software will use a similar font its dimensions may be slightly different, so that the amount of column inches – the actual length of the text on the page – changes. 12 point in arial is bigger than 12 point Abadi MT condensed light so if the final text appears in a different font you may have too much text or more white space, illustrations may end up on the wrong page, headings and other features may be in awkward points at the bottom or tops of columns.

These issues should be resolved before you do your layout work because they will delay publication and are a source of many problems.

### Economising

You can economise by having a glossy cover and using lighter weight paper on the inside pages, just using colour (spot colour) on the cover and having the inside black and white, or printing the whole magazine in one colour, but using a different colour paper for the cover. If you are doing a series of publications it may be cheaper to have a batch of covers printed separately in one colour showing a standard design (perhaps an identifying logo or piece of artwork), and then overprinted in smaller batches with the title of specific publications in another colour.

You might have some ideas about how you are going to sell your publication already – if it is going to go in a shop, you might want to have a heavier glossy card on the cover as this improves shelf life. You should find out whether you can have print on the spine – this is important if the book is going to be displayed end on, and even on a stapled magazine a vertical line of print along the spine can help to identify your publication from a mass of others. It is difficult to predict how your magazine will be displayed, and you have to assume that most people will not be looking for it in advance, so it has to appeal to the spontaneous purchaser. Sometimes it is better not to skimp on things that in the long run improve capacity for sales.

### Paying contributors

Many people imagine that writing is a way to make money. It is not, and it is best to make this clear from the outset in order that contributors are not disappointed. Many publications, even professional publications, cannot afford to pay contributors.

Rather than raise anyone's expectations of being made rich through writing, encourage them to see it as a hobby – many well known authors need a real job to live on, and may obtain a small amount of income from writing.

A small group will find that it is administratively time consuming and financially draining to offer payment. It is unusual to do better than breaking even on a small publication, though individuals who self publish may find that, doing much of the work themselves, they can do this more easily.

### Other ways to publish

Distributing 1,000 magazines calls for more effort than 200. You will probably want to sell them rather than give them away to get the money back, and you will have to find more places to send and distribute them. One way for increasing your distribution is to have the files from your desk top publisher saved to pdf format, and then post these as an attachment to your web page for others to download – however web publishing is a separate topic. Print, performance, or audio publishing can have an advantage over web publishing in that it reaches people who don't have computer access – which is true for most of the people I work with. Through print you can also target distribution to specific groups or individuals. Internet publishing is fine, but unless you are looking for it, how would you know it was there? How will your audience find you?

### Performances

Organizing a performance in a pub or the material for a cassette takes less time than organizing it for a magazine, although there may be almost the same amount of content. For a magazine, all the material will have to be proof read, and you will need photos, illustrations, some thought about layout and design. You will have to organise postage and distribution. Some material may have to be cut out, whereas you might be able to find those extra few minutes to fit someone in at the performance.

There is a limit to this. A large group, or organisers of more popular performance nights, may find that the performers who have watched lots of others get squeezed in to the show at the last minute are disappointed when a tired audience cannot respond to their material, having already watched three solid hours of different poets.

### Ground rules

A performance requires planning. It is difficult to deliver serious or complex work to an audience that has had a few drinks and heard a lot of comic material. You need a strategy for pulling people off when they hog the stage, silencing hecklers, and preparing some clear ground rules for performers – such as not taking on their entire works, working out what they are going to read before hand, avoiding mumbled chapters from works in progress and trying out their material before they take it to the event.

### The mc

Appoint a strong mc to keep things in order and give people a boost as they come on. This person will anchor the show and keep the audience more interested, especially if there are many people participating. The mc needs to keep good time and to be able to act quickly to swap things around when people don't turn up or can't be found at their moment. Plan when the breaks should occur.

Do you need a mike in the room or can you be heard without it? Poor mike technique reduces a poetry

performance into an acoustic lottery, but when a room fills up with people sound disappears. Many of the rooms you end up using for performance have poor acoustics or background noise from other parts of the building. The mc will need to quickly coach people in using the mike, and prompt better technique when performers can't be heard or 'pop'.

The mc will also spell out ground rules for the audience. Audiences must be encouraged to respect everyone performing, and to be supportive to those who may not be used to strutting their stuff in front of others.

Good publicity is essential. Do not rely on mailing lists through local council arts services, as these can often distribute material too late. Use them, but also do your own.

Often if you are producing a publication having a meeting or event to launch it can be a good way to start sales.

### Audio - cassettes

Producing a cassette can be easy, but there are a few points to think about. Some people prefer to listen than read, and can, for example, play your cassette while doing other things. However, a cassette case allows you to visibly display only a very small amount of information about your group, so is less likely to attract people to pick it up, unless you can place it well. Because cassettes are small, they can easily be fitted into prominent places like the shelf above the cashiers' head, where they will catch a curious eye. They can be a good way to get information to people who already subscribe to the group and a cheap way of producing a small circulation magazine.

### Equipment

The equipment in your living room may not be good enough to give a quality that other people will want to listen to cold.

Find, or borrow a *good* quality tape deck with a manual recording level, and use a *good* quality mike (you may need two, or an adapter, to record on both channels). Use a stand, or attach a lapel mike to avoid rumble on the recording from handling the mike.

With a mixer you may be able to dub on music and sound effects, but remember that every time you duplicate a tape you get more hiss and rumble, so that the mixed down result will have more noise on it than the master tape. The mixed down tape is the tape you will want to copy from, so more noise will be transferred onto the copy. Experiment with the equipment first, so that you have an idea of what it can do, before inviting people in to record them.

Record in a quiet room, away from street noise and fluorescent lights (which hum – you'll find this is picked up by the mike, though you won't hear it). Use a room with soft furnishings – draw the curtains. Kitchens and

halls will produce an echo, fridges and freezers will make a hum. Unplug the phone and switch mobiles off.

### Preparing participants for recording

Unless interviewing, you should make sure that everyone rehearses what they are going to put on the cassette until they sound as if they are speaking freely rather than reading from a script. You might like to cover the main points of an interview in outline before recording, but not so closely as to make it sound stilted.

People sound different on tape. So much of communication is visual that often people are unprepared to find that they do not sound as distinct on tape. Try to get participants to 'limber up' their mouths by stretching them around a series of exaggerated vowel sounds for a few moments before reading.

Get people to record their piece again if they make an error, but if you have a mixer and you are pushed for time, you may be able to edit a polished version from two complete readings. Play it back and make sure you can hear it clearly, that the speaker doesn't speed up as nerves come in, and that there are not too many interruptions. You are unlikely to get a broadcast quality performance, but you should be able to achieve an acceptable result.

Different speakers use different volumes – set the recording level for the best results for each person. An automatic level usually produces a booming effect as it finds the optimum level for a new sound, it is important to keep an eye on the level and adjust throughout the recording, as often people will alter volume.

Cassettes can be even cheaper if you recycle them. You can simply ask people to return the tapes once they've heard them, and then you can record the next edition on them. Always use fresh tape for your master copy, however, as any problem on the master tape will be transferred onto your copies.

Small numbers of cassettes can easily be copied on domestic machines, but if you plan to produce material in larger volumes (in excess of 40 copies) it will be competitive to look for a bulk cassette duplicator, under recording services in the yellow pages.

Finally as CD writers are increasingly within the range of everyone's pockets, it can be well worth while considering distributing your material in CD format. The finished product can be very cheap (blank CDs are now cheaper than blank cassettes), and you might have images, video clips and sound as well as a lot more text. Good quality results can be achieved using portable digital equipment.

**More next issue!**

# Writing is in my blood now

Alicia Jenkins writes about the positive effect Cherry Smyth's writing residency at HMP Bulwood Hall had on her

I started writing when I came to Bulwood Hall in November 2000, through the encouragement and inspiration of an excellent Writer in Residence called Cherry, who held a creative writing class.

I had never attempted any form of writing before and although I had a wealth of experience of life, plus memories galore, I'd never thought of putting pen to paper, to share it with other people.

Cherry introduced me to poetry in a refreshing way, so although I hadn't looked at poetry since my schooldays (over 30 years ago), I started to appreciate it in a totally different way.

My first attempts at writing were based on happy memories, but after a period I progressed to reality, plus painful thoughts, emotions and dreams.

The pen and paper was my way of communicating, a friend in whom I could trust, to mirror my thoughts and feelings exactly, without altering anything. (That is why I love writing!)

Last year an anthology of poetry called *A Strong Voice in a Small Space* was published (see review on page 36), which was a collection of various styles from people at Bulwood Hall. I was thrilled when I found out that six of my poems were going to be included in it, as there were so many talented writers I attended class with.

The launch took place in September 2002 (which was held in the gym at Bullwood Hall) was a huge success, and lots of books were sold that night. A selection of poems were read out (myself included) and a camera crew from *Prison Video Magazine* filmed a few of us on stage, as well as afterwards on a personal interview, to ask about creative writing and how I became involved.

It is still a pleasure to write, plus an added thrill to get published, but either way I can't stop now, because writing is in my blood!

*Alicia Jenkins (EH7974) HMP Bullwood Hall*

## Photographs

I look at this piece of paper  
that makes me cry or laugh.  
Taken from different perspectives  
it's known as a photograph.

This image a camera created  
displays memories I won't forget.  
Those eyes and smiles of sunshine  
that never fade or set.

It doesn't matter how much we change  
or how the years fly past.  
the lens that captures the person  
leaves a treasure made to last.

The history of a colourful life  
is stuck to a board on my wall.  
Pictures of places I've been to,  
and my children that grew so tall.

*Alicia Jenkins*

## Here I go again

Here I go again opening the door.  
A pile of letters are lying on the floor.  
"Time to lock in", her voice drones,  
I can hear some moans and groans

Perhaps I'll have a steamy shower,  
can I manage in a quarter-of-an-hour?  
I'd better put a towel on the floor,  
or else it'll look like a swamp for sure!

Tap-tap-tap. "Are you there?"  
I'm usually sat on my bed or chair.  
Writing or painting, having fun.  
I wish I had a water gun!

*Alicia Jenkins*

## American Dream

Published by Pig Iron Press, Youngstown, Ohio, ISBN 0-917530-74-8, \$24.95 hardback, \$14.95 softback



*American Dream* is an anthology of poems, stories, essays, cartoons, art, and photography compiled by editor Jim Villani. The works come from “92 Writers and Artists from 30 states”. The American dream, however, is such a diverse thing that it cannot be clearly defined (and the introduction by Villani somewhat testifies to this). Instead the American dream is expressed through the art of Americans themselves.

The poems that open the anthology focus on the discovery of America, the mythic imagery of the New World, and the conquest that made America. These poems speak of ship crew members arriving to America (Wendy Bishop’s “The New World”), and the subjugation of the Native Americans (Maggie Jaffe’s “America” and Juan Carlos Vargas’ “De Obre Novo”). Like Pablo Neruda’s *Canto General*, *American Dream* begins with an epic vision of America: history from above—the conquerors—and from below—the conquered.

After the first three poems, the theme of the works shifts to more contemporary, “mundane” versions of the American dream. Often these later stories and poems take the form of retrospections of childhood and family life. Some poems focus on memories of immigrant grandparents (Justine Buisson’s “Grandfather” and Charles Ghigna’s “When Grandpa Danced on the Water”). Kurt Rheinheimer’s “Six Acres” is a story of a family buying property in the country, hoping to move out of the old neighborhood. But the story ends with the property going to waste over years as suburbs,

shopping malls, and office buildings surround the six acres.

A mixture of innocence and violence characterizes other stories of childhood memories. In “Alfred Learns English” by Lawrence Bozick, kids grow up in immigrant working-class neighborhoods. Alfred, a German boy who can’t speak English, takes a leap from a tire swing and ends up breaking every bone in his body. But Bozick provides a redemptive, idealist vision of American childhood: while Alfred heals up in a full-body cast, the neighborhood boys teach him English by playing board games and poker. On the other hand, Earl R. Hutchinson’s “A Green Force” is a memory of growing up in the Great Depression; a story of kids on the Fourth of July getting into mischief, playing marbles, and witnessing town locals beat up three communists and driving them out of town.

Overall, *American Dream* explores the hopes and failures of everyday Americans as they pursue different versions of the dream. Private property acquired and lost; the marriage and the job that secure a sense of success only to end in divorce; a celebration of childhood innocence and a lamentation of lost innocence; the desire to be a pop idol. Much like a dream this anthology flows through several varied images that make up America, but unlike the dreamer, I doubt a reader will sleep through it.

Nick Peterson, Temple University

## Beyond the Means Test - The Writings of Walter Brierley

By Paul Lester, £3.50, published by Protean Pubs, Flat 4, 34 Summerfield Crescent, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B16 0ER, ISBN 0 948683 43 0

Small but not lacking in information. On average 350 words per page and 13 pages, but in that short text we are brought into the world of Walter Brierley, not just his writing career but also the man, his background and history. This booklet is a mine of information for anyone wishing to know of the life of Brierley and his works. But it also gives in insight into the ‘Birmingham Group’ of 1936. Brierley’s works are all about the struggles of working class men trying to fit into either their own world, being mining, or into the larger world of academia and that of town dwellers. If you want to know about the Birmingham Group this small biographical book on Brierley tempts you to delve further. I found it enjoyable throughout and informative both about Brierley’s upbringing and his works. If I have a criticism it is purely one relating to where the section about Brierley and Hampson’s correspondence and the Birmingham Group was placed in the text. It caused extra backtracking at one point to remind myself who the people talked about where, which when considering the book is about Brierley



was irritating. But perhaps this is just my view of the ordering of the text. What I would say is Paul Lester has given us a book that though lacking in numerical pages is not lacking in information, and for that I would not have missed it, bravo Mr Lester not a wasted word, and given my one reservation on paragraph layout, the reality of Brierley's life and his writing is interwoven with great craftsmanship by you. This book should not be missed by anyone wishing to study or understand working class writing or historical study of the demise of publishing opportunities for working class writers, regardless of era. And perhaps would be a salutary reminder to publishers of the wealth of excellent **original** work from those who have lived it rather than those who only regurgitated it, thus now being left to that ridiculed and despised area of 'self publishing'. I for one would rather read a working class press book than yet another "wonder woman's or man's glitterisation rather than gritterisation.

And should you be tempted, Paul Lester has also written about others in the Birmingham Group including a booklet on D H Lawrence which given the forgoing is sure to be informative without the hype so often associated with writers who are using biographical text to strut their stuff!

*Sue Havercroft, Grimsby Writers*

## Southwark MIND - Manifesto

Published by and available from Southwark MIND, Cambridge House, 131 Camberwell Road, London SE5 0HF, no copyright, tel 020 7701 8535, e-mail [info@southwarkmind.org.uk](mailto:info@southwarkmind.org.uk)

Southwark MIND is run by people who use or have used mental health services. It has a nationwide reputation as one of Britain's most radical and effective mental health user groups.

This is my kind of book. Simple, direct, utterly relevant. A user generated Mental Health Manifesto which is beautiful to behold. I can do no better than offer quotes from the Manifesto and encourage you to read it in its fullness. Here goes.

"The Medical Model is too restrictive and gives much power to psychiatrists. Drug therapies should be an informed option"

"Our social needs, such as housing, education and employment opportunities have an enormous impact on our mental health"

"Diagnosis is a tool for social control. When we are diagnosed we are labelled and therefore stigmatised"

"Compulsory medical treatment is a blunt instrument experienced as degrading, humiliating and disempowering to people who receive it. Compulsion undermines our basic human rights"

"We believe in a holistic approach to mental distress and recovery. Physical and mental health issues are interdependent"

"All service users should be treated with dignity and respect"

There is much more in this wonderful little book - including some great photographs. Get a copy, read, weep a little, then get out there and help. We can make it if we try.

Thank you Southwark MIND for your Manifesto and your immense humanity.

*Roy Birch, Stevenage Survivors Poetry*

## Two Thousand Feet

by Julie Ward, published by Jack Drum Arts £3.00 available from Jack Drum Arts, 43/44 Gladstone Terrace, Sunniside, Bishop Auckland, Co. Durham, DL13 4LS.



A collection of Japanese Haiku poems inspired by the sights and history surrounding the Rivers Tees, Wear and Derwent. The title comes from the source of these rivers which is approximately 2000 feet above sea level in the North Pennines.

This book has a rustic charm, bound together with twine, which perfectly compliments the simplicity of traditional Haiku. Each poem is accompanied by an Ordnance Survey map reference, making it possible to retrace Julie's steps.

The poems are as timeless as the rivers themselves, taking the reader on a journey vivid with sensory and historical detail. Julie's passion for the landscape shines through, her knowledge, experience and enthusiasm breathe life into each and every page. Her appreciation for natural beauty and a tremendous sense of fun is evident throughout, although this does not cause her to shy away from serious issues such as pollution and environmental damage.

I'd recommend this book to everyone, especially anyone who needs a bit of time-out.

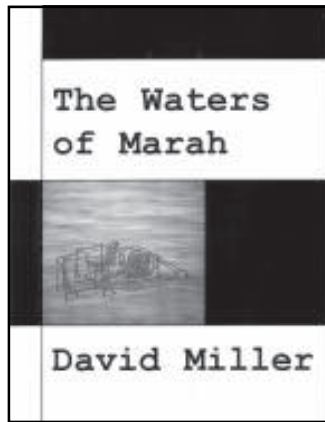
*Ashley Jordan, Shorelink Community Writers*

## The Waters Of Marah

By David Miller, Selected Prose 1973 - 1995 Published by Singing Horse Press, P.O. Box 40034, Philadelphia P.A.

19106 ISBN 0 - 935162-25-9

singinghorse@erols.com



I am resistant, and therefore need the illusion of symmetry. David Miller is a hero of the Beyond Within, and as such wages peace on the Unbeliever. How do I describe the writings of David Miller? Apart from

telling you they are very beautiful I'm not sure. *The Waters Of Marah* reminds me of many things by being totally unlike any of them.

The only rule David Miller appears to accept with regard to his writing are Truth and Beauty and a silent echo which follow which follows itself around at the edges of its own awareness.

When I first read *The Waters Of Marah* I felt that the waters, though beautiful, were dark, sluggish and a trifle turgid. Since then I have come to realise that the darkness is on the outside only, that the waters are illuminated from within by a soulful iridescence; that the sluggishness is illusory and that in truth the waters are flowing at the speed of Eternity; and that far from being turgid *The Waters Of Marah* are quite simply much larger than their actual physical size.

*The Waters Of Marah* is a beautifully produced, beautifully written book. A meditation on emotional self- exile. The theme song from a fifties French Movie painted in black and white on a lotus petal in black and white by Edward Hopper. Impossible but proven. *The Waters Of Marah* read it, then listen for your silent echo.

Roy Birch, *Stevenage Survivors' Poetry*

## Tales Along the Appalachian Plateau.

By Danny Fulks, Working Dogs Series, Bottom Dog Press, Huron, Ohio, USA. ISBN 0-933087-38-1. \$9.95. Reviewed by Roy Holland.

This collection gives a wonderful picture of the culture of that part of the Appalachians in the state of Ohio. We follow the progress of the dirt farmers,

of illicit whisky stills and of highly competitive school basketball teams from the thirties to the fifties of the last century. Each piece of oral history reads like a story in itself, although only one chapter consists of an interview, that with the coal miner, Marshall Wallace.

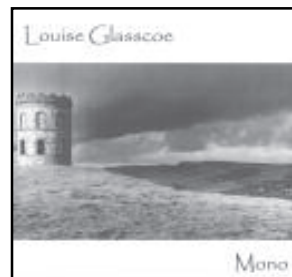
The society portrayed is very insular. Few people have travelled beyond their immediate surroundings. The Church and hymn-singing are important, even for 'sinners'. We learn about funeral customs and the effect of a double murder, in which an outsider appears to be involved. Everyone smokes Camels, even the parson, or chews tobacco, which is an important local crop. Traditional Bluegrass provides the entertainment, while the youngsters go hunting racoons with dogs. The flora and fauna are vividly described.

What is not clear to an English reader is whether this rural backwater and its priorities survived beyond the fifties. Looking back in the age of Globalisation this book is almost like Thomas Hardy to an English eye. If it is intended for wider circulation, some kind of editorial intervention would be of help. As it is it's still a great read, and a model for oral history.

Roy Holland, *Survivors' Poetry*

## Mono

Poems by Louise Glascoe, CD, £6.99 available from 7 Balmoral, 16-18 Marlborough Road, Buxton SK17 6RD



Mono is an excellent CD, containing a collection of nineteen poems, read and performed by Louise.

I often enjoy listening to poetry more than reading it, as the writer can guide me through the emphases in their writing, and find deeper meanings than my own interpretations can. Louise is a very good and clear reader, as anyone who has seen her perform will testify.

Louise creates a very strong 'voice' in her writing, and many pieces are very personal in nature. Listening to Louise read is like having a privileged glimpse into her life and thoughts. She is a viewer, of herself, and of people and events around her. I remember being very moved when reading *An Accident of Fate*, which when read is even stronger. *Tango at the Club Latino* is another which is even stronger when heard.

I recommend you buy this CD.

Tim Diggles, *FWWCP Co-ordinator*

## Creatures of the Night

Performance Poems by Rosie Lugosi, published by purpleprosepress, £4, isbn 0 9536746 2 2, available from purpleprosepress, 7 Longford Road, Manchester M21 9WP, or at Rosie's performances.



I have the honour of again reviewing another collection of Rosie Lugosi's performance poems. And what a collection! Many are 'alternative' lyrics to famous tunes, such as *I get a kick out of you*, and as Rosie runs a Fetish night at a club, well you can imagine the rest, and if you can't go to the club!

Rosie uses this collection to take a well penned swipe at middle class Cheshire in the wonderful *Middle England Tango*, enough to make all the John Lewis customers squirm! In *I'm being queer for Britain*, Rosie highlights the problems of being *different* in our 'beige' society. Equally wonderful is the hymn to masturbation in *Safe Sex Message* (sung to a version of *Diamonds are Forever*). This collection covers most things situated in the locked closets of our minds, and only let out in the dark of night, when no-one else is looking (through their nets).

Rosie does this with humour and a 'black' wicked wit. Her performances are brilliant, funny and reach parts other performers fear to tread. This book is one to treasure as is Rosie, whose fame (quite rightly) is rising all the time.

Tim Diggles, FWWCP Co-ordinator

## Back to Brighton

by Leonard Goldman, ISBN 0 9530593 5 9,  
£5.00 from 26 Westfield Crescent, Brighton, BN1 8JB

*Back to Brighton* is the third part of Leonard Goldman's autobiographical trilogy. The first part, *Oh What a Lovely Shore*, tells of the early years in Brighton and the big

influences on his life. The second, *Brighton Beach to Bengal Bay*, tells about being London, getting involved in Politics and the Unity Theatre before going off to War.

*Back to Brighton* begins as Sergeant Len leaves Calcutta for the long journey home, mostly spent talking about and looking forward to home. Absence does not always make the heart grow fonder, sometimes couples grow apart so homecoming was a cold reception by a blazing fireside in Birmingham in December, not quite what he expected.

Being a bit depressed after Embarkation Leave he threw himself into the life at the army camp, editing the camp newsletter, getting into trouble over the politics of editorials, and finally collecting the 'civvy' suit that marked Demob.

In a Britain desperate for teachers (some things don't change much) Len took up the challenge and trained at the Birmingham Emergency Training College to teach History and English. Then on to London and a job with LCC. When further training was offered Len applied for and was surprised and happy to be able study at the LSE, a five-year part time evening degree course. Academia was beckoning. During all of this time he did not hide his Communist sympathies. No 'red under the bed' here, people knew where Len stood.

All this work had at least minimized the effect of the divorce which took it's own time but had been inevitable. Len rejoined the Unity Theatre and they even did some tours. But a different tour in 1957 saw Len joining a group of teachers on a short visit to the German Democratic Republic to do English workshops with teachers there. Before leaving to come home they were told about a post at Karl Marx University in Leipzig as a Lektor for English. It took a while, walking around London's streets, but Len eventually applied and got the job. Academia won out. So did Len. It was in the GDR he met the love of his life as well as many lifelong friends. Seven years later Len was back in UK looking for a job in Brighton, trying to get back to his roots.

He got a job in Dorothy Stringer School and he was back to his roots in more ways than one. In Brighton he was now the teacher, but very soon he was also the political activist pushing for Comprehensive Education and the demise of the 11-plus. Trying to tell (11-plus) failures that they were not failures, and history is interesting, and get the local authority to change the schools is pretty tough, but Len had been through a war, worked in London and Leipzig...

I thoroughly enjoyed this book. I could go on and on. It's the descriptions of the way things were done



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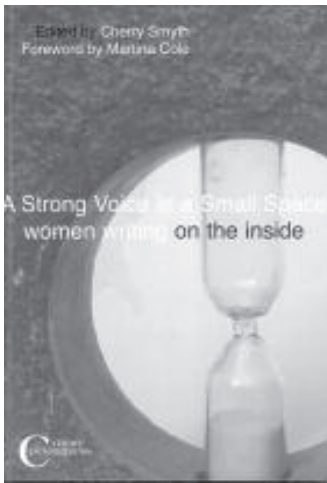
in the fifties. The effect of the 'Iron Curtain' on Britain's Communists, the holding back of those who dare to be different, the 'battle' for comprehensives, and the family man and his life at home. It's a good read! Enjoy!

Dave Chambers, Newham Writers Workshop

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## A Strong Voice in a Small Space - Women Writing on the Inside

Edited by Cherry Smyth - Forward by Martina Cole -  
Published by Cherry Pickingpress - Price £4.99 ISBN 1-8746000-92-9



E

I delayed reading this anthology of poems for many reasons, and I have to say that I was wrong not to read it the moment I got hold of it. Why, you may ask. Because of the strength, compassion and emotive pieces I have had the pleasure, although often with a lump in my throat and watering eyes, of reading. From Cherry Smyth's own introductory poems, which are a well deserved tribute from her to the women she worked with, and give a wonderful taster of the pieces that are to come in the sections themselves.

First section Titled *'Bees in a jar'*; gave me a taste of what it meant to be 'trapped' in a prison with Vicki Walton's *'Bee in a jar'* when you sense her fight (metaphorically) with the invisible wall. And Miranda Walsh's *'The Cobweb'* should not be missed even if you don't like spiders! *'I don't remember anything really'* by Brenda Batsa tells it like it is with repetition until the last line of the second stanza when she lets us in on what hurts most, 'time', and Natasha Solomon's *'Situations' ... "you will hold the key"*. The collaboration of M.V.R & C lightens the mood, not that the preceding pages are dour, but by

its snappy 4 syncopation. To end my tempting you in the first section read *'Wish you were here'* by Sara Hatherly when she transports us from *"The stagnant stench of loneliness lingers... to... Here the stars shine over me.. on indigo sleep, I wish you were here"*, I felt a pang of envy as with so many of their love poems, as we will see in Section 3

*'In Your yellow room'* Emma Gregory's *'Thunderbolts'* leaves me sweating too when she mixes so many pictures with her words. Debbie McLoughlin's *'The Magic Box'* had *'fish and chips and onion bhajis'* in it, a girl after my own heart, although I have to say I'm not a Daniel O'Donnell fan, but I do relate to *'childhood memories'* being right to put in the box. *'The Retirement'* by Racheall King was touching and as she says *"a real woman with a love that's real and will last forever"*. I then had to re-read *'the Lodger'* by Angie Sellars with its sensuous delight of *'like tickle my ear, search my mouth..'* Only to be tickled myself by Vicki Walton's *'Warning'* yet I felt it had pathos too. As to the lump and tears in my eyes, I defy anyone who has experienced compassionate love not to be moved by *'The Daughter'* when Miranda Walsh & Racheall King *'...look in her looking glass...'*

But more is to come in *A Year without Love*. Every emotion, every love that a human can have is here, from maternal to sexual and of those weaker sadder types of love such as heroin. I wanted to highlight some of these pieces too, but I'm not. Why you may ask again. For two reasons, one is there are so many that moved me (which spaces does not allow for here) but secondly because I want you to want and dare I say even crave to read this Section all to yourselves. You'll not be disappointed, truly believe me, I know I will read and re-read this section in particular often.

Last but not least, *'Out there'* starts with Miranda Walsh's *'Out there'* what a brilliant piece all the truths of her life yet she packages it for us to digest, tidy rhyming you almost don't feel the collision within you. This Section again is more powerful than the last and again why should I let you have it easy folks, buy the book the poetry goes from strength to strength. The writers' abilities to write all styles of poetry are boundless, their experiences should be read about not left or forgotten. I feel that through allowing me into their lives, their heads I started to wish I could hear the writers themselves reading their own work, perhaps a CD is in the pipeline!

And peppered throughout there are pieces by Cherry Smyth and I especially liked *'For the Prisoners'*, which for me summed up a lot of what I personally got from the writers work, they are *people* like you and me and not just *prisoners* and very creative and worthy in their writing. The book ends with stories of the writers which gave insight, beyond requirement. These ladies have opened up their hearts, their inner world for us to see. If you are

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reading this then don't just let the experience pass you by, buy the book and be humbled by and thankful for your problems, as despite their problems they have given a true gift back to those of us outside.

Lastly I must say to all those writers who did not see their name here, don't feel left out. I wanted to put more references in but space is limited and of those mentioned I would say my tastes are not collective, I write poetry too within a group and we all write differently and critique each others work and we always get mixed receptions as we all write in different styles. What I would like to say to you all is don't stop, go on, the book is a breath of fresh air and will blow away all those who wish to label anyone they do not understand. Here's the book, people of the world, you have no excuse! I am privileged to have read your book ladies of Bullwood Hall, thank you.

Sue Havercroft, Grimsby Writers

(See article on page 31)

## Live From The Wholly Stolen Empire

CD by Chris Chandler and Anne Feeney, \$15, see [www.primecd.com/chandler.htm](http://www.primecd.com/chandler.htm) for details of how to obtain it



Chris Chandler is not well known in Britain, but has a number of CDs of his poetry/monologues available in the USA. In them he gets to the heart of the corrupt big corporation/government USA. It is funny and yet cuts right to the point. This CD features the singer Anne Feeney, hero of many strikes and protest marches. It is a mix of Chris's voice over Anne singing/playing 'typical' American songs, such as *I am a Pilgrim*, *I shall be Released* and so forth. They contrast and combine, adding meaning and counterpoint to each.

His website says of him: *Chris Chandler is a veteran of the road. As a wandering poet and musician, he has been Travelling the thin Highways of fat America. Few performers can lay claim to on the roadisms the way Chandler can. Over the past seven years he has blazed a trail from*

*Edmonton to Guadalajara, Halifax to Baha. Over a million miles in seven years. He has lived in a car and performed on the very streets that wrap around his universal joint.*

Chris' texts are sharp and delivered in a strong voice. This is a live album from various performances around the US, and the audience reaction is a plus, and does not get in the way.

Amongst the 10 tracks I particularly liked *I Dreamed I Saw St. Augustine, Florida*. It takes for its theme the whole of US history and everlasting life! There are wonderful lines such as "...the water from the fountain of youth was served to me in a disposable paper cup...", and "...as for me I keep my viagra right next to my prozac, but if either of them worked I really wouldn't need the other one...", and "...Andrew Jackson was forced to surrender, whilst slinking back to Washington DC to declare victory, and it's not the only time defeat in Florida has led to becoming President...". All this over Anne beautifully singing *Swimming to the other side*.

Another is *21st Century*, where Chris gives a voice to the many in the US who are anti war, but who many others wished were silent. Again wonderfully ironic lines such as "...we'll prove Iraq has the bomb even if we have to drop it on them ourselves...", and "Jeb rang up (George Snr) and asked ... if we introduce democracy into Iraq does that mean Florida might be next?".

It's hard hitting yet entertaining stuff, in many ways the true voice of the many Americans swamped by the over patriotic networks and media.

This CD is an ideal introduction to Chris' work, I hope you will enjoy it as much as I have.

Tim Diggles, FWWCP Co-ordinator

## Reviews

If you or your group publish a book, CD, tape, magazine or pamphlet, either send us a copy, and we will find someone suitable to review it, or, get someone to review it and send us the copy with a good copy or scan of the cover, and any illustrations, the more the better!

Send them to FWWCP, Burslem School of Art, Queen Street, Stoke-on-Trent ST6 3EJ.

If you would like to review books then contact us on 01782 822327 or e-mail [thefwwcp@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:thefwwcp@tiscali.co.uk). Remember this magazine is often the only place where many publications are reviewed, let others know about what you publish.

# Homeless Experts Speak Out

“We used to be just single voices and no one listened... Now that we are all starting to talk with a unified voice, we’re just going to have to be listened to.” - Jimmy Carlson, homeless volunteer, London

Fed Member Groundswell UK has updated its popular Speakout Recipe Book in time for Speakout Week 2003 – and to coincide with the deadline for Local Authorities’ first Homelessness Strategies.

Based entirely on Speakout ‘recipes’ from experienced homeless Speakout ‘chefs’ around the UK, the new Speakout Recipe Book is packed with more information from Speakout events held by homeless people around the UK.

The updated book includes:

- tips on finding the right ‘ingredients’ for your Speakout
- ideas for planning your Speakout ‘menu’ of topics and issues important to homeless people
- case studies of successful and first-time Speakouts held by homeless people around the UK
- advice on documenting a Speakout
- encouragement to follow up the promises of policy makers who attended the Speakout
- a full list of contact details for Speakout chefs and further resources for homeless-led groups

Groundswell’s Speakout Recipe book has been updated in time to prepare for Speakout Week 2003, from 15-19 September, when homeless people across the UK will put their views and questions to decision-makers at forums of their own design, and invite local decision-makers and policy makers to hear their views and commit to working with homeless people in their area.

With Local Authorities required to consult homeless people for Homelessness Reviews and Strategies, there has never been a greater need to hear the views of homeless people. In the Speakout Recipe Book, homeless and ex-

homeless people share their experiences of organising events where they can give their views.

For more details or to arrange to speak to someone with experience of homelessness, contact:

Toby Blume, Clare Cochrane, Steve

Jones or Athol Hallé at Groundswell UK, tel: 020 7737 5500, E-mail: [speakout@groundswell.org.uk](mailto:speakout@groundswell.org.uk)

What is Groundswell UK?

Groundswell UK is a national charity that supports people and projects that are committed to inclusive approaches to tackling homelessness, poverty, and exclusion.

*What is a Speakout?*

A speakout is a forum where homeless people can talk directly to decision makers and service providers can hear directly from homeless people about their needs.



## Public Liability Insurance

As from 1st May 2003, the Literature Department at Arts Council England stopped administering the Creative public liability insurance scheme for writers and literature development workers. Writers, literature development workers, and people running workshops, interested in renewing or taking out cover should contact Jack Moss or Kim Dodden at Blake Insurance Services, 46 North Street, Bridgwater, Somerset TA6 3PN, phone 01278 453345, or fax 01278 446680, who will continue to administer the Creative insurance scheme, and who are now the first point of contact. Blake Insurance Services will be responsible for renewals, new business and collection of premiums relating to the scheme.

# literaturetraining

Philippa Johnston, CPD Co-ordinator, updates us with the latest from the consortium.

Our latest news is that our website [www.literaturetraining.com](http://www.literaturetraining.com) is now live, providing quick and easy access to information on literature training in the UK. There are searchable sections on:

- a wide range of literature training events and opportunities, including workshops, mentoring schemes, critical appraisal services, fellowships, competitions and job opportunities, plus training of general interest to the sector
- creative writing courses
- literature organisations, networks, websites and on-line writing communities, plus links to other sectors
- information sheets, articles, books and other resource materials
- funding sources for professional development
- training providers

There is also a section on professional development, background information on the **literaturetraining** partnership, and a free e-mail update service for subscribers.

Our other news will be of particular interest to Fed members living in Scotland. Thanks to a successful funding application to the Scottish Arts Council, **literaturetraining** is going to be working with the

Scottish Book Trust to deliver a programme of training and professional development specifically tailored to meet the interests and needs of writers in Scotland.

The training programme has five main strands of activity. There will be an induction programme for the Writers in Scotland Scheme (WiSS) incorporating a series of training days; a pilot mentoring scheme for writers; a writers' forum; and a conference for writers and teachers focusing on writing in schools. There will also be a range of training opportunities for dramatic writers. To inform the programme, we will be undertaking research into the training and professional development needs of WiSS writers in Scotland. The project gets under way in June 2003 and runs until October 2004. A programme manager has been appointed for the project and takes up her post shortly.

We also have plans for a training programme for writers in Wales, working in partnership with the Academi. There will be regular updates on both projects in future issues of the Fed Magazine but do please contact me in the meantime if you would like any further information.

Philippa Johnston  
CPD-Co-ordinator, literaturetraining  
Tel: 0131 553 2210  
E-mail: [p.johnston@nawe.co.uk](mailto:p.johnston@nawe.co.uk)

## London Fed Event November 22nd 2003

There will be a day of workshops, meetings and readings in London on November 22nd 2003, organised jointly by London Voices and The FWWCP, open to all who wish to attend.

The cost is £10 before the day or £15 on the day, which includes all workshops and lunch.

Workshops will take place from 11am to 9pm at a local school and the evening readings at The Sekforde Arms, Sekfords Street, Camberwell Green, nearest tube Farringdon.

Further details will be available from early September, contact The FWWCP on 01782 822327 or e-mail [thefwwcp@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:thefwwcp@tiscali.co.uk), or, phone Gill Oxford on 0208 445 0090.



## Arthur Thickett

We have to report the very sad news that former FWWCP Chair Arthur Thickett died on Easter Day, just a week before his beloved Fedfest.

Arthur was one of the real characters of the FWWCP, and was a longtime member of QueenSpark Books. His new book about his life and politics was featured in Federation Magazine issue 25.

Jackie Blackwell remembers him from QueenSpark Books:

*I knew Arthur for about 11 years. He was one of the first people I met at QSB, with his carrier bag full of accounts – he introduced himself as the treasurer! I have spent many happy times with Arthur, a lot of them involving drinking! At one time, a group of us would regularly go to read and listen to poetry at the Walmer Castle pub – Arthur's performance always guaranteed to bring the house down. I have been to many FEDfests with Arthur, enjoyed evenings and endured hangovers the following morning! Sometimes Arthur was infuriating, but overwhelmingly he was a warm, funny and generous man who I loved and thought would go on for ever.*

*There is much much more I would like to say about Arthur, but I wanted to send a small tribute to him to share with FED Members and I hope you will raise a glass or three.*

*In the words of Arthur himself, 'CHEERS ARTHUR'*

At FEDfest 03 we celebrated his life with readings and memories, and Roger Drury led a noisy tribute to him. At his funeral I spoke of his time as Chair, Treasurer, friend, and performer. Others who knew him gave their tributes, often very movingly. The funeral ended with The Red Flag, but the organist was very rusty with the tune, and it ended up like a Les Dawson piano sketch! I think Arthur would have enjoyed that! After some drinks in his favourite pub, we went down to the beach in Brighton, and the burnt out West Pier (where he had worked and wrote so honestly about), had set alight again in the strong winds, billowing smoke all over the town centre. Arthur had one more performance left! Thanks Arthur for all you did.

*Tim Diggles, FWWCP Co-ordinator*

# FEDERATION MAGAZINE & BROADSHEET NEXT ISSUE

The deadline for submission of articles or reviews for consideration for Federation Magazine issue No.27 and Broadsheet 13, is October 20th 2003, for publication and distribution in January 2004.

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E-mail: [thefwwcp@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:thefwwcp@tiscali.co.uk)

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