

# Federation Magazine

The magazine of The Federation of Worker Writers and Community Publishers £1.50 \$3 €3

## Seeking the Enemy

**A major new book from  
Working Press  
Review & Article inside**

**INCLUDES  
BROADSHEET  
NO. 11  
INSIDE!**



**Issue 25**

**January 2003**

Seeking the Enemy -  
Whose Story?

Driftnet

Werkkreis

Literaturetraining

Groundswell

FEDfest 03 Form

Book Reviews

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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; fundraise to help support people attend events.

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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# F E D i t o r i a l

## Collaborate!

Like many people in the Federation I've been looking forward to Arthur Thickett's collaboration with Lorraine Sitzia for some years, ever since that brief passage in Deck Hand West Pier in which he mentions his experience of the Korean War. Her article is a compelling account of the complex challenges involved in producing community publications from personal, raw and still keenly felt experiences. Sometimes - perhaps because of funding limitations on projects, but perhaps also due to insufficient consideration, publications have lacked this degree of care and sensitivity in the editing process, with damaging effects on the individual whose life is portrayed. Though not always in the mainstream of community publishing Working Press titles have often been significant and Seeking the Enemy looks as if it will become a landmark publication.

Moving from Brighton to Grimsby, the upbeat story of the Driftnet performance group might be the kind of thing that other Fed members consider developing - and writing to the magazine about. The Federation is an increasingly diverse organisation - just look at the range of publications in the review section to evidence that - but the continuation of the FWWCP depends upon the activities of its member groups, and the creative exchange which some of the contributors to this issue invite.

**Nick Pollard**

## Changes to Federation Magazine and The Broadsheet, and Issue 26

The Executive Committee of The FWWCP have made a decision to publish Federation Magazines twice a year, and include The Broadsheet as a pull-out. We hope this will offer the opportunity to read about events, set alongside creative writing. There may also be some special issues of both publications, published alongside projects and events. The magazine will be larger in size, and we hope, broader in scope.

The decision to take this action has been made to save on the costs of both postage, and production, to help work on the FWWCP's deficit. We are working hard to raise more funds, and would appreciate any contribution you can make by becoming a Friend of the Fed, or in guiding us towards new sources of funding.

For Issue 26 we are looking for articles and interviews with a theme of the way we use words. Whether it is how you use words in your writing, performance, songs, and drama. Or, perhaps the way words have shaped your perceptions of community, organisation, place, or group. Do you use local dialects, words your mother or family taught you, are there words which remind you of an event. We want to hear from you!

Please keep contributing, we value your writing and opinions.

**Tim Diggles, FWWCP Co-ordinator**

## Cover

Former FWWCP Chair and Treasurer, Arthur Thickett (centre) with friends in Japan, in 1953. Arthur has worked with Lorraine Sitzia on a remarkable oral history of his life and politics, called Living with the Enemy, published by Working Press.

## Whose story? collaborating on a life story

Lorraine Sitzia describes the process and writing of the new Working Press publication, *Seeking the Enemy*

A core principle of the FWWCP and its member groups is collaboration, but working together on a community or life history project is not always easy and raises many important issues such as ownership over the material produced, who decides what material is made public, and how this affects the history told. In this article I will provide an overview of a collaborative oral history project in which I was the interviewer and Arthur Thickett, who many of you will know, was the interviewee; I will attempt to make transparent the process of the production and authorship of the resulting book, *Seeking the Enemy*<sup>1</sup> published earlier this year. Included within this piece is a very brief biography of Arthur which I hope will serve as an introduction to his story. I am aware that readers may wonder why this piece has been written only by one of us, and the reason is that outside of the collaboration on the book we have both been free to talk about and use the material for our own purposes. For Arthur this has been mainly in performance and for myself it has been in research – specifically exploring the process of collaboration and sharing authority (which Arthur has been aware of and supported).

### Beginning Arthur's Project

I have known Arthur for many years through our involvement with QueenSpark Books, but it was not until the beginning of 1996 that I began to interview him for an oral history course I was undertaking. Though I knew that Arthur had been a communist for many years, and at some point a soldier in the Australian Army, I had never heard the 'full' story of Arthur's military and political life. Knowing Arthur as a storyteller and a performer, I thought he would enjoy the opportunity to talk about his life, and I knew that it would make a fascinating interview. My initial plan was to interview Arthur about his joining the Australian Army, his experiences during the Korean War, and subsequent 'conversion' to communism. This first interview coincided with my discovering that the Communist Oral History Project was looking for ex-comrades to be interviewed. Arthur was keen to take part in the project and so we decided to conduct further interviews, focusing on Arthur's political conversion and subsequent transition from right-wing working class youth to socialist, educated man. On completion of these interviews, in the middle of 1997, we began discussing the possibility of producing a book from the collected interview material.

Arthur and I both had a strong desire to develop this work. Arthur was motivated by a need to tell his story,

especially the political side of his history, and to have it placed in the public domain. Arthur's involvement in community writing and publishing and his allegiance to the ideals of this movement<sup>2</sup> were significant influences; he saw *Seeking the Enemy* not only as a testimony to his political ideals, but as a contribution to this wider movement recording and presenting the histories of 'ordinary' people. In fact over the last few years Arthur had attempted to write an autobiography but had stopped some time before we began the interviews. After writing nearly one hundred pages he had only reached the age of fifteen and 'ground to a halt' with the enormity of the task. As a result Arthur found that he preferred the collaborative oral history process to that of written autobiography. To a certain extent, as the interviews progressed, Arthur also felt the oral telling of his story as a therapeutic process, as the following interview extract illustrates:

You cannot completely sort yourself out alone, and as a political person, which I still am, it is wrong to even try to that extent because from yourself you extend, politically, philosophically and socially. I believe in that. In a sense there's a great need as well inside for this, so out of this and the total manuscript must come something good for me.<sup>3</sup>

### Motivation

My own motivation came from a desire to work with a sole narrator and to involve the narrator in the process of creating his/her history, through which myself and Arthur would share responsibility for and authorship of the final narrative. I was particularly influenced by Michael Frisch,<sup>4</sup> an American oral historian, who has written extensively on the idea of a 'shared authority' between interviewer and narrator, and of course by the ideals of community publishing. I wanted to involve Arthur in the process of 'making' his history, to see not only whether this ideal of interviewer and narrator working together in this way was attainable but also whether it resulted in an equal collaboration; alternatively, I might find that this was an exciting and interesting ambition but unworkable in practice.

### Arthur's Story

A teenager in Hull in the middle years of the Second World War, Arthur could not wait to sign up 'to get at the Germans', but first saw active duty with the British Army in India during the August 1946 Calcutta riots between Hindus and Muslims. Arthur volunteered for 'special duties': to clear mounds of dead, bloated bodies



Lorraine interviewing Arthur 1998

from the streets of Calcutta. After being demobbed in 1948, Arthur was increasingly troubled by memories of India. He began drinking and eventually suffered his first nervous breakdown.

However, Arthur was still desperate to fight for Britain, as the men in his family had before him, and with the advent of the Korean War he tried to sign up again for the British Army. Refused admission because of his mental health status, he saw an advertisement for recruits placed by the Australian Army in the *Hull Gazette* and decided to apply. After telling a few 'white lies' he was pronounced 'AI fully fit' and left England in November 1950 for a six year term of Australian Army service.

### Conversion

On returning to Australia from the front-line of Korea in the mid-1950s, Arthur, 'became rather wild', drinking very heavily with a gang of veterans and getting into fights, and he suffered a series of breakdowns. During these years Arthur also began to question his world view - conservative, patriotic, militarist, imperialist - and increasingly found answers in socialism. In 1959 Arthur completed his 'conversion' and joined the Communist Party of Australia.

Arthur returned to England in 1961, where he became active in the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and the anti-Vietnam movement. He gained a undergraduate degree as a mature student in the 1970s and became a school teacher. However, memories of war were never far away, and he continued to struggle with guilt about his military service. A predominant theme in Arthur's life during these years was the need to find a 'just' war and be on the 'right' side. On several occasions, Arthur actively

pursued this desire to take arms against imperialism, however, Arthur's ambition to fight for just liberation struggles was never fulfilled. After some teaching and other jobs Arthur retired and he now lives in Brighton where he is actively involved in QueenSpark Books. He remains a socialist, and became committed to pacifism in 1992.

### Scripting a life

Editing *Seeking the Enemy* to present the material in an interesting way that tells a story has been a long process. First, after completing the interviews for the Communist Oral History Project in 1997, I read the transcripts looking for stories that could be placed together to form a coherent narrative. I tried to draw out broad themes that reflected the key element of Arthur's story - a political conversion narrative which followed a chronological pattern.

I moved the oral testimony into working chapters and this material was then roughly edited into a more flowing narrative - removing excessive repetition and my questions, for example. This was presented to Arthur for comment, usually one chapter at a time. I had decided from the beginning that the text would take the form of a monologue, with my presence as interviewer removed because I felt that leaving my questions in the final manuscript served no purpose but to disrupt the flow of Arthur's story, and would have made the editing process more difficult. In this respect I was particularly influenced by books such as Marjorie Shostak's *Nisa* and Theodore Rosengarten's *All God's Dangers*.<sup>5</sup> I wanted to see if it was possible to order the material into a cohesive narrative without comment by me, other than with a brief

**Whose story? cont'd**

introduction, in a way that would engage the reader and tell a story. Nevertheless, despite the lack of any written analysis or interpretation by myself, the structure and organisation of the material does reflect *our* interpretation of Arthur's stories, and through *Seeking the Enemy* there is an attempt to show the 'how's' and 'why's' of Arthur's life by editing and presenting the interview material in the form of a monologue.

**Interactive**

However it cannot be denied that the stories were told within an interactive dialogue between myself and Arthur, and it is important to acknowledge the impact of the interaction between the narrator and interviewer on the stories that are told. Our relationship has been a significant impact on the development of this project.<sup>6</sup> As I have mentioned, I had known Arthur for many years and this 'insider' status allowed me access to Arthur. However I was an 'outsider' in many ways: I had no experience of war, I had not suffered mental trauma, I am not a man, I am thirty-eight years younger than Arthur. The fact that we already knew each other may have had an impact on what was told at the beginning. It is difficult to judge now after interviewing over such a long period of time, because as the interviews progressed our friendship developed and each of us opened up to the other. However, a good friendship is not enough to generate productive and useful interviews. Over the years distinct factors have emerged that contributed to this process and made Arthur feel comfortable in telling me his story. Of these, the following are particularly significant: shared interests, family background and specific life events.

Our shared interests were very important. Our working relationship at QS was a significant factor and my interest in communism and a shared general political view were also significant. Arthur has a political story – his conversion – that he wanted to tell and he had a captive audience in me.

The similarities in our family backgrounds formed the most important connection. Both our families are working-class and from the north of England, indeed Arthur's family is from the same area of Hull as my mother's, and both our families worked in the North Sea fishing industry. Other significant factors were my own semi-military upbringing and my having lived overseas in countries important to Arthur's story. The danger in this shared experience is that sometimes I did not always challenge Arthur, or I accepted certain explanations because they fit into my own understandings or beliefs. As Yow has emphasised, oral historians need to be self-reflective and self-critical, and to think carefully about how our own background affects which questions are not being

asked and why they are not being asked.<sup>7</sup> If Arthur had political as well as personal motivations for telling his story, there were also complex forces motivating my involvement in the project which affected my relationship with Arthur and his story. As interviewees we become involved in the creation of a life story and can ourselves become affected by that interaction.<sup>8</sup> Like Thomson I found I had an emotional investment in my work with Arthur: a need for a grandfather I never had.<sup>9</sup>

Although Arthur at times spoke uninterrupted for up to twenty minutes or more, this was nevertheless in response to my questions. While I adopted a fairly loose framework within the interviews and tried to follow Arthur's lead, I would ask for clarification, question certain statements he made, and bring him back to areas which were particularly interesting to *me*, though these were not always interesting to *him*. In a sense we had to negotiate our way through his stories, balancing what he wanted to say with what I wanted to hear. This ongoing dialogue was beneficial for us both: it helped me understand Arthur, and I think Arthur enjoyed telling his stories and thinking about his life in different ways. The format which we chose in order to tell Arthur's story meant that this interaction is not shown, but it is important to remember that this interaction and dialogue has been an important part of the development of the project.

**More Depth**

The initial edit of the Communist Oral History Project interviews enabled us to identify gaps, contradictions or inconsistencies in the stories, or areas which needed further exploration. For example, I wanted more material on personal relationships, about which Arthur had said little at that point. And Arthur wanted to provide far more depth on his visits to Ireland, which had been only briefly touched upon in the early interviews. Essentially this rough draft provided the basis for further interviews. As a result the manuscript for this book progressed in tandem with the interviews, in that after each interview the material was edited into existing or new chapters. Often in interviews Arthur would elaborate on previous stories and I tried to combine these multiple accounts to give a fuller description of the events. Yet the stories never changed in essence; what seemed to happen was that the more Arthur read draft chapters the more it made him remember other events.

**Themes**

The way in which Arthur told his stories also influenced how I edited the material and drew themes from it. By reading the transcripts, and from our numerous untaped discussions, I looked for the ways in which Arthur chose to tell his stories, noted recurring themes and the relationship between these themes. I aimed to have the narrative reflect these. For example, Arthur interjects his

stories with historical facts, and also reflects upon the stories and their impact on him as he tells them. This is a typical aspect of Arthur's storytelling and I have tried to retain a sense of it in the book.

I had intended at the beginning of editing to present Arthur's story following a neat, linear, chronology, but as I began to edit the material it became apparent that this was not fully possible. There are many themes which appear at intervals throughout Arthur's life, and attempting to weave these into one single and seamless narrative was not only going to be difficult but also would not do justice to the complexity of Arthur's life and how he has lived it. Equally, attempting to record the totality of someone's life, even in a project working over several years, is an impossible task. The narrator chooses the stories he wishes to tell, to present the life he wishes to be recorded. While I am attempting to reconstruct Arthur's past in a linear and chronological order, through telling his story Arthur is asserting his present-day identity and the way he interprets his life. Thus he tells the stories in which *he* is interested, the ones *he* wants others to know. These do not always follow a neat linear progression but reflect connections of events and interpretations that Arthur makes of his life as he relates his stories.

**Structure**

The structure of *Seeking the Enemy* is further complicated by the use of Arthur's written material. The use of written pieces interspersed within the oral narrative is a key element of the book. Arthur has been writing since the age of thirty, both fact and fiction, sometimes combining the two. He has kept all his writings, and because writing has been, and still is, very important to Arthur it seemed appropriate to use the material in some way. The idea of using Arthur's writings developed initially because in one of our interviews Arthur repeatedly referred to a specific section in his book, *Deckhand West Pier*,<sup>10</sup> which he felt summed up his feelings about war. I thought it would be illuminating to use this within the narrative and when I spoke to Arthur he told me he had many more pieces of writing and began giving me a selection of his work to read. Approximately twenty per cent of *Seeking the Enemy* consists of these written pieces.



Arthur on leave with friends in Japan, 1953

Most importantly I felt that the written pieces often added to the oral narrative, offering a different insight into Arthur's experience. A good example of this is Arthur's description of the physical symptoms of his psychological distress as the following two extracts demonstrate. The first is from an interview and the second is a written piece.

Oral account:

*There was a series of about four to five breakdowns [...] I was going to work one day on the train. I was just sitting on the train and this physical pain came and it went on for two or three days - sort of doubling-up pain. I thought I had ulcers. I was shaken and I went to see the doc, and to sum it up it was all nerves.<sup>11</sup>*

Written account:

*I was doing my favourite walk along the towpath up the Thames valley. It was just at that moment that I felt the first burning pain in my stomach, and slowly, stupidly, I realised I was having one of my 'attacks of nerves'. I looked up at the yellow haze in the sky; it was changing, deepening. The burning pain in the stomach was severe now. I was walking partly bent double and I couldn't help it. I forced myself to straighten up again and looked at the yellow patch in the sky. The clouds had changed to a dirty grey with ragged fingers that seemed to reach out, ugly and yes, menacingly. The yellow light was now a strange eerie grey.*

*It was quiet, dead quiet save one crow in the distance. Caw. Caw. Caw. He seemed to laugh cynically, and seen in the distance I had a strange, silly moment of panic and lonely helplessness as the pain increased sharply and I had to stop walking now.*

## Whose story? cont'd



*I was breathing sharply and deeply now and looking at the cloud that threatened; one lot of fingers had grown a hand and it was reaching out behind me. My ears were ringing, but then suddenly, unbelievably, I heard music drums and I was in Sydney and I was marching, marching back from Korea and there was a noise in my ears that was cheering and clapping ...<sup>12</sup>*

An important point to note is that the written piece is contemporary to the experience - it was written in the 1960s at the time when Arthur suffered repeated breakdowns. The written piece seems to express Arthur's experience with a vividness that is absent from the oral narrative. The oral narrative of this episode seems relatively 'thin', not because Arthur had difficulty talking about these breakdowns but simply that, thirty years on, Arthur feels removed from them and does not remember the detail of how he felt at the time.

## Changing stories

The Korean War was a major turning point in Arthur's life and the cause of his joining the Communist Party. As a consequence, we spent a lot of time discussing this period in his life in order to understand this conversion and how he made sense of it. This transformation in Arthur's life is the underlying narrative of *Seeking the Enemy*, and Arthur's stories revolve around it. This means, as with all autobiographies, that not everything that has happened to Arthur has been included or even been told to me throughout the four years of our working together. For example, Arthur has written a fictional work about his teaching experience. He hopes one day to publish this and therefore felt it unnecessary to elaborate on it in the course of this project. He also felt that it was a minor part of the more 'political' story he wanted told. Furthermore there is an expectation that the narrative in an autobiography in some ways reflects a

'completed' life. However, this is impossible for we are always in the middle of our stories and can never know how they will end.<sup>13</sup> If Arthur had not had a political conversion the stories he would have told about being a soldier would be very different to the ones he now tells. The facts may remain the same but the interpretations and understanding of those events changes as our lives change. The past is open to interpretation and reinterpretation as both the individual and society change over time. As Arthur has moved from soldier to communist to pacifist, his remembering becomes shaped by his current identity. He remembers and interprets his life from the viewpoint of an Arthur who is politically active and a pacifist, who views war very differently from the Arthur of forty years ago. This does not mean

that Arthur does not remember the events clearly, or gives inaccurate information, but that changes both in society and within Arthur mean that his memories are now filtered through his present-day identity. For example, despite his conversion and it providing the means for him to explain his actions in going to war, subsequent public debate about war, particularly around the Vietnam War and its legitimacy, have provided more reason for Arthur to discuss his experience of war and indicate how wrong he now believes it is to take up arms.

## Choice

Not all the interview material was included in the book, either because it did not seem to fit our overall plan of what the book should be, or in some instances because it was very personal information that Arthur did not want made public. At some point a choice must be made about what has been collected and how it will be used, and *Seeking the Enemy* represents the way in which we both decided to present Arthur's story after much discussion and debate. Attempting to 'share' the authority for the final manuscript and work collaboratively has been rewarding, but also at times difficult and frustrating, trying to balance both our wishes and intentions for how the book should be. Although there was always an agreement that it was *our* book, as publication became a reality there was a tension over ownership; it was Arthur's story but at the same time I had been the facilitator and had been responsible for making the life story public. It is probably inevitable that at some stage this tension arises and fortunately we were able to work our way through it. *Seeking the Enemy* was never intended as an academic piece of work in which I would deconstruct and pass comment on Arthur's story, but was conducted in the spirit of community publishing. I have found Jane Mace's comments with respect to her work in reminiscence a

useful guide: 'The important idea that I still work with is that the final text should be one that satisfies the authors, whether I have some regrets about their decisions or not'.<sup>14</sup> This does not mean that I relinquished my 'authority'; I think we still achieved a 'shared authority' but it was a negotiated process that meant compromise on both sides, helped by the fact that we both shared the same vision for the overall narrative. I think the process of collaboration led to an exciting, stimulating and successful project. I learnt an enormous amount from the process and for Arthur, this publication is a way of having his story heard: 'A major political statement from me, my side of it. Small to the world outside but the one chance of a big voice for myself. I am a representative of ordinary people, with certain experiences, taken altogether somewhat unusual and perhaps worth writing about.'<sup>15</sup>

Lorraine Sitzia

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>Sitzia, L & Thickett, A, 2002, *Seeking the Enemy*, London, Working Press

<sup>2</sup> Morley, D et al, (eds.), 1982, *The Republic of Letters: Working class writing and local publishing*, London, Comedia

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Arthur Thickett, 5 February 1996, recorded by L. Sitzia

<sup>4</sup> Frisch, M, 1990, *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History*, Albany, SUNY Press

<sup>5</sup> Shostak, M, 1981, *Nisa: The Life and Words of a !Kung Woman*, London, Allen Lane; Rosengarten, T, 1975, *All God's Dangers*, London, Jonathan Cape

<sup>6</sup> see Sitzia, L, 1999, *Telling Arthur's Story: oral history relationships and shared authority*, *Oral History*, 27(2):58-67 for more information on our relationship and its impact on the stories told and not told

<sup>7</sup> Valerie Yow, 1995, *Ethics and Interpersonal Relationships in Oral History Research*, *Oral History Review*, 22 (1): 51-66

<sup>8</sup> Mary Stuart, 1993, *And how was it for you Mary? Self identity and Meaning for Oral Historians*, *Oral History*, 21 (2): 80-83

Advert

## The Life Search Project

*Developing an evolving moral and ethical democracy  
Facilitating greater informed participation for new thinking  
Creating a better world through integrated personal and group  
proactive creativity*

**Volunteers** (online and home-based) wanted for multi Website based project, who are informed, inspired and involved in sharing the challenges and demands of our shrinking individual and communal world, facilitating a new media campaign empowering mentor for *New Thinking* about life issues post 9/11.

- If you care, need a voice, are independent and self-motivated?
- If you ask yourself who are we? Where are we going? Why should we bother?
- If you can spare two hours a week helping make a difference, then get in touch and join the global community network.

*Materials provided and expenses reimbursed*

**Contact: David Lloyd-Howells FRSA**

www.thelifesearchproject.org.uk  
osvd2002@yahoo.co.uk

<sup>9</sup> Alistair Thomson, 1995, *Memory as a Battlefield: Personal and Political Investments in the National Military Past*, *Oral History Review* 22 (2): 55-7

<sup>10</sup> Thickett, 1993

<sup>11</sup> Interview with Arthur Thickett, 5 June 1996, recorded by L. Sitzia.

<sup>12</sup> Arthur Thickett, unpublished piece, 1961.

<sup>13</sup> see Polkinghorne, D.E, 1988, *Narrative Knowing and the human sciences*, Albany, SUNY for discussion on narratives and plotlines

<sup>14</sup> Mace, J, 1995, *Reminiscence as literacy: Intersections and Creative Moments in Mace, J (ed), 1995, Literacy Language and Community Publishing*, London, Multilingual Matters, pg 114

<sup>15</sup> Thickett, A, 1999, from letter to LS

## Driftnet - a widening influence in Northern Lincolnshire



Driftnet performers l to r: Stephen Rix, John Sullivan, Carolyn Doyley, Gordon Wilson, Caroline Burton, Neil Stanforth, Sue Havercroft, Jim White, Tracy Booth

Driftnet is a new mark on the poetry landscape of Northern Lincolnshire.

Despite only becoming formally constituted in March of 2002, the nine strong group of poets is already making a significant impact on their local arts scene.

Driftnet celebrated its performance baptism as a group in July when it presented an evening of readings as part of the week long arts festival of Grimsby's Parish Church of St. James'. Each poet read from their own work in a programme designed to reflect both the shared and the individual interests of the group.

"We were thrilled and excited to be able to read in such a setting," said Driftnet Secretary, Caroline Burton. "It was a wonderful opportunity for this group to launch itself."

The outfit's aim is to promote poetry across Northern Lincolnshire by striving to engage new listeners, readers, writers and publishers and by providing opportunities for aspiring, developing and established poets to find audiences for their work.

Driftnet hopes to bring a major name poet to their area for an evening reading this autumn and is currently working with local arts officers to bring this about. There are also plans to run workshops among community groups.

"One of our primary objectives is to work with groups in other arts areas on collaborative projects," Caroline explained. "We have invited actors, musicians, singers and artists to explore the possibilities of joint working. Plans are under way for two themed evenings, one with a Billy Bragg tribute artist and another with local folk singers and musicians. Our longer term plans include

more readings and competitions; and the publication of poetry in print, sound, film and multimedia."

Driftnet is composed of a legal secretary, a personal advisor for young people, two mothers, three teachers and a pair of dubiously retired gentlemen. Members' ages range from thirty something to 'too old to remember'.

These poets work in both modern and traditional forms and in performance and more contemplative modes that range from the hilarious to the reflective. Tone and mood fall variously between the playful and the sublime while subject matter touches the local and universal, the timeless and more immediate.

Driftnet grew out of Grimsby Writers, in which many of its members are still active.

In January 2001 a small group gathered around a table at a Grimsby Witherspoon's and decided that they needed a format and environment dedicated exclusively to poetry, and one that would allow for exploration of their individual and collective work while facilitating a quality of feedback that existing arrangements were unable to provide.

After telephone calls to other likely enthusiasts a meeting was held within a week at John Sullivan's house and seven members established a set of basic principles that remain unchanged today. There was talk of pulling down funding for projects but it was quickly agreed not to try to run until they'd walked awhile. It was decided that any "business" meeting of the as yet unnamed group should wait until twelve months after that inaugural meeting.

The group proceeded to meet on a fortnightly basis in each other's homes following a simple and unchanging programme. At every meeting each poet would read and

## A Strong Voice in a Small Space: women writing on the inside

Twenty-seven women in HMP Bullwood Hall have worked with poet Cherry Smyth over two years to produce a profound and moving collection that challenges assumptions about prisoners, life in prison and what comes next. (See Reviews)

Experimenting with styles like haiku, sestinas and free verse, these are poets just cracking out of their shell.

The book includes a foreword by Essex Crime Writer Martina Cole who has visited the prison and worked with some of the women.

At a time when the UK's rate of imprisonment has just become the highest in Europe and the female population is the fastest growing of the prison estate, this book provides a valuable insight into what it's like for women to be inside.

In frank testimonies, the women explain how self-expression through creative writing has helped them grasp hold of the reins of their lives and take them in a new direction.

Prizewinning poet Cherry Smyth describes how changes occur in her regular poetry classes at the prison:

"When the love poem by a 16<sup>th</sup> century preacher – John Donne's 'The Good Morrow' – brought tears to the eyes of an eighteen year old ex-junkie with little formal education and made her want to stick it on the wall of her cell, she was surprised as I was. Out of that connection, a door opened and a new poem emerged."

The book was launched by Martina Cole, with readings by the prisoners, at HMP Bullwood Hall on September 18<sup>th</sup> 2002, and at the Chelmsford Poetry Festival on October 10<sup>th</sup>.

For further information contact Lynda Toovey on 01702 562810.

circulate single poems to be taken away for thorough and rigorous critiquing that would be delivered at the next meeting. Feedback is delivered according to the Hobsbaum method whereby the poet under scrutiny silently hears their work discussed, with an opportunity to reply afterwards. Such silence requires and instils an invaluable discipline. It prevents disruptive attempts at defence or explanation while encouraging or, in some cases, coercing the writer into constructively listening to the often surprising and unexpected reception of their work.

There were initial reservations about the method and some poets still find themselves unable to desist from interruption but, almost exclusively, members accept that the process has rendered them more sensitive to detail and consequently all share a feeling of having grown considerably as a result. It's a method practised by the likes of Seamus Heaney and Michael Longley in the 1960's. What more needs to be said?

The early caution regarding funding and project development enabled the group to focus exclusively on their poetry. That in turn led to the establishment of a deep and mutual trust among members that allows for honest criticism to be confidently and comfortably offered and received. The consequence for Driftnet has been the realisation of a secure identity for an ambitious group keen to make its mark on the arts scene.

Groups interested in working with Driftnet are invited to contact the secretary on 01472 311871.

To find out more about Driftnet, visit their website at <http://beehive.thisisgrimsby.co.uk/driftnet>

**Gordon Wilson, Grimsby Writers**

## Peace Not War

Torben Franck, the acting Development Officer for Burslem School of Art (who reviews *Werkkreis'* latest magazine on page 31), has recently written and recorded a track for the fund-raising compilation double CD "Peace Not War", on international release December 2002 in all good record stores.

It includes other great artists such as Billy Bragg, Massive Attack, Ani DeFranco, Chumbawamba and Public Enemy, to name but a few. All proceeds will go to International Peace and Anti-war groups, including Stop The War Coalition in London who produced the CD.



## Return to Philly, October 2002

FWWCP Co-ordinator, Tim Diggles, was invited to review the progress of Philadelphia, USA, group New City Press, here he reports on his visit.

This return visit came about through Steve Parks, who is Director of the Institute for the Study Literature, Literacy and Culture, at Temple University, Philadelphia. Steve asked me to review the progress of New City Press, who were formed after being inspired by our performance 3 years ago of *Feds under the Bed!* The visit offered an opportunity to build upon links previously made.

Steve had set passages from Fed books *Republic of Letters*, and *Once I was a Washing Machine*, as part of a BA course, and I was asked to attend classes, answer students' and tutors' questions.

### New City Press & Temple University

During my stay, I met most of the people involved with NCP, and by the end was able to make a preliminary report. New City Press is a very strong organisation, and developing quickly, it was great to meet 'old friend' such as August Tarrier and Eli Goldblatt, and hear about the progress.

It was fascinating to see how our publications were being used. I met four different classes (about 90 students), talked a bit about the Fed, read some pieces from *Broadsheet* and took questions about the organisation. These were very thorough, and showed how deeply they had read the books. Most questions were about the basic tenants of the FWWC, something we always find when visiting abroad. Students were using the book as an illustration of how writing about the use of a 'real' voice was important. Steve wishes to develop this work and use more Fed books in the future.

I also had a meeting with graduate students (taking MAs, PhDs), who were doing most of the teaching, and heard about what difficulties and issues were being raised by students. Probably one of the most interesting points was how much discussion was raised by the work, how much was questioned in a positive light, and how it made the students realise that it was not always necessary to write in 'academic-speak'. One tutor was setting students work to compare between an Emily Dickinson poem and *Washing Machine!* I have asked that some of the students' papers be sent to us, they may make a fascinating article for this magazine. One other tutor used a wonderful phrase for the work in *Washing Machine*; she said it was so natural that one could 'walk their shoes for a while'

Recently NCP have published two books, *The Forgotten Bottom Remembered* (to be reviewed in Issue 26), and *No Restraints: an anthology of Disability Culture*

in Philadelphia (reviewed page 36). They are planning more, and I met Mark Lyons who is working on an oral history of The Kennett Square area, with Mexican mushroom workers, about their lives and the struggle to get into the US, originally as illegal immigrants, then the struggle for rights and survival in the low paid agricultural industry. This will be published in the near future, and raises some very interesting issues that are central to many debates in the UK, it should be a fascinating book.

In recognition of the influence of the FWWC on their work, Steve has made me (as representative of the Fed) a Fellow of the University. I feel this is an honour for the whole FWWC.

We planned that in June 2003, members of the Fed will visit Philadelphia again, to work with members of communities on issues of shared values and interest, using people from a broad range of member groups, and they are especially interested in oral histories, the survivor movement, performing, and small-scale local publishing. We are planning a project working with the Atwater-Kent museum of working life in Philadelphia, to set up community history/writing initiatives, based around life histories of people, which would become the basis for walks around neighbourhoods.

We also discussed a scheme in the future for individual Fed members to work in the department for a term, working with the press, and with students. Temple University are setting up writing centres in schools and community settings, and would be central to that work.

### Washington and the George Meany Center

I travelled by train down to Washington DC (about 120 miles), which was in the grip of the Sniper! It was great to meet Elise Bryant again, she had given an inspirational talk at the Working Class Studies Conference in Youngstown, where she saw *Feds under the Bed*, and loved it! Elise works for the AFL-CIO, equivalent to the TUC, at The George Meany Center, in the northern suburbs of Washington.

She took me to meet David Jones and other people at the Labor Heritage Foundation, who collect songs, books, banners, photos, everything to do with working people. Their catalogue of CDs and books is well worth looking at. Music and singing are very important in US labour history.

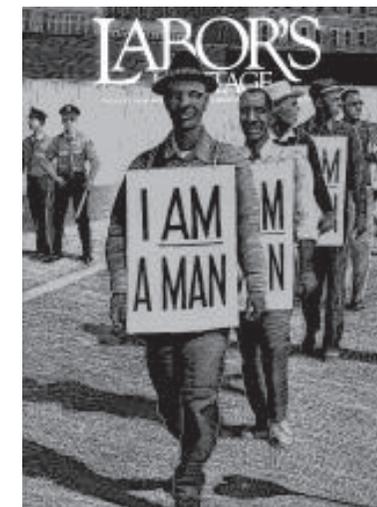
The Labor Heritage Foundation has premises in a building close to The White House, in the heart of government Washington. They have a scheme, the *Inventory of American Labor Memorials*, to locate memorials and monuments to workers and working class struggle, an idea we could well look into on a European wide basis. In addition, they organise a four-day event called the *Great Labor Arts Exchange*. We have been invited to take a group of people from the Fed to perform and run workshops. That is also in June 2003.

Later I met Sol Schneiderman, a musician who works at The Library of Congress. He used to publish a magazine *Talkin' Union* in the 1980's, which covered a lot of music and history of struggles, much of the work the LHF now do.

At The George Meany Center. I was shown around the massive AFL-CIO archive, and given a very interesting booklet about setting up small-scale archives. Their archive workers offered to give us any help we may need when setting up ours. They publish a very beautifully produced magazine called *Labor's Heritage*, which is well worth getting hold of.

### The Kelly Writers House

I visited the vast University of Pennsylvania (Penn) site in Philadelphia. It is a highly prestigious university, with massive corporations sponsoring buildings and research facilities. The Kelly Writers House, is an 1850's building, surrounded by trees and full of character. I met Al Filreis, the Director. He said that his overall subject head was very keen to work with us because she had seen our performance three years ago (we must have been so good!). It is one of those buildings you wish you could just move into. There are rooms for meetings, performances, dtp, sitting reading in front of a fire, publishing, workshops, and eating. It is very much part of the student life on the campus, and they offer critical assessment, have a radio show, and programme about 300 events of readings and workshops annually. Just after we had finished talking, poet Bob Holman gave a very



lively talk about his poetry and the poetry club he runs in the Bowery, NYC, to which he invited all Fed writers!

### The Pew Charitable Trusts

I met with Adrienne Edwards for around an hour, who controls a \$35million Culture budget for the Trusts, in one of the plush offices I have ever been to. I think the furniture in just that office would have cost more than our annual spending! They fund the Philadelphia area only, but it showed just what is potentially available. Steve and I are working on an application for funds.

### Future

As you can see, there are many things to move forward. It was a busy, and I feel, very productive few days. The New City Press people appear to be pleased with the input I was able to give.

People in the UK often forget how strong the left and labour movement is in the USA, we hardly hear about it in Britain, but there is great opposition to the Bush policies, and as found on previous visits, there are many people who share the same values and beliefs, which the members of the Fed do. The work with Temple and others could open wonderful cultural and creative opportunity for members in many Fed groups.

**Tim Diggles**

### Web Sites

New City Press: [www.beyondbroadstreet.org](http://www.beyondbroadstreet.org)  
 The George Meany Center: [www.georgemeany.org](http://www.georgemeany.org)  
 Labor Heritage: [www.laborheritage.org](http://www.laborheritage.org)  
 Kelly Writers House: [www.english.upenn.edu/~wh](http://www.english.upenn.edu/~wh)  
 Bob Holman: [www.bobholman.com](http://www.bobholman.com)  
 Bowery Poetry Club: [www.bowerypoetry.com](http://www.bowerypoetry.com)

## Something to get your teeth into...

The FWWCP organised a weekend of performance training with practical workshops from Rosie Garland (aka Rosie Lugosi), and sessions on marketing, working with schools, and earning a living, with Geraldine Collinge of Apples and Snakes. This was in conjunction with Literaturetraining. The course took place at Burslem School of Art in Stoke-on-Trent in late November 2002. Below is some of the reaction to the course.



### At Rosie's workshop I learnt:

...that other poets are just as scared as me about performing, however confident they appear in 'normal' circumstances... to lower my voice, use a deeper voice for better projection... to relax more during performance... how to hold your paper(s) in an unobtrusive way and make eye contact with the audience... how to stand and receive applause after reading, not to scuttle off stage... how to control my breathing... to speak in a lower pitch from within myself, speaking slower... relaxation and projection techniques ...voice control, breathing, gaining more confidence, what to perform ...that everybody's experience and individuality is naturally

respected and nurtured... This was the most accomplished workshop leadership I have experienced; and I have experienced many.

### The Saturday Night Performance:

It helped me to savour the experience of being listened to and allowed the audience to appreciate my words... I had gained the confidence during the course to go first (on stage)... my voice was clearer and I did manage to read with the pauses to help the listener... I did not commit the faux pas of leaving the stage while the audience was still clapping!... A great way to utilise these skills with a supportive audience... Needed

more time to perform... I enjoyed my thirty seconds of fame... I stood and accepted the applause - looked at the audience and met their eyes... too brief... Rosie's discipline was invaluable...

### At Geraldine's Workshop:

I liked the way it was offered clearly and to the point... I learned to exploit myself as an individual and collective poet... she has so much info to give and I took away so much and handouts were good... got info about publishing and marketing a CD... gathered substantial information through handouts, a bit of information overload!... very useful contact addresses... as I have no prior knowledge of such matters

I learned such a lot from this session... covered a great deal in a short time... I wish these workshops were run on a more regular basis.. lots of advice about how to find venues and advertise events...

### About the weekend:

Food was enjoyable and venue excellent... refreshments (special dietary needs) well catered and thoughtfully provided... thoroughly enjoyed the weekend, I hope there are more weekends like these to come... informative and social weekend... no-one starved!... information packed weekend in a friendly environment... more vegetarian selection please... long way to travel for six minutes performing time... numbers and mix about right... a great taste of things to come, looking forward to the FEDfest in April!



## Bingo People

Out we stumble  
The bingo people  
Mumberling and murmuring  
In vexed delight  
Our minds reeling with numbers that might have been  
Legs eleven and all the sixes  
In company with the rest  
To be brought out next opening time  
Thus keep our interests alive  
For another day.

*Michael Williams, Doncaster*

## A Recipe

*Ingredients:* bus-stop  
across from the market-hall,  
cafe with milk-shakes:  
another weekend at home, now  
back to the city. *Spuds carrots onions.*

Return ticket in my pocket, safe.  
Next time walk my favourite hills; now  
just a glance from below. *Lamb chops:*  
middle neck cheapest, best. Oysters,  
but only when poor man's food.  
Leave them out with clear conscience.

Times change but landscape  
stays in the past,  
still flows to the sea. *Ah Bisto,*  
the odd wartime memory. Soon  
ghosts were knocking at my door  
as I stepped on hometown flags. *Method:*  
slice spuds into big blue roasting tin.

Before I was born Mum made sweets  
in the Home of the World's Largest Pear-Drop,  
ate all she wanted but took none home.  
Chops in dish, layer carrots, onions.

Chimneys, countless as desert sands.  
Rails brought coal from pit to mill. Riots:  
looms broken up, 1824. Why do they  
still remind me? *Cover with stock & salt.*

Here comes the bus to the present,  
with Mum's old recipe  
ready in the oven when I get back.  
Cover tin, place on middle shelf, cook  
till it all falls apart in the mouth.

*Steven Waling, Manchester*

Broadsheet publishes  
writing by members  
and supporters of  
The FWWCP.  
Broadsheet 11 has  
been selected by  
Stevenage Survivors  
Poetry, plus some  
late inclusions.

If you wish to have  
your writing  
included in  
Broadsheet 12,  
please send it to us  
by April 15th 2003,  
if possible attached  
to an e-mail to  
[fwwcp@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:fwwcp@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 select  
what is included,  
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.

### A Spinning Wheel

The door of Donal's little shop drew  
me like a magnet  
in that side street off the quays  
where a bicycle wheel in its bracket on the wall  
was spinning in the wind to celebrate continuity.  
He was alive and well - my heart gave a leap!

I remembered the little man balding  
and threadbare  
in his rickety second-hand bicycle shop  
mending a puncture and busy with wheels,  
saddles and lamps and all the tools of the trade.  
He answered my knock and stood back in surprise  
reaching for a clean rag to wipe his oily hands.  
"Begod, it's yourself!" he shouted. "I was  
beginning to fear the worst!  
Hold on a sec. - I'll get a bottle and two glasses"  
We drank but said nothing for a long time,  
each of us stripping away layers of strangeness  
in a time-warp euphoria. Then it all came out  
in a rush of names and places, events -  
the life we had known in a flood of recall.  
How long had it been?  
Why hadn't I called before now?

He talked about the seasons of protest  
against unemployment and emigration - his forays  
with copies of THE WORKER'S VOICE  
whenever he had the time  
and how angry he was to see a  
mug shot of himself  
in a religious tabloid, tainting  
him as a menace to society.  
And there it was in the centre of the shop -  
the big stove that would glow  
like a ruby on a winter's night  
when he sang ballads and talked  
about the books he'd read -  
THE MIDNIGHT COURT being  
one of his favourite poems.  
If you found no excuse to get away  
you could find yourself listening for an hour or two  
to the great Russian writers, and his own favourites  
AND QUIET FLOWS THE DON, THE  
LOWER DEPTHS and various polemics.  
It was a time when the wolves hunted in packs  
in the grip of Red fever, McCarthyite scribes  
seeking out Reds under the beds,  
Weird men snooping around dark alleys

rattling empty dust bins with  
pietistic froth and blather,  
the pathetic pillorying of a brave young doctor  
for introducing a modest Mother  
and Child Health scheme...  
We recalled the hustings outside Elephant House,  
how the young men shouted  
their protests then went  
on an unemployment march that led to the boat  
and Birmingham, London, et al, to look for work...  
How the mothers pushed babies  
in prams on the march  
and young men went on  
hunger strike in defiance of the boat.  
Donal lit his pipe and black smoke filled the shop.  
"Oh, all that is water under  
O'Connel Bridge now...  
Have another jar and we'll pick a winner or two.  
We've got different fish to fry these days,  
drugs abuse, moral issues, an El Dorado mentality  
that leaves so many vital things a-begging -  
fading scrolls of 'indomitable Irishry",  
loss of a dimension!  
The ghost of Jonathan Swift is moving  
in the shadows near the little church hall  
where the modern Irish spirit flared.  
The Countess Cathleen!  
Trading in her soul to feed the poor  
then getting & Divine pardon!  
"Who today would be prepared  
to follow in her footsteps  
and gamble everything for social  
justice and a new enlightenment?"

The mood changed when Donal exulted  
about the cycling trips of our youth,  
a dozen or so boys and girls  
all whooping along the road to Strawberry Beds  
or Enniskerry, Killarney and many  
other beauty spots,  
poring over maps or stopping for  
a picnic on the way,  
the joy of lilac time or a swim at the Forty Foot,  
cruel time sweeping it all away  
to become a shimmering memory and no more.  
We went on like this until nightfall  
while the wind, screamed like a banshee  
striking us silent and tremulous  
as we wondered about the great, changing tapestry  
with its many colours in our own lifetime.

*Patrick Norman, London*

### A Heart Felt Complaint to God

O' God you have taught me to  
feel the touch of Hot and Cold  
You have taught me to  
Laugh, when Happy  
You have taught me to  
Cry when Sad  
But you did not teach me how to  
bring-up Children without Dad  
The struggle is not Over  
It still goes on  
You did not teach me how to  
Save from Death, my first Born.

*Amarjit K Takhar, Stoke-on-Trent*

### A Book of Revelations

Writing things down meant  
saving all the silver wrapper  
inserts that cigarettes came in.  
That they contained smoke meant  
the paper was magical and all  
things magical were sacred.  
What she wrote down was from a new  
Bible transmitted from a radio  
tower in New York City that only  
an amanuensis could write down.  
It was a long book of revelations  
that could not be saved that was  
slowly being covered by tidal changes.  
She could see it all from her window  
from the sixth floor; Manhattan  
was the last refuge. I wanted  
to ask her where the cigarettes  
came from after hearing that:  
"The confederate South is all covered  
by water. None of these states have  
actually existed for almost one hundred  
years." All the cartons of cigarettes  
she had stored away under the bed  
came from North Carolina; that was  
a place for her that didn't exist.  
Looking out her window after she died  
of cancer I saw an antediluvian world  
through a nicotine nightmare of stained  
glass I wished had never existed.

*Alan Catlin*

### Another Showpiece Ruse

THE RESULT... NAUGHT OUT OF TEN  
WE... THE 'PUBLIC'... LOOSE OUT... AGAIN.

BURN OUT.

self help, self harm,  
can't stay calm.  
error, weakness, sin.

receives graded punishment  
scaled as bruise through cut to bum.

house bound husband  
tasks, uncompleted,  
job list, missed,  
still, a list.

winter harm  
hit hard, beat and treat  
roll down, not up, your sleeve  
then, untreated  
just  
leave.

willow wand  
for  
general miscellaneous misdemeanours.  
the jewel hue  
of line dancing markers.

error on the ironing board  
demands  
the tattoo torture  
of a 'skin slice'.

turmoil in the kitchen  
CUT, CUT,  
restart, retake.

out... yourself, leave a jar  
the closet door.

can't do any harm...

CAN IT??

*John Hirst, Gallery Poets, Solihull*

**Ode To Mary Ellis**

I tore my trousers on the glass-topped  
 wall at Queen Mary High  
 To get a glimpse of you  
 I got the bus home from school  
 the wrong way every night  
 So I could sit ten seats behind you  
 Made my Mum's life a misery  
 till she got me long pants  
 Just in case you saw my knees  
 Your Mum must have used Persil  
 Your shirts were whiter than the rest  
 Your navy blue was bluer and your hair  
 always looked the best  
 I remember your ribbons, brighter than the rest  
 The rosy cheeks, the button nose, your  
 supple body and wondrous limbs  
 So sleek, you never stepped  
 on pavement cracks  
 It amazed me you never looked my way,  
 I would have run away of course  
 And if you had spoken, even just hello  
 I don't think I could have stood the strain  
 It was enough just to see you every day  
 This schoolboy love was secret,  
 never shared with a living soul  
 I wouldn't risk the scorning  
 If I had spoken to you and you had turned away  
 My dreams would have been shattered  
 To be rejected is hard, but to be rejected  
 by a Goddess  
 Well, Mary Ellis, who won your heart,  
 and did he love like me?  
 Did you take him in your arms  
 and set his spirit free?  
 I'd almost forgotten about you and I don't  
 know why you've come to mind  
 I couldn't climb that wall again even  
 if the glass is now worn flat  
 by other schoolboys who long to see their loves  
 But I am glad the memories are back  
 I would know what to say to you now, although  
 its thirty three years too late.

**Anthony Rice, France**

**The Dice**

Yesterday He played,  
 the part of someone very well known,  
 and He played Ludo,  
 with me playing Dominoes,  
 and by telling me the truth,  
 made me lose all I had.

Earlier today He played,  
 the same game with me,  
 told me to respect my own culture,  
 what a fucking cheek,  
 trying to tell Me what to do,  
 But He made me clean up my  
 own desperation  
 and think about others instead of myself

Pretty soon though,  
 I started my own legal business  
 which allowed me to create  
 as well as consume,  
 and I must confess, forgot about Him.

Last week He played,  
 the part of a little Child  
 being fed the right information  
 about his Culture  
 instead of rolling up newspaper  
 and pointing it at another child in  
 pretend battle,  
 Well, the Child was creating,  
 it was a start anyhow.

Later on in life  
 the Child will get out of Prison  
 and travel to Iceland  
 where he will kind of stand out  
 somewhat!  
 this helped the locals  
 to appreciate the Child  
 as well.

So strange this evening though,  
 because the part He played  
 Last week  
 Yesterday  
 and  
 earlier  
 wasn't convincing enough.....

**Timothy Wesley, London**

**Colour Coded**

Another decade another new drug  
 Spell 'goodbye' in syncro  
 intermediately the plug, I pull  
 is on the pirates' message

It's a sign of the—.—.—.  
 just a sign of the—.—.—.  
 Red white and blue  
 more red white and blues,  
 with a nod to the green  
 black and gold though

Talking of colour, propaganda spray's  
 ignorance in red on subway walls  
 where, Bhangra kids run, no more  
 As yet I am unfamiliar with their music  
 So take a chance to listen *not abuse it*  
 It's not always possible to  
 Understand **LIFE**  
 It's not always possible to understand  
 poetry either .....

**Timothy Wesley, London**

**Breath of Loneliness.**

I breathe in a sudden breath  
 of suffocated loneliness;  
 It lodges, stale,  
 in my chest –  
 and I cannot breathe it out.

**Night-Time-Feeling-Doom-Thoughts.**

They leap up breathing,  
 Then they crawl around the ceiling,  
 You can't find them in the morning,  
 They didn't have a meaning.

**The Light and the Leaves...**

A partial eclipse of the  
 street lamp,  
 Lit the leaves, as lovely  
 as sunlight.

**Carol Batton, Manchester**

**Slow Forward**

We think our docks are now more  
 accurate than the stars.  
 They re-count the loss of the  
 coming years.  
 We think we know the times we  
 went too far.

There was a journey that we  
 made and saw  
 And now that journey is  
 too far we fear.  
 We think our clocks are now more  
 accurate than the stars

The passing seconds give the world  
 its prison bars  
 of Iron water like metallic tears  
 that press against the coming years.  
 We think we know the times we  
 went too far.

We may have passed the last harbour.  
 We bore the fear of what the future bore.  
 We think our clocks are now more  
 accurate than the stars.

And things created, all of them will mar.  
 Life does not get you anywhere that's near.  
 We think we know the times we went too far.

And time is on the precipice of  
 non-return and prayer  
 and time is dear and time  
 is everywhere.  
 We think our docks are now more  
 accurate than the stars...  
 We didn't know the times  
 we went too far.

**Carol Batton, Manchester**

**Poppies**

Captain Bell was arrested in Parma  
(sometime in 1943) and thrown  
into prison as a spy.

From his cell window overlooking  
the courtyard, he watched dozens  
of Italian sympathisers, rebels, resistance,  
women, children, stood  
against a wall and shot.

Dozens,  
Every day.  
For month after month,  
as season followed season.

As Mussolini fell, the fulcrum shifted  
and, with time running out, his turn came.  
Blindfolded, he stood in the same spot  
thinking how no one would be in  
that same window  
watching his death.

In a moment of defiance he scorned them:  
Carry on. Shoot me. Then you'll never get  
any information from me.  
In the pause that followed, his life hung  
like a spiders web in a storm,  
before the German  
captain halted the execution, apparently  
understanding the logic of his argument.

This time, they dragged him into a new home,  
strapping him into a primitive dentists' chair.  
He broke the straps, so they chained him in.  
Then they pulled out his teeth with pliers-  
(like Olivier in Marathon Man or  
Burton in 1984,  
only the coughing blood, the gurgled screams,  
were not the imagined reactions  
of writers composing in clock-ticking  
studies, but reality).

When he regained consciousness,  
he was back in his cell, lying in  
a pool of thick blood  
and hanging on; hanging on as the web  
strained and threatened to  
snap in the howling wind.

He continued to hang on in a POW camp;  
until the war ended and he came home.  
Today, he still refuses to give in  
to the new enemies of Old Age and Time.  
Next time someone stops you  
on your lunchbreak,  
in the leaf-shivering breeze of Autumn  
when you'd sooner get back to the office  
than dig in the trench of your  
pocket for change,  
think of Captain Bell.  
Think of what you will do today  
and the part he played in making that possible.

Think about that, then search in  
those same pockets,  
and decide how much you think  
his sacrifice is worth.  
*Andrew Detheridge, Birmingham*

**Shortlisted**

Unused to the underground, he fidgets,  
nervously fingering the collar of a new shirt,  
checking his progress against the thin vein  
of the tube line destinations, obscured  
by lovers' affectations sprayed in bright  
Christmas-colours.

Against the tacky rhythm of Walkman  
headphones  
and turning newspaper pages,  
he tries to remember his opening gambit,  
the main thrusts of his suitability,  
the clever ending.

Emerging into busy streets of backlogged buses  
he tries to get his bearings  
among the crowds who push past  
in a tide of purpose and haste.

When he has signed in at reception,  
he clips on a name badge,  
then takes the lift to the top floor--  
despite feeling that he should be going  
down, down, down.  
*Andrew Detheridge, Birmingham*

**When I'm not here.**

Too ill for work; I lie in bed  
Pale fusions highlight the drifting dust.  
Shadows hide behind the wardrobe;  
A black sock lounges on the lip  
of an open drawer.

Distant road works counterpoint bird song;  
Bus tyres squeeze a hiss from the wet tarmac.  
Neighbour's door bangs shut and footsteps  
Tap and scrape the pavement slabs.

A postman delivers a slap of letters;  
Old Bert's van coughs and diesels away.  
The house silence whistles in my ear;  
Is it like this when I'm not here?

*Gerard Melia, Suffolk*

**Inappropriate.**

I put myself forward  
With reluctance.  
Yesterday.

There is a mistake on my form,  
Its number.  
Its colour.

Post code is inappropriate,  
Grammar acrobatic.  
Dirt in my finger nail.

Somehow, the wrong way up?  
Don't fit jigsaw.  
No tie.

Word-grasp below par,  
Prompting aggressive,  
Tongue tied.

Gloss hard surface of this place,  
No point of purchase  
Sliding off.

Would like too, of course,  
So many to choose from,  
Try in Springtime.

Apparently I'm inappropriate,  
At my age.

*Gerard Melia, Suffolk*

**The Flight Of Faith**

Faith is fragile;  
It is vulnerable;  
It is volatile and flits like a blind bird in barren  
treetops.  
The cat prowls below, as real, as solid  
As the weapon of the hunter.

Faith flew when Marianne saw  
The shadows on his thin shanks,  
His self-satisfaction as he sprawled over the bed,  
His stupid, surprised face.  
And Frances, walking naked towards the  
bathroom.  
The smell of intimacy in the glowing atmosphere.

Faith cannot forget the sounds of passion:  
A bedspring, the slap of flesh against flesh,  
Trembling moans, frantic cries.

Faith, naïveté, loving minds never find what is  
not,  
And think "is not" means "never will be".  
Faith, naïveté, love, hope -  
All fall apart in front of "is".

And faith flees,  
Leaving her alone,  
All alone,  
With the unmistakable tracks of love on the  
bedclothes  
As if a field mouse had darted over a snowbank  
at night,

Unseen... unheard... unknown...

*Martin Reijman, Slough*

**Impecoonieocity**

A penny fir yaer thotes  
the auld dictum saes.  
Whit eedjit kin afford  
pennies fir thotes  
when yae cannae afford claes?

Ma mammy used tae sae  
“tak cair ae the poons...  
an the pennies’ll tak cair a’  
themsel’s.”

Noo am no sure whit ma mammy meant  
cause a hivnae any poons,  
an’ a ‘ hivnae any pence.

Whit a say to aw you who yearn  
fir some brass  
who’re starvin’ fir sum fid  
an’ yir heid’s up yaer arse,  
get oan yer bike lik auld Tebbit saes  
(if yae cannae afford wan,  
pinch it, it’s aw the same.)

Fir God loves a tryer  
yae kin be sure ae that.  
Yae shouldnae let things get yae doon!  
Try, try again wis King Rabbie  
the Bruce’s motto.  
An if its guid enough fir kings  
it’s guid enough fir the likes ae us.

Fir when yaer oan yaer uppers

an things is getting hard  
go rake the middens  
thair are treasures tae bae had.  
Fir I’ll never forget the day,  
Jim, my auld Briggait mate,  
telt me about the Picasso he fun  
in a puddle at a car boot  
doon the Drum,  
about tae be thrown oot  
lik burnt bills up the lum.

Fir thairs never a truer word said  
than whits junk tae ane  
kin be a treasure tae anather.  
Fir who kin forget the first time  
as a bairn, pennies from heaven  
in the gutter by a pub,  
bought a free packet a crisps  
an a ha’penny tub?

So get oot, get doon  
get aw roon the toon  
an see whit’s tae bae had  
fir thaems no ashamed tae  
rake the middens an stoop doon.

Fir in ma opinion,  
thairs no nobler  
profession in aw the world  
than the man no afraid  
tae recycle whits hurled.

**Grahame Gemmell Thompson, Glasgow**

**Connected**

Hyperlinks dash, joy  
Cascade unite, reverie  
Trees always knew this.

**All Together**

Fractured aspirations  
Bind breaths in orbit doubting  
A branch yields, drift.

**End of October**

Holy souls darkens  
Inward look, days mute  
Leaves fall, beauty in passing.

**Peace**

Autumn backlights peace  
Solitude surrounds brightly  
Freedom flows, bird flies.

**James Clarke , Hereford**

**To an Innocent Isreali Terrorist**

Stumbling down the shattered stairs  
A frightened child looks in your eyes  
Your one-eyed Uzi stares at him  
Your headwear glistens with menace  
-Why does it look like an SS helmet?  
-Why does the Star of David resemble  
The infamous Swastika?

Reservist of the IDF  
Some living mother’s loving son  
Smiling boy with handsome face  
Are you enjoying your fun and games?

Child of Holocaust survivors  
Forging Holocaust all your own  
For your Semite blood-brothers!  
Are you not ashamed?

You spring from the same fountainhead  
You with the gun that boy upstairs  
Sons of Abraham Ibrahim  
Both kith and kin and one

That hero of Sabra Chatilla  
That anti-Semite assassin  
Has sown poison in your heart  
And barb-wired your brain

With Apache gunships overhead  
Tanks and bulldozers below  
Rockets mortars everywhere  
Shells smashing buildings walls  
Ramallah Nablus living hells  
Jenin a Hiroshima  
“Horrific beyond belief”

From a safe distance you pull your trigger  
-Are you a valiant warrior?  
Does your chest surge with pride?  
How would you like if you are labelled  
A war criminal?

Atone  
Wipe this shame from your brow  
Salute your comrades who would not kill  
Join hands with Btsalem \*  
Join hands with Gush Shalom \*\*  
Redeem your honour NOW

LAQAAYAM SHALOM SALAAM PEACE

**Homi Framroze**

\* Israeli Human Rights  
\*\* Peace Now

**Uncle**

My uncle’s name is Norman  
He is small and not tall  
Like George Foreman

In his glory days he was well known  
He played football like George Best  
I’m sorry to say his life now is a mess

he met a drug called mister brown  
It made him stay in and stop going around town  
This thing has made him go down  
He used to smile now its turned into a frown

he could have been a professional footballer  
Now for a bag he will maul yer  
I don’t think he realised he was a role model  
He thinks going through life is a doddle

Now the young ones are coming up  
They’ve seen Norman now they’re corrupt.

**Marvin Johns, Stoke-on-Trent**

**Coffee Morning at the Gallery**

He can deal withthings in the City  
wearing his old school tie.

He can expand on the Economy  
calling on his rich experience.

He can exude Social Status  
smoothing a crumpled suit.

He can’t utter person poverty  
gagged by his public school voice.

**Barbara Kemp, Bournemouth**

**Victim**

He's blended into the road and sky  
 Almost landscaped to death  
 Why should I be his mother?

He's quite ignorable  
 Short people are.

Cold Ness in the dark loch  
 Is crying dry tears  
 We are all in need of mothers.

If I could bleed  
 There'd be so much blood.

Yellow canary-seed trails  
 Don't mean a person loves you  
 Merely that we all have our duties  
 Except mothers, of course  
 Pretending not to need dark glasses.

When I was in prison  
 My problem didn't stay with me  
 It shivered outside.

I didn't mean to hurt him  
 I was conscious...  
 I could see myself going off the rails  
 You can never get an ambulance  
 when you need one.

*Christopher Barnes, Newcastle on Tyne*

**Schizophrenia**

There's so little of the little things  
 They all seem so big  
 The dizygotic twins glow like clams  
 Huge bellies of yin and yin  
 But only on the outside

One day they'll contradict  
 A love and a peace  
 Both sides of the brain  
 Will feed off the other  
 Psychosurgeons jousting  
 In the garden of lovers

*Christopher Barnes, Newcastle on Tyne*

**The Tycoon Scenario**

Thursday morning, crappy kind of day,  
 pissing down, ghetto blaster on the  
 blink,  
 can't even afford any fags. Christ! Not  
 worth getting out of me pit. I mean,  
 here I am, up for it, waiting to serve  
 me fellow punters, and there they are  
 too busy warring and screwing and  
 looking after numero uno to give a  
 monkey's. If only they'd button their  
 flies and shove their credit cards for  
 half a minute, I'd show 'em where  
 I'm coming from. Hacking, street art,  
 car nicking, all meat and drink to me  
 mate. And you needn't think I haven't  
 heard of the likes of Shakespeare and  
 Einsteine and that bloke who painted  
 the Pope's ceiling. Mind you, I'm not  
 planning on going into their rackets.  
 Each to his own, I say. I'm looking at  
 the tycoon scenario; you know, make  
 a million by thirty, few bungs to good  
 causes, see the old lady all right...  
 Oh shit, she's coming up stairs. 'Get up  
 ya lazy sod,' she says, 'it's Thursday.  
 You'll be late signing on down the  
 Social.' Then she goes to put the  
 kettle on. 'Bollocks to the lot of them,'  
 says I, under me breath, of course.

*John C Bird, Birmingham*

**Half-Moon Dramatisation**

The half-moon dramatisation  
 Of coloured lights  
 Sprinkling your hair  
 Forming shapes  
 On your cheeks  
 I kiss the skin  
 Slightly blemished  
 Your ear is there  
 I whisper softly  
 And feel you smile

*Anon, Survivors' Poetry, Scotland*

**Serial Thriller**

Spring blossom covers lovers  
 The hiss of illicit trysts  
 Drips from every picnic glade and  
 midnight lay-by

'Phones go off unexpectedly,  
 then think better of it  
 Conjugal peace threatened  
 By call-back, call-barred espionage

Death is cheated in those last  
 Languorous, lip-licking declarations  
 Forbidden fruit tasting stickily sweeter

Summer is too bright, too harsh  
 Families reclaim the woods  
 Leafy lovers dissolve, too hot, too slow

Autumn sees the first excuse  
 And the lily-livered reluctance to risk all  
 Brings misted indifference

Winter is a long dark night of the soul  
 Redeemed by dreams of coded faxes  
 And car park kisses.

*Tony Lupton*

**The Kiss  
 (after Klimt)**

Kneeling  
 in the summer meadow,  
 oblivious to crushed petals  
 beneath bare feet,  
 leaves tangled round ankles  
 and bright flower stars  
 threaded through copper hair,  
 they embrace,  
 bodies folded  
 in a golden mantle,  
 stealing time  
 to touch.... tender lips to cool cheek  
 trusted hand to exposed neck.

*Annette Ryder, Gallery Poets*

There's a longing  
 An ache so deep  
 There is no ending  
 It hangs in the air  
 This way and that  
 Fills every day  
 With a wish  
 a wish for  
 something  
 and maybe  
 anything

*Tayo Doherty*

**I feel ill**

I feel ill so I take a pill  
 The voices are lurking  
 But the medication  
 Is working

*Steven Paul Lees, Doncaster*

**The House on the Hill**

The house on the hill stands out from the rest  
 It's bigger and brighter, quite simply the best  
 There's nothing inside it, nothing to see -  
 I can't put my finger on why that should be.

*Susan Dawson, Doncaster*

**Past**

The walls leak history,  
 fragments of argument  
 seep through the mortar  
 with the forgotten perfume  
 of her body.  
 Hands punch brick,  
 a nagging voice lingers  
 on the stairwell  
 like a glass splinter  
 in a wound.

*Annette Ryder, Gallery Poets*

**In Praise of Little Black Girls  
....And Little Black Boys**

Little Black Girls Like To Run Screaming  
with Delight,  
For the Sheer joy of Being Alive

....And Little Black Boys Watch,  
Shaking Their Heads  
Say Those Little Black Girls  
Are So Silly !

Little Black Girls Like to Play Dress Up  
And Kiss Up,  
And Like To Wine Their Waist,  
Like The Big Women Do.

....And Little Black Boys Stand and Watch,  
Hand On One Hip,  
Just Like The Big Men Do.

Little Black Girls are Spiritual and Free,  
And Like To Hold  
The Hands Of Little Black Boys  
To Show Them The Way.

....And Little Black Boys Are So Glad  
For The Little Black Girls  
Who Are  
Spiritual And Free.

*Ashia Leah Longville*

**Cream Toes Turning Red**

Goofy girl, mean-eyed sixteen,  
calls herself 'Coffee'  
Leans on concrete street lamp  
in snow-damp, silk night.  
A milky kid in black hose  
cracked cream leather boots  
A site for sore noses, see.  
Off white rose just budding,  
flooding the senses with scents  
stolen from Woolworths  
foolishly sniffing more than flowers.

Only hours later the punter,  
a wrong 'un with strong arm  
and long burning anger,  
bangs a hammer to her head

*Mike Hoy, Heeley Writers, Sheffield*

**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.

The size of Broadsheet necessitates that we don't publish anything longer than one A4 page.

What you see published in this issue, is less than 10% of what was submitted, and 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 sent 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*

**Return to Germany 2002**

Eric Davidson, of DGSP and Lockerbie Writers, reports on his visit in 2002 to meet FWWCP's German sister organisation Werkkreis.

One year ago I went with the Fed to Dortmund - returned within a month to visit Gudrun Seigel of Werkkreis in Koln... she then came to FEDfest02 in Liverpool, and now I have just come back from a visit to Brussels and Koln. I went on a Scottish Arts Council *Go and See* award, in order to try and set up a writers exchange between Scotland-Belgium-Germany. Next year I am invited back to the Werkkreis Annual Conference in Bavaria, and to a weekend at the German equivalent of Booktown (Scotland has one in Wigtown, where Lockerbie Writers performed at their fringe event last September. There is an attempt to make one in Redu, Belgium).

Having had a successful Gaelforce (see p's 24 & 29) event, it is our desire to hold an international event in Lockerbie in 2003 and 2004. I have now made the necessary contacts - all because the Fed gave me the opportunity. Via a link with the Saltire Society in Brussels, and Gudrun in Koln, we are now at the "Go for it" stage! Another part of the equation - over and above writing (ich bin schriftsteller) there is now a Kunst link (visual art) (ich bin maler) (artist). This came from "Garage Culture"... Mecide and Mizra Atug, of Kurdish origin, Mizra acts as translator for the Turkish/Kurdish/Armenian communities in NordRhein/Westfalen. Since he thinks after two hours that "Eric ist verrückt (crazy)" that is why I spent the night with this crazy man in his house. His wife fed me well and since he cannot speak English and my German is very "etwas" (slight knowledge)... we had to communicate in the international language of art - which we did very well and I was forced to speak German "Besser" - and did. This man changed his garage into a writers/artists centre... "Autos raus - Autors in" (cars out - authors in). He was so successful that the local authority closed it down - and then built a new purpose built centre in compensation.

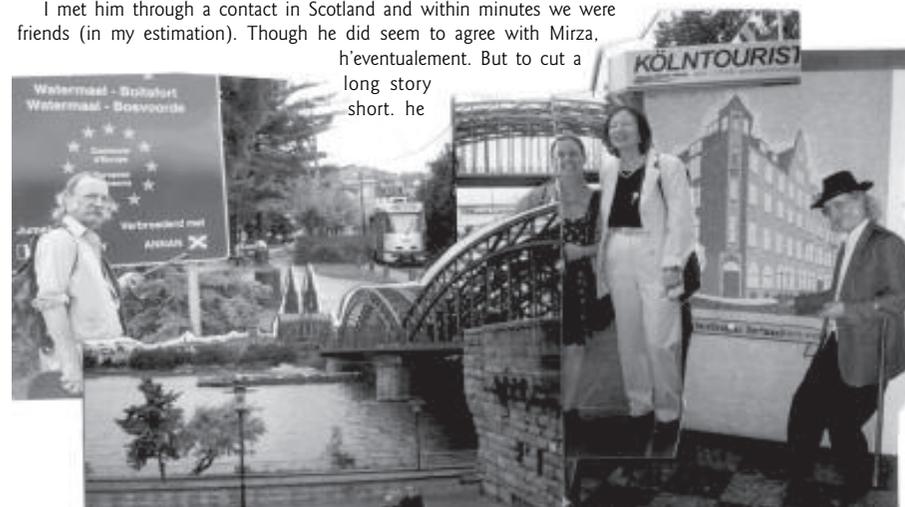
I spent the second afternoon with Erasmus and Pilar, whom I had met in Dortmund in 2001. Pilar told me - "Eric, I had an impulse about you" ... and had written a piece of work in English for me. Being blind and German speaking of Spanish birth, typing a four page piece of work in English was no sweat to her. (Talk about being humbled in the face of adversity...) Pilar's story involves two women making comment about a third who is blind but really unaware of any disadvantage on her part. So the follow-up will be my writing about my perceptions of what the two women will say when they depart the third. (I am not dis-abled, but very UNabled at times). Once again, an international exchange of writing by snailmail or e-mail.

Equally... en Bruesel/Bruxelles/Brousla.. or what we know as Brussels - though in Flemish it is actually Brussel. I met with Alistair Geater, President, Saltire Society... who said - "Eric, delighted to make that sort of contact... can I take you to dinner?"

Well... I thought (for about a nano-second)- "YUPPI!"

I met him through a contact in Scotland and within minutes we were friends (in my estimation). Though he did seem to agree with Mirza,

h'eventuellement. But to cut a long story short, he



is seeking info. For me and I did go to Watermael/Boitsfort - a suburb of Brussels twinned with Annan in Scotland, not far from Lockerbie and thus another link established.

So - German/Belgian/Scottish/English writers - ditto in visual art - and now ditto in traditional music (a la Ecosse et les autres) -

".... Haw, Jimmy... whi's the probz... Eh???"

Gotcha. Gonny. Will.

I am now going to go back to night school to improve my command of the German language... my French is slightly better than "ou est la plume de ma tante" and I find the whole concept to be exhilarating, particularly since Nick Pollard and I have already had an exchange between Dumfries and Doncaster, with more in the pipeline. Some Brits may have a problem with the Federation of countries in Europe - there is no problem with a Federation of Writers... working or publishing in communities, apparently, not only am I "ich bin Schottin" - I am Scottish but I am also "Ich bin ABSchottin" - isolated. With Werkreis and the Fed isolated I am NOT!

So - Ich Gehr Koln, Je vais Brussels, Sie Kommst Lockerbie, vous venez ici - Wir bin schreibers und weltburgers... or as Rabbe Burns wrote: "...as come it will for a' that, that man to man the World owere shall brithers be for a' that".

**Eric D Davidson, Lockerbie Writers**

See page 31 for a review of the latest Werkkreis magazine.

Below is a poem about the working class writers meeting at Cologne. Written by Michael Tonfield of Augsburg for Eric. The weekend before around twenty people were killed in Germany by a storm called Jeanett.

## Stormy "Jeanett"

Broken trees &  
disappointed trains  
handicapped rails  
a furious trail  
*Jeanett's* dowry

deadly kisses  
sign highways  
airports even ships  
that stormy lady's  
marriage ceremony

quiet the river  
quite along the  
Rhine rushing by  
train - passing  
*Jeanett's* cemetery

banned the  
cathedrals yard  
life saving barriers  
no mountain everywhere  
nevertheless stone fall

only a few hundred  
of yards by feet  
really by feet walking  
- backwards those  
highly holly rocks

crosses on top  
no green no wood  
no snow no ice  
simply sacrificed  
stones at Cologne

step by step  
carefully through  
unknown valleys  
of asphalt bride  
- autumn light

reaching the point  
of appointment  
sentence by sentence  
question by question  
step by step

no debate but  
discussions far  
away the Bavarian  
mountains, nearer  
the Highlands

one by train  
the other by plane  
and both are  
strange, however in town  
and never mind

minutes are gone  
suddenly hours  
two men have left  
as if they had known  
each other forever

Eric Davidson 'replied' to Michael Tonfield, with the piece below:

## "ICH BIN "ABSCHOTTIN"

Ich gehr nach alte-Colonia  
Ihr kommt aus BayernBerg  
Zwei herren schriffstellar  
Arbeite und wertere-spieler

Coming and going  
To-ing and fro-ing  
I "gang in" \* - ingang he  
Incomer "Auslander spreche

Wenig oder etwas"  
Deutsche sprache begrenzt  
Ich bin maler - besonders gern gedichte -  
Ein verukkt Weltburger

Schottin rurality to Nord.Rhein rhurality  
From sud-west to Westfalen osten  
*Uisge-beatha* # encompasses Kolsch  
Glasses ... "Prosit - Sainte" +

?Wo wohen sie - ich geboren wo?  
Damals spazieran mit geschafsfuhrer  
Mit augen blick - Garage Kultur - nieuw  
Verstandhen beser dieses lander-volk  
AND  
Veni vidi vici Romanesque-stadt  
Came saw but no conqueror  
Won over by - uber alles -  
Ich glaube den Camaraderie ist  
Vor mei

VIELE GLUCKE

\*GANG IN = GO IN (Scots language)  
# Whiskey - water of life  
+ "cheers" (Gaelic language)

## Gaelforce 2002

**What could better that** - nothing I hear myself say - well get this - Went to Lockerbie to take part in and listen to the contributors to the Soulsongs Anthology (see page 23 for Review) and did I enjoy it, what a silly question, yes I did and how. They all performed their own pieces with feeling and gusto, and grub and hooch (no not that cheap muck but real Scottish hooch of course - whisky galore). Some polished and honed to perfection, some with wit and humour, some with gut feeling of kinship to other's. **THE LOCKERBIE 'GAELFORCE 2002' WHAT A SUCCESS!** - Two workshops put on and many thanks to those who lead these - all walks - all genres and all ages. We were there - where were you?

Save time in next years planning to go up to Lockerbie and support your fellow writer's performers and publishers in their own community. This way our groups will grow and achieve support from within our communities.

**Sue Havercroft, Grimsby Writers**

## Do you know someone who could win a 'Learning Award'?

The Adult Learners' Week awards, organised by NIACE, the National Institute for Adult Continuing Education, recognise people who have overcome difficulties to take up learning, and made a difference to their lives. Awards are not only offered for individuals, but for community groups that demonstrate the power of learning collectively. If you know an individual or group that deserves recognition for their achievements, why not nominate them for an award?

For more information on the Adult Learners' Week awards please call the NIACE Campaigns and Promotions office on 0116 204 4200 or e-mail alw@niace.org.uk. You can visit the Website at [www.niace.org.uk/alw/](http://www.niace.org.uk/alw/) competitions to read stories of previous award winners.

## Tools For Change

Nick Pollard reports on the Groundswell conference in Sheffield

Groundswell\* is an alternative organisation of and for people who are homeless or who are vulnerable or excluded. Their 4<sup>th</sup> Self Help forum, a biennial festival, was held over 3 days last July in a tent city at the Ponderosa, an open area of ground in Lower Walkley, Sheffield. Over 300 people attended, including representatives from survivors' groups, soup kitchens, and a wide range of housing organisations, as well as homeless organisations like Cardboard Citizens and People off the Streets.

The conference was a very different affair; I ascended the green mound which breaks the winds coming up the valley I noticed a couple of trucks surmounted with solar panels and small wind generators – one providing the catering facilities, and a profusion of straw. So much straw, in fact, that, as I was told, one participant had woken up that morning in his bed in Sorby Hall to find he'd brought half a bale back with him.

My workshop, on "DIY publishing" – or developing community publishing projects with vulnerable people – was to be given in one of a series of small marquees. Mine was in the "Writing Zone", there was also a "Talking Zone", "Play Zone", and a "Blagging Zone", the last of these set up in a yurt (or Mongolian felt tent). Although my workshop was to start at 10 am, participants drifted in through the workshop to join in, having celebrated the previous evening with a round of performance poetry, theatre and singing. Having prepared a handout which explained what would be covered in the workshop, it was more practical to have a free discussion including whoever dropped in.

We covered many of the practical issues of trying to organise publications in environments where people do not have fixed addresses and are transitory:

- relying on community facilities to provide a stable base (for example to keep artwork and material in the process of being made into a publication),
- the need for clarity and group responsibility in sharing tasks and communicating when individuals become overburdened with the things that others are unable to do,
- planning a publication through to the stage of working out how it will be distributed before saddling a group with a lot of copies of something it has to sell in order to recoup the investment
- understanding that few publications make money and that few people earn money through their writing

- worries about copyright – better to publish, than to worry about being 'ripped off' because the remunerative benefits are so small. In practice copyright infringements are relatively rare in small publications.

Strategies included:

getting individuals to 'buy in advance' a small number of copies to provide the start-up cash for a publication

- aiming to produce something cheap and simple rather than glossy and expensive, because cover prices could be kept low for a low income audience and allow the produce to be given away if necessary
- recognising the need for legwork in distribution – the most cost effective way of selling a publication is face to face. It is no use producing a publication for which you have no clear distribution strategy.
- to consider performance and recorded material as 'publication', particularly where literacy problems are common. Cassette tapes can be more popular than print media as just as cost effective.

People participating in the discussion ranged from someone involved in a self build project and a worker in a soup kitchen, to people from survivor and homeless groups. This was a very different and refreshing conference experience, and certainly there is no better place to organise one, in the summer, than in a field, under canvas.

For further information about Groundswell, their Website is [www.groundswell.org.uk](http://www.groundswell.org.uk) or phone 020 7737 5500

**Nick Pollard**

\*Groundswell were recently accepted as Reciprocal Members of the FWWCPC

\*See Page 34 for Review

## R e v i e w s

### Survivors' Poetry Posters

Kazi Nazrul Islam, Six posters with notes by Debjani Chatterjee, Survivors' Poetry, Available from Survivors' Poetry, Diorama Arts Centre, 34 Osnaurgh St., London NW1 3ND



Kazi Nazrul Islam is Bangladesh's national poet, who died in 1976. Despite spending some 34 years in silence he was a prolific writer of poems, songs and novels during the twenty year period when he was productive, and a passionate voice for unity as well as rebel against oppression. The reasons for Nazrul's silence are unclear, he was sent to several specialist institutions but pronounced incurable.

This series of posters introduces Nazrul's work, with Chatterjee's translations interposed with the Bengali original. Although mainly intended for work in secondary schools, many of the exercises and topic points raised in the accompanying notes make the pack transferable to therapeutic uses, and the bold and colourful posters will be attractive materials for use in discussion. For those who, like me, had not encountered Kazi Nazrul Islam before, there are many interesting websites and web discussion about his work, one of which is [www.pabna.net/ni.htm](http://www.pabna.net/ni.htm) offering links to other materials.

O Poverty, you have made me great!  
You have gifted me with Christ's honour:  
The beauty of his thorny crown. You have  
given austerity  
The supreme courage of fearless expression,  
A fierce and direct gaze, razor sharp speech.  
Your curse has turned my veena\* into a  
sword!

\*A musical instrument, similar to a sitar

### Werkkreis - Literatur Der Arbeitswelt

edition Nr 250, 32 - *Literature of the Working World* published in German by Werkkreis - for further information e-mail [Gudrun-Siegel@gmx.de](mailto:Gudrun-Siegel@gmx.de)

It's with some difficulty that I actually come to review a German magazine containing such a wide variety of interests and styles. Whilst my spoken German is fluent, the written has always proven more of a technical and logistical challenge. Now, I get asked whether I'm a German who speaks good English or an Englishman who speaks good German. That tells me I might be just have reached a useable level of spoken German.

Anyway, rambling aside. The magazine distinguishes itself almost immediately as being socialist, grass roots, and community publication. It's crammed with reports of literary meetings, workshop, seminars, obituaries, biographies, web-based information and original works. The German humour has always been one, which I've found much dryer, frank, and hard-faced than British humour.

The advantage is that German political and social satire, whether written, drawn or spoken, has poignancy and style which, in penance to it's grammatical roots, cuts to the heart of the matter pretty darn effectively. There was a noticeable "improvement" in alternative comedy and satire in Germany whilst I lived and worked there. Perhaps it was more acclimatisation of my cultural upbringing and thinking to German culture and thinking but reading these short poems reaffirmed the large under and over-ground movements of thinking which openly question and prod fun at the German societal and political structure.

One poem entitled "Jupp hattat mitten Euro" by Kurt Kuether was a prime example of a play on the language, rhyme and politics. Imagine reading Geordie spelt as spoken, complaining about how a normal person might deal with the horrors of the Euro with its face cloth notes and the beauty of the beloved-but-defunct pound and the gradual process of acceptance to what is merely a symbolic affair anyway. Money exists, but really only in our heads.

It was a prime example of how different spoken and written German are. The author used the language entirely to his expressive benefit and ignored the conventions set by the higher class "Hoch-deutsch" (high-German - like Oxford English) rules. It reads like a hard-core local accent,

# R e v i e w s

of where, I wouldn't quite know. But it was easily to pick my way through the lines and convert it into understandable conversation.

These were the kind of accents and expressions I had heard from people living on the streets when I used to busk in Germany. It was exactly those people and images that the poem conjured up.

A person finding their way on the streets, grateful for each 'Deutsch Mark' that fell to them and now, the face of that valuable object had changed, it's value 'Eurofied' and yet that person would still look down into their hand and through hazed, tired and drunken eyes and see nothing but the next bottle, the next meal or cigarette.

I enjoyed reading these poems, it reminded me of a time when I was brave and even foolish, standing red-cheeked, eyes wide with excitement in a foreign town absorbing all the new bits of information about this foreign culture.

I can't say that I'm any authority, but thumbs up to the German artists who clear the misty haze of modern Euro-living and comment on its strangeness. Just think, we will soon be full part of a super-state, some might say one of very few in the new brave world. I think even I might be writing a song or two...

**Torben Franck, acting Development Officer  
Burslem School of Art**

## BroomSprings

**BroomSprings Writers Workshop,  
WEA Rotherham, 6-20 Corporation St,  
Rotherham S60 1NG  
ISBN 0 9542729 0 0**

She gazed at his sweat-sheened  
back and whispered,  
Thank you Darling. She was his,  
not matter what.  
He leaned forward, sighing softly,  
murmured  
Ee, Lass, I can't find my socks.  
*Sue Woodbine*

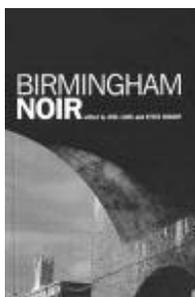
This well presented collection of short stories, poems and novels in progress from a Sheffield based group features Michael Harding's accounts of the lives of musicians on the pub circuit and John Malcolmson's comedies of manners amongst others. One interesting exercise is the development by Sarah Ibrahim of one of Michael Harding's stories. Sue Woodbine and Brian Mawdsley's work is more concerned with the uncertainties and boundaries which occur in love and within the self.

**Nick Pollard, Heeley Writers**

## Birmingham Noir

**Joel Lane and Steve Bishop (eds), Tindal  
Street Press, 217 The Custard Factory,  
Gibb St Birmingham B9 4AA  
www.tindalstreet.org.uk  
ISBN 0 9535895 9 5 £7.99**

A 320 page bumper volume of crime stories set in the contemporary underworld of our biggest midland city. These are gritty realist tales with a new edge, but a pedigree which the editors assert goes back to the hard boiled cop fiction and social criticism of Chandler and Hammet. The city is a mad and dirty place and you can never be certain who is victim or villain, cop or crook. Opening with Rob Smith's *The Kiss of Death*, in which a photographic editor uncovers the full extent of a colleague's slide into fascist violence, the collection also includes Judith Cutler's *Doctor's Orders* where an abused wife waits for the opportunity to escape her drudgery. Zulfiquar Ali's *Vendetta* builds up a gang situation which is relentlessly out of control, and Pauline Gould's *The Way She Looks at Me* has a serial killer well beyond the boundaries before a murder has even been committed. Excellent value, gripping reading.



**Nick Pollard, Heeley Writers**  
Congratulations go to Tindal Street Press who have won The Celebrating Cultural Diversity Award for their book at the 2002 Birmingham Arts Ball.

## Out of the Box

**Adrian Bishop, available from:  
1 Blue Ball Corner, Water Lane,  
Winchester, SO23 0ER**

Adrian has produced a collection of some two dozen wittily comic poems of a distinctly subversive nature. "Chicken Porn" is a particularly good example, with the reference to "It's not about corrupting the morals of the nations poultry," but rather "Which came first."

Some are very short. "Fish" is only four lines but speaks up for those who prefer quality to quantity.

This is a nicely produced book with a proper spine. A selection of the poems is also available on CD in a live performance by Adrian.

**John Malcolmson, Heeley Writers**

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## Soulsongs

**Contributions from, Lockerbie Writers.,  
Stranraer Writers Group, Upper Nithsdale  
Writers group, Stewetry Survivors Poetry,  
Dumfries & Galloway Survivors Group**

The book is split in to defined sections; 'of Earth & Sky', 'Love & Loss', 'People & Earwigs', and 'of Thoughts and Stories'.

And what a collection this is, strong links, lilts of Gaelforce and mixed blood writing. Lyrical Scottish accents, married with straight talking like Derek Ross' 'Isle of Ulva'.

Try Mary baker's "Island Wash Day" where the wind toys with man or in this case woman. And Andrina Kearton's "*catching the unsuspecting*, in Autumn Winds, or 'Snow Cameo'.

In the section on 'Love & Loss', Frances Grant touches the *emptiness of being feel without our soul mate* in 'Before this Time', or Sally Jordan's *feline buddie* in 'Ode to Treutch and if you wish to shed a tear read Hazel Gardiner's 'Address to Life'. Or try the liquid 'Stalker Stymmed' by Eric Davidson.

And don't miss the section headed Of People & Earwigs, and Anne Graham *not giving a damn* in 'Coming of Age'. Don't miss the beautiful prose of Davie Graham who takes on a life journey in all its facets 'Hamish Hornygolachs Horrible Hassle'. And does your hubby give you cause for jealousy if so don't read Anne Lambie's *Women-on-Walls*, and don't 'whatever you do show him Eric's drawing!

Last but not least the section in 'Thoughts and Stories', Angus Macmillan hits you when you least expect it in 'Mugged', and shocked into life by John Horn in 'I see her yet', when *she took a small silver pistol ... delicately between her lips*. Quickly followed by the mitigation of Robert Howard's 'A Judge's Summary of Proceedings'. One not to miss is 'We Spar With Words, a touching intuitive piece of prose by David Ewart, and almost bringing to an end is 'Laundry' by John Horn and I'll never hand wash again without trying to do it *'sagely and wear with pride*'.

Thank you all for a lovely book. I look forward to next years anthology as this book is not only a delight to read but an education in accents that warmed and invited me in. The lithographics are wonderful. More power to the writers and their groups, one to savour.

**Sue Havercroft, Grimsby Writers**

## Seeking the Enemy

**Lorraine Sitzia and Arthur Thickett,  
Working Press,**

*Seeking The Enemy* is an interesting book in and of itself. Beautifully produced by wOrking Press, Palmers Green, it tells the story of one man who will be known to some readers - Arthur Thickett - previously Chair of the Fed between 1998 and 1999, both through his own written words and through recorded interviews conducted over a number of years by Lorraine Sitzia (see page 4).

The book, which is structured episodically rather than chronologically, speaks primarily of Arthur's long life as a soldier, first in the British Army in India from 1945 to 1948, then later in the Australian Army in Korea and elsewhere in Australasia. However, it would be a mistake to imagine that this is the only element of Arthur's life covered in this little book, which also speaks poignantly of drinking, love and madness - 3 key elements of this man's life across the course of the last seventy years. Yet the book is interesting in another way too, with regard to the questions it raises about the merits of oral history as recorded by a third party when opposed to the integrity of the first person narrative. For in this book that narrative simply hums with life, irrespective of the linguistic merit of individual entries or the genres in which they are framed. For, although Ms Sitzia's essay in defence of oral history as a medium is thought provoking, and her work recording Mr Thickett's life story is extremely thorough, it is Arthur's own story, as crafted by him and revealed to us through journal entries and story fragments, which is truly fascinating. For Arthur has had a long and full life and his reflections on it can be startling. From the Indian partition riots of 1946 to the Falls Road in 1969, Arthur has seen many of the century's greatest conflicts close to. He speaks movingly of his move from right wing politics via communism to pacifism, his discovery of the Fed, and also of his experiences of madness during the 1960s. In the end, this is - a book of many parts - but, to finish in the words of Alistair Thomson, the author of "Anzac Memories: living with the Legend" in his cover note: "...he weaves his extraordinary story through the shifting shadows of the twentieth century. This is a riveting tale of searing honesty and sparkling passion."

**Alison Combes, Director, Survivors' Poetry**

# R e v i e w s

## Toolkit for Change

**The Groundswell Self Help Manual, published by Groundswell UK, Elmfield House, 5 Stockwell Mews, London SW9 9GX - 020 7737 5500 94pp + 17pp directory £10**

To do this Manual justice you really have to get hold of it and use it. It is a model of clarity and ideas that should be on all community and arts organisations bookshelves, as the ideas and projects are universal in scope.

I like the way that throughout there are Jargon Buster sections, leading you through the complex nature of some of the form filling culture, such as what are really meant by the words: objectives, priorities, activities, strategies?

The Manual has useful checklists, examples of good practice, and case studies. This is a book about empowering people from the ground up, involving people, it is a book to be used by those who participate, as well as those who plan and manage (shouldn't they be the same?).

I liked Chapter 19 - *Having Fun*, a page of photos and just one line '...don't you know how to have fun?!' Which highlights how so many organisations get caught up in the minutiae of funding plans, systems and everyday existence, forgetting why they really exist!

The book may not seem cheap, but it is well worth the £10, and if your organisation has no money, then Groundswell are open to negotiation. It is also anticopyright, which I fully support, and Groundswell invites you to photocopy it and distribute it to anyone who may find it useful.

Well I found it very useful and will copy sections for many people, and use it as one of the most useful tools I have on the bookshelf. My recommendation is GET IT AND USE IT!

**Tim Diggles, FWWCP Co-ordinator**

See page 30 for an article on Groundswell



## Visible Voices

**Young People's Ideas Annual - Community Links, 105 Barking Road, Canning Town, London E16 4HQ Phone 020 7473 2270**

Visible Voices is a useful book of project ideas for tackling some of the issues which matter to young people.

All the projects came about from discussing issues with young people themselves, and used the concerns they expressed along with their own ideas about how they would like their problems confronted.

The projects vary from the obvious concerns of young people about sex and drugs, to making the most of opportunities and using arts and technology.

The book gives a good guide to what each project aimed to achieve, and the ideas used to achieve it. Particularly interesting is the 6VT Youth Cafe project in Edinburgh, in which young people shadow the posts of the 'winklies' who monitor the finances and provide expertise on securing political and financial support.

Each project gives contact details for those interested in starting a similar project. (See extract below)

**John Malcomson, Heeley Writers**

The following extract from Visible Voices gives a good idea of the depth of the content:

### The Teenage Voice

#### Keeping control of their voices and concerns

The Teenage Voice began as a research project to ascertain the needs of young people in Eastwood, Nottingham. The researchers wanted much of the work to be undertaken by young people themselves, so that any recommendations made in the report would come directly from them.

#### How did it happen?

Considerable time was spent asking young people about their needs and views. Young peoples ownership of the project was absolute, they circulated questions and gathered responses themselves. All the questions were in response to issues raised



# R e v i e w s

## Middle Class Hero

**David Floyd, Piffing Publishing, The Bigger Shoe Box, Muswell Hill Centre, Hillfield Park, London N10 3QJ**

This exploration of what it means to be middle class glories in bathos and is packed with choice lines: "Sliced bread/ is quiet, withdrawn and generally appalling in social situations/ sliced bread is useless if you are trying to pump up a bicycle tyre" (sliced bread it's crap) at it's best in his savage Blairite protest song "war is not nice/ it's better to hold hands/ when we hold hands/ we cannot hold guns..." which has, perhaps, been more recently overtaken by world events. The title poem, a kind of reversal of Lennon's angry song, is wonderful: "... over fed angst's just a school bus away/ when you think no one loves you/ and know no one needs you/ it's time to take a chainsaw to the hand that feeds you/ screaming "your soft furnished values/ mean nothing to me"/ but a middle class hero is something to be".

**Nick Pollard, Heeley Writers**

## Not In The Attic

**An anthology of writing from the Manchester Survivors' Poetry\* Women's Project, c/o Commonword, 6 Mount Street, Manchester M2 5NS Published by purpleprosepress ISBN 0-9536746-1-4 24pp £3**

This is a collection of poetry by members and special guest writers, including Jackie Kay. *Not in the Attic* (is the title a reference to *Jane Eyre*?), is a real gem of a book, 15 poems and each one very special. I enjoyed Rebecca Mott's *So, Why Do You Like Football?* probably because I do and Rebecca has got to the root of its soul. I felt both sadness and life affirmation reading Crystalline Aphrodite's *Flower in the Sky*, so sparse in her use of words and imagery, and tearfully poignant. I felt guilty reading Karen Moore's *From The Other Side*, it brought back memories of my own life. I shuddered at the sinister tale in Cathy Bolton's *Trucker's Rest*.

A very fine collection and well worth exploring.

**Tim Diggles, FWWCP Co-ordinator**

\*Manchester Survivors' Poetry have recently been provisionally accepted as members of the FWWCP

in discussions with participants.

### Progress

The most significant issues emerged simply as a result of young people being asked about their thoughts and feelings about, for example, careers and qualifications; financial security; drink and drugs; the poor opinion of other members of the community. Young people were very concerned about their 'public image and the labels attached to them by their elders. They felt this to be a major obstacle to making changes in their own lives.

### Keeping control of their voices and concerns

The project was very well received by the local young community, who soon adopted it as their own and gave it a new direction. The original goal was to produce a large authoritative report conveying the teams research findings to interested organisations. However, it became clear that a formal report like this would not be the best way for young people to have their say. They decided instead to produce a newspaper discussing the issues and problems they felt pertinent to themselves and their peers. They edited, compiled and produced all the material, and the newspaper will be distributed free to every household in Eastwood, hopefully ensuring that it reaches the widest relevant audience possible.

### Having influence

Meanwhile, the young people have made quite an impact on local politicians and decision-makers, who are beginning to consult them about relevant issues. Their work is not being ignored, and some useful suggestions for local improvements are being discussed.

### Contact

Ellie Lodziak, Scargill Walk Centre, 32 Scargill Walk, Eastwood, Nottingham NG 16 3AY

# R e v i e w s

## No Restraints

An anthology of disability culture in Philadelphia, edited by Gil Ott, 152pp US\$20, New City Press/Liberty Resources\*, 1114 W. Berks St, 10th Floor Anderson Hall, Temple University Philadelphia PA 19122, ISBN 0 9712996-2-5

A vibrant grassroots collection of 'Disability Pride', spanning across all service users' perspectives of disability from the viewpoints of the disability rights movement. The focus here is on ending the unlimited petty discriminations debarring disabled people from social participation, on obtaining accessible services so that they can have a life without every daily function being medicalised. The Americans with Disabilities Act has drawn a wide definition around the term 'disability' as "any condition which limits a major life function", which editor Gill Ott suggests has given emphasis to the cultural process of asserting rights and individuality within the diverse community of people with disabilities.



This range is reflected in the many essays, histories, poems, manifestos and personal accounts of aspects of disability and activism. Also included are Rodney Atienza's photographs of the recent campaign for access on Greyhound Buses, art works by visually impaired artists and by Coalition Ingenu, a network of artists recruited from mental health facilities and homeless shelters, and great excerpts from David Kime's mental health survivor magazine, Transcendent Visions. It's an inspirational and powerful beginning which makes clear the link between political action and artistic expression, and, as Maria Dewan says, a case for activism as education.

**Nick Pollard, Heeley Writers**

\*For more information about Liberty Resources work in Philadelphia go to their website: [www.libertyresources.org](http://www.libertyresources.org)

## Tolpuddle Boy

By Alan Brown, Hodder Children's Books, £4.99, ISBN 0340852038

"It is 1834, and you are a convict, being transported to Australia. There are hundred aboard this ship, kept from mutiny by shackles and brutal floggings with the dreaded cat o'nine tails. Conditions are so bad, many prisoner never reach Sydney. The dead ones are pitched overboard with no ceremony. Sharks follow the trail of bodies, gorging on corpses. will one of them be you?"



In a period when the Labour party appears unable to use the 's' (ocialism) word, at least in a positive context, and the membership of unions is in decline, this is an engaging tale of injustice and a popular cause at the beginning of the trade union movement. Alan Brown's rich and vivid retelling of the true story of James Brine, the youngest Tolpuddle martyr, in the style of his earlier, excellent The Smallpox Slayer (Dr. Jenner and the discovery of a cure for smallpox) is gripping enough to excite the most reluctant young historian:

"Strong hands hoist you to your feet and pull the blindfold away... A looming skeleton is raising a scythe to cut off your head! Your cry out in fear! 'Remember thine end,' says a solemn voice.... you repeat a long oath, a few words at a time. 'I will persevere in endeavouring to support a brotherhood known by the name of the Friendly Society of Agricultural Labourers...'"

The Captain Swing riots, the hardship caused by the adoption of new machinery, the terrible conditions of the penal colony, and the machinations of local landowners and their spies are brought alive as characters speak directly from contemporary sources, including James himself. The narrative, which covers the martyrs' pardon and concludes with the continued celebration of the Tolpuddle martyrs fight for justice, even includes a little romance and melodrama as we speculate whether James will ever be reunited with his sweetheart Elizabeth. The best stories are, as it says on the cover, true.

**Nick Pollard, Heeley Writers**

# FEDfest 2003

## April 25th to 27th

### at The University of Sheffield

The annual FWWCP Festival of Writing is one of the most exciting events in the arts calendar in Britain. It brings together people from many communities in Britain and abroad, who write, publish, and perform . FEDfest enables people who share the belief that writing and publishing should be made accessible to all, to meet, share skills, learn from each others' experience. There are workshops, talks, meetings, bookstalls, and an opportunity to read your work to an appreciative audience at the amazing Saturday night open reading. For 2003 we plan to broaden the workshops even further, bringing in new people from the many organisations who have become part of the Worldwide fellowship which is The FWWCP today. FEDfest 2003 is open to all, and all people are made most welcome, it is one of only a few events where people come for the first time and immediately feel a valued part of the event.

For the first time we are running workshops on Friday afternoon, this was requested by members at FEDfest02, see the booking form below.

FEDfest enables you to meet people, have a hectic weekend of readings and workshops, or, the opportunity to take time for yourself.

All workshops, events, meals, bar and accommodation, will be at Dale Hall, at The University of Sheffield. The building has good access, and is set in lovely grounds. Rooms are all single and easily accessible by lifts.

There should be some bursaries towards fees, through the FWWCP, from many of the Regional Arts Boards. We advise people apply to their local authorities for support, both for the fees and travel. Contact Tim Diggles on 01782 822327, or e-mail [fwfcp@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:fwfcp@tiscali.co.uk), to find out what may be available through The FWWCP.

Use the form below to book your place.

**We look forward to seeing you**

## The deadline for booking is Friday April 18th 2003

**(One form per person only, please photocopy or phone 01782 822327 for more forms):**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

I am a member (see note 1) of: \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to book the following (please tick) (note 2)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weekend - Member £95 (note 3)             | <input type="checkbox"/> Weekend - non-Member £125            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weekend Meals Only - Member £55 (note 4)  | <input type="checkbox"/> Weekend Meals Only - non-Member £70  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Meals Only - Member £30 (note 4) | <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Meals Only - non-Member £40 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weekend Basic - Member £25 (note 5)       | <input type="checkbox"/> Weekend Basic - non-Member £35       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weekend Child £70 (note 6)                | <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Child £20                   |

please give child's age if a creche place is required (note 7) \_\_\_\_\_

Friday Workshops and lunch add £10 (note 8)

**IMPORTANT! Please complete your requirements and read notes overleaf**

## I require (please tick):

- support with my reading and writing (note 9)
- to be in a room near my carer, partner or friend who is: \_\_\_\_\_
- a room on the womens block
- an en-suite room (note 10), add £15 to your fees if for choice and not disability or medical reasons

Ground floor rooms are not required as there are lifts.

- Vegetarian food       Halal food
- Kosher food       Dairy free food

Food served will be meat based European meals. If you have food requirements not covered above, please use the space below to let us know or contact the FWWCP:

If you have any access or other requirements, to make your weekend as enjoyable and free of stress as possible, please use the space below or send information with this form.

I enclose £ \_\_\_\_\_ as Deposit/Full Payment (note 11)

Please make cheques or postal orders payable to "FWWCP" (do not send cash), and post to:

**FWWCP FEDfest, Burslem School of Art,  
Queen Street, Stoke-on-Trent ST6 3EJ**

Please tick if you agree to the following information being included in the delegate list distributed to participants:

- your name     address     phone no.

Do you wish to convene a workshop or give a talk? If so please indicate below and we will contact you:

## Notes

- 'Members' are members of FWWCP affiliated groups, Magazine subscribers, and Friends of the Fed.
- For Friday or Saturday night only phone 01782 822327 or e-mail fwwcp@tiscali.co.uk for details.
- 'Weekend' booking fees cover food, workshops, and accommodation, from Friday evening to Sunday lunchtime.
- 'Weekend Meals Only' booking fees are for workshops, and meals, Friday to Sunday. 'Saturday Meals Only' for workshops and meals on Saturday only, not breakfasts.
- 'Weekend Basic' fees are for workshops and performances Friday onwards only, with no food.
- Children's fees are for under 14's.
- A creche will be available, but must be booked by Friday March 21st 2003.
- The extra cost for Friday workshops cover room hire and buffet lunch. Details will be sent with the delegate pack.
- Where possible support will be available during workshops for people who have reading and writing difficulties. Please let us know if you can offer that support to others.
- There are very limited en-suite rooms available in Dale Hall, prioritised for those who require them for disability or medical reasons. If this option is chosen, enclose a note about why it is required. For those who do not need en-suite for medical or disability reasons, there are en-suite rooms available in another building about 150 yards away. If chosen an extra £15 will be charged.
- A Deposit of £30 may be sent, with the remainder paid by Wednesday April 16th 2003. Payments may be made at FEDfest **only** if an agreement has been made with the FWWCP (i.e. due to waiting for a grant to arrive), phone Tim Diggles on 01782 822327 for details.

**CANCELLATIONS**

After Friday April 11th, there will be no repayment of Deposits or Fees for cancellations, for ANY reason whatsoever. Previous to that a charge of £10 will be made for administration.

**Travel and Workshop Details**

A Delegate Pack will be sent to all people attending around two weeks before the event. If you are pre-booking train tickets, you will need to arrive in Sheffield on Friday at around 5pm, or midday if you are attending the Friday workshop. On Sunday 27th FEDfest will end at around 2.30pm.

**The FWWCP subsidise all places by at least £15, if you or your organisation can afford to add that to your fees, it will help support the work of the FWWCP.**

## Literaturetraining

The latest news on the New Writing & Literature Consortium (FWWCP, NAWA, NALD, writernet, Lapidus, Survivors' Poetry, and Apples and Snakes), front is that we have a new name - literaturetraining. This is a rather less unwieldy title, we feel, and is in line with our forthcoming website [www.literaturetraining.com](http://www.literaturetraining.com) which went live in December, with the latest training and funding information for the sector. We are currently in the midst of planning for the future and are in the process of drawing up a three-year plan (2003-2006). Our aim is to provide an information and advice service that will genuinely support the professional development of writers and all those involved in creating or supporting new writing and literature. We are also delivering a wide-ranging new programme of literature training of our own (see below). This runs until June 2003 and takes place in various parts of the UK. Areas covered include making a living as a writer in schools, writing in health and social care, literature development, performance and presentation skills, training for disabled writers in writing for performance media, and marketing and small-scale fund-raising skills. The training has a strong practical focus, with opportunities for participants to gain hands-on experience through placements and work-shadowing. There are still places available on many of the courses. Check the What's New section of the Lapidus website for further details or you can contact me on tel 0131 553 2210 email [p.johnston@nawe.co.uk](mailto:p.johnston@nawe.co.uk)

**Philipa Johnston**

## Some of the Literaturetraining training sessions in 2003:

*Extending Curriculum Knowledge, Building Successful Teacher/Writer Partnerships***21<sup>st</sup> January 2003 at The Henry Moore Institute, Leeds**

This seminar will give participants the chance to extend their knowledge of curriculum requirements in primary and secondary schools and look at how this knowledge can inform their working practice. It will also provide an opportunity to think big, and debate how to plan rewarding and ambitious placements with teachers in schools. Venue -

**Facilitators - Anthony Wilson**, poet and curriculum specialist and **Peter Ellison**, member of the Islington English and Literacy Team.

**Fee** £55 Literaturetraining members, £80 non members 20 places available

*Live Literature Performance and Presentation Skills***11th to 13th March at The Henry Moore Institute, Leeds**

If you wish to build your confidence in presenting and talking about your work, this course is for you. It will allow a concentrated period of time to explore performance skills and how to speak well about your work in public. You will be given to chance to work alongside other writers and learn from their different styles. New directions in performance work will also be explored as part of this course including the use of movement and cross art form work.

**Facilitators - Apples and Snakes** workshop leader **Denise Wong** - freelance theatre director and Artistic Director of Streetsalve Theatre Co. who work with young homeless people. + guest writer with performance skills.

**Fee** £150 Literaturetraining members £175 non members - 15 places available.

*Cross Art Form projects - Keys to Success***18th March at The Henry Moore Institute, Leeds**

Facilitator Graham Mort has an excellent track record of using writing in collaboration with other art forms in a school setting. Participants will gain the opportunity to explore this fascinating area of work and unpack the secrets of good practice from a writer's point of view. There will be a chance to plan new ideas for ambitious work in the company of other professionals and to extend the range of what you can offer in an educational setting.

**Facilitator - Graham Mort**, poet, freelance specialist in writing in education

**Fee** £55 Literaturetraining members, £80 non members - 20 places available

## Literaturetraining training cont'd

### *Building a Solid Foundation – Planning, Evaluating and Working as a Freelance Writer in Education*

**8<sup>th</sup> April 2003 at The Voicebox, South Bank Centre, London**

One of the steps to ensuring a successful career as a writer working in education is to master the art of good planning and evaluating your work so that you can set it in a framework and learn from your experiences. Writers are being increasingly asked to involve themselves in planning and evaluation and this seminar will provide you with the necessary tools. It will also look at what you need to know to work as a successful freelance writer in education.

**Facilitator – Alicia Stubbersfield** poet, teacher, used to run writing programmes for the Open College of the Arts. **Fee** £55 Literaturetraining members, £80 non members 20 places available

### *Developing Your Career as a Freelance Writer in Education*

**3<sup>rd</sup> June at The Henry Moore Institute, Leeds**

Many writers working in schools have a basic understanding of good planning techniques. This seminar will enable participants to sharpen up their skills and learn from new developments in this field. It will also provide an opportunity to think about where to go next in developing a freelance career using writing as a creative tool in education and other settings.

**Facilitator – Jean Sprackland**, poet and co-ordinator of The Poetry Society's PoetryClass project.

**Fee** £55 Literaturetraining members, £80 non members 20 places available

### *Marketing Skills for Writers*

**13<sup>th</sup> May at The Voicebox, The South Bank Centre, London**

It is increasingly important to be able to present yourself well and market your skills in order to develop a career as a writer working in education. This seminar will explore how to plan your marketing, who to target and evaluate your success. It will explore ways of communicating via print, on line and using the media to your best advantage.

**Facilitator – Steve Dearden**, freelance writer and Co-ordinator of National Association for Literature Development.

**Fee** £55 Literaturetraining members, £80 non members 20 places available

If you wish to book a place on a course, please contact Paul Munden or Anne Caldwell at NAWE. Tel. 01653 618429 E-mail paul@nawe.co.uk

# Federation Magazine & Broadsheet NEXT ISSUE

**The deadline for submission of articles or reviews for consideration for Federation Magazine issue No.26 and Broadsheet 12, is April 15th 2003, for publication and distribution in June 2003.**

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