

# Poetry Express

The Survivors' Poetry Quarterly Spring/Winter 2006 Issue 24

**Ex Chair John O'Donoghue Speaks out !**  
**Tom Halloran talks of Leeds SP Achievements**  
**Publisher Paula Brown on Poole SP**  
**Amita Patel –A Lesson Learned – Lameth Mind Survivors**  
**Jacque Lewis – a poet's artwork**  
*plus Broadsheet, Reviews and Letters Pages*



*Your Survivors' Poetry is still working for you, with help from The John Ellerman's Foundation, Lloyds TSB, The Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Richard Cloudesley and The Mercer's Charitable Foundation ! Thank You*

*The fight for Survivors stills goes on...*

*promoting poetry, prose, plays, art and music by survivors of mental distress*

*Survivors' Press is the imprint of Survivors' Poetry, a unique literary and mental health charity promoting the writing of survivors of mental distress. The first year of its National Mentoring Scheme, 2005-06, sponsored by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, sees an exciting and ambitious programme managed by Alan Morrison; that has brought together ten survivor poets with ten volunteer poet mentors.*

**Bear Loveday  
Tyler**

**Love Grenade**



Survivors' Press  
*Survivors' Poetry Mentoring Series*

**B**ear Loveday Tyler was born Elisabeth Brooks (Lis) in 1945. **Formative** years in several countries including Majorca. Educated in England at a convent school in West London from 1952 to 1961. Her NDD studies at Hammersmith School of Art were curtailed by a breakdown, which affected most of her adult life and the lives of both her daughters. Her first child was an adopted son, born 1964. She brought up her two daughters mostly on her own, working at an assortment of jobs from TEFL to farm labouring. She changed her name to Bear Loveday Tyler in 1996. The name 'Bear' was first given to her by Hazel Hammond in 1962. She changed her name by deed poll to Bear Loveday Tyler in 1996. Marriages in 1965 and 1978 failed, but her present one, to Laurence Tyler, has been happy and stable since 1994. They live near Leicester in a small terraced house with cats and a huge bird-friendly garden. Bear has an MA in Contemporary Religion and has nearly completed her first book for children.

**B**ear Loveday Tyler was mentored by poet **Robin Ford**

ISBN: 978-1-874595-05-2

**Geoff  
Clark**

*Off the Radar*  
**Forgettable Memoirs**



Survivors' Press  
*Survivors' Poetry Mentoring Series*

**G**eoff Clark was born on December 12, 1964, in Wickford, Essex. In addition to being a graduate of the Mentoring Scheme, in July, 2005, he successfully represented Survivors Poetry at *Ways With Words* at Dartington Hall in Devon, one of the country's leading literature festivals. He is currently involved in a music project in London. He is also successfully continuing the process of recovery.

£4.00

Survivors' Press

**G**eoff Clark was mentored by SP Outreach Worker Roy Birch

ISBN: 978-1-874595-07-6

**Tim  
Pearson**

**Fulfilment in Shadows**



Survivors' Press  
*Survivors' Poetry Mentoring Series*

Tim Pearson born 18th October 1987 was mentored by Royal Literary Fund Awardee Poet and Critic Dr. Simon Jenner. Tim is an active Poetry reader on the survivors poetry circuit, appearing regularly at The Poetry Cafe, Covent Garden. He lives with his parents and is currently studying for a BA in English Literature and Classics.

'With at least this much achievement, Pearson is as likely to develop into an extraordinary poet as anyone now writing under 30. If he does develop he could quite easily become a major poet.'

£4.00

Survivors' Press

**T**im Pearson was mentored by SP Director Dr. Simon Jenner

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**SURVIVORS' POETRY**

Survivors' Poetry is a unique national charity which promotes the writing of survivors of mental distress. Please visit [www.survivorspoetry.com](http://www.survivorspoetry.com) for more information or write to us. A Survivor may be a person with a current or past experience of psychiatric hospitals, ECT, tranquillisers or other medication, a user of counselling services, a survivor of sexual abuse, child abuse and any other person who has empathy with the experiences of survivors.

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# Update from SP Director *Dr. Simon Jenner*



**H**ello, we're back, virtually. Lucky you, you can read a pdf or browse us at an internet café. I'm sorry you're not exactly enjoying the feel and fondle factor for which Poetry Express under Alan Morrison has been justly famed. Everything's here, of course, except Poetry Express in the paper. We hope that will change. But you get unrivalled colour.

**S**ince I last wrote, you might have wondered what would happen once the Arts Council in its infinite wisdom disinvested in us. Well, a lot, not least from the poor Arts Council themselves who've similarly disinvested in head of Literature Gary Mckeone. More on this later.

**T**he office remains, courtesy of John Ellerman who gave a huge vote of confidence in voting us two tranches of £20,000 till April 2008. I must thank Tim Glass particularly, since he also lobbied ACE on our behalf, and talked to other funders. Similarly Birgitta Cliff and Damien Wilson at Lloyds TSB in consultation with John Ellerman, voted me a three fifths Director's Salary for a year, quite enough to be getting on with, thanks. Other Foundations, like the Mercer's and Richard Cloudesley, are also to be thanked for making outright smaller grants to help us survive the transition period. We've also had very worthwhile and heartfelt contributions from some of you. Latterly, through the efforts of Roy Birch, we secured £5,000 from The Paul Hamlyn Foundation for an outreach programme based at Vale House in Stevenage, which Roy has modelled on much prior experience. We're in negotiation with them for a far more substantial sum. Other bids are being planned. For many of these, we're indebted to our Fundraiser Wootton George, and particularly Andrew Devon,

for identifying particular nuances of bids and speaking to potential funders.

**R**oy Birch kept up the NIACE partnership project One in Four, resulting in the production of a stunning brochure. He's similarly working with the Maudsley now. But he wasn't the only volunteer in SP. And despite other jobs, several of our old staff returned and helped wherever they could. Blanche Donnery has, despite her role of Education and Commercial Administrator at the Royal Photographic Society, been much in evidence recently as adviser, exhorter, and designer of this magazine. Co has kept up his work for our website despite his full job at Brent. Indeed, he's redesigning the website as I write. Dan Nelson has kept up his support in helping us fund-raise. Matthew Hackett has gone up to Oxford, though he still phones me about his essays, which is fun. Our virtual Ulysses tutorial had consequences at his college. Our mentees are often in contact, and some, like Margaret Carney, have been of huge benefit to survivors by masterminding launches and sales for instance at Ottaker's in Torquay. Just before they became Waterstones. My own mentees are in touch pretty regularly, and I see Tim Pearson for instance, at the Poetry Café where we perform every second Thursday of the month, as ever; or popping up at 1am when I'm thinking of logging off. Hello Tim.

**T**his website is now our reach into the world, and even generates an income from the sale of books, Google advertising and donations. To make Poetry Express viable again, we need to print it for those who can't receive it any other way, and ask for contributions of some kind to make this happen. When I came to Survivors', costs were £1180 printing, and £750

mailing. The new total nears £5,000. Clearly we have to do something in the face of escalating post office surcharges and rises in postage and weight, and the size of the periodical itself. What do you think? What do you want? Do any of you like this new, instant form of Poetry Express? Who could live with it? Who'd simply prefer the paper flopping onto their doormats? We need to decide how we can make this available to you, and clearly we'll have to offer pdfs only to organisations, unless they can specifically offer something to cover their fractional share of the costs, like an annual subscription of £30.

**There's** much else, and that's mostly inside these covers. Roy Birch has been a huge success in the States, and this points up a vast potential of identification and commonality previously untapped, and itself abandoned in the USA from about 1980 onwards. More on this in our next issue.

**Gary McKeone** was a friend of Survivors' in many ways. His demise has been genuinely mourned by, and angers, the literary world, and indeed many others such as myself. I was one of many who wrote to him about it and he was I think surprised and touched by the level of support he has continued to enjoy in places like the TLS, who see the new job that displaces his, as a kind of ministerial CEO strategic role. Briefly, ACE England, the policy hub, has been enfiladed on both the arts side in its Peer Review (for getting rid of its artistic advisers, and distancing itself from the artistic community) and by the government, for paying too much perhaps to their successors, the suits. DCMS (Department of Culture, Media and Sports) had words (as we once did) with ACE Chief Executive Peter Hewitt. The result is that nearly everyone at ACE England is looking for a new job. Hewitt himself, soon to retire, has started yet another Big Conversation, asking everybody what they want from the Arts Council. This presupposes that they've

heard of it. If they have, the answers won't help him. Tessa Jowell hinted this was a re-jig too far, and 'we have to ensure {ACE} adds value to the ... intermediary {arts-government} process' (AI, 15th December, 2006). The Arts Council needs championing itself and people like us need to add our supportive voices. We live in distracted times. I'll endeavour, with the help of my colleagues and friends, to keep this electronic corner a Survivors' one. Thanks for all your support, emails, letters and phone calls. They've made a huge difference. We know what we're fighting for now. And to the next round of fundraising, let's hope Christmas comes by March.

**Within each quarterly SP wants to introduce our users' Artwork and within this edition we are featuring the work of Artist and Poet Jacque Lewis.**

**If you have artwork including photographs, you wish to share, particularly work relating to a poem you have written, please submit your work to SP. We prefer to receive electronic copies, tiff's or jpegs, as we cannot store works within our office. If however modern technology is not available to you please send no more than 5 in number, A4 size. Consider sending both colour and monochrome, however we can print more black and white images so bare that in mind.**

**We cannot of course guarantee publication of works or that we will be able to fulfil this activity within Poetry Express. That's up to what you send. Contact us if you have any queries. We look forward to hearing from you.**

**SP reserves the right to crop and frame your work.**

**SP apologies unreservedly to Mr. Alan Collins for publishing artwork placed within the text of his vignettes: 'The Road to Nowhere' in PE22, pg: 15. SP did not wish to cause offence and wishes to make clear that the drawing was not produced by Mr. Collins, and we concurred with his view that it bore no relation to the content of his article.**

# A Survivor Speaks Out

## Ex-Chair of Survivors' Poetry

John O'Donoghue talks of his longest serving record tenure

I am glad to say that the news of Survivors' Poetry's demise is news that I do not have to break to you. I step down as Chair and as a Trustee on hearing that SP has been granted £20,000 by Lloyds TSB, with further funding looking secure. The tremendous efforts of Simon, the staff and the Board surely belie ACE's judgement. What other organisation could have survived their decision to disinvest in such a worthwhile charity as SP?

SP has, and will, I firmly believe, go on to bigger and better things, serving survivors in the UK, and through our website and Poetry Express – survivors abroad also. Survivors' Poetry International may be in its infancy, but it has arrived.

My own background has made this news all the sweeter. I am not a member of the Great and the Good, a professional committee man. Like you, I am a survivor. I was sectioned six times between the ages of 16 and 28. Nor do I claim to be 'over it'. I have had my dark times these last few years, but the support given to SP and myself has got me through. It has always been my belief

that I am here to serve SP, not the other way round. I will admit to hard work for the cause. Since I was elected Chair in 2000, I can count the number of Board Meetings I have missed on the fingers of one hand. Add to this the many other meetings, with funders, with staff, and with partner organisations, and you may appreciate the time and effort involved. And I have to confess: I have at times been a very reluctant Chair.

ACE themselves encourage me to stay on in April 2003. They appreciated how important it was for SP that I should stay on through a very difficult patch. I thought that if I did stay, the positive relationship SP enjoyed with ACE would be cemented. Our then Director needed support: the Board gave the Director that support. When the Director fell ill, the Board aided the Director over and above the guidelines by ACE. In retrospect it is hard to know how we could have behaved differently given our ACE approved ethos. So imagine my horror when we received the Appraisal in February 2004, slating SP.

The Board submitted a document challenging many of the findings of the Appraisal, as we felt it was flawed. Subsequently, we went through the complaint procedure with ACE about that Appraisal and all that stemmed from it. ACE will argue that the many Compliances laid down by them have strengthened the organisation. My argument is that the Appraisal should never have taken place. Vital documents were missing on the day of the Appraisal. They were at home with the Director, who was now incommunicado due to illness. We were instructed by ACE not to contact her. Many of you will recognise a typically Laingian double-bind here. SP did have sound policies and procedures, as anyone who has worked for SP will tell you.

What SP did not have – and what no voluntary organisation can have – is security. SP is dependent on funding. This creates anxiety, and anxiety, as many of you will know, affects survivors more profoundly than most. This is a serious problem not just for SP, but for the sector as a whole. If politicians see community enterprise as a way of binding the social fabric of our nation with values that are being

eroded and forgotten by individualism, alienation and deprivation; if they really do wish to show themselves to be compassionate and caring; if they want to be tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime; if they want people to believe in them and to vote for them, then they have to think about ways of strengthening the voluntary sector. In these times of seeming prosperity, surely more funding should be going to voluntary organisations, not less.

Look back at the achievements of SP over the last five years, and I take pride in all that has been accomplished. Survivors Press has been revived and is going from strength to strength. Thanks to Alan and all the staff and contributors, Poetry Express can rank alongside any magazine in the sector. The website improves every time I type [www.survivorspoetry.com](http://www.survivorspoetry.com) into my browser. And thanks to Simon, we have new funders, new optimism, and a new spirit. Survivors' Press is largely Simon's vision: it affords great opportunities for survivors everywhere.

Our organisational development is now in our hands. SP has shown that survivors are resilient and tenacious, despite what we have to contend with. If we can survive ACE and their 'disinvestment' programme, we can survive anything...



## John O'Donoghue Poems

### broken

**first my heart broke  
then my mind  
there they lie  
all mixed up  
they won't go  
back together  
they don't  
work right  
stop staring  
at them  
and leave  
what's left  
of me  
to fix them**

### my cracked muse

**my cracked muse  
speaks in broken images  
looks at me  
with moonsick eyes  
calls me when I'm least  
able  
to keep her company  
her and all her moods  
her starkness and her  
blues  
cause of my troubles  
and my triumphs too  
her downturned smile  
sometimes all that keeps  
sick...'**



### Paranoia

**the stethoscope  
can't catch the beat of  
my brain  
the x-rays  
won't show the nightmares  
the weighing machine  
can't say how heavy it's  
got  
the thermometer  
how cold  
so why  
should a white coat**

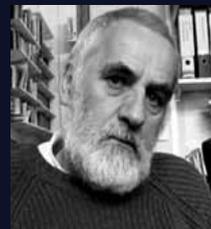
**be any better  
than the disguises  
we've all  
adopted?**

**the way  
the way out  
is the way in  
the way in  
is way out**

If there is enough interest Survivors' Poetry is looking to start up a new user group in the Brighton area, please contact SP:  
[info@survivorspoetry.org.uk](mailto:info@survivorspoetry.org.uk)  
Tele: 0207 281 4654.

# ROY BIRCH

## *Since disinvestment Outreach has been...*



Since disinvestment outreach has been, as can well be imagined, a somewhat difficult undertaking, as I have been rather shackled to my desk in the SP office. Here are the fruits of that curtailed activity.

In February I helped set up "The Big Bash," SP's first annual performance event at RADA, headlined by the inimitable John Hegley, with support from well-known American poet Eva Saltzman, and Mirquita Oliver, presenter of Channel 4's Popworld programme. A cast of thousands included such celebrated members of the SP network as patron Debjani Chatterjee (herself a quite rightly celebrated poet), and translators Richard McKane, and Cristina Viti. It was a wonderful evening and we hope to do it again as soon as funding allows.

In March, I arranged an SP presence at 'The Word Festival' in Newham, and in April I was invited to represent the organisation at the 'Spring Forward' festival at the Oval theatre in Kennington. May saw SP make a successful return to the Swindon Festival of Literature.

From May through June I was busy with 'One in Four,' a collaboration with NIACE (the National Institute for Adult Continuing Education), to produce a collection of writings and pictures on the theme of Mental Health.

In June I organized an SP Poetry Reading at the Whitechapel Art Gallery. I have to confess that this was not one of my more successful ventures, partly because the Gallery insisted I book four poets rather than have the session as an Open Mike event, and partly because the event occurred on what appeared to be a very quiet day at the Gallery. The place was almost empty when we arrived, and staff informed me it had been so all day. Hardly anyone attended the reading, which was no surprise in the circumstances. The event had seemed a good idea, (links with an important gallery are always useful), but of course, good ideas don't always come to maturity. Hopefully we can try again next year.

In July I gave a reading from 'One in Four' at the NIACE/NAHWE Annual Convention.

In August, my fundraising efforts with Director Simon Jenner bore fruit when the Paul Hamlyn Foundation granted me £5,000.00 to co-ordinate a project at Vale house in Hertford (the only major Drug Stabilization Centre in East Hertfordshire) to combine Meditation, Reiki, and Creative Writing in a new and intensive way to help the rehabilitation of recovering addicts. I am happy to report that the project is not only making progress, but that it is thus far succeeding to a much greater extent than anyone, myself included, anticipated that it would. My hope is that this project, a Survivors Poetry initiative, will be sufficiently successful to convince the therapeutic and creative establishments that an extension and expansion of the project is justified.

In addition to the initiatives chronicled above, I have, during the greater part of 2006, been, with SP Director, Dr. Simon Jenner, co-ordinating the SP National Mentoring Scheme. During this period I have also been instrumental in the development of Creative Minds, a Pan-London Forum for the promotion of Mental Health Arts and a platform for dialogue between User-Led creativity and the Mental health establishment. Last but not least, I am currently in partnership with the Maudesley hospital in South London to produce a collection of poems by a writers group in the Felix Post Geriatric Unit.

On October 10th I organized two SP events to celebrate World mental Health Day. The first was a successful Creative Writing and Visual Arts Workshop facilitated by John Hegley (again at the Whitechapel) and the second was a reading from recent SP publications, co-ordinated by SP Director, Dr. Simon Jenner, and held at the Café Rustique in Tufnell Park. Hopefully the organization will be in better financial health by this time next year and better placed to stage larger and more inclusive events.

In early December I was fortunate enough to be given the chance to visit the USA and represent not only SP but the federation of Worker Writers and Community Publishers (for whom I am currently co-editor) as part of a group exchange which began when Steve Parks, Professor of English and Rhetoric at Syracuse University, brought a group of his students to the Fedfest in April. It was a flying visit, some six days in all, and extremely busy. The benefits are already manifesting themselves, as definitely two, and possibly three, American groups are going to affiliate to the SP Network, and there is the possibility of several collaborations between myself (as Outreach Worker) and a number of capable and interesting groups and individuals in the united States – the most immediate of which is with Georges Marceau, Education Officer of the 1199 Health Workers Union, who has taken the first steps in a dialogue to help create a writing class for union workers at Syracuse University, using as its template examples drawn from the Stevenage Survivors Work Book (the history of, and collected exercises from, the Stevenage Survivors Creative Writing Workshops Programme). Although there is nothing in the States which remotely approximates SP, I am surprised that things are moving as rapidly and as positively as they are. SP International is no longer a dream. It is a reality. My heartfelt thanks to everyone who has made it possible.



### Obituary

Sadly in March 2006 Alistair Brinkley, finally lost his battle with Cancer after several years aged 59. He was a talented Singer, Guitarist, Songwriter. Alistair was well known at London SP Events for his sharp and biting critic, famous for his song 'Bitter and Twisted of Finsbury Park', the signature of Survivors Poetry. He worked at SP as the Workshop Coordinator for several years. After leaving SP, he continued to be involved as a volunteer and helped support our campaign against disinvestment with ACE until the end. He last performed for SP, in 2005, at Shepards Bush Library.

He will be sadly missed by the community and of course by his Wife Xochitl our Events Coordinator.

## INTRODUCING JACQUE LEWIS

### YOUR HEALTH

What to say  
 What to think  
 Now able to think  
 Hold thought  
 Health wealth and happiness  
 Old cliché  
 Healthy happy child  
 Health – heart – hear – her  
 Health here  
 Still here  
 Ready to fight  
 Take flight  
 Rambling mind  
 Now returned  
 Back to the beginning  
 What to say  
 What to think

Now

Able to think

Hold a thought

Be me



Jacque Lewis Plate 024

## The Tree

In my mind I see it standing  
Tall, proud  
reaching toward the sky  
leaves glistening with rain  
Yet, walking round its vast trunk  
its other side shows pain  
Someone's careless hand  
burnt black branches  
scorched short and leafless  
A chord strikes deep inside  
but my scars don't show  
I feel more affinity to this tree  
than with many of human kind

Jacque Lewis



# Following Up Leads - Tom Halloran

## on the achievements of Leeds Survivors

**T**here is still new poetry being written by our members ten years after they first started to perform and workshop with Leeds Survivors' Poetry. We started out the same time as the national organisation, 1991, with our first 'gig' at the Studio Theatre at Leeds Metropolitan University. Along with the London group, some of whom had come up to get us going and perform alongside us, a memorable mishap took place when 140 plus people turned up to hear us and 40 had to be turned away. This magnificent turn out was all due to the efforts of a London poet and survivor who happened to be an ex radio-journalist who had worked in BBC local radio in London, Anna Neeta. She had taken over in a live Radio Leeds interview/feature when I dived after the question "Tom, what is poetry?" The proper answer to this Google should have been "Do you want the full answer to that, or the Groucho Marx answer to that?" Of course, there was just silence and embarrassment! Anna took over and did us justice and was wholly responsible for the overflowing of punters at our joint performance, most of the audience having heard about the event on the radio.

**S**ince then we have produced an anthology, "and the world really had changed..." which went through three reprints and sold between 1,400 and 1,500 copies (all thanks to the hard work of the small committee who edited and saw to typesetting and design, headed up by our then secretary, Steve Bindman – who then sold most of the 1,500 copies himself (still available from 8 Beulah View, Leeds, LS6 2LA for Pounds GB 4 – cheques made payable to Leeds Survivors Poetry). We also 'work-shopped' for about ten years solid, until Terry Simpson and Steve Bindman and others moved on to other

projects. In that time we have performed many times, but due to pressure of other voluntary work I haven't been able to organise more than one performance a year for the last two years – our latest at Headingley Library (on 23-11-05) having been a modest success. We intend to set up a writers' group to meet there regularly, for people turning out verse and prose at the moment, and to perform several times in 2006.

**S**o what's kept us going for 14 years? There is, I think, an undefined but strong common link between we survivor poets – whether it is the system we have survived or the commonality of our usually democratic approach to writing verse – we know about the things that personally get us through mental distress and the boredom, unemployment and poverty of its aftermath. We have 'been through the wringer' and are still creative out of the other side. Do we need any more than that to bind us in a common purpose? For many people the events that lead up to and then away from mental distress are full of homelessness, physical and sexual abuse and experience of the inside of secure units and jails. One thing is knowing that there is a worse side to the experience of distress than the acute ward. Other things like social isolation make for an amount of friendship and camaraderie that springs naturally from workshops. We are writing because we want to, because in creativity we are making a mark on the boughs of the tree of life itself to mark our maturity as survivors: "to write is to create is to make". To make verse is to add to the culture of the survivor – of singular or many 'baptisms of fire' colouring the world we live in with its dark corners of despair and distress. But which are only visited when illness comes to call. To people reading this it may seem

strange that I have restated what seems so obvious to many of us. But the binding force behind the relative longevity of Leeds Survivors Poetry has been, certainly, the cement of common experience.

**T**he poetry produced in workshops over the years has not been compiled into an anthology or recorded, but performances and the buzz they create allow us to sample individual work in a way that workshops never will. Some of our current performers have put forward some of the poetry they used at our event in November 2005 and again in November 2006 at Headingley Library on North lane beyond Woodhouse Lane and the two Universities. These chosen few poems are really the tip of a creative iceberg that seems only to surface in workshops. Others have chosen to include past work.

**T**he achievements of Leeds Survivors' Poetry are more than just keeping going over the last 14 years; we have published an anthology; we have published several pamphlets of individuals verse, and produced a taped project called "Planet Connect", as well as a themed performance on Cafés which was 20 minutes long and performed at the then Moderno Café, Lower Briggate, in Leeds. Individuals associated with the group have continued to achieve successes of their own. In 2001 Terry Simpson won the Martha Robinson Prize for a poem entitled "Rubbish"; Char March continues to have plays performed on BBC Radio 4 and Jack Simpson and Steve Bindman continue to perform their songs and poems set to music away from LSP. Terry Simpson has edited a book prose on the life experiences of the Local Voices group, Leeds, "Doorways in the dark", which launched here in October 2004 at West Yorkshire Playhouse. Steve Bindman has brought out a CD of poems set to music. Planning for future events is under way and funding options being applied for may allow us to produce further publications under a nationally organised,

London – based, imprint through the national office of Survivors' Poetry. Individual collections are more likely than anthologies but hopefully the latter will also surface among the poetry in print in future. In the 14 years from 1991 to 2005 a small group of people running the many Survivors Poetry groups throughout the UK, achieved a great deal – especially in raising the profile of creative writing as a therapeutic tool. Most of us write, however, because we enjoy creativity and the act of writing. The effect of ordering ones thoughts, or putting things 'in perspective', is an extra bonus, not the main reason for writing verse. At least that's the way I approach my own writing. My own verse is supposed to suffer from what a close relative calls "writing in code that only you understand". No way!! If you don't write that way you don't get to unearth the dynamics of the deeper personal motivations in writing. This seems to contradict some of the foregoing. What I write down, however is not as opaque as it once would have been often needing a manual to explain the obscure references and metaphors. What is important to me as a Survivor-writer is that I continue to write even when the skies are at their very darkest and storm force winds of the psychiatric variety hound my every thought with a tenacity that only legendary canines are allowed to display. But there are other times when, with the door locked, a sunset shining through the west facing window in my flat an invisible "Do not disturb" sign on the outside door, the computer fans whooshing away, almost quietly, and a full mug of steaming hot tea in attendance, there's not much more needed for the writer to start to feel creative – for the muses of times gone to help one write for hours on end. But the poem that takes several versions before you're satisfied, that takes days of sitting waiting for the right phrase to finish the last line off – that is a creative birthing of the worst kind. However, the last scenario is more rare these days, as I suffer from either a dearth of writing or a superfluity.

What's provided a great stimulus to writing articles has been the paid-for course on Freelance Journalism I've undertaken with a commercial college, which has provoked more good verse than sitting and reading any amount of Heaney, Donne or McCaig, nor any of the over-wordy reviews that used to fill up Poetry Review. I only wish this operated in reverse and that thousands of words of poetry would provoke just one good article. Seamus Heaney famously suffers from a two week writer's block followed by two weeks writing as if nothing had happened. He's a lucky man.

**A**mongst the other poets who have contributed poems to this article are: Usha Want Kaur, Linda Steele, Steve Bindman and Terry Simpson. Usha's performances are full of physical motion and the use of the arms and hands to illustrate her poetry. Her poems involve the elemental, particularly water, and vigorously describe those portions of 'survival' as a writer that are sufficient to goad any saint. Pacific and carefully constructed, her verse is an example to us all to cut to the bone those extra words that inevitably get in the way of clean, spare verse. The examples of work by Linda aim straight for the heart, but do so with an accuracy that is unnerving in the way they clearly illustrate the strength of a solitary image when handled properly. Or the emotion wrapped up in memories that can be as sharply injurious as slippery ice in ones hands but as rewarding as the inevitable warmth that follows a thaw. Memories of this kind can help or they can hurt one. Steve Bindman's verse is by turns celebratory, modernist, comic and polemical, politically aware and personally sensitive. This range of Steve's work has been a thread running through years of work for Leeds Survivors' Poetry and has been heard at most of the performances of our group. Steve now sets some of his work to music, mostly provided by Bradford musician Moses Ekebuisi. Terry Simpson was once described in print as

"Mr Alternative Mental Health, Leeds" and his hard work over the last twenty years has been on a local, regional, and national stage, for organisations as diverse as UKAN and Mad Pride, and, for LSP. His latest project is a book he has edited, of prose, 'Doorways in the Night' (Details of how to get hold of the books mentioned here can all be found at the end of this article). This is a book all about the kind of survival that allows for recovery from distress and describes the many traumas experienced on the way to its final discovery by individuals who have many insights into the twist and turns of mental suffering. As I mentioned above, Terry's poem "Rubbish" won the 2001 Martha Robinson Award (a competition organised by National Voices). Terry 'MC'd some of the series of events we put on at the Studio Theatre at Leeds Metropolitan University and is now engaged in playing and writing for his musical trio "Marelle".

**T**he future of Leeds Survivors' Poetry depends very much on the continued goodwill of our membership and those willing to contribute extra time and effort into running things. Certainly, writing this article across the timeline for the performance at Headingley library has meant that there is a decided difference between the live versions of some of the poems submitted for publication here and their printed versions which was very obvious – interpretation adding to the value of our now, annual exhibition of our own verse. In the past there has been a lot to do when volunteering for LSP. But now, even with the publicity going out on local BBC Radio, there is a reluctance to turn out for performances unless they are 'open mic' events. Maybe there is a future for the group in publishing members verse as pamphlets and as give-away 'broadsheets' (like the "old penny dreadful" novels of the 19th Century?) and there are many ways that publishing on the Net can take us forward, too. But this all demands time and commitment from all who volunteer their time – as was

the case fourteen years ago when we enthusiastically set out for the first time to perform on the stage at the Studio Theatre of Leeds Metropolitan University – with a lot of help from our London colleague, Anna, boosting our audience numbers.

**For more information on Leeds Survivors' please write to Tom Halloran at Leeds Survivors Poetry: 94, Cherry Tree Walk, East Ardsley, Wakefield, WF3 2AJ or email tom.halloran@homecall.co.uk**

## SURVIVORS' POETRY LONDON-CALENDER January - March 07



### EVENTS:

POETRY PERFORMANCE - OPEN MIC :  
every 2nd Thursday of each month - The Poetry Cafe  
- Near Covent Garden.  
last Saturday of each month - The Cafe Rustique  
- Near Tufnall Park Tube  
cd BIG BASH - February 07

For further details:

Contact Xochitl Tuck at Survivors' Poetry:  
Tele: 020 7281 4654  
website: [www.survivorspoetry.com](http://www.survivorspoetry.com)  
e-mail: [info@survivorspoetry.org.uk](mailto:info@survivorspoetry.org.uk)



# SP Poole & Portsmouth

by Paula Brown

Survivors' Poetry Poole meets on the first Thursday of each month in the coffeeshop of Ottakar's Bookshop in Fallands Square, Poole, Dorset from 4pm to 6.30pm. This is our 'workshop' session and general meeting place to discuss poetry and the work everyone as been doing since the last session. In the future, we hope to be able to publish chapbooks and eventually books of the group's work. In Poole, the offer is open to local groups of people who may have suffered with any kind of mental distress, for a mobile group meeting, where I go to visit the group and offer a session of working on some text for specific tasks or exhibitions or simply for a therapeutic session. Previously, we have worked, on including, local groups from MIND and Headway in the local literary festival events, such as a DVD project and an "Elements Banners" art project across the Day Centres in Poole. We have encouraged members of Survivors' Poetry to read and compete in mainstream events such as the monthly "Slammers" stand-up poetry event in Westbourne, Bournemouth. The group is still relatively small but it has encouraged people from isolated

groups to compete in the mainstream and this has proven to be very successful and welcome.

Survivors' Poetry Poole is not yet fully operational but it already has support from the head of culture in the city and the arts unit, who have offered a small amount of arts funding and the free use of some of the city's best buildings for poetry events and readings for Survivors' Poetry. The group needs to secure a bank account and public liability insurance before all of this support can be put into place, but it is looking – extremely promising. The idea is to hold a session in an inspirational building every other month. In the meantime, I am working on more general arts and poetry projects in the city, which has included inspiring the school councillors from a local middle school to have the confidence to write some text to be inscribed and imprinted in their new landscaped garden and a new project for February based around Valentines' Day on the theme of "love myself" - this has been funded by the Learning Disability Development Fund and is to promote and

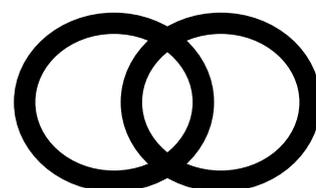
encourage positive self-image through the media of text and self-portraits. I believe that through Survivors' Poetry, it is as important to encourage the maintenance of good mental health and positivity as it is to show support to those who have suffered mental ill-health and to promote and support recovery from mental distress. I suffer with Bipolar Disorder myself but am enjoying a lengthy period of recovery at the moment, long may it last!

Please contact Paula if you are interested in attending the group either:

paulabrownpublishing@btinternet.com

or telephone:

Dave:  
07983 391297





Jacquie Lewis Plate: 007

# Survivors' Poetry Broadsheet

## Conquest

Laughing teams of conquerors  
have prepared their table. They confess  
to an imperfect synthesis, but don't want  
to dwell on it. Those their encumbrances  
bear witness to attempted peace-offerings,  
as though the least of these burning trees  
Were known by a peerless fruit.

Love and the human soul are stronger than  
you think,  
she said, and with that,  
took possession of my heart.

**John Abrahams**

## Athletic Appointment

Two in the afternoon  
doesn't mean exactly that.  
Thank goodness I brought a book  
to write my thoughts, as I ponder  
a day spent with a (an absent?) friend.

An art-filled morning with a dash  
of Piccadilly Circus, Trafalgar Square,  
draped in smoke gray illusions of cleanness  
atop the number 9 Red bus.

Rushed to you from an exhibition of  
perfection

through lunch-panicked crowds,  
scent of fried bacon and eggs,  
scaled down a fifty foot escalator  
to ride a metal caterpillar.

Passed musicians who jangled better days,  
sped up formidable concrete hills,  
collided with bus stops to land at your door  
precisely on time  
and still have to wait.

**Yinka Fasawe**

## Housewife

Take my house  
and shred it.  
All the mementos,  
the snaps of since-past people;  
the ducks forever flying; the books; the litter of  
lampshades;

the oh so valuable, valuables,  
and apply for an annulment

I was wed to the adulterous belief  
that a house would become a home,  
a place of sanctuary,  
if you built an extension of yourself  
into it.

But as I look around from one piece of  
memory to another,

they fail to jog into the jigsaw puzzle  
that might form the anatomy of my life.  
Instead, this disjointed pile of fragments,  
has become an army

blasting me with well-aimed accusations.  
For I am a cheat,  
as the pictures on the walls –  
the eyes and ears of my artefacts –  
watch and listen  
for moments of infidelity.

It is a con and always has been  
that should you follow the habits  
of a home, a habitat,  
you will be delivered from disconnection,  
saved from the certainty of chaos.

I divorce thee house  
along with my chattels,  
and enter the tempest, the tsunami,  
to be flung into a space  
as meaningless as matter,  
familiar in its anonymity,  
for it is the only house that offers me a  
welcome,  
and from now on, I will call it home.

**Linda hart**

## Tripp On Bridgend, (In Cardiff)

Walked under the lit arched portico  
of the Angel just beyond the Castle clock  
on which figures newly painted  
Burgess bright, cast mediaeval light  
even at dusk  
in the City  
crossing the road to keep company  
with wild animals on the wall  
stone coloured, moss smattered  
eerily pewter,  
vaguely sinister  
fast fading into the chilly leafy evening  
background  
alongside the silent smooth inky ribbon of the  
river.

Figures hunched Lowry-like against the cold  
pass in the opposite direction  
on the bridge  
two pushchairs vie for position  
at the lights by Cathedral Road.  
A charity shop in Cowbridge Road  
has given the Matisse Blue Dancers  
prominence in the window,  
but standing on end like a blue and white  
column  
giving it some barmy equal status with bric a  
brac

brass and baubles.  
On to Chapter  
to hear those in the know  
read tales of Wales in poetry  
in the cosy warmth of companionship  
where honesty dictates  
even litter and grease  
bad odours and dissent  
get a spot  
in the lilting limelight

**Judith Toms**

## Decisions

Sometimes... no. Quite often  
I have trouble getting to sleep.  
Lying in bed negotiating the problem  
of medication. Which, if any, to choose.  
Weighing the options:  
a guilt-free herbal slow drift down,  
or a pharmacological  
no-questions-asked-and-I'm-gone.

**Amanda Geary**

## Detritus

Clear away the debris,  
Detritus scattered  
by lost and lonely angels,  
piled thickly, silver  
and grey and white, and find  
flecked blackened wires of-  
is it hair?  
search, dig deep and  
there you may  
uncover a mask,  
a face, perhaps  
twisted  
into a smile  
or grimace –  
joy, pain –  
Or pleasure?  
Only Heaven knows  
or Hell maybe...

**Maureen Oliver**

## Net Curtains

I used to look at life once removed;  
it was like looking at the world through net  
curtains  
or dirty windows,  
I hoped no one could see in.

I used to, but one day  
I decided to pull back the curtains>  
and open the window.  
It was hard at first,

stiff through lack of use.

I began to like what I saw.

Some people even waved as they went past,  
so one day I mustered up the courage

to step outside,  
into the light.

**Karen Harvey**

## Hip Replacement

'Vascular necrosis' - his pathologist's  
manner told h'e chunk out your young hip  
like coral it had died and juttred.

Your pinioned generosity was legion,  
lesioned in a staggered arc of give.  
Little things swarmed to you to live.

What'll become of us, slow molluscs  
when the sea-change saline bites plastic,  
alloys of pain silvered to turning?

Summoning bone, you've smiled, and run  
dimples and corrugates to your sunken hip  
looked to artificial to be real again.

Caught in each's amniotics, we need this  
to know our letting go of other's pain  
when they dazzle breaking surface.

**Dr. Simon Jenner**

## Hector

I thought about Hector,  
a huge and powerful horse  
that carried my lifetime's weight;  
we once galloped.  
We once flew.

Dennis Leckey

## Now That's Magic

If you saw her you'd never guess  
that the lady next door knows magic.  
That behind the routine,  
the knitting and plants,  
and budgie in a cage in the corner.  
That between the butchers and bakers  
and feeding the cat,  
magic stirs.

On the bus,  
people miss  
her Technicolour ticket,  
in Tesco's  
her trolley full of song.  
She pays with marshmallow money  
and feeds lemonade cakes  
to the birds  
who know it's not long  
until she'll vanish  
without applause  
in the invisible halls  
of her fading dreams.

**Richard Jones**

## You fibbing cows

So.  
What do you know?  
Seven of you on yer feet  
and only one lyin' down  
in the drizzle.

Next time round.

You stare pseudo-aggressively  
imitating bravos toros  
about to charge their capes.

See.  
What do you know?

**Dennis Leckey**

## Memory

I was part of those London crowds  
jostling the dirt-strewn streets  
in their solo hells;  
a cramming of people  
exhausting by the  
lives they drag behind  
like dragon-plated tails  
clank, clank.  
The sound of tormenting pasts.

In all my todays  
yesterdays intrude, blundering back  
drunken guests  
when the party's ended.  
Memory stores hand grenades  
pull the pin and  
demonized figures erupt,  
smoking chunks of history from  
abandoned corridors of the brain.  
OK

## Approaching Zero

I stop her breath, open  
the canals of her ears  
to hear the gun-shot

crack of breaking ice, observe  
her muscles becoming taut,  
adrenals squeezing

panic into her blood  
and guts, at the thought  
of dropping down to glacier-melt.

I direct her hands to grope  
for ropes, levers, handles,  
and we're ready to pit jaw-gritting

strength against this threat.  
Senses are reaching for  
the judder, the creak,

the sign this ship  
is about to splinter,  
disintegrate.

**Amanda Geary**

## WARD 8 (WEAK SONNET)

Bedraggled, bewildered after my long night  
in Casualty, waiting with the wound-weary.  
Wheeled in at dawn – yet more nurses to smile at  
(for their sakes, as I'm a Buddhist – and now mine!)  
The light's far too dim, their radio doesn't work  
but after no sleep, the joy of laundered sheets.  
Fitfully I doze, while ward friendships flourish:  
'I need men's company, I go out to play pool.'  
'No, not marriage for me, I'll not be tied down'.  
Later, I creak up; that geriatric shroud  
smiles 'Hi, pet, better?' – she's revived!  
Four days on a drip, four days in half a cage  
four nights disturbed by noise, by sudden lights.  
Then freedom – weak, but I got out alive.

**Olga Kenyon**

## Confidentiality

Confidentiality  
is the key word  
in therapy

One rule-  
patients do not meet.

Every Friday  
there's a man

he walks from the front door  
to the gold Renault

I look away.

His clothing's changed from  
smart to casual  
in just twelve weeks.

He spends time looking  
for invisible scratches  
on the side of his car.

And then leaves.  
never smiling  
never looking

I meet  
him on the high street  
we look away

knowingly.

## Dumped

I dumped the therapist  
after six months.

She took too long  
to decide  
whether I was worth it.  
The assessment  
hadn't ended.

I went back and said,  
'why didn't you contact me  
Rather than my GP?'

Her long blonde hair shimmered  
she told me we didn't  
have a relationship.

'But we'd met for six months.'

Her stern face  
confirms her comment.

"So what was it then?"  
I'm curious.

Her mouth forms a perfect grin  
And her words form a perfect  
'nothing.'

'And now?'  
'We'll see.'

## Revealing

The counsellor wears a  
knee-length skirt  
a split all the way  
up the side

She sits  
legs crossed  
revealing more

her hair's short and dyed  
and she speaks in an unidentifiable accent  
she's Director of the House  
presumably the most qualified  
and experienced

her heavy gold bracelet  
dangles

sitting opposite  
refusing to divert her stare  
I realise she's incapable  
of advising someone  
with complex problems

Her face doesn't crack  
there's no feeling

I wonder what's happening  
in the other rooms  
with other people...

**Heather**

## Night Nurse

In the early hours of morning  
she would wait by the door,  
necklaces stuffed in sponge bag  
and Wellingtons on her feet.  
I would press on with some jobs  
and leave her for a while  
a deranged hope she'd go back to bed.  
But she'd catch hold of my arm  
and say 'nurse, I'm going Home  
my mummy will be waiting'.  
And I would have to tell her  
that she was ninety two  
and mummy would be dead.

**Linda Steele**

## Put Down

Each of these dogs has two heads  
one to bark with and one to bite with  
and they are barking now  
not asking but aggressively demanding priority.  
And used to servility  
our masters are handing over  
double rations of whatever is asked for  
not knowing or not accepting  
that this breed is notoriously never satisfied.  
I will be biting next  
and it will be without warning  
and sadly it will not just be a biting  
of the hands that feed it but of everyone's hands.  
Best not give a dog  
a second chance.

**Geoff Stevens**

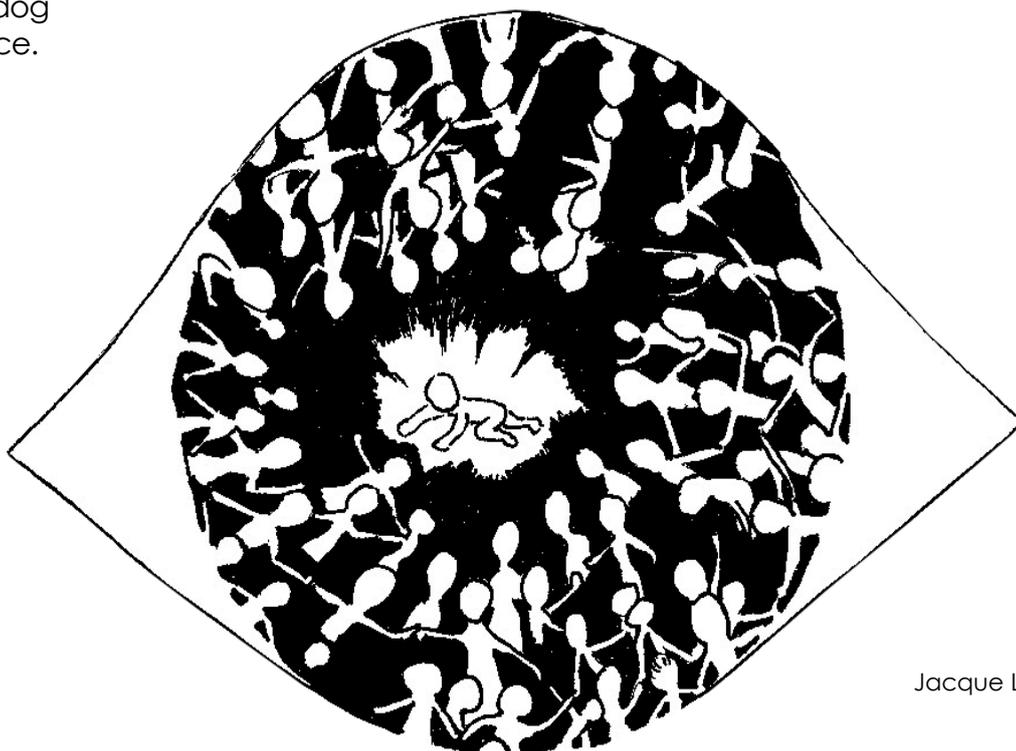
1994

A cry for help –  
no one hears.  
bloodshot eyes,  
but hanging on and  
no one knows.  
Fantasise  
throughout the years.

I'll damage me,  
sitting down.  
Screaming hurts –  
my lungs will drown.  
Skies crying blood.  
No one knows.  
I eat dirt –  
a weeping clown.

But one that cries behind a mask;  
one who lives, forgetting to ask  
why there is good reason, true,  
for me to doubt; - I cannot trust you...

**Tom Halloran**



Jacque Lewis Plate: 012

## Leonid Aronzon 1939 – 1970

1967

1

A day of brief showers  
damp garden under street-lanterns  
chaos of yellow leaves  
leaves a direct fence  
the windows of evening are full  
of returned silence.  
It's late. End of August, almost fall  
Branches of the garden on the wall.  
Only you are luminous, it's seeming  
that outside the window are July and morning,  
that I saw when I woke  
from thunder, rain and sea – almost soaked.

2

From the wind how the garden suffered.  
Water, from the night rains that buffeted,  
still from leaf to leaf sinks,  
from leaves to earth, lets the sand drink,  
but already the stems straighten  
and raise the flower faces  
and the mist of the moist morning  
has already risen between the branches' spaces.  
How good it is, enraptured by you,  
to look at a world that we can capture.

3

It's difficult to quote poems out loud  
in our speedy conversational speech.  
For poems agreed meetings are allowed,  
candles, scenes, silence must be reached.  
But whatever the topic, I tether my speech,  
don't allow other words in when I converse  
and on my lips there is always the same half-line of  
verse:  
'My sadness is luminous!'

*Translated by Richard McKane*  
*A selection of Aronzon is published in Ten Russian*  
*Poets, Ed. Richard McKane*  
*Anvil Press & Survivors' Poetry*

## Fractured Dreams

My fractured dreams -  
but in those dreams  
your warm and still form, next to mine  
can softly rest  
against my breast  
until, at morning's break I find  
that shadow sometimes substance seems.

My fractured sleep-  
yet in that sleep  
a break from limbs not overfine  
which, needing rest,  
still move in quest  
of shadows which our dreams refine,  
of comfort, which we claim but cannot  
keep.

## Caged Bird

It is a sin to cage a bird -  
yes, even one that sings  
a soulful song you hadn't heard.  
It is a sin to cage a bird-  
it's flex or thresh their wings.  
It is a sin to cage a bird-  
Yes, even one that sings.

## Crow

Through jeopardies we value lives.  
Last summer as I took a drive  
this crow took wing instants before  
my car reduced is wings to gore.

I've wondered since why common fear  
bids us move fast when danger's near  
(though sense and evidence both show  
that to stiff ends we all must go).

I'll never know if that crow thrived:  
enough, I think, that he survived  
the incident. Quaint to relate,  
I felt caught up within his fate

so shalln't begrudge my near-miss  
his margin of precariousness  
for, on this road we share, I know  
my heart leapt upwards with that crow.

*Kevin Saving*

# Lambeth Mind Survivors' Poetry Group

by *Amita Patel*

**R**ecently Simon Jenner Director of Survivors' Poetry (SP) asked me to write about my experience of setting up a SP Group in London Borough of Lambeth.

## Right Place, Right Time

**I** am a volunteer at Lambeth Mind which is a User/Survivor led organisation. The ethos therefore exists amongst us to empower ourselves and others in a variety of different ways from running a help line to campaigning on local issues. I, having found Survivors' Poetry groups uplifting and a source of personal self empowerment both as a participant and later as a co-facilitator, wanted local people to have access to this support also. I felt Lambeth Mind was the ideal place to realise this aspiration. The premises were accessible to wheelchair users and were unused at weekends when no support was available for survivors locally. A structure of personal support also existed in the form of Lambeth Minds' Coordinator, Yan Weaver, who has always been available for consultation and supervision. Further, being a well established organisation always one step ahead of applying for core and peripheral funding for projects, Lambeth Mind was sent information about various places that could be approached for grants especially small grants from about £1000 - £5000. I was therefore at a point in my life in 2003 where a number of factors came together helped me realise the aspiration to set up a local Survivors' Poetry group.

## Vision and Action

**I** had an English teacher who used to say of the romantic poets that the world

had need of its dreamers and visionaries a bit like having a car. However-without petrol, the practical steps that need to be taken, dreams cannot be realised. For me the practical visionaries are the founding members of SP – Hilary Porter, Joe Bidder, Frank Bangay and Peter Campbell. They put into motion something that since the early nineties has continued to inspire and support many SP projects and people nationally.

**M**y own first contact with SP was soon after my first hospital admission in 1993. To be able to concretize in words on paper my inner experiences and then to liberate them by sharing them with others in a group was incredibly supportive. I did not believe I was writing poetry but rather creating windows on an aspect of my overall experience. I wrote 'bits' that were stand-alones, or glimpses. The bits became a record of my journey as they increased in number over the years. Much of the journey is still on the back of envelopes and recycled paper. For me the closing of the Brixton SP Group was a blow not just for myself but others locally as well. One day some years later it just popped into my head, some six months after becoming a volunteer at Lambeth Mind that perhaps a poetry group could be set up locally.

## No Need to Re-invent the Wheel

**A**t that point I was a co-facilitator for the Camden workshops. I had undergone training to be a facilitator. Further through working on the Equal Opportunity Policy Working Group for Survivors' Poetry Working Group for Survivors' Poetry I had become involved in designing recruitment

procedures for new facilitators. I know that if funding was forthcoming I could adapt the work of the working group and Camden Workshops to recruiting a coordinator and facilitators for a local group. There was therefore no need to re-invent the wheel. From others and my own collective experience I could bring my own ideas into a local forum.

**Lambeth** has six times the national average for the incidence of psychosis of which a disproportionate amount are Black People. What I felt was needed was the need to create a safe environment in which Survivors could share their experiences through the written, spoken or sometimes sung word. I wanted to see this happening through introducing others, and myself on that journey, to the work of other poets from a variety of different cultures past and present; have themes to give workshops a pattern and continuity whilst at the same time keeping to the traditional structure set up by the Founders of SP. This traditional format provides three types of workshops. Feedback workshops where participants could bring their own work to share and ask for comments; writing workshops and performance workshops. I had no experience of running performance workshops so this curtailed the workshops that Lambeth Mind would be able to offer to feedback and writing workshops.

### **Practicalities and Political Correctness**

**I can** honestly say I made every effort to meet in practice Lambeth Mind's and SP Equal Opportunities Policy on Recruitment and Selection of Facilitators. However the fact that at that time there was only one paid worker, our Coordinator, Yan Weaver and a beleaguered Management Committee meant that corners were cut. The 'job pack' was complete, the posts and workshops advertised; however it was impossible to have a panel of three people to shortlist and interview the candidates. I

therefore ended up doing these tasks on my own justifying my choices in Support and Supervision with Yan.

**Regarding** the post of coordinator, when I raised the matter of advertising the post and the workshops being on a Saturday, not a normal working day, key issues arose. These included security, access to premises and additional support being needed to be offered to a new person; and resulted in my being appointed the coordinator. I still feel uncomfortable about this. However in this our second round of funding applications I am happy to say I won't be the coordinator and we will advertise and interview candidates for the post after we've drawn up a job specification and job description.

**So** what is the value of having an equal opportunity policy? I think the value is that in all the various areas in which the policy can be implemented from recruitment and selection management, we can hold ourselves responsible to the values enshrined in those policies. Recruiting in the 'voluntary sector' can mean organisations as large as the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureau to one individual wanting to do something for their community. Some degree of common sense and accountability needs to be observed. And in this I think Lambeth Mind has not failed. We are already looking at ways to improve our service and our practices.

### **Funding**

**From** the funding information that Lambeth Mind was sent we chose Awards for All because it was the first one we came across whose funding criteria we fitted and who were prepared to give a (then) maximum of £5000. The bulk of the money we applied for was for the freelance salaries for our new survivor facilitators and for our survivor coordinator.

At the time of application no decision had been made about my being the coordinator. As a guideline for the salaries I used Survivors Poetry's practice with a few amendments as the coordinator's post carried more responsibility than the post of coordinator for the Camden Workshops. The application was for 25 fortnightly workshops. This brought the salary's budget to £3,850. The remainder of the money was allocated as follows: £300 for publicity, £300 for administration, £250 workshop materials, and £300 refreshments. We also approached SP for help and we were given £500 which will go towards producing an anthology becoming a reality in 2006 instead of 2004.

**Was** filling out the funding form difficult? Yes and No. I'm afraid mine was hand written as I'm a dinosaur when it comes to new technology. Our success confirms my belief that many funding bodies these days are sensitive to the needs of small groups and individuals. So don't worry too much about not being able to type out your application. Further, the application form becomes a guide that an open ended 'write and tell us about your project' cannot be. So for example, the form asked the name for the project which I think is an important start to concretising concretising your project. It also asked us to describe the projects activities, state who will benefit, state safety issues that may affect the project, give details of references, bank account, referees etc. These are all practical steps that can help you to think your project through. It was easier for me because Lambeth Mind already had a bank account, produced annual reports and was and is a well established group. The hardest part was costing the project. I had no experience. Once I'd costed the salaries, however, using SP's guidelines, the rest fell into place. Ideally we need more than £5000 to cover the cost such as renting more suitable premises than our one room office. It would also be good

to meet management costs for Lambeth Mind such as the cost of the time taken to offer support and supervision for the coordinator of the poetry project, heating etc. However at the moment this is not going to happen.

### Lesson Learnt

**From** the idea to start the group to the start of the group eight months elapsed. So think long term. The project has also had to cope with my hospitalisation towards the end of its remit. However by that time a team spirit had emerged and to their credit, particularly Yan and two of the co-facilitators, Hanna McCallum and Anne Cooper, the project was satisfactorily concluded with the only outstanding matter being the putting together of an anthology of the Group's work. Hannah had also done the bulk of the work in putting our new bid to Awards for All.

**For** me personally it has been an incredible experience from the satisfaction of seeing the Group's work taking shape over the year through to a feeling of confidence about my capacity to be a better co-facilitator of Survivors' Poetry workshops. Lots more still to learn though. It has also been good to be part of a team even if at times it did feel a bit lonely at the beginning. I've had, too, a great opportunity to learn one way of making a funding application and learning the various administrative tasks of setting up and running a Survivors' Poetry group.

contact SP if you  
want to get in touch  
with this group

# Broadsheet continued

## If you want to know the time, don't ask a poet!

You ask me the time

the time is now.  
Your bus is just about to disappear from the station  
the guard blows his whistle  
as the train prepares to leave the platform  
our dinner is already getting cold  
the film is starting  
the umpire has already called play  
your loved one is calling out to you  
that bleeper indicates some kind of emergency  
your involvement in the whole future of  
humanity  
also rests on this slender moment.

So don't linger too long  
asking me for reassuring confirmation of the time

although a few seconds have lapsed  
I can still say to you.....

The time is now

## A song To Life

Our lives which art on earth  
valued be their appraisal

our political chances come  
our democratic will be done  
on earth which is the only possible venue.

Let us take ourselves – this day – our daily bread  
and let us lead ourselves not into heavenly illusions

for ours is the opportunity for a peaceful and just society

its power

and its glory

for as long as we sustain it

so let it be.

## Steve Bindman

### A window of one's own

Pink flowers were here, dainty,  
see everyone, there can be dainty.  
Frailty too. Leaves fall, crows call  
in near vulgar sound – subtly

falling short. They have an energy  
that belongs to the real world.  
The colours change. Dull. Fade,

blur, disappoint. A missing link  
clumps along the grey path,  
seems to live a pointless day,

but, past the awfulness  
of him  
there is a sadness.

## Dennis Leckey

### Wildlife

On a tripod  
dawn of strobe daylight,  
red haired squirrels  
dart on seas of starched oak.  
Black crows are perched  
with vulpine intrigue,  
beneath a fervent sky  
of crooked cloud.

Along staggered  
avenues of tritone homes,  
a dog's breath blemishes,  
a raised window pane.  
The stains of broken shadows  
trail the road,  
like pending rain

that can scatter a homely cat.  
On a waggish street  
a kitten sips raindrops,  
stranded car.  
A whistling fox drifts  
through a trundled breeze,  
carrying the remnants of a shredded  
black bag.

A war torn cat gazing  
with vinegary eyes,  
at the bustling traffic  
jolting with panic.  
Pigeon's camouflage a red roof  
of dry paint,  
like a twisted bed-sheet  
twitching in a dream.

### **On the first day of Summer**

Silent mist dripping from naked bark,  
winter approaches in the darkest air.  
Night swims into the clearness of day,  
like falling embers to Autumn's dying tomb.

As curved clouds hang from a fervent sky,  
a jay skims an unmade bed of orange leaves.  
The bundled shadow of flaking oak,  
is like a pencil drawn lake of icy dew.

### **MJ Duggan**

### **Thank You For Giving Me Back Balloons**

We bounced and batted the balloon  
between us. Bam! Bam! Bam! Bam! Bam!  
Your arms stretched up, all fingers spread  
ready to catch (always too soon!),  
eyes lit like stars, and child-smile beam.  
You held the balloon above your head  
and squeezed with all your infant best  
(still its red rubber would not burst!).

\*\*\*

Three years before I'd hit balloons  
(the ward's "Games Group") in hospital,  
humbled that it was all the sport  
I coped with then.

William, thank you  
for giving me moments to recall  
more positive than those.

\*\*\*

I caught  
your red balloon and hit it back.  
Balloons are fun again. Bam! Whack!

### **On seeing "After Man Ray" by Chuck Samuels, 1999**

For you alone I bare these scars,  
these dark windows onto my heart  
and sole emblem of my burden,  
unhealed wounds I conceal, from wars  
I've waged.

I do not weep for these scars, but  
through them: out my aged body  
sounds seep, pain echoing. I sing  
like a violin, resonate full  
with music hitherto un-dreamt.  
I share it with you. Here.

### **Mike Loveday**

#### **LOST**

Since every god  
should have a name  
I shall call mine  
lost.  
And when wolf lonely  
cries echo broken back  
from startled streets  
it is the easy part  
to worship,  
bend my knees  
and whisper, still,  
"Find me . . ."

#### **Lawrence Toms**

## **Masses of Opium**

He's a common-sense addict,  
added to which  
he understands what he sees  
knows what he has experienced.

But they are trying to get him off it,  
hiding the truth from him,  
discounting the evidence for things,  
forbidding his use of logic.

They have him on a diet  
of Government cold turkey.  
They have told him that  
every dull day is Christmas

and that at the same time  
that it is an historical occasion  
and that they have printed proof  
that it is a time for rejoicing.

But he's not been paying  
for common sense  
for what he sees with his own eyes  
for experience

and they want him to pay  
for the treatment that they are giving him  
so he wants to pull out  
to go back on the street-wise

and he has to keep sticking a needle into himself  
to make sure that he's not been dreaming.

## **Geoff Stevens**

### **Helios**

No matter how bright  
the sun – even it cannot  
shine upon itself.

### **The Death unto Sickness**

There is a secret death.  
A silent death.  
A death like snowfall on bleak winter  
nights:  
as pure and imperceptible as goodness;  
which I underwent,

before the sickness was made manifest.

It involved the stagnation of the will,  
a sort of sepsis of volition;  
and a ceaselessly withering heart,  
that closed within the burning altar of  
my chest,  
like the brittle petals of an orphaned clove  
crumbling into dust –  
dispersed by nasal sighs of apathy.

Once my heart had died,  
it remained only for my mind to follow.  
My once tethered thoughts had fled,  
becoming rogues and fugitives:  
roaming among the brambles  
beneath the dark undergrowth  
where many a thought and feeling  
lie buried.

Not long after, my actions ceased to be mine,  
just as my thoughts were no longer mine.  
I wallowed in this death  
like the breached porpoises, I saw as a child,  
lying still, rank, and rotting  
along the ill-frequented beaches  
lulled by tide  
rolled by tongues  
the ebb and flow of enmity.

... mere prologue to madness.

## **A Mirror in Pieces**

My face of glass shatters  
into a thousand shards of cracked light  
that raucously clatters  
on the floor with the stolen images of an eye.  
Not that it matters  
but the eye remains petrified in glass  
vitrified with time...  
We're all as mad as mad hatters.  
while the eye still stares in perpetual glaze  
my own sight scatters  
out from my face and gets lost in the lonely  
night  
hearing pitter-patters  
O imagination's feral feet running wild.

## **Zachariah Rush**

**DINO  
Campana**

**SELECTED  
WORKS**



**TRANSLATED BY  
CRISTINA VITI**

**Survivors' Press  
Translation Series**

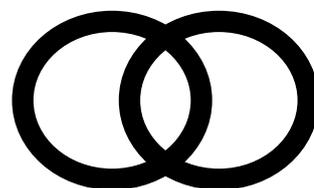


Ostracized by his contemporaries for the subversive visionary power of his imagery and the volatile mix of deep sensitivity and antagonistic violence that characterized his personality, **Dino Campana (1885-1932)** has been steadily gaining recognition as one of the most significant poetic voices of the 20th century.

During his brief life, the last third of which was spent in silence behind the barbed wire fence of an asylum, he published one collection, *Orphic Songs*, which dealt a deadly blow to the literary conventions of his time with its dramatic intensity and stylistic innovations.

His other poems, written on odd scraps of paper during years spent travelling the world in flight from the forces of the *status quo*, were published posthumously thanks to a few friends. Several appear here in English for the first time.

Survivors' Press  
Translation Series  
£9.00



ISBN: 978-1-874595-02-1

Cristina Viti's versions of Apollinaire and Cendrars were published in *Modern Poetry in Translation*. Current work includes research on less well-known Italian poets, readings and poetry videos.

Cover image:  
Michelangelo, *The Night*

# Reviews Reviews Reviews

*Burgundy The Eternal Ride  
Selected Poems 1965 –  
2005 A Definitive Collection  
by Peter Geoffrey Paul  
Thompson Published by  
Feather Books Shrewsbury  
2005 ISBN-10: 1-84175-226-6*

**R**omance is inherent in a poet's soul and it finds a comfortable home in the work of Peter Geoffrey Paul Thompson. A beacon for the new Romantic Movement, he is well established and this volume represents, what are presumably the (self-selected) highlights of, a forty year career in poetry.

The original Romantic movement emerged at a time of strife and confusion and some of it still has that power to speak down through the ages. Thompson, and the whole New Romantic Movement, attempt no mean feat by trying to measure up to Byron, Keats et al. He uses the system of language and symbols they established. "The great of generations past who trod this land in lustrous fame" as he describes them. He refers to Spenser, Sappho and Blake, the latter to whom he has been favourably compared. Not everyone loves Romanticism; Irving Babbitt in *Rousseau & Romanticism* (1919) quotes Rousseau describing the original movement as 'a pilgrimage in the void' and 'self-indulgent escapism'.

Thompson is a Christian and much of the work deals with spirituality, writing that "Poetry, [is] the one true holiness". The nature of inspiration is much pondered, the book is dedicated to 'the Muse' and many of the poems sport elaborate titles and dedications, e.g. "Her Smile A Petrarchan Sonnet (Written in the Autumn Twilight)". He is a clear voice from an era gone by, like hearing a distant church bell. There is much that is vivid and colourful here, along with a coy Christian sensuality. The collection certainly has range, firstly in form, which is varied and at times complex, but also in emotional intensity. Although almost relentlessly upbeat, there are moments touched by depression, 'the tears of hopelessness' attest to the poet's personal experience of mental anguish. The poetry is followed by an extensive selection of what is best described as fan mail, lots of compliments and kind words. Without wanting to sound too harsh, for this is a sweet, well meaning book, this does add to the air of self satisfaction which is commonly found amongst the religiously assured, those who have the universe sussed.

Because he is looking back, rather than forward, Thompson never gets

"Beyond this late rose-appled bower," – the restrictions imposed by the rules of Romantic poetry. The general problem with committing oneself to a historical style – or any movement for that matter – is that the parenthetic rules are already set. There can be nothing new, only re-visits. And of the restricted material available to the writer committed to any particular style, many have tackled it before and some of them were great. Is there really any more that can be added to such an illustrious canon? Thompson is competent in his chosen arena, capably handling form, rhyme and image. But the constant rhyming and Thompson's liberal use of words gone out of common parlance (showeth, ne'er, 'tis, 'twixt), particularly thee and thou, risk irrelevancy to the readers of today and tomorrow. I certainly found it wearing, along with all those exclamation marks.

It is interesting to note that the Romantics saw imitation, particularly of the classics, as an offense against autonomy, and creative imagination. What would they make of Thompson's sincerest form of flattery? Unless you're a hard-core romantic I'd personally suggest that instead of picking up *Burgundy*... you seek out the originals, some of which are

still beautiful and truthful. And I'm happy to report that this will not bother Peter Geoffrey Paul Thompson, "My holiness is poetry, not society's respect." Maybe the other poets amongst us can learn something from that.

**MiA Hart-Allison**



### **Review of 'A Shilling for the King' by Sean Kinsella**

**T**he intriguing title of the chapbook printed by Pro Print is the fourth volume by this poet, who was born in Romford, grew up and was educated in Wales. His poetry reflects the history, culture and landscape of that country and his preoccupation with the natural world - he is a keen gardener - and his love of sport. Peppering the dark lyrical poems that form the bulk of this book gardening poems such 'Summer's Store' and the haunting sports poem 'A Mourning in Glamorgan 84', summed up in the line 'spectators exchanged for spectres', turn the reader from his main message. The loss of identity caused by the departure of traditional work. These are the poems I found both provoking and skilled. I would recommend starting with 'Victoria's Walls' 'its citizens hide in society of shadows'. Here Sean twists metaphor to produce a evocative view of incarceration. Also the

Swallows of Swansea, the death of traditional beach holidays. I loved the way metre is used in 'Down in the Valley's to create a hymn of protest for the mining industry that would inspire even the most assiduous accountant. The role of the soldier, bereavement, faith its questions, its loss, enhance the feeling of exclusion, the burden of history emanating Sean's poetry and explain his choice of title.

### **Score by Sarah Wardle, Bloodaxe**

**S**arah Wardle is Poet in Residence at Tottenham Hotspur FC and "Score" is her second collection. For those who are not fans of the club, or do not know its location, the opening poem 'St. George's Eve' with its sylvan symbols, and modern conclusion might seem a curious choice. However, it refers to the club, its history, its Shakespearian connection and to the surrounding streets, many of which are named after characters in Henry IV. It has resonance too with crowds waving England colours.

Following this romantic prologue the poems kick off with In Memoriam of Bill Nicholson. Twelve short poems are played with international skill starting with an elegy to the great man, that sums up the respect and love he generated and the club's farewell to him in: 'the stands knighted you.../ these grass and roots you

push through.'

Two further poems reveal back stage mysteries to the uninitiated: 'In the Bill Nicholson Suite' the 'idol's head' football from '61' in its case deftly links the glory days to the 'Delphic' 'sacred ground' of the modern 'Injury Room' a hidden place to all but players and officials. Any fan will delight in reading 'Keane', 'Captains', 'Goal' or 'Against Metaphor', even those who have different affiliations would enjoy 'Late News.' 'At White Hart Lane' concludes this section in style linking the city, Macbeth, football rivalry with all the deepest passions of the game, 'the true score crossing the line.'

The four long X Poems mark a change of mood, they are an expanding guide for imagination and insight, see sonnets III and IV. I am sure the extended sonnet sequence "Easter X" is a masterpiece for any poet in residence in the way it swings from Spurs to Split Lit, via the Imperial War Museum: 'A cockerel is crowing like three knocks to a door,/ not nails on a cross, but a summons to a Chamber/ not breaking and entering, but permission to open/ not the drive of a car bomb, but a Word programme...

In To an Ex -OUCA President this insight is coupled with an acute political awareness. Written on the 30th anniversary of Margaret Thatcher's election as Tory leader it captures the spirit

of that age and subsequent changes in political and spiritual awareness with wryness and hope. It is a theme that is developed through the use of terza rima to offset the film noir of *Ex-Prospective* to climax in the goal of X A Poetry Political Broadcast.

Sheet Music again changes the pace reversing to a pattern of shorter but varied poems that develop aspects previously dealt with coupled with poems that will appeal to non Tottenham readers. "Independence Day at Dawn" and "Footprints" have a song that calls up the writing of sonnets and Stone Age man while "Sheet Music" the title poem of this section starts with the lovely line, "What are we and the world but shored-up thoughts...". I felt the intensity of "Sarah Malcolm in Prison" rising from Hogarth's canvas through her words 'but you're no scarecrow martyr'; they conjure a vision of everything that is suffered by female prisoners, often unjustly, through history and still today. In the front stress of each repeated 'because' gives "Hymn to Enlightenment" the assonance of told beads.

Many readers will be familiar with "Schrodinger's Cat" having heard it either at a reading or on the radio, however "Premonition" deserves equal recognition. It is an award winning poem having been given a prize in the 2004 Keats-Shelley Poetry

Competition. I loved the way Sarah develops the poem from its opening: 'Which pub were we walking back from that night?...' to the watching of a child at sleep, through a mother's dream of her daughter in danger 'that she was drawn by prison bars of sheet music/ playing in the grounds of her subconscious,/ sleepwalking in a white cotton nightdress,' What parent would not know this experience and Sarah is a poet who has transformed feelings, fears into lines of immense beauty.

Whether you're a Survivor, Tottenham fan, political analyst, or general lover of poetry in this volume there is a poem for you. I have only a fleeting knowledge of the game and had to do some research in order to do it justice but it was worth the effort, it was an enjoyable book to review. Sarah has created poems that span all these genres and woven them into a volume that is a paen to Tottenham and will be treasured by fans. More than this, like an international, possibly even an England v Germany game or the World Cup, it rises far above the club to appeal to and resonate with a wide audience.

It is a book I would not hesitate to recommend to someone who avowed a dislike of football or a rival fan.

**Islandia by Eric Ratcliffe:  
Published by Astrapost:  
ISBN 0 904838**

**T**his book is unusual in that it follows the format of an annotated sequence on islands, islands of reality, history, legend and idea. In it is one long poem interspersed by quotes from the works of Donne, Graves, Yeats and Stevenson. To enhance the volume Eric has provided notes and has divided the poem into headings so that each 'island' can be turned to with ease.

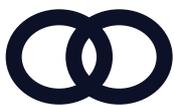
'Conceptual Essence' opens the poem laying out Islandia as 'a state of being not less than environmental vacuum'. In 'Standalone Crisis' the island becomes the bombing of Coventry, a symbol of the island-nation survival. I loved the ideas of 'Islands Unrecognised' where Eric has used Donne and the oak as a precept for life, death, regeneration and retribution.

Winding through myth - Celtic, Roman 'Otherworld Islands' traverse the Arthurian legend via Bardsley island, the labours of Hercules, Syke and Stevenson's 'Silver' the central section culminates in 'Desecration and Renewal of Faith' a fascinating meshing of the Iceni and Arthurian before culminating with 'Voluntary and Involuntary Containment'. Here centuries elapse and Alcatraz and Pitcairn become the final islands of Islandia.

It is not possible in such a

short review of this long poem to include many quotes and to do so would I feel do the work an injustice. I can only say that I found this work totally absorbing, full of drama, and allegory yet factual, informative and easy to read. Indeed with its annotations it forms a intriguing insight into both the possibilities and potential of this form of poetry. Well worth both study and reading.

**Carolyn O'Connell**



**Julia Neuberger: *The Moral State We're In.* Harper Collins, £16.99.  
ISBN 0 00 718167 1**

**T**his is a timely critique of British society where we have become disenchanted with politicians and inured to the needs of the most vulnerable in society. Neuberger bases her diagnosis on the premise that we have 'a failure of trust combined with an aversion to risk'. Health and welfare workers are afraid that they will be blamed by politicians when things go wrong. The introduction starts with a story from the Guardian: 'Q. How many care workers does it take to change a light bulb? A. Ask a risk assessor'.

The main part of the book is divided into five sections discussing the predicament of the elderly, the mentally ill, the young and vulnerable,

the prison system and the outsider. The chapter on the elderly concentrates on the very old and very frail. In 2002 there were over a million people over 85 in the UK. In this context Neuberger analyses the euthanasia debate. At the very least those with terminal illness should not be manipulated into suicide by the thought that their families or society are responsible for their care. Public opinion has been moving towards favouring mercy killing, possibly because of people's fear of their own disintegration in old age, and Neuberger predicts that we may have limited euthanasia in Britain within the decade. But healthcare professionals should never be asked to actively terminate a life and, if we are to move toward a system of advance directives, we must acknowledge that suffering is barely dealt with in medical training.

Nor do the elderly go into longterm care out of choice, but out of necessity, and they may feel betrayed, expecting care from cradle to grave from the welfare state. Neuberger also mentions the advent of a 'grey power movement' which will grow its political teeth. Abuse of those in care certainly exists, but one solution is to improve the conditions and morale of care workers.

In her chapter on the mentally ill, Neuberger draws on her experience of years chairing Camden and

Islington Community Health Services NHS Trust. She speaks of the 'increasingly risk averse public policy climate'. She writes 'the truth is that there has been a terrifying and disgraceful history of using psychiatry and its antecedents as a means of social control', giving a very good summary of the history of attitudes to mental illness. But in her account of contemporary policies she quickly moves to the highly publicized cases of recent years in which a patient was responsible for a violent attack. When it is known that mental patients are more likely than the average member of the public to be the object of a violent attack, I feel that it is counter-productive to devote twenty pages to close descriptions of the cases featured in the tabloid press and the subsequent inquiries. However she concludes that 'we need to recognise that we cannot get rid of all risks'. Locking up those with severe personality disorders 'is probably not going to avoid any, or many, terrible deaths.' More cognitive and psychological therapies are required, and proper housing, work opportunities and 'ways of having and keeping a social life'. Carers need support and the mentally ill should be befriended rather than feared.

In the chapter on the young and vulnerable, Neuberger suggests that social workers are 'increasingly ground down' and that all of us need to take some responsibility

for the children who are collectively in 'our' care. She argues that sexual abuse has made it impossible for a decent outsider, who is not a professional, to help care for children, making abuse all the more likely. A detailed survey follows of cases of murder of children by members of close family, including the Climbié inquiry, and of the problems with taking children into care homes or foster care. The BBC website shows that to the children the important things are to be treated as an individual and the realisation that you are on your own and have to make the best of your life. Government is more concerned about the scandals than about the 'underlying grinding misery.' Social workers should be given the moral support they need and arrangements for care leavers should be properly funded and supported by all local authorities. The wider community should again be involved with activities in children's homes. The chapter on prisons begins with a brief history of punishment and then asks whether the present system is more enlightened than what went before. Statistics are given on the growth of prison populations and overcrowding. Neuberger summarises 'we are not locking up the bad and the dangerous – at least not to an extent that makes a significant difference to our crime statistics. We seem to be locking up the inadequate, the miserable,

the poor and the sick...' Remand prisoners are far more likely than sentenced prisoners to have been unemployed and had inadequate housing. The effect of prison is shown in mental ill health, re-offending and increased suicides. Black defendants charged with the same crime are more likely than white defendants to receive custodial sentences, in some cases because of a lack of fixed abode. The cost of the prison system takes money away from the educational and social facilities which might help to reduce offending. Prisoners are also far less likely to be treated for their mental health conditions inside prison than outside. Prison health services have been moved to the NHS, which now faces extreme recruitment problems. This is to enhance continuing care, but the prison itself is not at all therapeutic. There is a section on women's prisons, where the statistics are even worse than the average. In her conclusion Neuberger says: 'A home, a job and a chance of not re-offending. That is what we owe offenders.' We have a system that 'brutalises prisoners, and society in general is allowed to ignore what goes on'.

The last chapter, *The Outsider*, considers the situation of refugees, beginning with the story of Neuberger's own family. Her mother fled from the Nazis to England in 1937. A history of Jewish immigration

follows with references to the relevant legislation and to increasing racism against asylum seekers, to which current governments pander. She deals with the effect of the dispersal policy on children and young people and the plight of unaccompanied children. She summarises the situation of asylum seekers thus: 'What we are seeing are proud people, who want to be of service and who are terrified of going back to their own countries, being destroyed by the ever more punitive provisions of our legislation'. She argues for 'common humanity... and showing political and moral leadership in the face of hysteria and prejudice.' This approach should be the keystone for all the groups in her book.

**Roy Holland**



**Barry Fitton - 'I Left No Footsteps Behind Me'; Hole Books, Patrick Jones against, Circle Press, £3.50: ISBN 0954- 18378-9**

**T**he first thing one notices about Barry Fitton's A4 book, after the size, is the title and how it's not footprints the author leaves behind him but footsteps. Could this be sloppy writing? The back cover recommendations certainly appear to have been done in a hurry: 'Fitton...to [sic] weird for words...' from the *Manchester Guardian*.

I looked inside, but not before admiring the sage-like snapshot of the poet, bearded in white robes on a suburban canal barge. The dedication page is dazzling, including individual entries for 'the US immigration service who taught me that the pen is indeed mightier than the sword', 'all the poets & travellers...' [uh-oh] '...wherever they maybe' [sic] and, most amusingly, 'to my ex-wives and children in the hope it will explain a few things that I was unable to during the times that I was around'. Then you could at least take a little more care with the syntax of it, I thought, surveying myriad more typos, false quantities, dead language and other mandarinisms before reaching the actual poetry. To be honest, things weren't looking good, but then some of the poems aren't all that bad. Still, comic poetry – I hesitate to say ditties – isn't on the whole designed to change the world and Barry Fitton does seem to take the whole shebang highly seriously.

And that's okay, for a while, since the contents page reveals Erotica to play a part. From erotic poems one at least expects mild titillation, like those of the early Carol Ann Duffy and Wendy Cope. In this case we get poems entitled Orgasm 3, 2 and 1, in that order, the best line of which is:

Coiled/ like a serpents hiss/  
she writhed/ against the  
rising tide/ that was within  
her/ silver grey tendrils/ of  
ice cold flame... Even this

contains one unforgivable cliché – ice-cold – and a non-sequiter – 'against... rising tide', but by then I began to get the hang of things. This was not designed to be about what poetry is supposed to be about, rather a personal vision so skewered and obscure as to draw us along, willing or not.

There's a misogynistic poem entitled Breeder which starts: 'You're nothing/ But a breeder...' and another which mentions and enumerates the dead of: Hiroshima, Dresden, Jews, one day at the Somme, etc, and ends by urging us all to become cannibals. I apologise for this and for much more. Of course, it's comedy (or at least I bloody well hope it is), and one shouldn't look too closely. Still, I think he meant footprints and not footsteps.

Patrick Jones' book against is about, certainly, abrupt and insincere war. In this case, that against Iraq, waged by the coalition forces, led by a bad Blair and a badder Bush. As Tony Soprano would say, 'badda bing' But we've heard it better before, pertinently, perhaps, by a lot of journalists, Rod Liddle, Tony Parsons and the other anti-Labour lot, yet not as deliberately: 'there lies... sadness...absurdity...loss... desolation...blindness... ignorance/ of / one/ human/ killing/ another'. Reader, did you get why those were single lines, or is it another pathetic attempt

at insubordination by an inept 'poet'? This book ends, obscenely, with a full page photograph – haven't we had a lot of those? Perhaps poetry wasn't what it once was – of an American torture victim. Beneath the photo the text reads: army: be all you can be. I say: that's not how it was or shall be. War is far too hard for your stuff. If there's anything one should be against, it's letting Patrick Jones write another insulting and degrading piece about war, something that readers of poetry are understood to be anyway. Unite!

*Brown Eyes – A selection of creative expressions by black and mixed-race women, editor Nicole Moore, Matador, £9.99: ISBN 1-905237-14-6*

**I**'ve always felt there's something distinctly undignified about an editor who includes their own work in the book they're editing. It seems to guarantee mediocrity. Not so in this case – although Nicole Moore has three poems and a three page essay in the anthology, *Blue Eyes*, it still offers up marvels. (Oddly, in the biography bit at the front, Nicole Moore is described as 'a published poet') – am I missing something?

The epigraph from Bob Marley – 'When will the colour of a man's skin be of no more significance than the colour of his eyes? – is understandably worthy yet unnecessary. It's clear what the book's about

from its unnerving cover: an anonymous woman's eyes in close-up. The perfectly sculpted brows say it all. I was enlisted for the duration. The journey was good. Not easy, but good. Lynda Wierko's essay sums it up: 'I went to Ghana...but I didn't really feel Ghanaian... I can't deny the fact that I am British... My mindset is totally different from how a Ghanaian would see things...' Hey, am I missing something, again? The prose sections are all good, I suppose, in so far as you subscribe to ideology. And some of the poems are good too, notably Tonya Joy Bolton, Dorothy Cornibert du Boulay and Karen Plumb, whose rendition of a teacher is to be savoured.

**Ezra Williams**



**Nick Burbridge *All Kinds of Disorder*, Published by Waterloo Press £3.50  
ISBN: 1-902731-29-8**

**A**s the title suggests, dysfunction is embraced in-discriminately in this collection, whether physical, mental, emotional, social or aesthetic. That is not to say that it admits of that disorder itself; in fact it is a sensitive and measured articulation of the desperate struggles with the darker side of being many of us are faced with at some time or other in our lives. With a distinctly lyrical lilt and a calm yet penetrating evenness of tone, Burbridge

plumbs the depths of cancer, osteoporosis, epilepsy, schizophrenia, paranoia, depression and severe anxiety disorder. The real strength lies in the lightness and humour with which the gravity of the subjects is dispersed, remaining faithful to the undeniable seriousness of the experiences rendered. In 'Shrink' the narrator is instructed to 'Carefully replace thoughts / of smoked salmon and your wife's inner thigh / with riddles of anticipation' and this comic repudiation of superficial understanding of the complexity of mental illness is echoed elsewhere, in 'secrets neatly papered and dark memories / washed over with magnolia.' The darkness is, however, forced into retreat by the illumination of poetic articulation, through confronting and exploring the fearful and uncertain depths of neurosis in the written word. Like a tribal incantation, these words flow in 'unstopped cadences / that summon and echo dark moments of belief.' The distorted and delusional belief, in 'The Power of Prayer,' that one can kill one's neighbour merely by meditating wilfully on that eventuality, is one of those dark moments. In another poem about neighbours, the effort to escape the confines of your own narrow, troubled existence in order to enjoy the perspective of another is realised:

'he fills my imagination - /  
much as, at times, I am drawn /  
to the barred windows /  
and wired perimeters of /  
prisons, / vicarious contrition

capped by relief, / the taste of freedom.'

The war against disorder culminates in 'War Vigil', a poem of rich aural texture, conjuring an image of a candlelit lake with 'wavering flames around the island thicket / where mallard and moorhen slumber.' Despite the profusion of entropy in all its various forms, the poems leave the reader with a prevailing peacefulness, ending with the optimistic assertion that: 'all manner of thing shall be well'. Fluent and highly readable, this pamphlet provides valuable insights into the perspectives of sufferers and help people to understand and empathise with them. Surely this is one of the most powerful functions of the poem; carving out a space where the reader can 'through the act of attention,' see through the eyes of another. It's good value for money too. The accompanying CD combines music by Jon Sevink with five poems from the collection.

**Roland John – *A Lament for England and Other Poems*  
Bluechrome Published,  
2005, £7.99:  
ISBN: 1-904781-76-4**

**R**oland John was born in South London and after travelling widely in Europe and the Middle East, he founded the Hippopotamus Press, a small specialist poetry imprint based in the UK. His work has appeared in a number

of periodicals both here and abroad. He has been involved with poetry for much of his life, publishing, promoting, teaching and writing it. His poems are clear-cut and sharp-edged and his voice mature and intelligent. The work of a painstaking and precise craftsman, they convey a strong sense of tradition and patriotic ideals. John's admiration for Ezra Pound runs deep and unearths a similar love of economy, concrete image and classical and Eastern literature. 'Versions from the Chinese' emulate Pound's propagation of the delicate art of translation, exhibiting an inspired judgement of his own. The prevailing theme of the collection concerns the weight of history, the pain of loss, the nostalgia for the irretrievable. Yet this weight is not a burden; John salvages the debris of modernism and re-constructs a sense of our time within the enduring landscape of what once was:

History lingers here on peaks / where crumbling tomes / recall that haunted past.' In many ways the poems are conservative and carefully wrought, but John is certainly not a one-trick poet-pony and at times I found myself surprised by the freshness and variety of the verse. 'The Child Bride's Diary,' some of which has previously been broadcast on BBC2, is an immensely convincing monologue of a young heiress whose innermost passions are versified as the drama intensifies: 'Only your love

my Lord / keeps me from crying out.' Despite the serious reflection on time's passing, at the end the poet finds room to turn and embrace the future with Horatian optimism:

'seize these moments / forget distant hopes, even as we talk / the hours slip by / live now, let tomorrow wait.'

***The Interpreter's House,* Issue 30, October 2005, editor: Merryn Williams £3 + 34p ISBN: 1361-5610**

**W**hat do hedgehogs and Shakespeare's Hamlet have in common? Proof that the poet can marry the unlikeliest of partners gets this collection off to a promising start. Taking its first line from the pen of Thomas Hardy, Jonathan Attrill's 'Of Hedgehogs and Hamlet' reassures us of life's essential simplicity. The poetic and profound quandaries of existence dissolve in the alternative philosophy of the modest hedgehog, who, it seems, doesn't worry about a thing: 'it isn't even thinking about how unreasonable / Mrs. Hedgehog can be when it rolls in / from the pub a little the worse for wear.' The reader can take comfort in this hedgehog-hardiness (Hardyness?), this vital determination to endure, despite all hardship, which manifests itself in a surprising number of poems in this collection. The latest issue of this tri-annual magazine offers an appetizing selection

of verse and a satisfying interspersed of humour and innovation amongst rather more measured and traditional pieces. Phil Kirby's poem is particularly intriguing, giving voice to the woman in Hopper's 'Western Motel,' telling us how she'd 'rather watch this empty road, / survey the empty hills, the quiet sky.' Indeed, this seems to be a preoccupation shared with many of the writers in this issue. It's replete with moments of reflection on the surrounding environment, whether the view from the window of a train or the terrible tragedy of the recent Asian tsunami. Considering the journal's sub-title, I was disappointed that there was only one story published in this issue, though this lone offering was a fluent and articulate piece and continued the theme of the powerful instinct for survival. The idea resurfaces yet again in prize-winning poet-physicist Mario Petrucci's 'In Conflict'. The poet marvels at the creative abilities of the algae in his neglected glass of water, which regenerates itself and inspires in him an analogous improvisation: 'I watch it get on / in spite of battles. It does what it does. / So what do I do? I rinse out the glass - / fill it. Take a sip, a breath. Pick up my pen.' Hopefully, this impulse is contagious.

**Karen Smith**



**SP Thanks all Reviewers**

# SP PS...

"I just wanted to say a big thank you for printing my hearing voices articles in the latest Poetry Express, and for printing my and my friend Luke Dunn's poetry. As ever, all the articles and poetry in the newsletter are excellent.

**Peter H. Donnelly, by email**

I have just received the, once again, excellent recent issue of Poetry Express and know that despite the impending threats of subsidy withdrawal, Survivors' Poetry will survive, in some form or other. We cannot allow something like filthy lucre to upset us, we are upset by more important things aren't we? Why don't all of us published poets donate our spare books to a massive fundraising event, where we can buy each other's books and find each other and thus keep going, for a year at least.

**Pam Hardyment**

Thanks for your first class magazine. I wish I had found it years ago. I am a survivor and have often done voluntary work in mental health settings. I have signed your petition and I hope your campaign will be successful it would be terrible for people to lose this chance to have their voices heard. It will be a privilege to be printed in the pages of Poetry Express. I can't believe that the Arts Council are withdrawing

their funding, PS is not only well produced and laid out but an important place for people to have their voices heard. I only found Poetry Express recently, I wish I'd discovered it years ago.

**Karen Harvey, North Wales**

Thank you for autumn's Poetry Express. Karen Bellamy's article hits a nail on a head not in a finger. How right she is that the real causes of mental illness go untreated. That is because the sufferers are really suffering from oppression and the social services just mop up the pieces and don't-or can't-SOLVE the problem. Does she agree with me that the only thing worse than a capitalist is a social worker? Cheating in relationships and oppression caused mental illness in my case, but I am comforted by Blake's words "until WE have built Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant land" - that is the person oppressing me and myself are BOTH part of this society. The nursery rhyme London bridge is falling down, quoted in TS Eliot means the same thing: without me the system falls down, person centred cosmology! These problems and the debate about cheating CAN be solved. Remember it's survival of the chattiest! Also by politicising the debate can we make inroads. Please pass on my thanks and support to Ms

Bellamy and by the way, do you have any vacancies for employment at your place? I was going to apply before but never got my application in on time. I have also attended London open mike and very much enjoyed it. Keep up the good work!!

**Paul Josling, Chair, London Liberals**

Thank you for my copies of Poetry Express - I'm really thrilled to have my poetry appreciated. I won't go on about what it means to me to be published in Poetry Express - I think I did enough of that last time. I am however moved and I reacted virtually the same as last time - by expressing a gammit of emotions...I am just so thrilled and delighted, I really am. The poems all have special relevance for me, and, if they manage to resonate with, touch or move just one person who reads them, I will feel both pleased and humbled! I was very moved by 'An Interview with John Horder', I can relate to a fair bit about what he talks about... Thank you both again, and to Roy Birch and the rest of the team who do such a brilliant job! Keep going! PLEASE.

**Sally Richards, Shrewsbury**

I think I qualify as a survivor poet, having spent thirteen months in a Belgian mental hospital, at times writing to poetry to survive. I found

your publication very interesting.

**Peter Tomlinson, Belgium**

Thank you as always for the fabulous Poetry Express. Living so far from London and coping with health issues... depression, anxiety and post traumatic stress disorder, and with a very small pension and bit of incapacity benefit, Poetry Express is a LIFELINE. Please keep going. I always read Broadsheet pages first and wondering reading as always! Really looking forward to reading the mentees pamphlets and feel very encouraged and inspired to apply for this year's National Mentoring Scheme. It would be just what I need in developing as a poet to have the privilege of being guided by a mentor... Also million thanks for the times you have included my work... Thanks Alan and Roy and all who work with you... you are helping me to keep lungs breathing, heart pumping and mind thinking...

**Steve Mann, Shrewsbury**

I am a member of Survivors' Poetry and am taken aback, shocked and saddened to hear that Survivors' Poetry is to lose its Arts Council grant and may well shut down. Survivors' Poetry supports the writing of all those who - like me - have survived mental illness or distress and of all who have been through major traumas. It is a national organisation that we cannot afford to lose. Survivors' Poetry is run by survivors. I know

from past experience with SP's sister organisation in Scotland how tremendously empowering it is when you have emerged from illness and lost your confidence to have the chance to work with a dynamic organisation that gives a voice to people who previously felt themselves to be "at the bottom of the heap" in our society. The word "empowering" may sound like a buzz-word but it expresses most precisely a part of what Survivors' Poetry achieves. If the Arts Council "gives up" on Survivors' Poetry than it is giving up on me and on all of us who have been vulnerable and who may well be again. The Arts Council says there are "issues re management, governance and finance" which "have had an increasingly negative impact on Survivors' Poetry's artistic output and the organisation's ability to meet funding requirements and responsibilities. "Survivors' Poetry refute this, saying that in all areas, performance, workshop and publication, there has been a dramatic increase in activity. The present Director of SP was appointed in 2004 and since the, say Survivors' Poetry "all aspects of concern, including administration, have gradually been transformed into efficient and fully functions departments. Unless the Arts Council changes its mind, or alternative funding is found, from 1st April Survivors' Poetry will have to lay off all staff and close its office. An invaluable national resource will have

been lost, and many people with problems and /or illness in their lives who live in the community will not have access to help, support and encouragement via Survivors' Poetry.

What can you do? Sign the petition on this website Write the Arts Council and ask them to reconsider their decision!

**Anne Marr from East Sussex**

I would greatly like to contribute to your - no! Our magazine.

**B Gibbons, Manchester**

I intend to write to ACE and to my local MP regarding disinvestment. I genuinely believe in what PE is doing...

**Kevin Saving, Bucks**

I would like to thank Sally Richards for her mentioning of my poem 'A Mirror in Pieces' in her letter: the fact that what a Poet writes in their isolation might somehow touch the lives of other people in a positive way was only really brought home to me by her comments; it then occurred to me how privileged we are to be in possession of such a gift: that one soul's pain can salve another soul's wounds...

**Zachariah Rush, Manchester**

I would like to say how much I enjoyed your latest Poetry Express... in which my article The Politics of Labelling appeared.

**Dr. Pat Bidmead  
Warwickshire**

I thoroughly enjoyed reading ... Poetry Express, but was dismayed to learn of the ACE threat of disinvestment. It is organisations like yours that need precisely this kind of support.

**Stephen James Wilkinson, Merseyside**

My mother recently skipped around the house like a lottery winner because she had heard that she had finally (after many many years of effort) found someone willing to publish some of her work - thank you. I think her work is very accomplished in many regards, but the lack of acceptance it has garnered over the years has often left her feeling awful and misunderstood. I too have an insiders view of the mental health system, so I thought, now she's mentioned your publication that I'd fire off a piece for your review. I hope you like it!

**Lawrence Toms, South Wales**

I'm sorry to hear about your funding problems and hope that this will be resolved adequately. You do wonderful and invaluable work.

**Paula Puddephatt, Hants**

May I take this opportunity to congratulate you on your expertise in a remarkable transformation of Poetry Express with design - words - and edit.

**Michael Fenton, Brighton**

Thank you for sending me a copy of the Winter Issue of Poetry Express (PE23).

As usual, I found it plastic, unintelligible and, mostly, unreadable. After struggling through it I finally found, on Page 45, a short events listing, this time devoid of any specific dates. In the previous issue, I had missed this page altogether. May I remind you that Survivors Poetry became successful and received long term backing from the Arts Council by putting on events, events and more events, at reasonably central and accessible venues. If you really want to save money, why not just send out Page 45 alone and leave the poetry to be read at the events. (Dave Russell is very good at creating flyers, you may remember).

**Norman Holmes**

I read about Norman Holmes feelings about issue 23 magazine and I feel that he is very wrong in saying all poetry should be left out. This issue is compact with lots of different issues that many people find interesting and supportive to read. Maybe the moneyside of publishing this magazine is more of a weight on his mind than the actual needs of people being able to express themselves and be heard. Laura Sadler ('paintbrush' poem in issue 23) I discovered your site via WriteWords.org and am so glad I did. As a person with a mental illness I am both a survivor of the mental health service and also a current user. I cannot begin to tell you how important your work is. I've signed your petition and hope it

is successful and that the Arts Council will retract their decision.

**Philippa Dozin**

"The latest issue of the magazine (PE23), genuinely rich and strange and interesting, arrived 2 days ago, for which thank you".

**Dr John Goodby, Poet (Arc publications) and Senior Lecturer at University of Swansea.**

I just wanted to say that the quality and content of your magazine just gets better and better with each issue. I particularly enjoyed Alan Morrison's super interview with John Horder - riveting reading! Please pass on my good wishes to Mr Horder and I wish you all a successful outcome in fighting the ACE decision. I've signed the petition (more than once, I'm sure!).

**Kim Schröder**

...thank you for the issue of your journal which you sent. It is very impressive. I have never seen anything like it in the mental health community. I contribute to a mental health newspaper here called "New York City Voices" which I like, but it isn't as culturally/literarily sophisticated as your journal. NYC Voices is well-edited and looks professional, but the stories are very focused on mental health policy and personal survivor stories and the editor won't let me write anything too intellectual, except maybe on the poetry page... I was horrified to read in your journal that you are losing your funding.

This is horrific. I don't understand why the Arts Council (or whatever group that has given you grants) would de-fund you when you seem to have done so much. In that one issue, there were many accounts of projects that sounded great, and the journal itself is a real accomplishment. I had thought that the arts funding climate was better in the UK than here (from my UK friends in new media art). Your story is very frightening. Are you going to be able to keep publishing your journal? Will you switch to an online-only format? (This saves a lot of money of course but many consumers/survivors don't have computer access...) I hope your organization gets the financial support it needs to keep doing what it has been doing... I will check your website to see how you are getting on.

**Millie Niss, New York, USA**

Leeds Survivors' Poetry Group has been useful to me because;

Sometimes it is difficult to find enough confidence to join a mainstream group of writers because of the feeling that their life experience has been so different/'normal' compared to mine. It is hard not to underrate myself as a writer because I have had connections with the mental health system for the whole of my adult life.

How I value creative writing in my life. Creative writing has been an invaluable lifeline. It is a very powerful

and satisfying way to write about how I perceive the world and the injustices I feel about being judged. I can do this in writing in a way that I find impossible to just speak about.

**Linda Steele**

Dear Gary Mckeone,  
I am writing to you with a serious concern regarding the considered disinvestment by ACE for 'Survivors' Poetry'. I apologise if you are not the person to whom I should be writing. If you are not then I would be very grateful if you would forward this to whoever is appropriate – thank you. This is a passionate plea, please read my letter carefully and fully – thank you. I am a survivor; I have M.E., and associated health issues and also suffer from depression. I am a Survivor for many reasons, reasons that in the main are not talked about in society generally. But it is for this very reason I am writing to you to add my name to the many Survivors who are seriously upset and any by the possibility of losing such a valuable 'life-line'. What does 'Survivors Poetry' / Poetry Express mean to me and to the hundreds of others with mental health issues? I of course can only speak for myself, but I hope I talk with experience and with empathy. Survivors Poetry is the voice for the voiceless. The hope in the dark for those who are creative, motivated, intelligent and just happen to have the misfortune to also be very poorly with a

varying degree of mental health issues. Whether as readers and or writers of the features and poetry etc. It is so heartening to feel part of something, which is unlike anything else. Where else can we discuss abuse, loss, trauma, mental illness etc, and feel comfortable to express our deepest and sometimes darkest thoughts and feelings? IN our culture of 'keep your chin up' and the good old British 'stiff upper lip' we just cannot get our head around the fact that mental illness is a MAJOR part of a sizeable proportion of people in the UK. Be it post natal depression, stress related and or trauma related depressions, all the spectrum of mental illness from manic depression to schizophrenia – it's all out there in society, but very rarely talked about. Why?...

We as a culture do not want to talk about or think about depression. It may 'be contagious'; it is a 'sign of weakness' etc etc... But in Survivors' we get a chance to counter this prejudices and pre-conceived ideas/ taboos. Yes we suffer with mental health issues, but – 'We' have other 'labels' skills, talents too... how about – creative?, articulate?, inventive?, we are thinkers (laterally), philosophers, spiritual, but more importantly we are just people. I have been lucky enough to have several poems published in the journal, writing is so therapeutic, and there simply is nowhere else to

express the dark side. Yet it is so important to be able to do so. All the hurt, pain, frustration and trauma needs expression, screams from a voice, shouts to be heard – would you please reverse this decision? We need 'Survivors Poetry'. Poetry and the Arts need 'Survivors Poetry'.

Alan Morrison and team do such a fantastic job, themselves being survivors and poets. You may ask what qualifies me to talk about this subject – well although I have not got a 'severe Mental illness such as Bipolar, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder ect, I have been on the receiving end of major trauma's since young – including abuse (outside of family), the trauma of Convent boarding school from the age of seven, the death of my father at a young age, the children, the breakdown of my marriage, the sudden death of my closest friend of many years – knocked down on the road, the subsequent health breakdown; M.E./ Depression and all its wonderful emotional issues and life changing horrors, including the loss of my career with young children. I also live with someone with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Depression, and Anxiety – I've seen their pain, their struggle, and their gradual loss of hope at times. I feel that I have had so much life-'experience' that I am qualified to talk about 'Surviving'. All this said... Survivors must not, do not and cannot give up, we

as Survivors are one of the gutsiest, determined and motivated groups of people you could meet. What else can we do?, lie down, rollover? Disappear into the ether? – Never!!! Yes I often feel like giving up, especially when after having to move out of my shared home of 9 years I find myself on the edge of homelessness twice in 18 months with no money due to all sorts of complications despite having been diagnosed long-term 'sick' by an independent medical examiner! Day to day we have to meet the challenges, struggle up the slippery slope in order to survive. We don't want to simply 'exist', we want to have our opportunities like everyone else. 'Survivors' have a lot to say, a lot to give and if we have a voice hopefully we can begin to change the perceptions of those who do not understand.

Please reconsider, we really desperately need this life-line, this voice, also the opportunity it affords to creative and talented people, to have a platform for their otherwise never-to-be-heard work. I have included some of my 'dark' poetry, some of which has been published in Poetry Express which I hope expresses some of my struggles, and that of those close to me. I hope it will serve to help to underline, and demonstrate this letter in words hopefully more powerful than simple word, sentences joined

into paragraphs to make a letter.

Thank you for listening, please hear me, thank you. With hope and anticipation  
**Sally Richards**  
**Shrewsbury**

Dear Owen Patterson MP, I am writing to you as my local MP with my serious and very heartfelt, pressing concerns regarding the Arts Council of England's decision to withdraw funding from Survivors' Poetry (London). You may or may not be aware of this organisation and/or the intolerable and desperate situation, which they find themselves in at the moment. Please read the enclosed letter which I have recently sent to ACE as part of a campaign by us 'Survivors' to try to persuade them to re think their very sad and I feel misguided decision.

Please try to do anything you can help us to fight this situation.

Thank you in anticipation of your response and possible help.

**Sally Richards**  
**Shrewsbury**

**A big Thank you to all our contributors. If you wish to contribute to Poetry Express please write to us or e-mail: [info@survivorspoetry.org.uk](mailto:info@survivorspoetry.org.uk)**

**Our next edition will most likely be in PDF form and posted on our website April 2007**

Survivors' Press is the imprint of Survivors' Poetry, a unique literary and mental health charity promoting the writing of survivors of mental distress. The first year of its National Mentoring Scheme, 2005-06, sponsored by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, sees an exciting and ambitious programme managed by Alan Morrison; that has brought together ten survivor poets with ten volunteer poet mentors.

Gail Campbell

How Things Fall



Survivors' Press  
Survivors' Poetry Mentoring Series

Gail Campbell is 34. She was born in South Africa, but has lived in England for the past 14 years. She's studied life painting, etching and sculpture, but is wary of taking on a university course. Between 1998 and 2000 she had some mental health problems, but has been well for five years now. Before she came to England, Gail travelled in Israel, Greece, Turkey and Holland. At the moment she works voluntarily at a computer centre for the homeless, and attends and sometimes facilitates poetry workshops for Survivors' Poetry.

£4.00  
Survivors' Press

Gail Campbell was mentored by award-winning poet Debjani Chatterjee

ISBN: 978-1-874595-04-5

Theresa Margaret Carney

Tales from the Womb



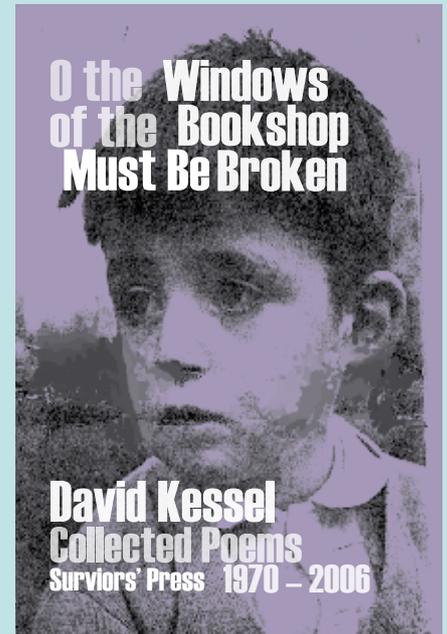
Survivors' Press  
Survivors' Poetry Mentoring Series

Theresa Margaret Carney was born in Cumbria in 1960. After sitting an entrance exam for Cambridge University she went to study Art at Chelsea School of Art. She then progressed to Leeds University where she studied English. During the 1980s she performed poetry on the London and Leeds circuits and was reviewed in *City Limits*. In 1988 she moved from London to Devon. Five years on she started suffering bouts of schizophrenic illness. She went on to continue studying English at Dartington College of Arts. By 2003 Margaret started writing poetry seriously again. She was accepted on the SP National Mentoring Scheme in 2004. 2005 saw her starting up a new Survivors' writers group in Torquay, where she lives with her three children.

£4.00  
Survivors' Press

Theresa Margaret Carney was mentored by poet and publisher Paula Brown

ISBN: 978-1-874595-03-8



David Kessel was born at Central Middlesex Hospital, Harlesden, London, April 1947. He suffered a breakdown at 17 prior to medical school where he spent the next six years untreated. With a Licentiate Royal College of Physicians from the RCS, he went on to practise as a GP in East London until his second breakdown put a halt to his medical career with a diagnosis of paranoid schizophrenia. In spite of his illness, David continued writing poetry and published his *Collected Poems, The Ivy*, in 1989 (reprinted 1994). A powerful reader of his own work, he is a long-standing member of the East End Outsider Poets and a regular reader at Survivors' Poetry at The Poetry Cafe. His work has also appeared in the Phoenix Co-Operative, Hackney Writers anthologies and *Poetry Express*. Some of his poems were recently put to music by the EMFEB Symphony Orchestra in Owen Bourne's score, *Hackney Chambers*.

£8.00  
Survivors' Press

David Kessel was mentored by writer Alan Morrison

ISBN: 978-1-874595-06-9

Survivors' Poetry Performance Night at Rada  
with Survivors of Mental Distress and their Friends  
in a line up for a **BIG BASH!**



featuring

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**Richard McKane**

**Cristina Viti**

**Simon Jenner**

**John O'Donoghue**

**Razz**

**Dave Russell**

**Lucia**

**David Kessell**

**Geoff Clark**

**Gail Campbell**

**Tim Pearson**

**Jeanette JuPierre**

**Lloyd Lindsay**

**Alan Morrison**