



INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MODERN LETTERS

Te Pūtahi Tuhi Auaha o te Ao

Newsletter – 27 May 2008

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This is the 124th in a series of occasional newsletters from the Victoria University centre of the International Institute of Modern Letters. For more information about any of the items, please email modernletters@vuw.ac.nz

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1. Business Time

A reminder that applications are now due for our specialist small-group writing courses. Each workshop consists of twelve weekly meetings spread over the July-October semester.

The **Children's Writing Workshop** with Eirlys Hunter meets Mondays, 4.00 – 7.00 p.m.

Our **Creative Nonfiction Workshop** with Harry Ricketts meets Fridays 9.00 – 12 noon.

The **Poetry Workshop** with Chris Price meets Thursdays 3.00 – 6.00 p.m.

And we have just learned that we are able to extend the submission date for all three workshops to Monday 9 June. For further information, call (04) 463 6854, or visit our website to download an [application form](#).

Our mid-year break is coming up. Time for our MA students – and staff – to do nothing but write! Our next newsletter will be sent out in the first week of July.

2. Shipping Out

We were very sad to hear of Gerry Evans's sudden death earlier this week. Gerry was a member of Victoria's MA workshop in 2000, and his memoir *Shipping Out* first took shape there. It tells the story of a boy from Aberystwyth, his father a gypsy, who found his way into the merchant navy and subsequently to New Zealand, where he led a vigorous life in the union (he was National Secretary of the Seafarers' Union from 1988 to 1994), and a rich life as husband and father. At the time of his death he was working on a biography of the novelist Noel Hilliard. They may be feeling a little anxious at the Karori Library. When Gerry launched *Shipping Out* there, with a tempter of ship's biscuits and a tot of rum, he said that he so loved the library, and was such a frequent visitor to it, that he thought he might well have his ashes scattered among the books. "Just kidding," he added, as looks of alarm raced around the room. He was a lovely man and a true storyteller. [More about *Shipping Out*](#).

3. Creative Science Writing Prize

The second annual prize, sponsored by the Royal Society of New Zealand in association with the IIML and the *Listener*, has just been announced. The theme for 2008 is evolution, in honour of Charles Darwin. Next year is the 150th anniversary of Darwin's birth, and the 200th anniversary of the publication of *The Origin of Species*. The topic writers are asked to respond to is:

"The Universe makes rather an indifferent parent, I'm afraid," said Dickens' kindly Mr Jarndyce. Humans have evolved to understand and intervene in the unsentimental processes of nature. With some unfortunate and unintended consequences. Back to nature or on to the future?

There are both fiction and non fiction categories, prizes of \$2,500 for each, and the winning entries will be published in the *New Zealand Listener*. Entries close 15 August, 2008. For full details see the current *Listener*, or [see here](#).

Last year's winners:

[Fiction](#)

[Non fiction](#)

4. The School of Hard Knox

We have just discovered that later this year novelist sisters Sarah and Elizabeth Knox will be leading a course about world-building for fiction. Their one-off course will explore strategies for creating whole, real-seeming worlds in long fiction and will encourage writers to think about what kind of world they want to make in their novels.

“It will help you identify possible premises for your worlds, whether a character's predicament, a dramatic event, or a setting—a place, period, atmosphere. Through a combination of lectures, workshops, and discussion, you will explore how to find and recognise book-starting ideas and go on to follow the logic of ‘if this, then that’ by workshopping processes of consequential invention. The course covers choice of point-of-view, ways to float a reader on information (rather than to drown them in it) and the pleasures and pitfalls of research.”

Saturdays 20 & 27 September, 4 & 11 October. More information [here](#).

5. King and Country

Dave Armstrong's *King and Country*, which won Best Dramatic Production at the 2008 NZ Radio Awards will be broadcast on National Radio this Sunday 1 June at 3.00 p.m. *King and Country* is a powerful and evocative drama based on the personal accounts of six New Zealanders during World War I. Stories of Māori and Pakeha soldiers, nurses, and civilians are interwoven with treasured New Zealand war songs and hymns, sung to the accompaniment of a live brass band. This radio version of *King and Country* directed by Prue Langbein features the original cast and offers listeners the chance to make a connection with a highly significant chapter of New Zealand's history.

6. The Pohutukawa Garret

Author Doug Wilkins, who recently settled in Wellington, is in the process of replicating the writers' colony success he had when he was based in San Francisco. Doug is currently finalising the purchase of a property in central Wellington that would become offices **just for writers**. Rent per office is TBA, but would be less than \$95 a week. The colony, The Pohutukawa Garret, would be a place where writers could cogitate and incubate rather than procrastinate.

The writers' colony in San Francisco, The Sanchez Grotto Annex, has produced travel guides, novels, non-fiction books, freelance articles, web content, short stories and poetry. Already two books from the San Francisco colony have become bestsellers, and a third won the PEN Award for Non-Fiction. “What worked in San Francisco will definitely work here,” he says.

For further information contact Doug Wilkins at dbwilkins@gmail.com or at 021-138-5050.

7. London Calling

A couple of NZ writer seminars are coming up at London's Centre for NZ Studies.

On Wednesday 11 June, IIML director Bill Manhire will be reading from and discussing his most recent poetry collection, *Lifted*, while on Wednesday 25 June Paula Morris, IIML graduate and now teaching writing at Tulane University, will be talking about recent short fiction in New Zealand. Paula is editing an anthology of contemporary New Zealand short stories for Penguin.

Both seminars will be held in Room 330, North Block, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1, 6.30-8.00 p.m.

Later in June, Bill Manhire will be reading his work at the launch of the summer issue of *Poetry London*. Foyles, Charing Cross Road, Wednesday 18 June, 6.30 p.m.

8. Hone Tuwhare commemoration

Advance word has reached us of a commemorative event to celebrate the life and work of Hone Tuwhare on Saturday 21 June, 2.00-5.00 p.m. (plus a drink afterwards), at the National Library auditorium. Among the organisers are members of the Maori runanga at the CTU, which would have warmed Hone's heart. In recent years he may have lived a somewhat solitary life at Kaka Point, but he was a union man to the end.

9. A busy residency

NZSA Top of the South branch has released the news that Kate De Goldi will be this year's Woollaston Writer in Residence, with a series of public meetings and workshops planned throughout June. At some of these Kate De Goldi will read from her new novel, *The 10pm Question*, which will be published in September. In addition Kate is keynote speaker at a LIANZA conference in Nelson, is spending a morning in each of three primary schools, and is also taking a workshop especially for talented secondary school students, sponsored jointly by Altrusa and the (TOS) branch of NZSA.

This sounds wonderful for the writers and readers who get to hear her, but our burning question is: When will De Goldi ever get any writing done?

10. The expanding bookshelf

Emily Perkins, who is busy guesting at the Hay and Charleston Festivals in the UK, has been getting plenty of media attention for her new book, *Novel About My Wife*. A Canadian profile begins thus: "A married man sits opposite a very beautiful writer from New Zealand in a dark bar in the late afternoon, hoping she can't read his mind." Crikey! Go [here](#) for the rest.

There has also been a full profile in [The Independent](#), plus good reviews in [The Guardian](#) and [The Sunday Times](#)

11. Big Prize for Small

Congratulations to Victoria English graduate Helen Small, now a lecturer in Oxford University's English Faculty, who has won the 2008 Truman Capote Award for Literary Criticism for *The Long Life*, a study of what philosophers and writers have had to say about old age from Plato to Larkin, Coetzee and Stevie Smith. The \$30,000 Capote Award is the largest annual cash prize for literary criticism in the English language, and is administered by the Iowa Writers' Workshop.

12. Writers' Festivals

There has been plenty of lively reporting from and on Auckland's recent big festival on various websites: on [Graham Beattie's blog](#), on the [Christchurch City Libraries blog](#), on the [Palmerston North library blog](#) and at Mary McCallum's [Audacious Book](#)

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Meantime, another festival takes its place almost immediately. A pdf of the **Yarns in Barns** programme is [here](#), while poetry highlights from the 2008 Adelaide Writers' Week, including readings by Paul Durcan, David Malouf, and Bill Manhire, can be heard on the ABC's weekly [Poetica programme](#) over the next few weeks.

13. From the whiteboard

"Poetry is a practical art. It is as good as a knife for cutting through the day's rubbish, and better than a folding umbrella for those sudden bouts of private rain that douse a body out of nowhere."

Jeanette Winterson

14. Two new websites

Reviews journal *New Zealand Books* has a [website](#), though it's not yet clear how much content will be held in it.

Japan-based New Zealand writer Ian Richards has launched a website which posts a range of his own critical and other writing. "No Frills New Zealand Literature" is [here](#)

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15. Recent web reading

[The New Yorker has a books blog](#)

[So does The Telegraph](#)

[The Dominion Post has started up again](#)

[But The Guardian still rules the roost](#), despite (or even because of) some of its more bizarre contributors' *Comments*

[Bridget van der Zijp reviewed](#)

[Procrastination Lit](#)

[A circular list!](#)

[A list to make you weep](#)

[Double Foreskins](#)

[South Island Gothic](#)

[Books: the new world order](#)

[Australian poet Adam Aitken has a blog](#)

[John Burnside](#)

[Another Scottish poet](#)

[100 essential jazz albums](#)

[Patrick White: the afterlife](#)

[Kleinzahler reviewed](#)

[Kapka Kassabova gets a plug in The Guardian](#)

[Anti-travel](#)

[John Berger's *Ways of Seeing* is on YouTube](#)

[Philip Larkin: The Lost Tapes](#)

[What is poetry?](#)

[Two Obama poems](#)

UK Laureate talk: [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)

[A 32-year-old poem](#)

16. Great lists of our time

Phobias - just the letter A

Ablutophobia- Fear of washing or bathing.
Acarophobia- Fear of itching or of the insects that cause itching.
Acerophobia- Fear of sourness.
Achluophobia- Fear of darkness.
Acousticophobia- Fear of noise.
Acrophobia- Fear of heights.
Aerophobia- Fear of drafts, air swallowing, or airbourne noxious substances.
Aeroacrophobia- Fear of open high places.
Aeronausiphobia- Fear of vomiting secondary to airsickness.
Agateophobia- Fear of insanity.
Agliophobia- Fear of pain.
Agoraphobia- Fear of open spaces or of being in crowded, public places like markets.
Fear of leaving a safe place.
Agraphobia- Fear of sexual abuse.
Agrizoophobia- Fear of wild animals.
Agyrophobia- Fear of streets or crossing the street.
Aichmophobia- Fear of needles or pointed objects.
Ailurophobia- Fear of cats.
Albuminurophobia- Fear of kidney disease.
Alektorophobia- Fear of chickens.
Algophobia- Fear of pain.
Alliumphobia- Fear of garlic.
Allodoxaphobia- Fear of opinions.
Altophobia- Fear of heights.
Amathophobia- Fear of dust.
Amaxophobia- Fear of riding in a car.
Ambulophobia- Fear of walking.
Amnesiphobia- Fear of amnesia.
Amychophobia- Fear of scratches or being scratched.
Anablephobia- Fear of looking up.
Ancraophobia- Fear of wind. (Anemophobia)
Androphobia- Fear of men.
Anemophobia- Fear of air drafts or wind.(Ancraophobia)
Anginophobia- Fear of angina, choking or narrowness.
Anglophobia- Fear of England or English culture, etc.
Angrophobia - Fear of anger or of becoming angry.
Ankylophobia- Fear of immobility of a joint.
Anthrophobia or Anthophobia- Fear of flowers.
Anthropophobia- Fear of people or society.
Antlophobia- Fear of floods.
Anuptaphobia- Fear of staying single.
Apeiophobia- Fear of infinity.

Aphenphosmophobia- Fear of being touched. (Haphephobia)
Aphobia- Fear of bees.
Apotemnophobia- Fear of persons with amputations.
Arachibutyrophobia- Fear of peanut butter sticking to the roof of the mouth.
Arachnophobia or Arachnophobia- Fear of spiders.
Arithmophobia- Fear of numbers.
Arrhenophobia- Fear of men.
Arsonphobia- Fear of fire.
Asthenophobia- Fear of fainting or weakness.
Astraphobia or Astrapophobia- Fear of thunder and lightning.(Ceraunophobia, Keraunophobia)
Astrophobia- Fear of stars or celestial space.
Asymmetriphobia- Fear of asymmetrical things.
Ataxiophobia- Fear of ataxia. (muscular incoordination)
Ataxophobia- Fear of disorder or untidiness.
Atelophobia- Fear of imperfection.
Atephobia- Fear of ruin or ruins.
Athazagoraphobia- Fear of being forgotten or ignored or forgetting.
Atomophobia- Fear of atomic explosions.
Atychiphobia- Fear of failure.
Aulophobia- Fear of flutes.
Aurophobia- Fear of gold.
Auroraphobia- Fear of Northern lights.
Autodysmophobia- Fear of one that has a vile odor.
Automatonophobia- Fear of ventriloquist's dummies, animatronic creatures, wax statues - anything that falsely represents a sentient being.
Automysophobia- Fear of being dirty.
Autophobia- Fear of being alone or of oneself.
Aviophobia or Aviatophobia- Fear of flying.

From [The Phobia List](#).