



Interchange @ the Goldsborough

Interchange (Bradford Writers' Network) meets every Tuesday from 8pm at the Goldsborough pub on Bolton Rd, Bradford.

The sessions are informal and provide a sounding board for members' work, as well as constructive criticism and feedback should this be required.

Support, encouragement and words are at the forefront of the group's activities, and all kinds of writing is welcomed: poetry, short and long fiction, plays, memoirs, articles and songs.

Inside this issue...

**Poetry for peace
and Human
shields, fiction by
Mark Cantrell,
poetry by Jean
Robinson**

Rapping a cool slam

Britain's first 'ante-slam' was held at the Goldsborough last month. But what is such an event? Mark Cantrell went to find out.

“COOL!” That's how young TV actress Natalia Fisher thought of Interchange's first ever Ante-Slam.

That's how she felt about winning it too, with a stunning rap performance.

“Some of the poetry was really intense and deep,” she added. “It was really good.”

Unlike ordinary slam competitions, this new 'ante-slam' allows performers to use props and backing tracks, so that singers and rap artists can go head to head against poets.

There are dangers to the use of props, though, as Ed Reiss discovered when he flung his hat out across the audience for a final poetic flourish.

Either his aim was too good, or simply off, but at least the only drink he spilled was his own.

Otherwise, 'ante-slam' is pretty much the same as slam: with performers

set a time limit (three minutes) and judged with the help of audience reaction.

The event saw a mixed bag of performers, with newcomers and old faces alike, poets, songs, rap acts and, inescapably, Patrick Blues's harmonica.

They included: Joe Ogden, ProjeX, Felix, Matt and Carol Solorz.

A novelty was provided by Dynamo, who performed some close up magic tricks.

The evening was compared by Bruce Barnes, as always in his own unique style.

“The night was a revelation,” said Bruce Barnes. “I hope we can incorporate all these young people into the Interchange setup.

There's room for them at Orpheus. It was brilliant.”

Gloria Dallas and Jean Robinson were the judges for the evening, and a tough task it was considering the diversity

and excellence they had to choose between.

They did have help from the audience, however, as part of the judging criteria is based on audience reaction. That said, they must also use their judgement on the writing, and the quality of the performance.

The first heat was a close run between Felix, a newcomer from Huddersfield and Natalia, who had come along while on holiday here in Bradford. A second heat, led to Natalia's victory.

Special thanks go to Peter and Sharon Malone, who hosted us at the Goldsborough pub for this first ever Ante-Slam.

“It provided a completely different outlook and a scene I didn't know existed,” said Peter. “It was new and exciting and it took my breath away.”

The Ante-Slam is an experiment Interchange is conducting on the third Tuesday of every month. The first event got off to an entertaining and successful start.

BACK ISSUES FROM: <http://www.tykewriter.supanet.com/tw/>

A slice of short fiction from Mark Cantrell...

To Heal The World

IT took a long time to heal the Earth; but humanity in its confused way got there in the end.

For centuries Man had plundered and pillaged; He poisoned and despoiled the Earth as if there was no tomorrow and He had to make as much of a mess as possible. Enthusiasm was the order of the day, as He hacked and burned the garden with a passion, like a child eager to

make the most of His time before being put to bed.

Earth had been a beautiful garden, back in the days of innocence, when Man first inherited His state of grace. By the time of His racial maturity, however, He had managed to turn this precious gem into an orbital slag heap, barely fit for human habitation let alone fit for anything else.

In the beginning, of

course, Man hadn't been so inclined to mess His own nest. In childhood, Man was well behaved and lived as part of Earth's diverse pool of life. He played by the rules and, naked in the face of tooth and claw, He fought for the right to exist.

He got very good at the rules of survival, this precocious child, and success went to His head. In winning the right to live, he kind of forgot that every thing else had to live too. He was that thing which is worse than a poor loser; Man was a very poor winner. Arrogant and smug, Man became a serious pain in the terrestrial arse.

In adolescence He got no better. Man became typical of those painful years. As growth accelerated and the changes occurred too fast for His bewildered mind to cope, He became grouchy and ill mannered. No longer a child, but not yet an adult, Man started to drift from the path to become anti-social and belligerent. He became a troublesome teenag-

er that had no respect for His Mother Earth.

Some knew about this unintended planetary matricide. These quiet souls, quite unlike their boisterous and messy siblings, recognised that they should pay more heed to the needs of their Mother. They lamented the mess Humanity made, and tried to argue that they should take more care.

"We must change Our ways," they said. "Our Mother is unwell, and needs much care."

"Nonsense," the Others scoffed. "There's years yet left in this Old Dear."

"And that is the problem: that she has only years, when instead she could have known aeons."

Still they scoffed, and strutted their manly stuff, flexing their youthful muscles and wrestling in the dirt.

As they argued, and Man laughed at the worriers and the swots among them, it began to seem that the patient was terminal. Mother was dying. The womb of Man's birth was turning barren — and they were still con-

Let's get busy

A Suffolk-based gift shop is offering UK authors the opportunity of selling their books through the company's Internet sales presence.

Busy Lizzy's Gift Shop would promote author's work through the site in return for a fee of 20 per cent of the retail sale price. The authors themselves would handle distribution via post.

The author must have stock of their self-published or pre-printed stock available. The shop would require a sample copy (which can be returned if postage is included), but says it cannot guarantee to list everything sent to them.

Words in the following categories interest the company: local history, British history, genealogy, children's picture books, children's fiction, arts & crafts and poetry. Authors are asked not to send anything of an explicit, adult or pornographic natures.

For more information visit the 'books' or 'trades' section of the website: www.kjvforkids.co.uk or email caroline@kjvforkids.co.uk. The mailing address is: Busy Lizzy's Gift Shop, 17 Wentworth Close, Hadleigh, Suffolk, IP7 5SA.

Mark Cantrell

nected by the umbilicus of their birth. Alone, they could not live.

But Man was having too much of a wild time to care.

This sorry situation went on for generations. But even the wildest party comes to an end, and after the hangover comes introspection. Man eventually sorted himself out and found the solution to the Earth's terminal decline.

So healed, the Earth became the beautiful maiden she had been in youth; verdant, healthy, flourishing with life.

The air was clean and sweet with pollen. The soils were fertile and supported a multitude of flora, which in turn nourished a teeming array of fauna. The seas and oceans teemed with life, and echoed with the song of carefree whales.

Once more she lived, this proud Mother Earth, and gave haven to the fruits of her loins.

The solution to her salvation had been simple yet radical.

Of course, it hurt the Mother initially. But as a surgeon can tell you, it is sometimes necessary to harm the patient's flesh in order to heal that flesh and make it a strong vessel of life.

So it was that one last burst of pain was needed to heal the woes of Mother Earth. Man wielded that knife of salvation and saved His cosmic haven.

In war He found the cure. In the roar and bomb, the whine of machine gun, and the scream of dying Man He purged the plague that brought low the patient. With the radiotherapy of nuclear catastrophe, he purged the cancer that ate the Mother's breast.

Man's bones nourished the soil. Man's rich flesh fertilised the Mother's rebirth.

In extinction Man found his Mother's life. Simple yet radical, this solution of Man's.

But what a pity that Man, in saving His home, demolished Himself.

The Peace March

In the race to Armageddon silver jets shot by
And all were deathly silent, save the screaming in the sky.
As they tore into white flocks of peaceful gentle doves,
Who fell from clear blue skies, broken bodies soaked in blood.
Then a missile shot towards me and I tried to step aside,
But it soon became apparent there was no place to hide.
My racing heart was pounding, in sheer terror at my fate,
A victim of lies and secrets in this shrouded war of hate.
It was dawn before I knew and I stirred from troubled sleep,
And as I lay I pondered over, what this dream could mean.
I had prayed about a peace march that was organised that day,
Because the coward in me whispered, that I should stay away.
I had looked for many reasons, the riots and weather too,
Or if people would look down on me, or think I was a fool.
I did go off to march that day and the first thing that I saw,
Was the banner of dove with an olive branch in its claw.
The march set out from Lister Park into the City Square
And every rce of united hearts was represented there.
There were many ages there that day all had felt the same,
There was never going to be a war started in their name.
Before the vigil started when we gathered in the dquare
When leaders of the many faiths offered up their prayers,
A banner came into sight and made me catch my breath,
These were symbols in my dream, this harbinger of death.
For the emblem of America stared down with beady eyes,
A claw gripped the peace birds body and the other a missile.
It was then I understood the meaning of my dream,
The US fighter jets were called, Strike Eagles F Sixteen.

Jean Rose Robinson nee McAvan

Venue Announced

A performance venue by Hear4Words (reported last month as Ear for Words) has been announced.

The Victoria Hotel, Frederick Suite will play host on 28th September 2003. As yet ticket prices and headline guests have to be announced.

"We are also looking at venues for regular open mic slots in Bradford and Leeds," group member Patrick Blues said. Any suggestions would be gratefully received and considered, he added.

Poetry's farewell to Karl

Interchange veteran Karl Dallas has gone to become a human shield, but not before he was giving a rip-roaring send-off featuring poetry and song. Mark Cantrell reports.

ONCE, idealistic young men and women went to war to fight the fascists in Spain, now an old man has gone abroad not to fight -- rather to stand without arms but arm in arm with others to prevent a war.

Interchange veteran Karl Dallas, 72, has finally gone to Iraq to join thousands of other peace campaigners from across the world, to act as volunteer Human Shields.

"Filling Baghdad with human shields is part of the campaign to stop the war," said Karl. "If

they bomb it then they will be bombing their own people."

Karl will be joining thousands of fellow peace campaigners turned human shields from all over the world.

Before he went, the former journalist turned singer/song-writer and poet was given a rip-roaring send off at the Melborn during an evening of poetry and song performance on the 12th February.

The night's main aim was to raise funds for Karl's air fare to Jordan, from where he will then take a bus to Baghdad in Iraq.

Originally, he would have joined a convoy featuring a white London taxi and a Routemaster bus, but following concerns over safety during the long trip, and a desire to get to Iraq as quickly as possible, organisers changed their plans.

"I've been going on marches since the age of seven," Karl added. "I suppose you could say that I am fed up with marches -- I wanted to do something more."

"If I am in Baghdad when the bombs start falling, then we have failed. But I believe we can

stop this war

"I have no intention of dying. I have a lot more things to do -- a lot more songs to write and a lot more poems to write. So I am not going to die. I am going to live -- and a lot more people are going to live too."

Bold words, for what is an equally bold but risky venture.

The evening at the Melborn raised £150 for Karl's heroic mission. It also gave him one Hell of a send off.

As well as regular Interchange performers, guests were adorned with the verbal gems of veteran performers Nick Toczek, Tim Moon, Little Brother, Joe Stead and of course Karl himself, who both opened and closed the night with songs, the first of his own composition.

They were joined on stage by Joe Ogden, Gloria Dallas, Rahel Guzellan and others.

Interchange newcomer Jean Robinson also dazzled the audience with a poem about a dream that inspired her to join her first ever anti-war march here in Bradford. From that she was inspired to join the national London demo that took place on the 15th February (see the poem on page 3).

"There are times when you must stand up and be counted," Jean told the packed venue.

The Tyke Writer is the monthly newsletter of the Interchange (Bradford Writers' Network).

For further details of the group, or to get involved, come down to the Goldsborough pub on Bolton Road, Bradford (about 5 minutes from Forster Square).

Or contact:

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Editorial contributions are welcome, but will be edited for space and style.

All contributions must bear the author's name, which may appear as a byline. Contributions are also preferably received in type written form.

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Human Shield

Human shield:
We will not yield
We stand
Hand in hand
Between life and death.
It is our will
To save life not to kill
And we proclaim with every
Breath:
Not in our name
Not in our name
Not in our name

**Karl Dallas,
Human Shield**