



Interchange Meets @...

Interchange (Bradford Writers' Network) meets every Tuesday from 8pm at the Irish Democratic League, Rebecca St, just behind the New Beehive, Westgate.

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...

Twin horrors commemorated in poetry, Thom's next date, Ilkley's 30th, the sweetness of novel-writing...

Poetry does justice in cause for peace

Two horrific events that occurred on the same date but years apart were commemorated in poetry and song. Mark Cantrell reports...

PEACE has featured heavy in the pages of *Tyke Writer* for more than a year now. Given world events, that is hardly surprising, as poets have been inspired to both dissent and lament at the violence and war in the world.

Just over a year ago, Seema Gill and

Richard Heley launched *Sundoves, Bumblebees & Blue Streak Bananas*, an anthology of peace poetry produced in response to the horrors of 9/11. Individual poets have taken their stand not just on the stage, but at demonstrations against war, and Karl Dallas went forth to Iraq as a

human shield. All of that has — of necessity — been recorded in the pages of *Tyke Writer*.

Poets have a long history of dissent and political protest, and the same applies to this day.

The theme of peace continued last month with Poetry for Peace & Justice, held at the Love Apple café. The event was organised by Sam Jackson to commemorate the vic-

CDs for peace

PEACE Not War is a two CD compilation of anti-war music produced by Kelly and Mudge. They are even now working on the next collection to be released next year.

DJ Disorientalist spoke about their activities at the Poetry For Peace & Justice event at the Love Apple. A whip round for their activities raised over £72.

The first compilation raised over £25,000 to fund the activities of a diverse range of non-violent anti-war protests and other peace groups. I

The next set of CDs will be released on 15th February 2004. The deadline is the 5th January.

Among the musicians involved so far are Asian Dub Foundation, Fun-Da-Mental, Mark Thomas, Billy Bragg, The Libertines and others. According to DJ Disorientalist, performance poetry is also welcome.

For more information visit: <http://www.peace-not-war.org>. Email: music@peace-not-war.org. Tel: 0207 75154702.

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Dive into the jazz

BEEHIVE Poets are once more running Nightdiver: an evening of poetry and jazz with Chris Bousfield and readings by the group's poets.

The event is to take place at the Cellar Bar of the New Beehive pub on Westgate starting at 8.45pm on Monday 13th October.

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

Poetry for peace & justice

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tims of two terrible events that took place on the 11th September.

“September 11 is a big thing in peoples’ minds for the criminal attack on the Twin Towers,” Sam told the audience when he opened the night, “but we are also thinking of all the victims of George Bush’s war on terrorism. It’s also a significant date as its the 30th anniversary of Pinochet’s coup

against Allende in Chile.”

Though separated by time and space, they nevertheless share the same ignominious ‘birthday’. The terrible links don’t end there. Both killed thousands, both were blatant attacks on democracy, and both were — depending on your political point of view — the direct and indirect results of Big Power politics.s.

Both of these terrible events killed thousands of innocent peo-

ple. Those victims were commemorated in poetry and song, by a diverse wealth of talent that gathered at the Love Apple.

It was a heady combination of poetry and politics. Indeed, as John Sugden of the Beehive Poets said at the beginning of his act: “It’s a rare chance to read political poems.”

“It’s a bit like fractal politics I suppose,” Sam said. “You put out the idea and it’s amazing how many people get in touch with you. There seems to be a lot of poets in Bradford who have been inspired by certain events, from September 11 onwards. I get the impression there’s a ‘democracy of poetry’ out there. A wide variety of performance poets, folk singers and classical poets like Gerard Benson and Steve Wilkinson. I hope they kind of overlap [tonight] in a kind of sharing of ideas and viewpoints. As Billy Bragg said with music, it’s like a culture of dissent. What poetry can do is to be part of that dissent.”

Sam recently completed a PhD in literature and now, when he is not looking after his two-and-a-half-year-old daughter, does some teaching at the college. He organised the night as an individual, though he is active in the anti-war movement.

Many of the per-

formers had in fact contributed to the Poets4Peace anthology mentioned above, and some even read their works out from that anthology. Among the line up was Steve Bindman, with Moses Ekebusi on African drums, Bruce Barnes, Karl Dallas, Gerard Benson, Steve Wilkinson, Gloria Dallas, Joe Ogden and many more.

Each contributed to what was an excellent evening of performance, with diverse poetry that was often political, frequently poignant and humanly moving. Bruce Barnes — naturally — was his own unique self with his performance using more than just words but sounds, cries, wails and motion. With Bruce, performance is a whole-body visual and aural experience.e.

Poetry For Peace & Justice proved an excellent night of performance, on a serious issue. Though-provoking as well as entertaining: it showed that poetry is still as powerful dissenting voice as it ever was.

Lit-Fest hits the mark

T’S a landmark year for the Ilkley Literature Festival, having reached the grand young age of thirty, writes Mark Cantrell.

To mark this year, the festival will see the launch of a children’s lit fest, a fringe festival, the first poetry pub crawl as well as a host of events, workshops and readings by writers of every ilk and hue.

Some of the names on the list include Alexei Sayle, Melvyn Bragg, M Y Alam, David Gill, Kate Adie, Martin Bell and more, so there’s plenty for everyone.

The festival kicks off on 3rd October and runs until the 19th October.

The event’s director, Rachel Feldberg considers 30 to be the ideal age to capitalise on the Festival’s past achievements and also look forward to the future.

“We want to use this landmark year as a starting point,” she says, “to rediscover the Festival’s roots and at the same time move forward and consolidate our position as one of the country’s leading literary events. And of course we want everyone to have fun in the process.”

For more information on the Festival and its wealth of events visit the website at <http://www.ilkleyliteraturefestival.org.uk>. Or call the Festival box office on 01943 816714.

Thom's last gig

THOM the World Poet returns to Bradford in October, when he will be performing at the Love Apple cafe.

This is — allegedly — Thom's last tour, but since he has been saying that for several years, you might want to mark the date in case this time it's true.

The Australian-turned-Texan is a familiar face in the district's literature scene having performed and given workshops at a variety of venues over the last decade. Among his venues this year are: Castleford Forum (Oct 4),

Castleford Schools (Oct 7), Stockport with Darren Poyzer (Oct 9), Widnes with Darren Poyzer (Oct 10), Voices Off! (Cheltenham Literature Festival) (Oct 11), Greenfield with Darren Poyzer (Oct 13), Yorkshire Arts Circus (all day workshop) (Oct 14), Cathedral Poets Wakefield (evening) (Oct 16), Sheffield Festival (mornings) (Oct 20-24).

See him live and in the flesh at the Love Apple cafe on October 22 from 8pm. Tickets: £4.

Mark Cantrell

Win with poetry

ENTRANTS to Interchange's first poetry competition will find out if they are a winner at a forthcoming performance event to be staged at the Irish Democratic League.

The evening on the 7th October will feature open mic poetry performances by Interchange regulars, along with the announcement of the competition winners. The lucky entrants will then have the opportunity to read their work on stage (or have it read by someone else if they feel too shy!).

Nick Toczek kindly agreed to do the judging.

At time of writing, there is still time to enter. Each poem should be unnamed and accompanied by a £2 cheque/PO made out to 'Interchange (Bradford Writers' Network)'. Poem titles should be listed on an accompanying letter together with contact details. Don't send originals. Entries should be sent to: Interchange (Bradford Writers' Network), The Bungalow, 50 Chapel Lane, Queensbury, Bradford, BD13 2QA. Deadline is 20 September.

AFTER months of tinkering Joe Ogden has finally published his first poetry collection, *Love Lost*.

Originally, he 'published' it earlier this year, but after a glowing review in *Tyke Writer*, he went back to perfecting his baby. Now the offspring has born fruit and the book is available from Joe direct.

The 34-page book costs £3.50 so catch Joe at a pub and buy a poem with your pint.

Catching a dream

BRADFORD'S Joolz Denby is part of a host of literary talent chosen by Dreamcatcher for readings and workshops in the UK.

The Dreamcatcher magazine has expanded rapidly since 2000, it says, and it has likewise expanded its activities in public events. Recently it has taken part in the South Bank Poetry Library's Programme of Digitisation and also Sheffield's Off The Shelf Festival.

Joolz will be joined in the selected line up by: Kathryn Daszkiewicz, Ian Parks, India Russell, Andrew Oldham, Julia Davis, Graham Mort, Rennie Parker, Peter Lewin, Paul Sutherland, Nell Farrell, and Chris Tutton.

Together they cover a wide expanse of writing: poetry, crime writing, fiction, factual and literary criticism, short stories, novels, film, television and radio.

For more information on Dreamcatcher's selected host or their programme of readings and performances contact: dcpoets@lycos.co.uk. Or phone: 07790 585114.

Pushing poetry

AUDIENCES Yorkshire is planning a boost for poetry in the region with a serious marketing drive in the coming months.

The organisation has secured a budget of £5,000 for leaflets, mailshots and other activities intended to give verse a boost.

Developing awareness of poetry throughout Yorkshire is the major objective of the campaign, along with raising audiences at events.

Check out the site at <http://www.digyorkshire.com> for more information.

National poetry

THE *Independent* newspaper is sponsoring this year's National Poetry Competition.

Organised by the Poetry Society, the competition offers poets the chance to pit their words against entrants from all over the globe.

Winners will win from £500 to £5,000, with a further ten recommended poems earning their authors £50. The closing date for entries is 31 October 2003.

Judges for this year's contest are Paul Farley, Medbh McGuckian, Grace Nichols and the chair is Debbie Taylor. The fees for entry are £5 for the first poem then £3 for each subsequent entry. For more information pick up a leaflet from the library or visit <http://www.poetrysociety.org.uk>.

Keeping your sweets

Jan Henek responds to last month's article about writing a novel

WRITING a novel is no easy undertaking, but then neither is trying to rehabilitate the criminally psychotic, or attempting to juggle sixteen bananas whilst blindfolded.

Why do we write novels?

Do we do it for the incredible sense of achievement that results when the sweat has dried and the ink has settled onto that crisp pile of folios?

Or do we pour forth our tortured prose because we want to see our name stacked high and proud in the lobby of Waterstones?

For love or money?

Or both.

I know which side I am on and I refute the claim that writing a novel is actually a torturous, soul-sapping experience as George Orwell might have you believe. If it's that loveless and hard then why bother in the first place?

I don't run marathons because it would not give me any sense of enjoyment or satisfaction and I would most likely have to stop every couple of

miles for a Regal king size.

Writing a novel is a fabulous experience, a journey into new territory, a creative dance through your own mind, a rip-roaring rush of white hot passion that bursts out of your fingers and onto that battered keyboard.

Yes it is not easy, but what is easy in this life?

And who are you writing for?

If you write for yourself the task becomes that much simpler because you have no aching fear of what so and so publisher might think of your work.

Selling a novel is harder than writing it, no doubt about that. But after a few rejection letters you might reach the point like I did, where you think, well sod them all. I do not have to prove myself to anyone here; I have nothing to prove and I write for the love of writing and the enjoyment that it gives me and that is enough.

To be published is not necessarily to be an accomplished writer (Jeffrey Archer – erm..... shite is the

word I am looking for). If you do not live in London and refuse to suck up to the publishing fraternity then you are up against it.

Are these the words of a disillusioned and bitter unpublished writer? Absolutely not.

Agents, publishers, what exactly are these people? Do they do it for the love or for the MONEY? Work it out for yourself. But I know one thing, we can exist without them, but they cannot exist without us. If there were no artistic talent then these people would be working in a call centre. Think about it, they give you 10% of the profits. Imagine as a child if you made 10 sweets (unlikely I know but I struggle with exemplification). Then someone comes along and says I will sell those for you but I will just pay you for one of them.

Do me a favour.

Personally I do not want to get into bed with Satan. I would rather be the humble (and skint, but so what?) God of my own universe.

I am keeping my sweets because I made them myself. Ten last longer than one.

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 Irish Democratic League, Rebecca Street, behind the New Beehive pub.

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.

Opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Interchange (Bradford Writers' Network).

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