

Tyke Writer

The Newsletter For Creative Writers In Bradford & District

Where to find us...

Tyke Writer is published on behalf of the Interchange (Bradford Writers' Network).

The group meets every Tuesday from 8pm at the Irish Democratic League, Rebecca Street, just behind the New Beehive pub on Westgate, Bradford.

No matter what kind of writing you are into, you will find it welcome at Interchange.

Along with poetry, the group also welcomes novelists, short story writers, journalists, singer-songwriters and just about every kind of writing imaginable.

The group is informal, and the emphasis is very much on the words. Critical feedback is available for those who feel the need, but the emphasis is on developing the writing and the writer in a relaxed and friendly environment. So step out of the garrett and join the scribes...

Running Out Of Breath

Team Flaherty Aims For The Record Books

Kevin Flaherty tells Mark Cantrell why he and his eleven siblings are to run the London Marathon. Is it all a ploy to sell his first poetry anthology?

AND they're off... From the starting blocks for a hair-raising saunter through London during the 2004 Flora London Marathon. Or at least they will be next month after a gruelling training and fund-raising session.

Interchange chairman Kevin Flaherty, 56, has gathered the clan -- all eleven of them -- to secure a paragraph in history and do their bit for charity.

The three sisters and eight brothers are to compete as a family to -- hopefully -- set the world record for the number of siblings to compete in and complete a marathon. In the process, they are aiming to raise £20,000 for Macmillan Cancer

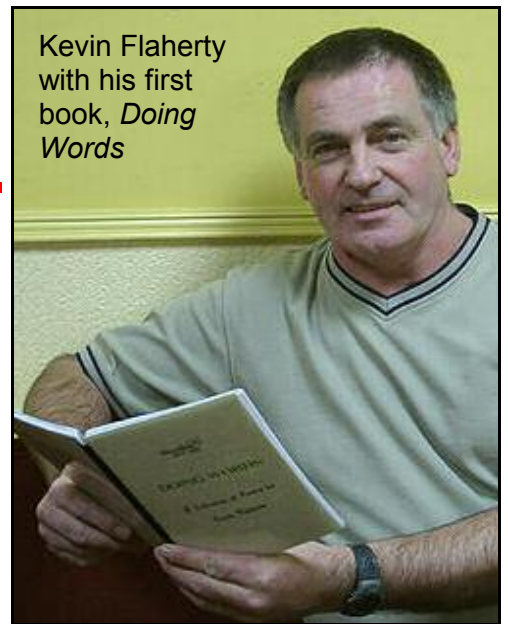
Relief. "The existing record stands at six brothers who competed last year," Kevin says. "We are in a privileged position of having 11 brothers and sisters. Few families can have that claim to fame. It's difficult to say, but I do think it will be a hard record to break in the future."

Behind the record breaking and the charity effort, there is a more personal reason behind the Marathon attempt. Both of the siblings' parents died of cancer and were tended by Macmillan nurses.

"We're sort of dedicating the whole thing to our parents," Kevin added. Father, James, died last year

while mother Kathleen passed away 12 years ago. As well as being tended by the Macmillan nurses, it was also Kathleen's favourite charity.

The Flaherty clan consists of Terence, Kathleen Caldwell, Dennis, Michael, David, Kevin, Brian, Margaret Blamey, Patricia Cox, Gerard, and Vincent, and they are aged from 45 to 63. They are born and bred in Lidget Green, though they



Kevin Flaherty with his first book, *Doing Words*

Photo By: Phil Wainman

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Madrid Poems Print Lives On

IN response to the atrocious bombing in Madrid, dubbed Europe's 9/11, *Nthposition*, London, wants poems to publish in dedication to the families and friends of the victims across Europe and the world.

The editors are open to a variety of responses and themes, and selected poems will be published online in their April issue.

"This is a fragile time caught between mourning

and protest, rage and sorrow, loss and achievement (as in the recent Spanish elections," says editor Todd Swift. "Europe is unsteady after its 'own 9/11' -- after three minutes of silence across the continent what shall we say?"

Send poems to *Nthposition* to Todd at: todd@toddschwift.com. Visit the site at: www.nthposition.com.

LEEDS' very own Samizdat magazine *Print R@dio* will live on.

After three years of publishing the grass roots publication, Mal Arnold has passed on the flame.

"As a self-funded free print zine, *Print R@dio* survived for three years and I think I did a pretty good job", Mal said on the announcement of his departure. "I have to move on and do other

stuff."

Now the bi-monthly publication will be edited by Bar Bowen, the folk music columnist. Aiding Bar will be Stevo Bobcat with design, production and management. The next issue is now in production, with a deadline of April 19th.

Contact *Print R@dio* at: 47 Westfield Road, Leeds, LS13 1DG. Email: print_radio@hotmail.com.

Kevin's Family Run Around

Continued from page 1...

have flown the nest to various parts of Bradford and the country.

Kevin, who is a retired fireman, amateur magician and a poet, is no stranger to marathons. On 18th April when he – hopefully – staggers across the finishing line he will have completed his 8th Marathon. Though he hasn't competed in such an event since 1986.

To raise funds for the charity, the group held a launch party at the Irish Democratic League with ticket entry, are raising individual sponsorship and holding coffee mornings as well as collections in the city centre and gathering places such as Morrisons.

Kevin has also launched his first poetry book, *Doing Words*,

to help with the fund-raising effort.

"Originally I was going to include only 40 poems," he says, "but then I thought I'd scrape the barrel a bit."

The book contains 80 poems from a prolific two years as a poet. Spiral bound, it's a hefty and substantial volume and at £5 does its bit to raise funds for the worthy cause. There's some not-half bad poetry in there too. In fact, it's an essential introduction to the mind behind Kevin's mischievous twinkle and boyish grin.

"I'd been contemplating doing a book for quite some time," Kevin adds, "and this Marathon was really a catalyst to get it pushed through. And the proceeds are all going to Macmillan."

As for training, the local clan members gather every Sunday

for 16 mile walks to get themselves 'in shape'. Those further afield are stuck on their own training sessions, but one thing the marathon drive has done is to boost the old familial ties. Since they started the project they've kept in much closer touch and 'caught up with the gossip'.

The plan is to walk the 26-mile route rather than run it. The emphasis will be on getting through and setting that record.

"We plan to have a party on the night," Kevin adds "but whether it'll be the 11 of us slumped in chairs knackered, I don't know yet. We'll get there."

So long as they don't end up like the ancient Greek guy who ran the very first Marathon...

Tyke Writer joined forces with Film Digital (Radio) for this interview. Listen to Kevin talk about the Marathon run at www.filmdigital.net/radio.html.

It's A Bit Dark In Here

“**THERE is a little cocaine in it, but no free samples,” said Simon Armitage.**

His new book, aptly called *The White Stuff*, focuses on another – much stickier – kind of... well, white stuff, as poet James Nash and the assembled audience discovered.

Simon was at the Pictureville cinema to talk to James about his book, his poetry and his experiences in combining the latter with film. From there, the conversation grew and after a reading of the first chapter, he took questions for the audience. After that, everyone settled back to watch the film *Sylvia* – about Sylvia Plath and her relationship with fellow Ted Hughes.

There was another reason to hold the launch in a cinematic venue, however, and that was the simultaneous launch of *Big Read At The Cinema*.

This follows on from the BBC's *Big Read* scheme. In what proved a huge success, the Beeb worked with the Reading Agency and the Literary Trust to encourage people to display their passion about their favourite novels. Events took place in libraries and book groups across the country, debate ran across the BBC and celebrities plugged their favourite novels.

Turned out that many of the top books in people's mind were influenced by film, such as the *Lord of The Rings* trilogy.

Joining forces with the National Museum of Film & Photography, Bradford Libraries decided to extend the scheme. People can now 'programme' their favourite screen adaptation and talk about it in a hosted discussion group at the museum.

Simon Armitage and James Nash, Sylvia Plath and Ted Hughes: together they got the

whole symbiosis off to an entertaining – and frequently thought provoking – start.

“We don't often get a large audience for events at the library and so it seemed a good idea to work in partnership with the museum,” said librarian Paula Truman. It was gratifying to see so many people there and to hear the interesting questions that were asked.”

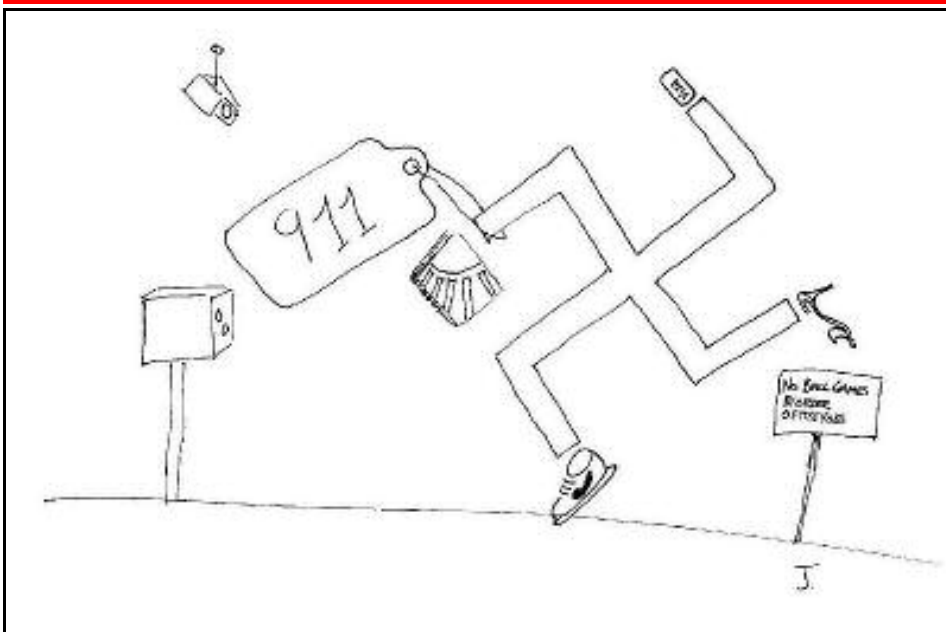
Something More

P OET Lemn Sissay performs at the Alhambra Studio next month, in his first full-length solo show.

Fostered as a baby and then living in care from the age of 11, he spent the first 16 years of his adult life searching for his family. Writing became his way of self-definition and making sense of the world around him. *Something Dark* expresses the issues central to his journey and his life story: race and family, identity and depression, love and sex.

Described as an 'electrifying and original voice' and a unique performer, he is said to fuse lyrical and polemical poetry with upbeat humour.

You can find if this not just hype at the Alhambra Studio on 22nd April. Tickets cost £5 and £3 (concessions). Bookings and further information from 01274 432000.



Sin(k) City Poets: Joe Ogden

Of Mice And Pen

What do you do outside writing? Drink to much beer, but in my spare time I run an Internet radio station. Produce shows on the local radio BCB96.7fm. ACT Now, Writers Circle, and a theatre round up for the afternoon show AartVerk. Currently editing own radio plays, secretary of ACT, on Committee of Contact 121-support services and peer support worker. Work on my allotment.

Why do you write?

To try and impress the women, with my wit, insight and seductive words. Does it work? Dose it f... So I have to say the words are what's left only after god has written the spaces.

How did you become a writer?

A girl called Amanda got this bucket of white mice and was going to stamp on one for every hour I didn't write. It was carnage at first.

What has been your greatest literary moment?

Pointing out to Comet electrical store that the notice 'Compare our prices before buying elsewhere' may be misunderstood.

What was your worst literary moment?

Drunk, reading out unknowingly aloud the words on a girls T-Shirt "I like shopping and FCUK'ing' and getting the last word wrong. The slap lasted two days. Where is she now though? Tell me that.

How has writing affected your life?

My name is Joe, er hello. Well it just started y' know with signing on at the dole, just m' name and that, every two weeks and that, then the girl left me and I - I WROTE A WHOLE POEM. Soon it was two or three poems a week. I swore I'd never touch the shorts (stories) but I jumped to N (novel). I knew the side affects; pen calluses, keyboard flat finger and boring the shit out of mates with my latest chapter, the endless cups of coffee. I've stopped N now and

I'm living, I still do the odd script and Open Mic from time to time but I'm alive thanks to Writers Anon.

What advice can you give fellow scribes?

Know who you're writing for. Every one can write a play or a novel or poetry. But will others want to read what you have written? Know a good idea from a dumb one. Be willing to rewrite seven or eight times and still be turned down. Research every inch of the book to get the fact right. Think of new things to say and not drag up old story lines. Make sure the characters grow throughout the book. Give the reader something to hook onto. And take your fucking ego, box it and lose it. No-one gives a toss about you in your books or poems. Above all write intelligently and sell the book idea strategically. Make love often and learn the joy of living. Let go of the things you no longer need. And know your truth in the now.

What is your involvement in literary

activities?

The Writers Circle, the Interchange Bradford Writer's Network and hEar4Words. The World Café word workshop. I have been to the poetry group at the new beehive and some poetry workshops, 1 in 12 club, Cathedral Centre, Bradford Central library and the Albert. I'm looking to fund New Writing 2 at The Priestley this year and to get a team of poets together to go to the fringe in 2005.

Who or what has influenced your work?

Who: Someone I miss very much. What: Sex, or rather the lack of it.

Brief Bibliography:

Love Lost the poems (Version 4) June 2003; Keighley Folk Printed 1987, Keighley Collage Students; Love, Sex, Death and Carrots Printed Dec 2000, Interchange Bradford Writer's Group; Sundoves, Bumblebees And Blue Streak Bananas printed Oct 2002, Poets for Peace. ⚡

TYKE Writer welcomes editorial contributions, but such will be edited for space and style restrictions.

All contributions must bear the author's name, which may appear as a byline. Material is also preferred in a type written form.

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