



Issue The Fifth, May, 1999.

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Perth Readers - Book Launch

Glen Phillips *SPRING BURNING: New and Selected Poems 1967-1997*

Time: 6pm Date: Tuesday 25th of May

Place: Staffroom, Building 13, Mt Lawley Campus of Edith Cowan University, Cnr
of Alexander Drive and Bradford St, Mt Lawley.

Publisher: Folio/Salt (John Kinsella)

Editorial

The season of howling winter westerlies and rain is upon us here in my temperate part of the world, and we enter what we refer to as "winter", to the amusement of North Americans and Northern Europeans, who pass through the rigours of real winter.

In any case, mild cooling is enough to stimulate southern Australians into activities away from the beaches. Most notable is the emergence of football in all its bewildering codes, which like religion, has fallen into schism from the faith of the true round ball, to the deviant egg-shaped ball in all its manifestations of rules for rugby union and rugby league, with many permutations and reductions, ponderous American gridiron, and here, Australian rules football.

In Western Australia, Australian Rules football has been abbreviated catchily as WESTAR, but the local media seems to feel that somehow this lacks poetic balance and now refer to "WESTAR rules", with admirable disregard for redundancy or the danger of being regarded as an over-regulated code. West Australian Rules rules football is thriving.

Football's drive for poetic correctness spills into the commentary box, where over-use of plain team names is avoided by using up to six synonyms per team, based on their real names, nicknames, colours and permutations thereof. An un-schooled observer could be completely confused into looking for several other teams on the ground.

Fortunately, the synonyms for goal (major, big opening, sticks, etc) and ball (pill, orb, leather) and the verbs compounded around "started to", have gone out of fashion.

Why does football need commentators for television, when the viewers can plainly see what is going on for themselves? It's really the telling of a story, as foundation for a Homeric history of football clubs. Viewers may clearly see Balim smiting Balam, but they want to be told about it in words that add some grandeur to the event, placing it in the context of social history and the lore of mighty deeds. Possibly, it is also due to the fact that many observers are myopic or mentally impaired for the occasion, through the taking of substances legal and illegal, and really do need to be told what is going on.

Given that audiences often sing or chant, play also often involves pirouettes and high leaping, and there are displays of considerable acting ability when attempting to invoke penalties against opponents for fancied transgressions, it could be argued that football is as much an artform as opera, and should therefore be eligible for arts grants!

It was once considered proper to post back receipts for money paid to you. Rapidly rising postal costs (which have since stabilised markedly) stimulated the fashion of not sending receipts, which became known, without very good reason, as, "according to business practice", as if this had been going on for some time and we were merely catching up to models of performance in more

sophisticated parts of the world.

The fashion has leaked over into correspondence so that to respond to letters received is often overlooked. Or there is a sort of Clayton's reply, an acknowledgement that a letter has been received and promising that there will be further correspondence when the matter is dealt with fully. Often, such promises are not of the "core" category and nothing more is heard, especially if the original letter were to a politician.

Experience suggests that letters, faxes, e-mails and telephone calls have varied response rates, and outcomes of a learned study on the subject is eagerly awaited.

But pity the writers who submit unsolicited work for possible publication or performance. They invariably suffer the proverbial long wait, as their compositions compost on editorial desks, waiting for a break in the important other activities of the editor. Works depending on some topicality, fade past their use-by-date as the news gives way to the "olds".

Hard copy submissions fare better than faxes or e-mails, which seem to disappear in cyberspace, unacknowledged.

Lack of acknowledgement can be demoralising and has potential for embarrassment. Long after I sent an article to a national magazine which paid real money, I allowed it to be published by a small, local journal. Three days later it appeared in the national magazine. I confessed, but was allowed to keep the money!

Major newspapers are good and professional. I suspect that they have a clear-desk policy and whatever is not used on the day or read, is tipped from the "in" basket to the "out". It is not unknown for apparently rejected work to be accepted on re-submission, without alteration!

Literary magazines are slack. Six months, a year, eighteen months or two years wait is apparently a common experience and often submissions are never heard of again. The magazines are doubtless overwhelmed with an increasing amount of material as other opportunities for writers dry up. At the same time, magazines are pinched for funds so that editorial assistance is poorly paid or donated by people busy with their own work, such as academics. It could also be due simply to slackness and incompetence and an unwillingness to apply business methods to an arts organisation.

Funding authorities would be doing a great favour to writers if they were to take up this issue as an important item of their evaluation procedure, if they have one, in deciding which magazines deserve support.

When I was active in the FAW I concocted a suggested "Writers Protocol" for competitions, submissions and returns, in which it was suggested that two months should be the maximum period between submission and advice of acceptance or rejection. It is a desirable goal.

According to several sources, writers workshops and guru sessions are in decline, with advertised sessions often failing to attract enough applicants to pay tutors.

Aside from the obvious fact that many sessions may have been offered by tutors with a great deal of enthusiasm but little else, there is also a dawning realisation after much workshopping, that writing is a lonely business and success requires lonely application. That is not to say that a good tutor cannot

provide both stimulus and correction, but after a surfeit of courses, time must be devoted to the task of writing.

Perhaps tutors have done too good a job and worked themselves out of a market!

Below in this issue are two appreciations of the life of Ric Throssel, who died in Canberra recently. It is a sad irony that the son of a left leaning writer and a war hero should have been dogged all his life by insinuations arising from his mother's politics, rather than his father's valour and patriotism.

Obituary

VALE RIC PRICHARD THROSSELL

I'm looking at a photograph of Ric with his famous mother, Katharine Susannah Prichard, taken in 1938 when he was sixteen years old. A fresh-faced Ric in a casual open-necked shirt smiles as he looks into the face of his adored mother. She is already 55, for she bore her only son when she was almost forty. By the time of that photograph, the other one in the loving trinity that had existed in the old house in Greenmount, his father, Hugo Throssell, a Victoria Cross winner, had been gone from their lives for five years,

Most certainly Ric Throssell came from a family where the two-way pull of love and loss seemed ever-present and always tending towards extremes. He was named Ric after his father's brother, tragically killed at Gaza in the early stages of the first World War. In his biographies of the lives of his mother (*Wild Weeds and Wind Flowers*) and his father (*My Father's Son*), he recounts an eleven year old boy's incomprehension of the 1933 suicide of his war hero father after the brief years that they had together.

Clearly, it was from his mother that he learned to be a writer. But with Irish and Welsh ancestry, the Celtic creative instincts were well established. They led him to four main areas of achievement in his writing career: as editor and biographer (principally of his mother's work), as playwright and as a novelist.

Ric was Patron of the Katharine Susannah Prichard Foundation from its inception. He was enthusiastic in the planning for the Writers' Centre at his childhood home at Greenmount, but always stressed it should not be a shrine to Katharine. What she would have wanted, he insisted, was a meeting place that would advantage local writers and, in particular, help them through their early difficulties.

In his own career Ric published four novels, *A Reliable Source*, *In a Wilderness of Mirrors*, *Tomorrow* and *Jackpot*, the last in 1998. He wrote at least ten plays, most of which were performed in Canberra where he was a long-time supporter of local repertory theatre. Additionally he edited *Tribute*, a collection of Katharine's stories, and *Straight Left*, her articles and speeches. But he will probably be remembered principally for his two revealing and sensitively written biographies, *Wild Weeds and Wind Flowers* (1975) and *My Father's Son* (1989).

Ric's devotion to the Foundation's work, as its Patron, was considerable. He accepted an invitation to deliver the Annual KSP Memorial Lecture not long after the Foundation was set up in 1985. Whenever he came to Perth he would usually manage a visit to the Writers Centre in his former Greenmount home. A competition for writers of biographies was set up in his name. He donated quantities of books from his published List to the Foundation and was occasionally able to send a cheque to help with special projects

Whenever there was negative publicity from old opponents of his mother, directed against the Writers Centre, he provided rapid and substantial support through the Australian media.

Ric Throssell will be sadly missed by KSP Foundation members but his name will certainly live on together with his mother's in the work of the Centre in promoting Australian authors. Hugo Throssell, V.C., his father, will also be remembered, not only through Ric's books but in those qualities of charm, generosity and infinite patience which were part of Ric's inheritance from his famous parents.

Some members will recall Ric Throssell's Life partner, Dorothy, who died only hours before her husband. They are survived by two daughters, Karen and Querida, and a son, James.

Glen Phillips

Vale Ric Throssell

Ric Throssell died at his Canberra home on 20 April 1999, aged 76.

Although most of his adult life was spent overseas or in Canberra, Ric Throssell leaves many friends and fond memories in Perth. One of Ric's last visits to Perth was for the well-attended launch of his novel, *In A Wilderness of Mirrors*, in 1992. Ric's grandfather was a journalist, his mother, Katharine Susannah Prichard, was one of Australia's most renowned writers, and Ric himself, although engaged full-time as a soldier and then in the Australian Diplomatic Service, was a prolific writer of fiction, plays, biography, and radio and television drama. Several of his works won major literary prizes. Ric was a member of the Australian Society of Authors, Writers Against Nuclear Arms, and the Canberra branch of the Fellowship of Australian Writers. There are many members of the Western Australian branch of the FAW who rejoice in the friendship they had with this fine and courageous man.

Don Grant. (FAWWA)

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Poetry - Virgin Verse and Verse From the Pros

CHIZARIRA For Megan Mkwanzani
Paul van Reyk

Megan I came to Africa tracking rhino
across the bowl of Chizarira where
wind and water weather rock
exposing veins of silica, grids
within the greater grids of elephant tracks -
tamped earth worn stone -
and over these the paths
of migratory birds,
and over all the stars traverse.
Pebble, crane, deer, sun
to shift of plates and planet's spin
move.

When we settled, planted crops,
built huts of daub and thatch, we rebelled
against the pull of moon on tides
and blood.
Not garden to exodus but
exodus to garden's been the loss.
Taming seed, taming kine, we
are tamed, journey's circumscribed,
river path to slaughterhouse.
Civilised past sensing,
along grids of sinew muscle vein,
no planets travel.

Dec 1998

Kangaroo Paw - Bush Dancing

Anigozanthos manglesii
Helen Jean Hagemann

In days of weeks she creeps
to speak of fine red hair
that gathers in her straps
of emerald green.

The vision brings a clash of sighs
in loveliness of stem
in wild design she's stylized
dancing kangaroos of spring.

In grass of well-groomed sandy soils
her ruby blossom tall aspires
motion-wise she's stationary
in bushland's sturdy pressuring.

Devotees of flashing smiles
impress her buds' bright eyes
laneways weigh the memories
that kangaroos can dance.

Still warm she closes paws
to brown in burst of summer's days
a vision of her classifies
a death of jewel and spring.

This Beautiful City
Helen Jean Hagemann

In this beautiful city
while the rain drowns your voice
game crickets play their violins
& scratch out their little songs
but they're mean when it comes to truth.

The traffic hums as the city sleeps
winding its macaroni framework
around the bones of guardians
long forgotten, gone.

Black people once knew the legends
of the narrowing bands of the river
why it never floods or sleeps.
Black people are the sand people
balancing grains of sand in their hands

sifting skyward to generations of lovers
fathers, and mothers' past.

We cover their legends with stone
& wash them away like
sands from our hands.

In this beautiful city
the goanna dreamtime has returned
in minute prints on artefacts
and didgeridoo sales.

When summer's gone
the cicadas fill beacons of rain
coming down, but the rain doesn't flood the town
or raise the river to wash the streets.

Where do the guardians sleep
in the busiest streets, in the busiest town?

In this town the sky
is perfumed in good-year cologne
Such luxury, while the traffic coils
20thC spoils
& the black dust spoils
the oils of my skin
but my voice is clean
- my voice is clean.

Jaded
Helen Jean Hagemann

I'm not incorporated
in your polyester pleasure,
divine alacrious lime skin
pumping licorice tights.
Nor am I attuned to your silver-on-jade head gear
that fluoro magnetism
crouched and emaciated
in febrile truth.
And although I'm wedged between stubble and track
you're pushing harder against
whatever came before.

While I, null and void
expose my mountain scene
in alabaster skin
I'm riding nuptials of green and chlor
a chameleon with enormous grit.
Although I'm tall, I'm not frightened by a fall
in these incendiary thighs.

So, I'm firmly pressed between lycra and scheme
embracing a climb with my
mountain bike.

Now that there's no magic-cadabra
between us, I'm thinking, fine!
this leather slip on skin
burns inside my roundabout.
In fact, my legs are spreading wet
where the animal burrows deep.
Having a need to feast on this helix turn
I brake too fast
crumple my fantasy, as you crank vigorously
up the hill.

At The Marina Jim Cornish

The sun was shining lustily
on the seafronts and behinds
of fishermen with their beachrods
and crafts of various kinds
and all the boats about the bay
and all the ships ahoy;
on every man and woman,
on every gull and buoy.

It shone on sailors' sweethearts,
it shone on bosuns' mates
and all the battered fish and chips
adorning plastic plates,
lettuce leaves and lemon wedges,
prawns and oysters, crabs and crays
among the glasses and the bottles
in the wharfside fish cafés.

On display in fish shop markets
were "catches of the day",
all of various sorts and sizes
sold by kilo or by tray.
Some of them were short and fat,
some were long and skinny
but all of them had pointy ends
and all of them were finny.

Boats nuzzled berths and scratched backs
against well-musselled piers.

Owners leaning on the taffrails
told sea-yarns and guzzled beers
while the music of their laughter
was carried on the breeze
from all the happy children
kittening on the quays.

Oasis N.S.W
Frances Arnett Sbrocchi

Spinifex
and tortured mulga
roots seek
deep in grey earth
waters of ancient rains

White cockatoos
cluster and call

All other life
deep
in the ground
shy animals
hide until evening
chills the sun

Men here
beneath the hills
seek gold
and pale opal

We come upon a town
a saucy village
tho grey
upon the brown of the valley
shops
and a pub
and that pre-eminence&emdash;
cathedral
to the lonely company of miners
the Leagues Club

Red plush
and slot machines

clinking coins
and cries of joy

or pain
ring up the losses
or the gain
Steaks and salads
and in this far place
Canadian rye whiskey

A black boy
leaps on his twisted bike
follows our bus to the edge of town

Centre Frances Arnett Sbrocchi

I caught the round centre
of the storm and carried it
into my white bedroom
wanting
to possess
the silence

I wake
to the impossible: We have reached
where pain
remembered
can no longer
be stripped away
a salt and sandy land
without plants
without life

Reciprocity Frances Arnett Sbrocchi

Sour dough is slow
brewed four days
in a warm window

Starter sulks in the cold
until I recall
its place behind the milk

A strange plant
filling my kitchen
with the scent of beer

I mould bread
sesame and cinnamon raisins
crunchy wheat

My friends
visit me
the day I bake

Hallelujah and hatred
Jim Cornish

They was stompin' and a-wailin'
They was pressin' at the railin'
and a-swayin' of a forest of their palms.
Big ladies hoola hoopin'
while their men folks was a-whoopin'
with a hollerin' and a-wailin' of the psalms.
Brother Jackson was a-preachin',
Sister Abie was a-screechin'
with fiery eyes and watermelon smiles.
The congregation was a-singin'
and a-noddin' and a-swingin',
they was a-rock and rollin' in the aisles.
And they begged the Lord for lovin',
begged his blessing from above 'em,
begged a-saving of their daughters and their sons
from the devils in the bed-sheets
glaring hatred through the eye-holes.

From the devils with the torches and the guns.

A renga

Shen

Rundle Street, Tuesday
night - an ordinary couple
out to the movies.

Her hand tucked into
her companion's back pocket.
Also a woman.

Light banter on a
street corner. As if they were
any two lovers.

As they walk past the Austral,
pairs of eyes track them.
Then, bruising laughter.....

Perhaps only I
perceive their hesitation.
For just an instant.

A man's voice shouts out
the punchline again - renews
a wave of giggling.

The women walk on,
say nothing. Something about
them has changed, though.

I walk across East
Terrace. The couple wait for
green lights, permission.

They stand passively,
have become just two friends out
on a Tuesday night.

All along Hutt Street
I wrote a renga. Squashed the
syllables into

neat holes, looked for paths
which made no judgements. Only

these observations.

Monologue imitating dialogue

Shen

There is nothing that you could say
which could alter my position.
*You can offer no reasoning convincing enough to
change my stance.*
I bring images of murder and rape and maiming.
I can counter with death and pain and humiliation.
Tell me something I have not
heard a thousand times before.
*Only if you stop using words so misused
that they have already passed into cliché.*
I speak for our dead.
*And I tell anyone who listens that our dead
speak for themselves.*
Have you listened to your own pathetic lies ?
Forget about them, and perhaps I'll overlook your
*exaggerations
falsifications
euphemisms
misrepresentations and
reinterpretations.*
Speak in a language I understand.
Your words have no meaning to me.
I demand the last word on the issue.
*How can I be silent when I can always
offer one more ?*
So how long must we continue this discussion ?
*Only until we have nothing left to say
to each other.*
Then there would be no discussion at all.
*Only then would we understand each other
perfectly.*

(APOLOGIES TO SHEN FOR SOME FORMATTING PROBLEMS. SOME LINES SHOULD BE INDENTED, BUT TRY AS I MAY, THE LINES REVERT TO THE MARGIN. I'LL BE LOOKING FOR A NEW WEB AUTHOR PROGRAM.)

Frieze

Diane Beckingham

Stillness is the key
to capture magic-moment miracle:
lizard exploring marri leaf,
jewel beetle fondling a flower,
bandicoot rustling fronds of zamia,
echidna scuffling across our path,
wrens preening each other's napes,
sugar glider skimming sown a tree
- stillness is the key.

Horizons

Diane Beckingham

Beneath the lowering bluff
even a man may crawl
to lick his wounds and learn
once more to face the city
life gone sour

beside the cool creek trees
a traveller may make fire
to warm a meal and spark
bold schemes to last
a month or more

under the blazing sky
a drifter may look up
to take direction from the sun
leading him on to lodes
and reefs of tumbled ore

across the burning plain
an outsider may return
to seek the healing spring
and find a welcome
at some door.

What follows shows just how good those spell checkers are.

Spell Checker

N.Anon

Eye halve a spelling chequer It
came with my pea sea It plainly
marques four my revue Miss
steaks eye kin knot sea.

Eye strike a key and type a word
And weight four it two say Weather
eye am wrong oar write It shows me
strait a weigh.

As soon as a mist ache is maid It
nose bee fore two long And eye
can put the error rite Its rare lea
ever wrong.

Eye have run this poem threw it I
am shore your pleased two no its
letter perfect awl the weigh My
chequer tolled me so.

(Sauce unknown)

Suppose Edgar Allen Poe Had Used a Computer...

N.Anon

Once upon a midnight dreary,
Fingers cramped and vision bleary,
Systems manuals piled high and
Wasted paper on the floor.

Longing for the warmth of bed sheets,
Still I sat there, doing spreadsheets,
Having reached the bottom line,
I took a floppy from the drawer.

Typing with a steady hand,
I then invoked the SAVE command,
And waited for the disk to store,
Only this and nothing more.

Deep into the monitor peering,
long I sat there wond'ring, fearing,
Doubting, while the disk kept churning,
Turning yet to churn some more.

"Save!" I said, "You cursed mother!
Save my data from before!"
One thing did the phosphors answer,
Only this and nothing more,
Just, "Abort, Retry, Ignore?"

Was this some occult illusion?

Some maniacal intrusion?

These were choices undesired,

One's I'd never faced before.

Carefully, I weighed the choices

As the disk made impish noises.

The cursor flashed, insistent, waiting,

Baiting me to type some more.

Clearly I must press a key,

Choosing one and nothing more.

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Shorts - old and new

Three of Us

by Trudy Graham

We are three. Even though three years separate the eldest from the youngest, we cannot remember a time growing up when we were not.

In old photographs we look so alike that we might have been triplets: short hair, cut straight across the back, just covering our ears, severe fringes kissing our eyebrows; round faces; round eyes; snub noses; hesitant grins. In real life, in colour, the differences are more noticeable. The eldest of us has brown eyes and a touch of red in her hair. Hazel eyes and blue-black hair physically define the youngest while the one in the middle is blonde and blue-eyed.

At school we clung, each to the other, like limpets. We were in different grades of course but have little memory of times apart. United we were strong. We did not speak of why the need to be three existed but

communicated on some other level. We must have talked but, in truth, cannot now remember words of any importance. We just knew that together we could keep the world out, the truth hidden.

How did we know our family was not like other families? There was no television then, no explicit movies for us to learn from but still we knew that others did not live as we did.

At home, at night when HE came home, we huddled in one bed, telling each other stories, trying to drown out his rantings, the noises of the blows our mother endured.

We were lost princesses. One day a prince, or two, or three, would find us, rescuing us from a life not really ours.

When he was not there, when we were away from home, life was sweet. We spent hours in the bush or at the creek, living a life where reality and imagination switched places. We endured the hell we could not change and invented our own heaven.

Years passed. We still looked alike but recognised differences in each other. One rebelled, one became bitter, the other entered into denial. We fell apart and became separate yet were still three, bound together by the powerful glue of past events.

Our longed-for princes came. We married them and had children before our heros turned into frogs.

We three came together now and again. We talked, but only with words, inconsequential words. Our bonds had been forged to fulfil a need, a need that no longer existed. It died when he did and like tops flung from a central core, we spun away from each other.

We struggled on, apart yet needing each other, knowing it on some deep level but unable to find the way back to being three. Until our mother died. The floodgates opened then, allowing us to communicate as never before and we saw each other, individually, as if for the first time.

Now we are strong and we live in the real world.

We are sisters, and there are three of us.

The Homecoming

Janet Woods

She'd been five when she'd left this place.

Beneath her, the red earth was warm and uneasy against the soles of her shoes. She slipped them off, curling her toes into the dust.

Her mother's feet had sent up little puffs of red dust as they'd pounded after the truck. Her eyes had bulged and her breath had been harsh with the effort of keeping up.

Eventually, she been able to run no more and had fallen to her knees, her head bowed against her chest. As the truck gathered speed she'd got smaller and smaller, until she'd become little more than a dot in the vast landscape.

There had been the white mother in a flowered frock. From her she'd learned of the God of love. From the white teachers in black robes, she'd learned that love was a word of less importance to God than discipline and gratefulness.

Cleanliness was next to godliness on the scale of things. Godliness was earned by diligence and the application of a rod.

She'd grappled with the notions of clothes being ironed, or spending hours learning to stitch evenly along a hem of an apron. And could never understand that a garment designed to collect dirt, had to be kept scrupulously clean.

As she'd grown older the hems had become less important, the books more. Inside them, she found the answer she'd been seeking.

God was a legal system, his laws interpreted to suit the situation. There could be victims, but no real oppressors under God's system. He controlled

the universe through man - and they controlled him.

Her mother's body was like warm silk, and smelled of the mud and reeds that grew at the edge of the water-hole. She'd giggled when her mother had splashed water over her small body and had shaken the water from her hair, squealing with delight as the iridescent drops caught the sun. She'd caught a fish with her hands that day, herding it into a circle of stones she'd made, then closing the gap so it couldn't escape. Her mother wrapped it in a leaf so it wouldn't spoil on the long walk back to camp.

The truck had been there when they got back that day.

"Be grateful you have a good brain we can work with."

It had been hard to remember all the things she was expected to be grateful for. High on the list were the good sisters who taught her lessons, followed by the white mother who trained her in cleanliness, and how to sew, cook and iron.

Then there was the nourishing food she found on her plate each day, when other, less fortunate people starved to death. The sampler on the dining room wall was a paradox

"God helps those who help themselves. God loves those who help others."

She remembered it on her graduation from university. The white mother had watched her accept the law degree with a look of self-congratulation and pride upon her face, her place in heaven assured.

She began to help others too, those who helped themselves. No victims, no oppressors. God's law meted out justice and punished without favour.

But there was something inside her struggling to be released -

something that called uneasily to her.

One day, when the voice became too strong to ignore, she looked in the mirror and saw the sad eyes of her ancestors gazing back at her.

Now her journey was nearly over. Spreading her arms wide, she shouted.

"I've come home."

Her words echoed round the purple hills bordering the spinifex plain.

A few crows rose in the air, wheeling lazily before they settled back down amongst the dry yellow grasses. Sweat trickled down her back as the sound died away to nothing.

The sense of aloneness was acute after the city. The sky was too blue and vast to comprehend, the silence unnerving. She stood, breathing in hot, dusty air and swatting the flies that tried to invade her eyes, nose and mouth.

All around her was life and death. There was a lizard sunning itself on a rock - a teeming termite tower, a spider web glowing iridescent in the sun, a butterfly beating its wings in panic as a spider approached it.

A hawk circled above, then hurtled on silent wings towards the earth.

A tiny, alarmed squeak reached her ears, then nothing.

She shuddered, and moved back to the safety of the car when a metre of brown snake slithered across the track.

She should never have left the road.

Her mother's name was Ruby, she'd discovered.

The hands of the man had been strong as he'd dragged her from her mother's side. The little fish she'd caught so gleefully had fallen into the dust and was churned underfoot by the man in the white collar. He'd been a fat

man, his eyes burning with God's righteousness.

The journey had been long, the children had huddled together for warmth, too frightened to cry. Sleep brought forgetfulness. Awakening brought a changed landscape. Gone were the wide spaces, the dust storms, the old man's dream-time tales. Gone were the simple everyday tasks and the security of knowing your place. Dream-time became a dream replaced by a different dream.

Several decades had passed since she'd left this place they called the Pilbara. The journey back had been long and twisting.

Mining companies had built towns for their workers and were raving the land for iron ore. A railway line curved like a ribbed snake through the country she'd been born in. The trains brought the ore to the ports where the carriers sailed away with it to foreign countries.

There, the red heart of the land was crushed and moulded, then brought back changed beyond all recognition into neat silver slices.

Despite all this, there was a timelessness about the place. It would be here in centuries to come, when the human race was an endangered species, and the steel, mountains of rust. The rain would still gush through the dry river beds in the wet season, and that which the earth didn't swallow would fill the scars, turning them into lakes before rushing onwards to the sea.

Though she couldn't see the shore, she knew the tide was out. Her nostrils were filled with the warm and slightly acid aroma of mangrove mud.

The mangroves thrust their roots deep into the brine saturated mud. They'd caught crabs when the tide was out, placing them in baskets

woven by the women. The sea had crept back silently over the mud, slowly at first, making seductive little sucking noises. A swift, hissing inrush of water followed, trying to catch them unawares as they skipped, laughing over the twisted mangrove roots.

The town of Roebourne was built mostly of local stone.

The post office, the courthouse with its flag flying gaily at the mast, the jailhouse where the drunks were penned like animals - all were hewn from the earth, and set block upon block to celebrate this early administrative centre.

Around the outskirts of the town were newer dwellings, weather-board houses painted pale pink or green with tin roofs and small verandahs. The house stumps were rooted in red earth, to which even the grass clung tenaciously.

The settlers roots had dug deep.

A bend revealed the hotel. There was a woman slumped against the wall outside, a bottle in her hand as she baked on the hot pavement, and oblivious to the music and laughter coming from inside. Two children crouched patiently by her side, their eyes old.

Further out of town the camp, radiating watchfulness. Several emaciated dogs rushed to threaten her, their hides lumpy with bush ticks.

They were in the place where her mother was born. She lay warm between the two dogs, half listening to her mother's song of how the moon crept out of its hiding place in the earth. The sky was dark, the creek a gentle murmur in her ears. She was sleepy. Just behind the trees the moon glow softly lightened the sky. Cicada's began to call to one another. One of the dogs lifted its head and growled when a dingo howled in the distance. Suddenly,

a star shot in a blazing arc across the sky. She smiled as she snuggled into the dogs warm bodies and listened to her mother sing.

She had known that her mother was still alive. But not like this.

It was hard to believe the old woman in a pink, stained dress was her mother. Her eyes stared unseeingly towards the hills, and she made a low keening noise in her throat as she rocked back and forth. Her skin was thin, brown bark sagging over a frame of bones.

Neither of them knew the other in the void created for them.

"Ruby, she hit 'im 'ead on a rock an 'aint never bin same since," her uncle said. "She die soon. White fella, 'im want to take 'er away to 'ospital. We wouldn't let 'im."

Her uncle was white-bearded and big bellied - his woman and six grandchildren all lived in the tiny house amongst the dogs, flies and cockroaches.

"Where are their parents?"

"My son, he did a bloke in, 'im in jail long time. 'is woman, she gone walkabout."

She'd had a younger brother, long gone.

"Poor fella, petrol took 'im." Her uncle tapped his head. "Ruby took it real hard."

Her uncle was a man of few words. The silence between them stretched into the evening.

The children stared at her through earth-brown eyes, their faces shy and solemn - somehow guarded.

So achingly like her own grandchildren, only different - less knowing of their place in the future, wiser of their place in the past. They made

her feel uncomfortable.

They made her a bed on the floor next to her mother's.

A rope tied to the bedpost was looped around Ruby's wrist.

"To stop er goin' walkabout in night."

Something as soft as silk touched her tears. Her mother was sitting on the edge of her bed, her eyes full of secrets as she gently stroked her face.

She knew what her mother asked of her. What she'd been taught, fought a losing battle with her intuition.

Rising to her feet, she loosened the binding and silently followed her out of the house.

She left the car on the highway, and they walked for a long time.

Instinct guided their feet through the darkness to the creek.

Above them, the stars were cradled in the mystery of the sky - around them the earth exhaled the fragrance of honey.

They lay upon the warm red earth, joined in spirit as her mother told her of the time of her birth.

Here, her aunts and grandmother had drawn her from her mother's womb.

The creek had washed the birthing from their bodies, and carried away the signs so the place would remain a secret amongst the women.

Their hands touched, then entwined.

Beside them, the creek flowed onwards in a never-ending journey as they talked their women's business.

When they fell silent the reeds began to whisper in the breeze, like voices from the past.

"My sisters," Ruby whispered, her smile young again.

It was the only gift she could give her daughter - the time of

belonging they'd once shared.

As the moon climbed out of the earth, Ruby began to sing to them in a sweet, high voice.

She began to sing too, calling them to her mother's place to celebrate her homecoming.

This 1,900 word story won the 1998 SWW Bronze Quill award.

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Page Three Writer/Reader Revealed

Watch this space!

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Reviews

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Articles old and new

The Trouble with Young Ozco

Walter Vivian

In a major mood swing from the euphoria of perceiving the arts as one of Australia's most important industries, with more people attending artistic events than sporting events, the Australia Council is now on a low. The problem, as reported in its entertainingly constructed pamphlet called "alert", bulletin 1 1999, (they'll have to do something about the printing machine as my copy had meaningless lines of ink going every which way) emanates from a Bulletin-Morgan telephone poll of 7-8 April, 1998.

The question asked of 535 electors was: "Thinking about Australia as a whole - in your opinion, what are the three most important things the Federal Government should be doing something about."

Apparently the responses were aggregated and ranked, and the Council is concerned that arts and culture did not rate a guernsey among more than 20 important issues.

Now at thirty years of age, the Council is very young in years. I can remember taking stock of myself at that age and wondering what I'd achieved, apart from fathering a beloved child and attaining moderate success in my chosen profession, and I subsequently counselled many thirty year olds when I was a man of power. If I had young Ozco sitting in my study, I'd deliver a few truths in my

best magistral but fatherly manner.

"Ozco, my dear", I'd say, most of my erstwhile subordinates being 'dears' rather than 'sons' or 'mates', "beware of rubbery figures. Firstly there is the matter of context, so ably expressed by the Sir Humphrey character in one of the *Yes Minister* episodes. If the drift of the questions was about industry, then you may be surprised to know, that most respondents would not think of arts and culture as industry. Then suppose, that even if the context were relevant, and most respondents ranked arts and culture in their minds at about number four or five. This would not show as they were only allowed three responses.

By all means take stock of yourself and the way you function, but beware of starting after hares that provoke nobody's interest but your own. Beware also of false analogies. Arts and culture are not an industry, although they may impinge upon it, in the much the same way as as they impinge on sport. Arts and culture have a special, unique place in the general social fabric and should be valued.

Choose your friends wisely and broadly and don't be seduced into letting your friends choose others of their friends to be your new friends. They'll warp things and influence you unduly.

Seek advice for yourself from a wide range of people. Be very wary of trying to balance some of your very old-fashioned prejudices which make you seem very, very old, by trying out very new, avant-garde notions which make you seem jejune and silly.

I have my own preferences. I'd prefer that there be less yodelling in poetry and more in music. I'd spend less on the dying art of grand opera and more on popular music and literature. I'd go for the common, chocolate boxy, jingling sort of things that ordinary people like and carry them along, rather than indulge the few po-faced, world-weary aesthetes who seem to hold sway. A yobbo playing popular tunes on a gumleaf is probably participating more in our culture than some dinner-suited yuppy going off to a foreign language opera that he neither understands, values nor appreciates.

Pushing the envelope is fine, but if you don't push some coherent understandable sort of message along with it, you're bound for the dead letter office.

In short, young Ozco, the trick is to live art and culture. If you have to define it and impose it, it's probably not there."

Young Ozco, who is very important and dear to me, takes her departure, looking fashionably drab and androgenous and somewhat puzzled, as, sadly, do most people I counsel. Without any good reason, the annoying, immortal lines of some unknown but negatively oft-quoted and therefore oft-sung poet, ring through my mind:

"Australia 'tis of thee we think at the dawning of each day,
We turn and see the wattle wink and shout hip hip hooray!"

The Literature Board of the Australia Council.

The present members are:

Mr Nicholas Hasluck, Chair, NSW(sic)

Mr John Collins, Tas, Deputy Chair
Ms Sarah Day, Tas
Mr Frank Devine, NSW
Ms Sue Gough, Qld
Mr Patrick Morgan, Vic
Ms Heather Nimmo, WA

This information was obtained somewhat laboriously from the website, which surprisingly for a public organisation, seems to have locked the information so that it may not be copied electronically. I had to jot it down and type it in.

I cannot vouch for its accuracy, as Nicholas is recorded as suddenly migrating eastwards from his WA domicile. I have it from the very lips of Ozco supremo, Margaret Seares, that such is not the case.

In a moment of high significance for PixelPapers, I was actually online when Nicholas materialised on screen in place of his predecessor.

The Weight of Artistic Practice.

Walter Vivian

Evaluation simple means to find a value, to judge the worth or success of something or some activity.

In simple business terms this means finding out whether trading is producing a profit or loss. Only in the simplest of concerns, where a sole trader buys stock and makes a summative evaluation when it is all sold, is it easy. Commonly, the process, even in quite small businesses, is more complex. The accountant rules off an arbitrary line at a given time, usually the end of a month or a financial year, pretending that everything is stopped for a summative evaluation. Obviously, there are ongoing costs and revenues so that the evaluation must be qualified by these to be meaningful.

As soon as enterprise takes on more sophisticated elements of service, there must be other dimensions to evaluation. If you recall the delightful Yes Minister episode where the minister's department finds itself in charge of a large, fully administratively staffed hospital, that is without sufficient funds to admit any patients, you will remember the Sir Humphrey character lauded it as an outstanding administrative success because of the perfect paper work of the staff, but by any valid criteria of medical service this was, of course, complete nonsense. Judged by normative standards, taking into account the performance of other hospitals, the minister's hospital was a zero.

Evaluation in the arts is even more complex because it encompasses not only funding and service but also considerations of quality, quite unlike the experience of a normal business enterprise where quality will inevitably be reflected in the bottom line. (Modern music or rock concerts, which attract enormous audiences and have no institutional support, are very successful in terms of patronage and financial returns.) There is also often a third party involved besides the artist/provider and the client/consumer, in the form of the patron or backer, commonly a public funding authority.

Where the evaluation is formative, the artist/provider checks progress against initial objectives and

also uses the normative approach to compare or contrast with similar programs. Funding authorities may also use a formative evaluation during the course of a program to check on progress, especially where funding is by instalments. They are doubtless also aware of normative issues.

A summative evaluation towards the end of a program is a useful learning experience for the artist/provider. This should take account of the achievement of initial objectives, the number involved in service delivery, the number and quality of client/consumers, the quality of the artistic service provided in relation to other similar projects (Perhaps in other places and times).

The patron/backer must cover similar aspects in its final evaluation, checking on client/consumer participation and satisfaction, but it must also explore the relationship between quality and cost. It should use a number of devices, including sampling, guided comment, questionnaires and interviews.

On the rare occasions where the patron/backer largely takes on the role of artist/provider, then it is common sense and good practice to commission a disinterested evaluator, otherwise there is grave danger that the evaluation will be warped or compromised.

For example, The Australia Council's WritersCentre/State Literature Officer program was instigated and set up by its Literature Board, which continues to dictate policy to the local committees. There are no competing applicants and the evaluations seem to have been done, in-house, by officers of the Board. I have been unable to find a record of any devices used to gauge efficiency, nor am I aware of any surveys in Western Australia. Comparative studies must show that there are many writers organisations doing as good a job, or better, in servicing writers on little or no support from the Board. Triennial funding of \$270,500 per annum, presumably with a matching amount from the states, has been committed, yet I am unaware of any public document justifying it. There is a blazing discrepancy between WA's and SA's allocations, despite the fact that they have comparable populations, and the claims of Western Australia's existing writers centres have been completely ignored. The Board has compromised its position badly in this case.

Where disbursements are large, the process complex, or the funding authority is entangled in the project, it is good policy to seek outside, expert evaluation.

Evaluation may be usefully built into a program. The Fellowship of Writers in Western Australia organised writers tours over that vast state for many years, attempting to maintain a spread of services and a variety of disciplines to each region. Part of each presentation was a simple questionnaire to be filled in by participants. This was very useful, not only in forming a summative evaluation of the program, but also in shaping the next years project.

Evaluation requires the application of devices in an organised manner, requiring the development of functionaries or organisations who acquire expertise, somewhat like financial auditors. Because their speciality is in the evaluation process, they are less influenced by the possibly covert agenda of their subject. They have little interest in finding things good or otherwise) to suit such an agenda and therefore provide a more accurate picture.

I have been involved in the past in educational evaluation, where programs were evaluated for their education content, sometimes by teams and sometimes by academics with skills in the area and no relation to the subject project. (In one case, there was a linking of art and education when Peter Botsman was charged with looking into the academic preparation of artists.)

Education evaluation could provide some useful models for the arts.

NEXT ISSUE, AN ARTICLE ON SELF PUBLISHING

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BLIMPS AND BLIPS - GOVERNMENTS FOR AND AGAINST THE ARTS

(Imagine if you will, a timeless, panelled interior, real offices with grimy glass panels and clerks scratching away with dip pens at high wooden desks. The boardroom is sumptuously decorated with pictures of past war heroes and notable battles, dominated by the portrait of queen Victoria in her mature years. The chairs have cracked leather upholstery and there is a water jug and glasses on the polished wooden table. An ornate sideboard bears the silver and the port.

(CONSIDERTED CRITIQUES OF POLICIES ARE WELCOME HERE. ANON WHISTLEBLOWERS ARE ESPECIALLY WELCOME.)

Amble, Ramble, A Clayton's Preamble

The artist formerly known as Honest John, in taking on the self-appointed task of writing the preamble to the proposed new constitution has achieved generally fulsome comment and revealed not only a lack of skill but also a lack of capacity to understand the issues.

Paul Kelly of The Australian, not noted for any leftish bias, has lauded a version written by Gareth Evans and damned John Howard's effort as a "A preamble too bad to be true", and, "John Howard has delivered a dud." This is the general theme of most reputable writers and commentators on the Australian political scene.

Why did the prime minister take on the task of writing a preamble for a constitution for a republic which he opposes and will do his best to see is never created? Why did he seek the advice of poet, Les Murray, and then apparently ignore it? Why did he flout the wishes of the constitutional convention which was his creation?

His place in Australian history as a talented and tenacious politician is assured, but in a fit of hubris, in which it has been suggested by one critic that he hoped to display that he has the oratory of Menzies and the writing skills of Churchill, John Howard has managed to call into question his own intellectual capacity, and through their endorsement, that of his cabinet. There have been worrying signs before when an unnecessarily nasty spin has been put on policies that have not been without merit, such as the work for the dole scheme. But in this display of lack of understanding, statesmanship, form and intelligence, prime minister and cabinet deserve to be thought of as being both thick and nasty, which does not augur well for their future or ours.

In his lumpy, pretentious piece of writing, John Howard has revealed something about himself.

The Draft Preamble (169 wds)

With hope in God, the Commonwealth of Australia is constituted by the equal sovereignty of all its citizens.

The Australian nation is woven together of people from many ancestries and arrivals.

Our vast island continent has helped to shape the destiny of our Commonwealth and the

spirit of its people.

Since time immemorial our land has been inhabited by Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, who are honoured for their ancient and continuing cultures.

In every generation immigrants have brought great enrichment to our nation's life.

Australians are free to be proud of their country and heritage, free to realise themselves as individuals, and free to pursue their hopes and ideals. We value excellence as well as fairness, independence as dearly as mateship.

Australia's democratic and federal system of government exists under law to preserve and protect all Australians in an equal dignity which may never be infringed by prejudice or fashion or ideology nor invoked against achievement.

In this spirit we, the Australian people, commit ourselves to this Constitution.

Labor's proposed preamble (89 wds)

Having come together in 1901 as a Federation under the Crown,
relying on the blessing of Almighty God, and
The Commonwealth of Australia being now a sovereign democracy,
our united people drawn from nations across the globe,

We the people of Australia
Proud of our diversity
Loving our unique and ancient land
Recognising indigenous Australians as the original occupants
and custodians of our land
Believing in freedom and equality, and
Embracing democracy and the rule of law
Commit ourselves to this our Constitution.

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Goliardys - Saucy little stories or verse.

(WE HAD CONSIDERED PUBLISHING EXCERPTS FROM THE CLASSIC PORN OF OUR YOUTH, PENGUIN'S *THE GOLDEN ASS* BY APULIUS, TRANSLATED BY ROBERT GRAVES. HOWEVER, WE BAULKED AT TRACKING DOWN THE COPYRIGHT AND HAVE TAKEN AN EDITORIAL DECISION TO AWAIT WRITERS' INITIATIVES.)

Joker

Some funnies from the prolific N.Anon

THE FOLLOWING ARE ALL QUOTES FROM 11 YEAR OLDS' SCIENCE EXAMS:

"Water is composed of two gins, Oxygin and Hydrogin. Oxygin is pure gin.
Hydrogin is gin and water."

"When you breathe, you inspire. When you do not breathe, you expire."

"H₂O is hot water, and CO₂ is cold water."

"To collect fumes of sulphur, hold down a deacon over a flame in a test tube"

"When you smell an odourless gas, it is probably carbon monoxide"

"Three kinds of blood vessels are arteries, vanes, and caterpillars."

"Blood flows down one leg and up the other."

"Respiration is composed of two acts, first inspiration, & then expectoration."

"The moon is a planet just like the earth, only it is even deader"

"Dew is formed on leaves when the sun shines down on them and makes them
perspire."

"A super-saturated solution is one that holds more than it can hold."

"Mushrooms always grow in damp places and so they look like umbrellas."

"The body consists of three parts - the brainium, the borax and the

abominable cavity. The brainium contains the brain, the borax contains the heart and lungs, and the abominable cavity contains the bowels, of which there are five - a, e, i, o and u."

"Momentum: What you give a person when they are going away."

"Planet: A body of earth surrounded by sky."

"Rhubarb: a kind of celery gone bloodshot."

"Vacuum: A large, empty space where the pope lives."

"Before giving a blood transfusion, find out if the blood is affirmative or negative."

"To remove dust from the eye, pull the eye down over the nose."

"For a nosebleed: put the nose much lower than the body until the heart stops."

"For drowning: climb on top of the person and move up and down to make Artificial Perspiration."

"For Fainting: Rub the person's chest or, if a lady, rub her arm above the hand instead. Or put the head between the knees of the nearest medical doctor."

"For dog bite: put the dog away for several days. If he has not recovered, then kill it."

"For asphyxiation: Apply artificial respiration until the patient is dead."

"To prevent contraception: wear a condominium."

"For head cold: use an agonizer to spray the nose until it drops in your throat."

"To keep milk from turning sour: keep it in the cow."

"The pistol of a flower is its only protection against insects."

"The alimentary canal is located in the northern part of Indiana."

"The skeleton is what is left after the insides have been taken out and the outsides have been taken off. The purpose of the skeleton is something to hitch meat to."

"A permanent set of teeth consists of eight canines, eight cuspids, two molars and eight cuspidors."

"The tides are a fight between the Earth and Moon. All water tends towards the moon, because there is no water in the moon, and nature abhors a vacuum. I forget where the sun joins in the fight"

"A fossil is an extinct animal. The older it is, the more extinct it is."

"Equator: A managerie lion running around the Earth through Africa."
(imaginary line???)

"Germinate: To become a naturalized German."

"Litter: A nest of young puppies."

"Magnet: Something you find crawling all over a dead cat." (maggot???)

And Finally ...

"Artificial insemination is when the farmer does it to the cow instead of the bull."

=====

The following are actual statements made during court cases:

Judge: I know you, don't I?

Defendant: Uh, yes.

Judge: All right, tell me, how do I know you?

Defendant: Judge, do I have to tell you?

Judge: Of course, you might be obstructing justice not to tell me.

Defendant: Okay. I was your bookie.

>From a defendant representing himself...

Defendant: Did you get a good look at me when I stole your purse?

Victim: Yes, I saw you clearly. You are the one who stole my purse.

Defendant: I should have shot you while I had the chance.

Judge: The charge here is theft of frozen chickens. Are you the defendant?

Defendant: No, sir, I'm the guy who stole the chickens.

Lawyer: How do you feel about defense attorneys?

Juror: I think they should all be drowned at birth.

Lawyer: Well, then, you are obviously biased for the prosecution.

Juror: That's not true. I think prosecutors should be drowned at birth too.

Lawyer questioning his client on the witness stand...

Plaintiff's Lawyer: What doctor treated you for the injuries you sustained while at work?

Plaintiff: Dr. J.

Plaintiff's Lawyer: And what kind of physician is Dr. J?

Plaintiff: Well, I'm not sure, but I remember that you said he was a good plaintiff's doctor.

Judge: Is there any reason you could not serve as a juror in this case?

Juror: I don't want to be away from my job that long.

Judge: Can't they do without you at work?

Juror: Yes, but I don't want them to know it.

Lawyer: Tell us about the fight.

Witness: I didn't see no fight.

Lawyer: Well, tell us what you did see.

Witness: I went to a dance at the Turner house, and as the men swung around and changed partners, they would slap each other, and one fellow hit harder than the other one liked, and so the other one hit back and somebody pulled a knife and someone else drew a six-shooter and another guy came up with a rifle that had been hidden under a bed, and the air was filled with yelling and smoke and bullets.

Lawyer: You, too were shot in the fracas?

Witness: No sir, I was shot midway between the fracas and the navel.

Defendant: Judge, I want you to appoint me another lawyer.

Judge: And why is that?

Defendant: Because the Public Defender isn't interested in my case.

Judge (to Public Defender): Do you have any comments on the defendant's motion?

Public Defender: I'm sorry, Your Honor. I wasn't listening.

Judge: Please identify yourself for the record.

Defendant: Colonel Ebenezer Jackson.

Judge: What does the "Colonel" stand for?

Defendant: Well, it's kinda like the "Honorable" in front of your name. Not a damn thing.

Judge: You are charged with habitual drunkenness. Have you anything to say in your defense?

Defendant: Habitual thirstiness?

Defendant (after being sentenced to 90 days in jail): Can I address the court?

Judge: Of course.

Defendant: If I called you a son of a b***h, what would you do?

Judge: I'd hold you in contempt and assess an additional five days in jail.

Defendant: What if I thought you were a son of a b***h?

Judge: I can't do anything about that. There's no law against thinking.

Defendant: In that case, I think you're a son of a b***h.

=====

And from David Woodward in the USA, a regular browser of ISANAnet:

Speaking of "technologically challenged ... it's hard to believe certain people survive to adulthood!!!

I saw a lady at work today putting a credit card into her floppy drive and pulling it out very quickly. I inquired as to what she was doing and she said she was shopping on the internet, and they asked for a credit card number, so she was using the ATM "thingy".

+++++

I worked with an individual who plugged their power strip back into itself and for the life of them could not understand why their computer would not turn on.

+++++

1st Person "Do you know anything about this fax-machine?"

2nd Person "A little. What's wrong?"

1st Person "Well, I sent a fax, and the recipient called back to say all she received was a cover-sheet and a blank page. I tried it again, and the same thing happened."

2nd Person "How did you load the sheet?"

1st Person "It's a pretty sensitive memo, and I didn't want anyone else to read it by accident, so I folded it so only the recipient would open it and read it."

+++++

I recently saw a distraught young lady weeping beside her car. "Do you need some help?" I asked. She replied, "I knew I should have replaced the battery in this remote door unlocker. Now I can't get into my car. "Do you

think they (pointing to a distant convenience store) would have a battery for this?"

"Hmmm, I dunno. Do you have an alarm, too?" I asked. "No, just this remote 'thingy,'" she answered, handing it and the car keys to me. As I took the key and manually unlocked the door, I replied, "Why don't you drive over there and check about the batteries...it's a long walk."

+++++

Tech Support "What does the screen say now.."

Person "It says, 'Hit ENTER when ready'."

Tech Support "Well?"

Person "How do I know when it's ready?"

+++++

Several years ago we had an intern who was none too swift. One day he was typing and turned to a secretary and said, "I'm almost out of typing paper.

What do I do?"

"Just use copier machine paper," she told him.

With that, the intern took his last remaining blank piece of paper, put it on the photocopier and proceeded to make five blank copies.

+++++

One of our servers crashed. I was watching our new system administrator

trying to restore it. He inserted a CD and needed to type a path name to a directory named "i386". He started to type it and paused, asking me "Where's the key for that line thing?"

I asked what he was talking about, and he said, "You know, that one that looks like an upside-down exclamation mark." I replied, "You mean the letter "i"?" and he said, "Yeah, that's it!"

+++++

I was in a car dealership a while ago when a large new motor home was towed into the garage. The front of the vehicle was in dire need of repair and the whole thing generally looked like an extra in "Twister". I asked the manager what had happened. He told me that the driver had set the cruise control, then went in back to make a sandwich.

+++++

And, one addition from a friend: She's been doing temp work at various offices. At one place she became the resident expert on the photocopy machine. One day there was a big backup. She went over to help and found that no one knew how to stop the copier from "punching" three holes down the side of each copy. She opened the paper tray, removed the three-hole paper and solved the problem.

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Publishing News - the rise, fall, amalgamation and gossip about hard copy & electronic presses

Opinion - readers views and feedback, especially with a literary flavour.

What about some flaming arrows for editors or arts policy?

What's wrong with rhyming verse? What's right with rhyming verse?

Are verbs as good as they used to be?

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Contacts - URL's to visit on the net

Andrew and Miles Burke have a site which is a gateway to other useful links and contains a great deal of useful information at [lit.bam](#)

[Australian links](#) is a homely site with a lot of useful information.

[The Australia Council](#) has useful links to other arts agencies but be prepared to wait as graphics mount.

[The Ozlit site](#) is massively comprehensive, with a huge database of Australian writers, but it is very, very slow.

[Fremantle Arts Centre Press](#) has a clear and simple site which tells all you need to know without distracting bells and whistles.

Prolific and successful writer, [Sherry-Anne Jacobs](#), has a prize-winning web site which is well worth a look. It is a model of clarity with speedy graphics.

[Web Wombat](#) is a recommended search engine for Australia.

Inklings: newsletter for writers. This excellent Canadian site emphasises technical aspects of writing, especially targeting and marketing. It's worth a look at [inkspot.com/inklings/](#)

The QUOTATIONS HOME PAGE, contains a mass of information at :
<http://www.geocities.com/~spanoudi/quote.html>

FREE NETSCAPE

For those who have had irritation and frustration in trying to download Netscape Communicator 4.5, try

<http://people.netscape.com/olcen>

Mac users can get direct to the business area without interrogation with

<ftp://ftp6.netscape.com/pub/communicator/4.5/english/mac/smartupdate/>

It takes about two hours to get all the goodies, and this time, my new software did not gobble up address book, list of bookmarks and correspondence.

COOL RELIEF

If you are tired of slaving over a hot computer in a heat wave, or like looking at penguins, snow, ice or old huts, for instant mental relief visit Australia's Antarctic stations at

<http://www.antdiv.gov.au/>

Australian Writers Organisations On-line e-mail Addresses: (Please contribute any others that you would like to have listed.)

Australian Society of Authors <asa@asauthors.org.au>

Australian Writers Guild <awgsyd@ozemail.com.au>

(THESE TWO ARE THE PROFESSIONAL AND "UNION" ORGANISATIONS FOR WRITERS OF BOOKS AND SCRIPT, RESPECTIVELY. THEIR FEES ARE HIGH AND THEY MAINLY CATER FOR WRITERS WHO ARE GENERATING INCOME FROM THEIR CRAFT.)

Society of Women Writers (WA) <trudy@iinet.net.au>

Fellowship of Australian Writers (WA writers centre) <fawwa@iinet.net.au>

Peter Cowan Writers Centre (WA writers centre) <nwacowan@iinet.net.au>

New South Wales Writers Centre <nswwc@ozemail.com.au>

Queensland Writers Centre <qldwriters@peg.apc.org>

South Australian Writers Centre <writers@eastend.com.au>

Victorian Writers Centre <writers@vicnet.net.au>

New Zealand Writers Organisations On-line e-mail Addresses:

New Zealand Society of Authors <nzsa@arachna.co.nz> (The Society apparently includes the New

Zealand PEN and has six branches.)

New Zealand Author<nza@clear.net.nz> (This the nzsa magazine.)

(Home Page URLs, if available, may often be found by re-jigging the e-mail address:
http://www.(address after @)/~(address before @)/
for example, pixpress@ iinet.net.au becomes http://www.iinet.net.au/~pixpress/)

Contributors

(Published contributors are invited to contribute their details to this section.)

Helen Jean Hagemann, is a student of creative writing at Edith Cowan University as well as a writer.

Diane Beckingham is a well-known West Australian writer and teacher.

Jim Cornish is a writer of whimsical (and other) poems and co-author of a chapbook with Fran Sbrocchi, an accomplished and prolific writer and poet.

Glen Phillips is Associate Professor of English Studies at Edith Cowan University.

Don Grant was formerly Associate Professor and Head of the School of Communications at Curtin University.

"Shen" practices medicine and poetry in Adelaide.

N.Anon has an ancient and honourable lineage. It is, of course, Net Anon!

Advertisements.



"Sappho's Delight", poems by Walter Vivian

\$12.95 posted.

Perth Readers - Book Launch

Glen Phillips SPRING BURNING: New and Selected Poems 1967-1997

Time: 6pm Date: Tuesday 25th of May

Place: Staffroom, Building 13, Mt Lawley Campus of Edith Cowan University, Cnr of Alexander Drive and Bradford St, Mt Lawley.

Publisher: Folio/Salt (John Kinsella)

Brillig

edited by Roland Leach

Brillig is a brilliant little magazine for secondary students. In quality and sophistication, it displays work rivalling much to be found in adult literary magazines. The slithy toves produce two issues per year.

Subscription is \$10.00 per annum or \$5.00 singly from Blackwatch, Presbyterian Ladies College, Box 126, COTTESLOE WA 6011.

Endeavour: A Photographic Journey

Richard Polden

In October 1996, photographer Richard Polden set off on an extraordinary adventure. Together with an international crew of men and women, he sailed from Fremantle, Western Australia, bound for London aboard the magnificent Endeavour replica. Two hundred and twenty-six years before, Cook sailed a similar route, limping home with a sick crew and a battered ship. By contrast the Endeavour replica's voyage was the start of her planned four year journey around the world. In dramatic detail, these photographs from the voyage capture the very essence of sailing on Endeavour.

FACP. Published in association with Sunday Times, Perth, on 18 March 1998

ISBN 1 86368 227 9 \$24.95

Not a Proper Shop

Walter Vivian

This nostalgic book of poems would make an ideal gift for a west coaster exiled overseas or interstate. See reviews on PixelPress page. Available at Dymocks Floreat, Dymocks Claremont, Lane Bookshop Claremont, Collins Cottesloe, Bookcaffe Swanbourne and other booksellers.

ISBN 0-9587350-0-X \$10.00

Sudden Alchemy

The winning poems from the prestigious annual Tom Collins Poetry Prize have been compiled and published in this work.

\$24.95 from booksellers or FAWWA

Dancing On The Freeway

By Ethel Webb Bundell (LMP - Aus \$15.00)

Ethel Webb Bundell spins a tale of heartbreak and despair, which may be too familiar for some in *Dancing On The Freeway*. The story centres around Vee, who is coming to terms with the tragic loss, two years earlier, of her husband and baby son. She finds a dangerous kind of solace in the arms of Grant, who was once a brilliant journalist, but is now reduced to a pathetic drunk.

The issue of women who love too much is explored throughout, as Vee gathers her strength to begin the long awaited journey back to reality. A place long since vacated by Grant, who is more or less, in constant hallucinatory state as the story progresses.

In most films, or any other medium which tries depicting alcoholism, the worst case scenario for a drunk is to have him or her (mostly Him) driving down the street, and having a fender bender with another vehicle. This person's alcohol problem is then amazingly cured by this incident, or a few harsh words from loved ones. Bundell therefore, strives to expose the side of alcoholism, unknown to many, a side which exemplifies how low "rock bottom" can be for sufferers of this disease. As she stated in the novel's introductory note, "I wrote this because, at the time, I felt the literature and information about alcoholism was far too hopeful.

Extremely well written, Bundell's story gives the reader's heart a good tugging with some wry humour injected along the way.

Chi Tran in New Readers World Book Reviews.

E&OE. IN THIS CASE, ERRORS AND OMISSIONS EXPECTED. IF WRITERS DETECT THAT WE HAVE SINNED IN DISPLAYING THEIR WORK, THEY ARE INVITED TO E-MAIL CORRECTIONS, IN THE KINDEST POSSIBLE TERMS, AND CORRECTIONS WILL BE MADE FORTHWITH.

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