

Annual Branch Reports - AGM 2015

In the following order:

- Otago Southland
- Canterbury
- Yop of the South
- Wellington
- Central Districts
- Hamilton
- Auckland
- Northland

Otago / Southland

The past twelve months have been busy for the branch with the introduction of some new initiatives and the bidding and successful endorsement of Dunedin as a UNESCO City of Literature.

Dunedin - City of Literature

In November last year, Dunedin was designated a UNESCO City of Literature. Mayor of Dunedin, Dave Cull says: "This announcement puts our city on the world map as a first-class literary city. We keep honourable company; other cities bestowed with City of Literature status include Edinburgh, Dublin, Iowa City, Melbourne, Reykjavik, Norwich and Krakow."

Dunedin is one of four newly designated Cities of Literature – the other three being Granada (Spain), Heidelberg (Germany) and Prague (Czech Republic).

A number of our members were involved in planning and submitting the bid to UNESCO and the branch in represented at all City of Literature Stakeholder events.

Writers Salons

In April we held our first Writers Salon at the Thistle Cafe & Bar. The format of the Salons includes four writers across different genres who read for fifteen minutes each with a ten minute break in between. There are few rules for the Writers Salon, anyone can come, but only members of NZSA are able to read.

Feedback from the evening was most enthusiastic – people loved the atmosphere, the readings and the camaraderie. We decided to schedule Writers Salons on the second Monday of the month, running March to November.

This will be mentioned later, but it is pleasing that the organisers of the Dunedin Writers & Readers Festival plan to close with our May Salon. Many thanks to them for the vote of confidence.

Dunedin Writers & Readers Festival and the NZSA

The first Dunedin Writers & Readers Festival ran in May and was a great success. A number of our members were on the programme. The Festival is again scheduled for

May this year and with almost double the number of sessions last year, it promises to be entertaining and informative.

Included this year is the **Janet Frame Memorial Lecture**, which will be delivered by Daphne de Jong, current President of Honour of NZSA. Daphne's visit to Dunedin is funded by The Otago Southland branch. These costs will be offset to some degree by income from the Romance Writers' workshop.

On both a National and branch level, the NZSA is involved in the Festival this year. Here are three events which are either sponsored or run by us.

Our thanks to UBS who have agreed to sell tickets to the Romance Writers Workshop.

Here are the specific NZSA events:

DWRF LITERARY LUNCH SERIES: The Janet Frame Memorial Lecture

Thursday 7 May, 12noon–1pm Dunningham Suite, Dunedin Public Library, no bookings required, FREE

Daphne Clair de Jong, current President of Honour of the New Zealand Society of Authors, will deliver the 2015 Janet Frame Memorial Lecture. She is best-known here and internationally for her top-selling romantic novels which she has written under the pen names of Daphne Clair and Laurey Bright. *Supported by the New Zealand Society of Authors.*

Love in the Afternoon. Romance Writers' Workshop with Daphne de Jong

Thursday 7 May, 3pm–5pm Dunningham Suite, Dunedin Public Library, Tickets from UBS Otago, www.unibooks.co.nz, \$30

Successful in New Zealand, North America and the United Kingdom, Daphne de Jong's romance novels have won her both acclaim and income. Join Daphne for this workshop, kindly sponsored by the New Zealand Society of Authors, and learn some

Sunday 10 May, 6pm, Thistle Café & Bar, Octagon, Meal/refreshments own cost, Readings FREE

The New Zealand Society of Authors (Otago/Southland) initiated a successful and entertaining Writers' Salon series during 2014. NZSA has generously agreed to host a special 'Sunday Salon' to help wrap up this year's DWRF festival. Come along and listen to a range of emerging local talent, each with their own unique voice. The NZSA do a fabulous job advocating for and supporting new writers. A wonderful, social way to bring the festival to a close.

Delegate to National Council

In June our National Delegate Karen Trebilcock resigned the position. Gay Buckingham stepped in to cover the period until this year's Annual General Meeting. Gay is stepping down as of today and a call has been made for nominations to the position. To date there have been no nominations.

On behalf of the branch, we thank Karen and Gay for their contributions.

The Peter and Dianne Beatson Fellowship

Diane Brown was awarded the Fellowship for 2014 and Emma Neale for 2015. Sue Wootton and Maxine Alterio were shortlisted (2015). Congratulations to you all.

This year it is our turn to judge the Fellowship. (Nominations for panellists can be lodged with me prior to May 30.)

'Write On' Radio show

Once again Vanda Symon has championed the work of writers with her monthly show on Access Radio, Dunedin. View the programme and listen to podcasts here: <http://www.accessradio.org/public/programme.php?uid=1217832482-142>

Burns Fellowship Meeting

Our May meeting (again at The Thistle) involved a panel discussion about applying for the Robert Burns Fellowship at the University of Otago. Past Burns Fellows Majella Cullinane (2014), David Howard (2013), and Paddy Richardson (1997) talked of their experiences, gave advice and answered questions.

Poetry Day

Sue Wootton organised our highly successful Poetry Day event (Friday 22 August) in the Dunningham Suite of the Dunedin Library. Readers were Vincent O'Sullivan, Emma Neale, Helen Rickerby and Owen Marshall, as well as the winners and highly commended poets from the Secondary School competition (which attracted 51 entries). Our thanks to Bronwyn Gibb from University Book Shop for helping to manage the administration, and ArtsNet's Doug Lilly (arts.net.nz) who donated his time and skills to build the website and prepare a press release.

We also spent a pleasant evening in conversation with Helen Rickerby at The Thistle on Thursday August 21.

Poetry Day 2015 will be Friday, August 28.

September Seminar

In September we ran a full day self-publishing seminar under the banner - Do you write?

MC Beverly Martens kept speakers and Q&A sessions on track as Philip Temple, Jackie Ballantyne and Rachel Stedman shared their experience of self-publishing – the good and the bad - with 35 eager writers. The day was so successful that we have decided to run another September Seminar this year.

Smashwords Presentation

Jim Azevedo, Marketing Manager of Smashwords – Ebooks for independent authors - presented a seminar over two days (September 12 & 13). Our branch joined forces with Dunedin Writers Workshop to host this event.

Courage Day

In November we marked Courage Day by printing and distributing bookmarks explaining the origins and meaning of the International Day of the Imprisoned Writer. Below are the words included on the bookmarks.

James Courage, 1903 –1963

James Courage is best known for his short stories and for the seven novels he wrote between 1948 and 1961. Despite living in England from the end of his secondary schooling until his death, New Zealand provided the setting for his most successful writing. Courage also took an active interest in the New Zealand literary scene, meeting and corresponding with many of its most prominent figures. His fiction reworks a variety of autobiographical scenarios, ranging from an early interest in the domestic relationships and specific New Zealand settings of his childhood, through to his later concerns with mental illness and its treatment, and homosexuality.

Philip Steer Kōtare 7, no. 2 (2008), p. 226 I may not agree with what you say but I will defend to the death your right to say it

Voltaire

Courage Day is the New Zealand name for **The International Day of the Imprisoned Writer**, which is celebrated throughout the world on November 15. The intention of the day is to recognise and support writers who resist repression of the basic human right to freedom of expression and who stand up to attacks made against their right to impart information. www.authors.org.nz

If other branches would like to print and distribute bookmarks, feel free to use these words.

Book Launches by members:

Out of Shape by **Sue Wootton**

Born to a Red-Headed Woman by **Kay McKenzie-Cooke**

Charged With Man's Laughter by **Kath Beattie**

The Mantis (Ebook) by **Philip Temple**

Edwin's Egg and other poetic novellas by **Cilla McQueen**

Swimming in the Dark by **Paddy Richardson**

MiStory by **Philip Temple**

The Silver Gaucho by **Jackie Ballantyne**

Albatross (Ebook) by **Carolyn McCurdie**

Reach by **Laurence Fearnley**

Kindness and Lies by **Lisa Scott**

JAAM 2014 *edition Shorelines* – edited by **Sue Wootton**

Trouble – a chapbook of poems by **Jenny Powell**

Kitchens: The New Zealand Kitchen in the 20th Century- by **Helen Leach**

Parrallel - poetry and magic by **Jillian Sullivan**

Inner Fire – by **Rachel Stedman**

Ice Escape (Ebook) by **Beatrice Hale**

Ruth Arnison launched the 25th edition of *Poems in the Waiting Room*.

Also: J & K Rolling Whistle Stop Tour – **Jenny Powell** and **Kay McKenzie Cooke** toured the region with poetry performance.

We finished 2014 with a picnic party up in the attic of the University Book Shop and we began 2015 with another picnic – this time, on a glorious blue-sky day we picnicked in the gardens of Olveston Historic Home. Afterwards we played croquet on the grass.

Jackie Ballantyne

Chair

NZSA Canterbury Branch

Kia ora tatou,

Canterbury has been active throughout the year with our monthly get together/lunch well supported at the Christchurch South Library and Learning Centre. The lunch follows on from our monthly committee meeting and gives a chance for members to catch up on what the committee is doing. We also go around all attendees letting others know any snags or successes with our writing over the last month.

Our bi-monthly Book Buzz events are doing well with the second event held on the 4th of July 2014. These occur on the first Friday evening of every second month and are becoming popular. The first part of the evening is an “open mic” section where members, on a first come, first served basis, sign up for a five minute reading of their own work. The diversity and scope of work and the talent of our local writers is encouraged and supported. Following a potluck tea the second part of the evening gives three authors 20 minutes each to launch their new books. We have had a wide range of launches including Jenny Howarth with “The Road’s the Mode”, a history of the trucking industry in NZ, Karen Zelas’ small lovely volume of poetry, “Feather’s Unfettered”, and a good Kiwi Bloke, Phil Walsh with “Fur, Fish and Phantom Reds”, Jenny Barrer’s new book and Kathleen Gallagher’s family history, “The Storys of Abdy Farm”.

We held a packed out seminar with Jim Azevedo, the Marketing Director for Smashwords on 20 August 2014. We also held a half day workshop for 30 participants with Jill Worrall. We successfully – with the help of head office - received a grant to organise our annual free weekend October 2014. The two day programme included 11 writers running workshops and over 150 attendees.

Following the successful workshops in 2014, we are running three all day writers workshops during 2015. Jo Bailey organised Kathryn Burnett to come from Auckland to run two writing workshops – one on creative writing and one on scriptwriting on Saturday 28 March. Bronwen Jones is currently organising a full day writing workshop to be run by James George on Saturday 27 June. We are currently organising the annual last weekend in October 2015 workshops. People are welcome to attend from throughout the country – please feel free to join us.

Helen Mongillo has set up a Childrens Writers Group Hub which now meets monthly at the South Library. Jenny Howarth, Kathleen Gallagher and Jo Bailey are involved in setting up an Indie Writers Hub which will meet monthly – to assist writers who are currently and intend to indie publish their work – to make sure it is of high quality and a marketable product and how to market it when produced. On 20 – 22 February 2015 Helen Mongillo organised the first weekend writers retreat at Glen Tunnel which was enjoyed by all attendees. Robyn Gosset is looking at producing a joint Canty branch book on Cats.

We continue to liaise with other writers groups in the city as events arise: - Poetry Wednesday nights, South Island Writers Association, Rachel King and Books and Beyond, and Chinese Writers Association. Books and Beyond held a well organised and brilliantly successful bi-annual five day Christchurch Writers Festival in Central Christchurch at the end of August 2014, which we supported.

Kathleen Gallagher Chair NZSA Canterbury 20 April 2015

Top of the South Branch

The focus of the Top of the South branch committee this year has been on promotion, both of the branch as a whole and the work of our members.

Starting with the branch, in November 2014 we launched our own website. As well as news and information it includes members' profiles, a writers trail, and a page for advertising local services for writers. Some parts of the site are still being developed, but we are very happy with its reception so far. We feel that an online presence is increasingly essential, and we look forward to linking our website with the NZSA head office website when it is updated.

More of a novelty was the QR code which links to the page on our website concerning the Maurice Gee Chair – the chair the branch dedicated to Maurice Gee in 2011. We had the code engraved on a small plaque and attached to an arm of the chair, so that passers-by can easily find out more about it. People have been seen holding their smartphones up to the plaque, so we assume it is being used as we hoped.

Still focussing on publicising the branch, we had leaflets printed describing local activities and contacts, which can be handed out instead of the national office leaflets. The first batch of 200 was widely distributed across the region, and we recently printed a second batch that includes mention of the website.

We decided to try to promote our members' books by putting together a video of book covers, including 45 titles by 36 authors. This enterprise turned out to be a learning curve for us, as we explored possible outlets for our production. The initial YouTube video proved to be of limited use, but a PowerPoint version offers more possibilities. We also discovered the option of single slide advertisements for the branch at venues such as Nelson Airport and local cinemas and theatres, either free or at low cost.

Despite August 2014 not being NZ Book Month nationally, we decided to go ahead with it regionally. We organised a display of books by local authors (non-NZSA members as well as members) in the front window of the Nelson City Council building. There was a great response to this exercise, with 82 titles donated by 41 authors, and we will consider repeating it in 2015.

Our on-going educational programme continued, with talks by Wendy Scott on self-publishing, Paula Browning on copyright, and Jim Azevedo (marketing director of Smashwords) on self-publishing e-books. We also promoted the workshops held in association with the Nelson Arts Festival in October.

Acting on a suggestion made by Jim Azevedo, our branch secretary and national delegate Jean Gorman has been organising "E-Coffee Mornings", informal meetings in Richmond Library where people involved with or interested in e-publishing can share experiences and ask for advice.

The monthly Writers at Lunchtime meetings, which combine a guest speaker with the opportunity to socialise, continue to be popular and have proved an excellent way to attract new members.

The third Writers Retreat was held in Rai Valley in November and featured Carol Ercolano as guest writer. The organisers – Dot Scott and Wendy Knox from the Marlborough sub-branch – have decided to move the dates to avoid conflict with other events, and accordingly the next retreat will be in March 2016.

Our individual members have done well this year. Several have won or been placed in poetry and short story competitions, two have been awarded NZSA mentorships for 2015, and there have been fourteen new books published.

The closing date for the Page & Blackmore Short Story Competition was brought forward this year to 15 April, allowing us to announce the results at the branch AGM on 9 May. We are very grateful to Page & Blackmore Booksellers for their continued sponsorship of this national competition. The winning and shortlisted stories from the 2015 and 2014 competitions, along with the poems that have been displayed in the window of the Nelson Provincial Museum, will be published in an anthology later this year.

Special thanks go to Sally Astridge, who has co-ordinated the competition for the last three years. Sally is standing down from the committee to focus on other commitments, but her place on the committee and as competition co-ordinator is being taken by Sue Perkins.

After two years in the role I am stepping down as chair at the AGM, although I will continue as a member of the committee.

I would like to thank my colleagues for their ongoing hard work, help and support. A new chair will be selected after the AGM.

Chrissie Ward

Chair, Top of the South branch

Wellington Branch

OVERVIEW:

This past year has felt like a very productive one for the Wellington branch. The committee has worked together effectively, with energy and good humour, and the branch meetings have been well attended (some filling our room at the Thistle Inn to bursting), mainly due to the quality of the guest speakers who kindly agreed to share their insights and expertise with our members.

Our meeting to discuss the proposed reforms showed that our members have a real interest in the future of NZSA. They shared their opinions and knowledge in a constructive fashion – and we were very grateful to receive them. It is reassuring to know that our members are engaged with NZSA, and will make the effort to turn up to meetings like these.

We are particularly keen to attract new, enthusiastic young people to be part of NZSA, including the committee, as this is how we believe we will stay relevant. Judging by the new faces at our meetings and our proposed new committee member, we are making headway. We are also attracting members who write in a range of genres, and who are successfully self-publishing – all of which adds new expertise that we can draw on.

We are looking forward to this year!

MEETINGS AND SPEAKERS: A SUMMARY

April: Redmer Yska gave a fascinating talk about the history of Wellington, based on his book *Wellington: Biography of a City*.

June: Paula Browning (CEO of Copyright Licensing New Zealand) spoke on "What Copyright means in 2014."

August: Reforms discussion – robust and productive! We were very pleased by the high attendance and by members' full and frank participation.

October (Nov): Harry Ricketts spoke about poetry and World War One, and Pippa Werry about children's non-fiction and fiction books about World War One. Great evening.

December: Christmas party! Thanks to Pippa and David Werry who hosted, and Chris Else for hosting the auction.

February: Former *Books and Culture* editor of The NZ Listener, Guy Somerset, packed out the room, who came to hear his frank take on book reviewing in New Zealand.

April (May): AGM. Michael Moynahan will give his expert opinion on the future of the NZ book industry.

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

National Flash Fiction Competition: Rebecca Styles, our branch committee member, organised the National Flash Fiction prize giving (in association with NZSA Wellington) at the Central Library Wellington. Mary McCallum, who had co-judged the competition, was guest speaker. Maggie Rainey-Smith was the Wellington regional winner, and Susan Koster was short-listed. We will be hosting this year's prize giving at our June meeting.

The Beatson Fellowship: It was the turn of the Wellington Branch to judge the winner of this year's Beatson Fellowship. Winner, Emma Neale, was officially notified on Nov 7. In the report to Head Office, the judges described Emma's submission as "inventive, joyful and beautifully written".

Courage Day: a small but committed group attended the Courage Day event at the Thistle Inn. It is pleasing to note that one of those writers we talked about, journalist Peter Greste, has now been released.

PEOPLE NEWS:

Branch committee: Maggie Rainey-Smith stepped down as Chair in early 2014, and Frances Cherry was voted into the role, but stepped down due to other commitments. In June 2014, Catherine Robertson was voted in as Chair.

In May 2014, Pippa Werry was elected National Council delegate at the NZSA AGM in Whangarei. She will hold that position for two years.

Our committee is: Catherine Robertson (Chair), Pippa Werry (National Council Delegate and Joint Secretary), Geoff Palmer (Treasurer), Vivienne Ball (Joint Secretary), Maggie Rainey-Smith, Kate Mahony, Frances Cherry, Rosemary Wildblood (also Chair of WWW), Rebecca Styles, Bridget Stocker.

Heather Hapeta is stepping down, and we will propose a new committee member at the AGM, Elizabeth Heritage (<http://elizabethheritage.co.nz/current-portfolio/>)

Obituaries: We were sad to hear of the passing of members Jean Watson, whose amazing work in India was captured in the documentary *Auntie and the Star People*, Pat Rosier, who came to speak at a branch meeting, and Margaret Boon, who shared her husband and member Kevin Boon's enthusiasm for all things Katherine Mansfield-related and helped with Katherine Mansfield walks.

Member successes: Often we do not hear half the news about our members' successes, so we decided the best way to find out what they'd been up to was to ask them. We got a great response that showed our members are busy, versatile and impressively successful. The full list is attached.

WELLINGTON BRANCH MEMBER SUCCESSES

From February/March 2014-April 2015

Introduction:

It's a long list, but we thought it would be great for all the branches to see what NZSA Wellington branch members are achieving – just imagine how long the full NZ list would be!

Catherine Clarke

<p>Awards: Won the Chilean Prize at the 1st Short Story Competition <i>Certámen de Cuento Corto</i>, organised by ALAC and Biblioteca Letras Latinas. The winning stories were published together in both English and Spanish.</p>

Kim Chamberlain

<p>Published:</p>

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Woman to Woman: 1,000 Conversation Starters for Talking about Anything</i> (Jan 2, 2014)• <i>Conversation Starters: 1,000 Creative Ways to Talk to Anyone about Anything</i> (Oct 7, 2014)• And coming out in May: <i>Conversation Starters for Every Grandparent: Tips for Talking to (and with) Your Grandchildren, Your Children,...</i> |
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Frances Cherry

Awards: story short-listed for the Page and Blackmore competition

Published: a short story accepted for the IHC fundraising anthology.

Tracy Farr

Awards

- Awarded inaugural R.A.K. Mason Writers Residency (residency in NZ in Apr 2014)
- Longlisted, Miles Franklin Award 2014 (*The Life and Loves of Lena Gaunt*)
- Shortlisted, WA Premier's Book Award 2014, Fiction Category (*The Life and Loves of Lena Gaunt*)
- Shortlisted, Barbara Jefferis Award 2014 (*The Life and Loves of Lena Gaunt*)
- Awarded CreativeNZ Arts Grant in Sep 2014 round (towards completing a novel)
- Awarded Varuna Second Book Residential Fellowship (residency in Australia in Mar 2015)
- Awarded inaugural Mildura Writers Festival Residency (awarded Mar 2015; residency in Australia in Jul 2015)

Contests:

- Winner, 2014 *Sunday Star-Times* Short Story Award ('Once had me')

Published:

- 'Soundtrack of my life' piece in *Sunday Star-Times* (Aug 2014).
- Radio NZ adaptation of *The Life and Loves of Lena Gaunt*. Adapted by Anna Rogers, produced by Prue Langbein, read by Lorae Parry (12 parts, broadcast Oct-Nov 2014)
- Short story 'Once had me' in *Sunday Star-Times* (Nov 2014)

Appearances, readings:

- Perth Writers Festival Feb 2014 (two sessions; also taught one workshop)
- New Zealand Writers Week Mar 2014 (one session)
- WORD Christchurch Aug 2014 (one session; also PechaKucha listed below)
- And coming up: Auckland Writers Festival May 2015 (one reading session); Mildura Writers Festival Jul 2015 (sessions tbc)
- Mandurah Library, Western Australia (Feb 2014)
- Wairarapa Word, Carterton (Apr 2014)
- 'Waves': PechaKucha presentation, associated with WORD Christchurch (Aug 2014)
- Kilbirnie Library, Wellington, with Fiona Kidman (Oct 2014)

Robin Fleming

Published: *You're telling me!* (Wrights Hill Press) A memoir of her mother, the late Peg Fleming.

Rochelle Forrester

Published: *Sense Perception and Reality: A theory of perceptual relativity, quantum mechanics and the observer dependent universe.* (e-book: October 2014)

Paul Gilbert

Published: Debut novel, *The Sovereign Hand* (Steam Press, August 2014)

Awards: *The Sovereign Hand* shortlisted for "Best Novel", and Paul for "Best Talent" at the Sir Julius Vogel Awards 2015

David Grant

Published: *The Mighty Totara: The Life and Times of Norman Kirk* (March 2014)

Awards: finalist in the 2014 NZ Post Book Awards for general non-fiction.

Appearances: I gave at least six public lectures on Kirk after the book was published.

Lloyd Geering

Published: *From the Big Bang to God* (published both by Steele Roberts NZ and by Polebridge Press in USA.)

Reimagining God- The Faith Journey of a Modern Heretic, a collection of recent lectures (Polebridge Press, USA) .

Awards: *From the Big Bang to God* won the Ashton Wylie Award.

Heather Hapeta

Published: *A Love Letter to Malaysian Borneo; Or can this travel writer be green?* (e-book, Smashwords) *The Virgin Twitcher*: double page article in NZ Listener, April 11th 2015

Anne Ingram

Published: *Lucy Bee & the Secret Gene*, a novel for children (White Gull Press, April 2014)

Wes Lee

Awards:

- First prize in the Grist Chapbook Prize, The University of Huddersfield, UK, for '*Cowboy Genes & Other Stories*' published by Grist Books at the University of Huddersfield, and launched at The Huddersfield Literature Festival, UK.
- Awarded third prize in The Troubadour Poetry Prize, London, UK.
- Shortlisted for The Cork Literary Review Poetry Manuscript Prize, Bradshaw Books, Ireland.
- Shortlisted for The London Magazine's Short Story Prize, London, UK.
- Shortlisted for the Aesthetica Creative Writing Award, Aesthetica Magazine, UK.
- Shortlisted for the Bridport Prize, UK.
- Commended in the New Zealand Poetry Society's annual poetry competition, NZ.
- Longlisted for The National Poetry Competition in the UK.

Published:

- Published in 'Meniscus Literary Journal', Australasian Association of Writing Programs (AAWP), Canberra, Australia.
- Published in 'Poetry d'Amour 2015', Perth, Australia.
- Published in 'HISSAC Winners: The first 10 years', Highlands and Islands Short Story Association, Balintore, Scotland.
- Published in 'Sweet As - Contemporary Short Stories by New Zealanders', Wellington, NZ.
- Published by Blackmail Press, Issue 27, Auckland.
- Published in 'Hildegard of Bingen: Visions & Inspiration', Poetry on the Lake, Wyvern Works, Italy.
- Published in 'Dazzled: The Vice-Chancellor's Poetry Prize Anthology', The University of Canberra, Australia.
- Published in 'The Trouble With Flying & Other Stories', Margaret River Press, Australia.
- Published in 'Westerly', 59, University of Western Australia, WA, Australia.
- Published in 'Take Back Our Sky' The New Zealand Poetry Society, Wellington, NZ.
- Published in 'Landfall', 227, Otago University Press, NZ.
- Published in 'The Sleepers Almanac', No. 9, Sleepers Publishing, Melbourne, Australia

James McNaughton

Published: *New Hokkaido*, debut novel (VUP, Feb 2015)

Kate Mahony

Contests and Awards:

- *Freedom* second placing Takahe Short Story Competition 2014
- Blackmail Press, *Specialist Topic*, October 2014.
- *The Journey*"- honorary mention, Fish Publishing Short Story Competition (Ireland), and publication in 2015 Fish Anthology
- *Regrets* longlisted for Fish Publishing Flash Fiction Competition (Ireland), 2015

Published:

- Sweet As, Contemporary Short Stories by New Zealanders (anthology) published 2014. *My Mother and the UFO*.
- Flash Frontier: *Heroes*, November, 2014, *Life for Us*, February, 2015.
- Easy Bites, Whitireia New Zealand, 2014, *The Marilyn Monroe Moment*.
- The Island Review, *Brothers and Street Performance*, October, 2014.
- Blue Fifth Review, *The Outcome*, Winter Quarterly, February, 2015
- Headland Literary Journal: *Behind the Scrim*, April, 2015

Phillip Mann

Published:

- *The Master of Paxwax*, *The Fall of the Families* and *Pioneers*. Re-edited by students at the Whitireia Publishing Course and re-issued under the new imprint Sargasso Press.
- *The Disestablishment of Paradise* (Victor Gollancz, UK)
- *Sa-Li*, published in *The Curiozeum* collection, Te Papa Press.
- *At Rest...At Last*, a long story (in two parts) published as part of the *Lost in the Museum* collection, published by PhoenixWriters.
- Radio New Zealand (2014) broadcast two of my Christmas short stories: *Come Unto Him All Ye That Labour*, and *Lord of the Forest*.

Appearances:

- With Mandy Hager, one of the guest speakers at a Whitireia book launch in 2014.
- One of the storytellers as part of the Literary Festival at the Embassy Theatre in Wellington. We were given 8 minutes to tell a story based in the idea 'Moving On.'
- Will be speaking and reading from *The D of Paradise* at the forthcoming Auckland Literary Festival.

Bob Marriott

In the Lion's Throat (e-book on Amazon Kindle)

Julia Millen

Appearances:

- Guest Speaker on the subject of 'Research' at Fiona Kidman's Writing Memoir course (July, 2014)
- Co-speaker with Harry Ricketts were at the National Library in an event entitled: *NZ World War I poets and diaries*. Julia Millen spoke about soldiers' diaries held in the Turnbull Library including the 1917 diary of her father, Roy G. Millen, written in the lead up to the Battle of Messines. (July 2014)
- *He Aha Te Utu – The True Cost*. Julia Millen was one of 6 women who created a drama about NZ women in World War I, performed at NZ Parliament on Armistice Day. The group has since performed *He Aha Te Utu – The True Cost* at The Society for Research on Women conference and in other venues (November 2014)

Published:

- *Fair Weather Trampers*: in the NZ bush with the Cock & Bull Tramping Club. Reprinted February 2015.

Eileen Mueller

Awards: *Lost In the Museum*: a science fiction and fantasy YA anthology by Phoenix Writers was awarded two Sir Julius Vogel Awards – Best Professional Artwork and Best Collection. Eileen was a sub-editor on this project.

Published: *The Best of Twisty Christmas Tales (Dec 2014)*. I was one of three editors of this anthology.

Lee Murray

Awards: Won the Sir Julius Vogel Award for Science Fiction and Fantasy writing, Best Novella category for *Cave Fever* (Published in *Regeneration* by Random Static)

Maggie Rainey-Smith

Published:

- A poem in *Essential New Zealand Poems: Facing the Empty Page*, edited by Siobhan Harvey, Harry Ricketts and James Norcliffe (July 2014)
- National Flash Fiction short-list and regional winner with *Shop until you Drop*, 2014
- *The Dawn Parade*, in *Stories for 7 year olds*, Random House (March 2014).
- Essay: *Who is Left*, Landfall (May 2014)
- *Turning the Worms*, in Flash Frontier International Issue 'No Regrets' theme (stories selected by Owen Marshall) (December, 2014)
- *Lonely Planet*, in Flash Frontier, Heroes theme (November 2014)
- A Sestina *Ngawhatu* in the 4th Floor Journal.
- *Polite Footprints*, a short story in the new on-line literary journal Headland (January 2015)
- *Whatever the facts*, book review in Landfall (May, 2015)
- Contract with Makaro Press for the publication of my new novel

Jo Randerson

Play:

I have had my first book of short stories, *The Spit Children*, turned into a full length play and performed at the largest youth theatre in Belgium, the HETPALEIS. Translated into Flemish it played a three week sold out season and had terrific reviews. So I was delighted with that.

Catherine Robertson

Published:

- *The Hiding Places* (Penguin Random House NZ, April 2015), fourth novel
- *May Day* (Penguin Random House NZ, April 2015), free online short story
- Articles and reviews in The NZ Listener
- Review in New Zealand Books

Appearances:

- 'Yarns in Barns' literary debate, June 2014
- The Panel, Radio NZ, various 2014-2015
- Coming up in May, 2015, Auckland Writers Festival, reading and chair of session *Conversation with David Mitchell*.

Apirana Taylor

Published: *The Breathing Tree*, a new book of 40 hitherto unpublished poems (Canterbury University Press)

Appearances: Touring schools in parts of the South Island in early May reading my poetry and telling my stories.

John Terris

Published:

- *September Showdown*, a self-published book about the funny side of politics
- *All Over The World*, a series of illustrated DVDs featuring interviews with WW2 veterans. This was funded with a grant from the Hutt Mana Charitable Trust and is to be available through local libraries.

Philippa Werry

Awards:

- *Anzac Day: the New Zealand story* made the non-fiction shortlist for NZ Post Book Awards for Children and Young Adults 2014 and LIANZA Children's Book Awards 2014, and was on the Storylines Notable Books List 2014 list.
- *Lighthouse family* was also on the Storylines Notable Books list 2014 for junior fiction.

Published:

- *Best Mates*, illustrated by Bob Kerr (New Holland, April 2014)
- *Waitangi Day: the New Zealand story* (New Holland, January 2015)

Central Districts

We had a September meeting at Anna Mackenzie's home on her family farm south of Bridge Pa, Hawkes Bay, and a December meeting at Dorothy Alexander's home in Palmerston North. In the past we have often been able to have the "Christmas" meeting at the Beatsons' Foxton Beach house, but circumstances ruled this out this time around. We have been extremely grateful to Peter Beatson, and for most of that time the late Dianne Beatson, over this long period. This time we were most grateful to Dorothy for her hospitality at relatively short notice.

The memorial book for Dianne Beatson is making good progress towards publication, thanks to the efforts of Joan Rosier Jones and Dorothy Alexander. It has reached the stage of signing a contract with a publisher.

The short story competition went reasonably well, although it would have been good to have had more publicity, and more entries, for all three categories: Open, Secondary School Age (Years 9-13), and Intermediate School Age (Years 7-8). We are grateful to our sponsors, Poppies' Bookshops in Havelock North and New Plymouth, Specsavers in Hawkes Bay, and others. Keith Butler contributed the prize money for the Intermediate category, in honour of his mother. The prize-winning entries in all three categories were pleasingly high in quality.

It is warmly appreciated that this a group of Hawkes Bay members have taken on responsibility for organising the national NZSA annual meeting, on behalf of the branch.

The work Anna Mackenzie has done as the branch's delegate to the National Council is warmly appreciated.

Dr John C. Ross,
Chair, CD Branch

Waikato Writers and Artists: Hamilton Branch

The year (2015) began with the election of new members onto the committee with a slight juggling of duties that saw Tui Allen take over the role of secretary. Guest speaker for the first meeting in February was British born author, Shauna Bickley, who spoke about her writing and the evolution of her knowledge and skills associated with the publishing world. Now living in Auckland, her speciality is described as "romantic suspense" fiction, though her latest novel, *Still Death*, happened to be a murder mystery. She revealed that there exists a substantial market for this type of book with recorded sales of a surprising high quantity happening on a regular basis.

This was followed in March with an address from Steve O'Toole who manages a local printing firm, called Print House. This business caters not just for the printing of books with state of the art technology, but has diversified to include assistance to the writer from book design right through to the finished printed product and beyond.

This all-encompassing approach was elaborated on by our guest speakers the following month that was part of the same firm, a subsidiary division called, The Best Little Bookstore. This section of the firm deals with on-line promotion and marketing, assisting authors and self-publishers in everything from proof-reading, design, ISBN and sales. A visit by the Hamilton Branch to the premises has been organized to witness first-hand the procedures and processes involved.

Other facets of Branch activity saw Scott Bainbridge talk briefly about the progress of the television production of his book on famous New Zealand crime history. "Hurry up and wait" was the phrase Scott used to characterize the speed at which things progress in that world. Julie Thomas saw her second book published by HarperCollins, *Blood Wine and Chocolate*. Both these authors were recommended for the "Significant Writers" list. Peter Blakeborough has also recently published a travel guide called, *A Handbook of Tour Guides in New Zealand* which is selling well while Jeff Taylor's *Hamilton Lake*, is due for a reprint.

Financially the Branch is in good health with attendances at monthly meetings averaging around a dozen or more each time.

Peter Dornauf.

Auckland Branch

A question was raised in the April branch meeting about the awarding of the Janet Frame Memorial Award For Literature, and the meeting voted that a strong letter to be sent to the national office protesting that the award had not gone to a mid-career writer but to a writer who had previously been awarded Te Mata Poet Laureate. We received assurance from the chief executive officer that selection committee considered the qualification criteria before making the award.

The award page on the NZSA website states it is a biennial grant of \$3,000 offered to an author of literary or imaginative fiction, or poetry. The purpose of this award is to support a mid-career or established writer to further a literary career.

Further our guidelines state: Janet Frame herself had benefited from the boost given by similar often-timely financial assistance and professional recognition throughout her long career. Janet Frame was a member of the Society and the recipient of many awards, prizes, grants, fellowships and scholarships, none more well-timed than the New Zealand Society of Authors' (then the NZ PEN Centre) Hubert Church award in 1951 for her first book, *The Lagoon and other stories*. The publicity for this honour convinced her doctors not to carry out a planned lobotomy, which would in all likelihood have ended her literary aspirations.

A simple solution might be to take the term 'mid-career' out of the guidelines (if this is the considered intention) with just something like 'established writer/writer of proven merit'. Then writers would have a clearer sense of where they fit, in relation to the criteria and whether it's worth applying. This would allow the award to go ahead without negative discussion. If in fact it does go to a mid-career writer – because the judges deem it should - rather than someone who has already had a laureate and PM award, then no unrealistic expectations have been engendered.

Outside speakers are an interesting part of the branch meeting, and attract attendance. Members are also keen to have time to present their new books – especially for self-published authors this is an opportunity to promote their work.

Another regular part of the meeting is the PEN report. Each month we have a large empty chair up the front. We nominate a writer, whose case is being represented by PEN International, and the writer is symbolically installed in The Empty Chair and their case explained. We remind our members that PEN is an integral function of the society, and ask for support for the international letter writing campaign.

Auckland branch will again support National Flash Fiction Day by donating a regional prize of annual membership to the NZSA, \$80 towards refreshments, and support at an awards ceremony at Auckland City Libraries. The Flash Fiction competition had drawn strong interest nationally and the branch mostly agreed that the award fell clearly into our aim as a society to encourage and support writers in all fields. On the other hand, there was discussion about how this could set a precedent for use of branch funds. It was suggested that branch support could be used to promote the benefits of the NZSA to flash fiction aficionados.

Auckland branch has on-going discussion about indie publishing and if and how support for indie publishing is a society and/or branch activity. A small branch sub-committee has talked about establishing some sort of certification process as to whether members' indie books measure up to professional standards of production/editing, along the lines of the Romance Writers grading.

It has been suggested that as the new CNZ criteria for literature through to 2020 have been expanded to cover indie publishing/authors that there would be a case, if well-presented, to seek CNZ funding to help pay for this process, primarily the time involved for assessors as with the current assessments/mentoring programmes. It would seem logical perhaps to seek a way to fold new funding into a special branch of the assessment programme.

Auckland has agreed to make a donation towards the upgrade of the national website, if and when required.

Our branch minutes and notices of meeting now follow the design of the national office e-communications for consistency of branding.

Kirsten Warner,
Auckland Branch Chair.

Northland Branch Report

This year started with a very successful national AGM held in Whangarei and we received many compliments on the friendly atmosphere and wonderful environment. Our meetings this year have been spread around Northland with two at Kerikeri, Whangarei and Mangatapere and one each at Dargaville, Rawene and Tapuhi.

The appointment of Daphne de Jong as President of Honour for 2014 was applauded by the branch. Daphne has given years of generous service to up and coming writers and we were privileged to hear the Janet Frame Lecture at our March meeting this year as a practice for Daphne's presentation to the Dunedin Writers & Readers Festival in May.

For Courage Day in November we wrote numerous postcards to writers in prison after the wonderful acknowledgement in the form of a poem from Aran Atabeck of how much letters to officials and the prisoners themselves matter. At the meeting the empty chair was again for Aron, with his poem displayed on it, and we took a photo of that to send to him. Lesley Marshall read out Aran's poem. She also wrote an introduction to Aran's son's email and both this and the poem were published in *The Author* in February.

In February this year we were saddened by the death of our life-member, Neva Clark-McKenna, aged 94. She helped set up Auckland PEN, served as National President and was President of Honour. She recorded a lot of history in the north. While living here Neva was a delightful and active member of our branch and we are left with many memories of her hospitality and acting abilities in the early festivals we held in Kaikohe.

In April the branch held NorthWrite 2015 focusing on self-publishing. This was also our fundraiser for the year with money raised by the sale of second-hand books and a raffle. The organising committee of Kathy Derrick, Lesley Marshall, Maureen Sudlow and Margaret Cahill did a wonderful job setting up two streams of workshops – commercial and whanau. We have since been requested to repeat the workshops in the Hokianga later this year.

The change of emphasis from branch meetings to hubs in areas where the time and distance for travel prevents members meeting up more often is well underway with both writing critique and poetry hubs active in Whangarei, and new hubs starting up in Kerikeri, Dargaville and Kaitaia.

Throughout the year the following members have had successes:

June 2014

Narine Groome: a play *Finding a Voice* staged by the Te Aroha Dramatic Society.

Heather Whelan: articles published in the last four issues of *Motorhomes, Caravans and Destinations* magazine, and in *RV Motorhomes Life Style* magazine.

Maureen Sudlow: a haibun published in the June issue of *Haibun Today*

July

Jac Jenkins: highly commended in the National Flash Fiction Day Competition

Daphne de Jong: shortlisted Whangarei District Libraries Flash Fiction

Phyll Holroyd: three stories published in *More True Tales of Great Barrier*, compiled by The Great Barrier Island History Research Group Inc.

August

Di Menefy: presentation on the history behind her new novel at the launch of Scholastic's *Kiwis at War* series. Susan Brocker's *Riding to War* was launched at the event.

Kathy Derrick: accepted into the University of Edinburgh's Masters of Creative Writing online programme..

Peri Hosking: a good review of his *Millennium* in *NZ Listener* (2–8 August issue).

Anne McDonnell: manuscript for a YA novel was awarded a place on NZSA's assessment programme. She has also had a book published on strokes – *S Day* - with profits going to the Northland branch of the Stroke Foundation

Trish Nicholson: leading workshops in six venues in the Netherlands and UK during September and October as part of a promotional tour for her two latest books on writing craft.

Piet Newland: article about the poetry hub in *The Northern Advocate*. It has a wonderful introduction and some great lines. The writer, Lindy Laird, clearly had fun, and it's an excellent advertisement for the group.

Michelle Elvy : essay *Cross-legged*, based on her travels in Fiji, was published in *Takahe*.

September

Heather Whelan: travel articles published monthly in *Motorhomes, Caravans and Destinations* magazine and an article about walking in the current edition of *Wilderness* magazine.

Maureen Sudlow: poetry published in *Blue Hour, Whispers* and *Blackmail*.

Daphne de Jong: a poem published in the poetry day broadsheet.

Kathy Derrick: short fiction published in Vaughan Gunson's *Take Flight*.

Jac Jenkins: short fiction published in Vaughan Gunson's *Take Flight*.

October

Anne McDonell: a poem in *A Treasury of New Zealand Poetry*.

Zana Bell: book launch for *Fool's Gold* – in Paper Plus in Auckland.

Lisa Taylor: YA novel, *Motive Games*, has gained a finalist position in the 2014 Literary Classics Books Awards. This is an international competition to honour excellence in children's and young adult literature. *Motive Games* was the recipient of a CALEB prize. A standalone sequel is scheduled to launch on November 1st.

Derin Attwood: *Caves of Kirym* is available on Amazon.

Di Menefy: second edition of *Hukerenui in the beginning* out for Hukerenui Districts 125 year school reunion.

November

Piet Nieuwland and his daughter (Rata Gordon, who is being mentored by Paula Green): both have poems in the latest Poetry NZ Yearbook.

Maureen Sudlow: two poems accepted for print anthologies, and a haibun coming out in the next *Fine Line* – NZ Poetry magazine.

Donna Blaber: *Hide and Seek* Book 5 in the Kiwi Critters series was launched on 7 November at Tuatara Design Store, Whangarei.

Michelle Elvy: poem "Moments in Sand" published in *Ika*. Besides editing for *Flash Frontier* and NFFD, Michelle has served as an associate editor for *Flash Fiction International* (W. W. Norton 2015) and guest edited for *Smokelong Quarterly*. She was also on the panel for the inaugural Miles Hughes Achievement Award – an honour indeed, as Miles was a staunch contributor to the indie writing and publishing community and also the 2012 Auckland co-ordinator for NFFD.

December

Maureen Sudlow: book of poetry, *Antipodes*, launched at our December meeting and in Dargaville.

Donna Blaber: *Off to the Beach* was released on December 6th, and her Kiwi Critters books made it into the *Australian Women's Weekly's* top picks of picture books for kids for Christmas.

Connie Atkinson: *The Brotherhood of Purity* written with her brother, has been featured in a full-page interview in *The Northern Advocate*. This book is the winner of two finalist awards: the 2014 International Book Award in the literary novel category, and the 2014 Next Gen Indie Book Award for first novel.

February

Faye Whittaker: announced as a finalist in the 2015 international Bookbzz Prize Writer Competition for her novel, *For a Fee of Two Shillings*.

March

Kate Ballard: her book, *Country Cop 24/7* was launched in Whangarei.

Derin Attwood: book launch for *The Trail to Churnyg* in Whangarei. *The Caves of Kirym* shortlisted for the Sir Julius Vogel Award.

Phyll Holroyd: article published by *New Zealand Memories*.

Lesley Marshall: asked to be mentor for a writer through NZSA, and was the writer's first choice.

She's also mentoring a student through Whitireia Polytechnic this year.

April

Di Menefy: *1915 Wounds of War*, second in the Scholastic series *Kiwis at War* launched at the KiwiNorth Museum. Scholastic have chosen Di as author of the month for their website. *Wounds of War* has made the best seller list for April.

Trish Nicholson: ran a half-day workshop, Writing Your Family History to non-writers at the REAP centre in Kaitia.

Diana Menefy. May 2015.