

Publishers

Worker Writers & Community

The Federation

FEDERATION



...What does
Reading mean
to You? ...

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98

- **Raymond Williams -**
Yorkshire Arts Circus win!
- **National Year of**
Reading
- **Reciprocal**
Membership

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Funded by

THE
ARTS
COUNCIL
OF ENGLAND

The Federation of Worker Writers and Community Publishers

Since 1976 the Fed has established itself as a leading voice of community writing and publishing. Working with and on behalf of our Membership, we have developed our policies so that all who wish to participate are able to do so. Representing people from Mauritius to Merseyside, Wales to Whitechapel, ours is truly an international organisation.

The Fed encourages an inclusive approach to creativity.

Community based writers' groups, publishers and adult literacy organisations network to help people develop their skills. Performance, oral and life history projects enable people to take an active role in their communities. Our co-operative approach values the participation of those who are homeless, survivors or people with different abilities. Groups meet regularly to share skills and offer constructive criticism and support.

The Fed IS its Membership.

Management and strategic planning are directed by representatives elected from member groups. All are encouraged to play an active role in decision making.

We believe that our difference is our strength.

We'd like to hear from you. A list of our current Membership is on page 18. If you belong to a group that is not a Member, contact our Co-ordinator for details.

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Feditorial

In this issue we launch a series of Federation recommendations from the membership to celebrate National Year of Reading. See what you think - and if you think there are some books which haven't been included - write in and tell us.

Some recommended reading to be getting on with is to be found at Yorkshire Arts Circus, this year's Raymond Williams Community Publishing Prizewinners, and runners up.

And with the Fed's emphasis on developing links between groups there's also plenty of scope to produce the recommended reading of the future through our Hand in Hand scheme and Reciprocal Membership.

Please note we have a new e-mail address it is:

fwwcp@cwcom.net

FEATURES

YAC and Raymond Williams Prize	
3	
Hand in Hand Update	4
National Year of Reading...	
- Reading for Life	
4	
- Writers Should Be Readers?	
6	

REVIEWS

Story of a House	12
First Times	13
Writing and Therapy	14
Pictorial Dictionaries	15
Fields of Learning	15
The Tragedy of Education	16
New Books, Training	16
Jim O'Brien	18
FWWCP Members	19

The Raymond Williams Community Publishing Prize

Fed Members Yorkshire Art Circus win!



*L to R Harry Crew, Gary McKeone (ACE), Brian Lewis and Merryn Williams at the
1998 Raymond Williams Community Publishing Prize*

In a spirited acceptance speech, Brian Lewis pointed out the need for greater funding for literature, especially from the Regional Arts Boards, and how much this prize will mean for all those who took part in the production of the book.

Congratulations go to FWWCP members Yorkshire Art Circus for winning the prestigious 1998 Raymond Williams Community Publishing Prize, worth £3,000, with their book "The Story of a House - Askham Grange Women's Open Prison", edited by Harry Crew and Brian Lewis.

Runner up, and awarded £2,000, was "Spirit of Bradford - Poems for the City's Centenary" published by Redbeck Press. Other Fed groups honourably mentioned, were Corridor Press, London Voices and Commonword.

At the award ceremony held at The Arts Council of England offices, the prizes were presented by Merryn Williams, daughter of the late Raymond Williams, who commented on the very high standard of the books submitted.

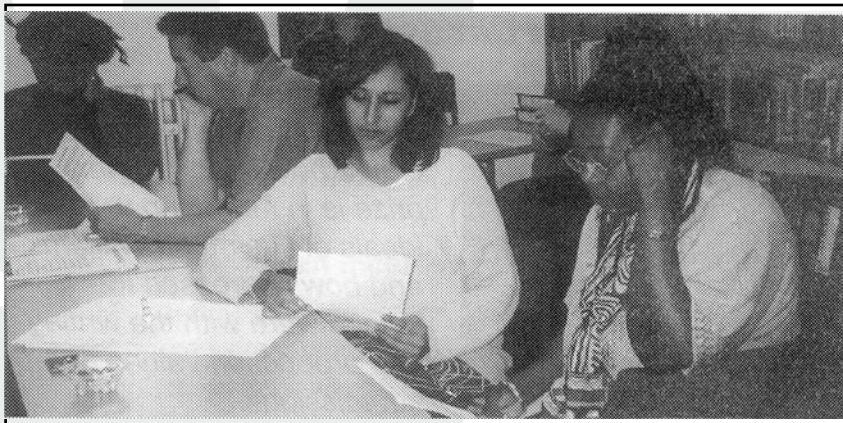
In his introductory remarks Gary McKeone, the Arts Council Literature Director, stated how important this prize is in furthering the ideals of Raymond Williams, and how impressed the judges were with the writing and production values of the submissions.

In a spirited acceptance speech, Brian Lewis pointed out the need for greater funding for literature, especially from the Regional Arts Boards, and how much this prize will mean for all those who took part in the production of the book.

The Raymond Williams Community Publishing Prize was set up by ACE in 1990. It is awarded annually for work of outstanding creative and imaginative quality, which reflects the voices and experiences of the people of a particular community.

It is open to non-profit making publishers producing books in mutual and co-operative ways. For more information of the Prize and how to enter, contact The Literature Department, Arts Council of England, on 0171 973 6442.

A review of "The Story of a House" is on page 12



Pam Ahluwahiia (Centerprise) & Florence Agbah (Pecket Well College) plan their radio interviews at the Working with the Media course at Wedgwood College

The Hand in Hand training project is now up and running, with a weekend of workshops on Working with the Media in September; a number of groups using the Helping Hand Scheme to get access to specialised, short-term training and support; and planning going on for two other major training projects. More information on all of these will feature in the next issue of Federation Magazine.

In the meantime, we are starting to plan the cycle of projects for 1999, and any member groups who may want to participate are welcome to contact me for an initial discussion. Hand in Hand is a three-year Lottery-funded training project which aims to increase Fed members' organisational and fund-raising skills, and to help create long-term networks of groups which can share training and skills. For 1999, we particularly want to develop major training projects with:

- Member groups which haven't participated in the project so far
- Member groups which don't have a paid worker
- Member groups which want to explore ways of working with other groups and organisations
- Member groups which have a specific training need

I will be contacting all groups about 1999's projects in the next couple of months, but if you have any thoughts, ideas, queries about how your group could be involved, do get in touch.

Christine Bridgwood

Training Development Coordinator
37 Airdale Road, Stone, Staffs., ST15 8DP
phone/fax: 01785 286 177
e-mail: handinhand@cwcom.net

Behind much of the work going on during National Year of Reading lies the perception of readers as, far from being the passive consumers of a writer's craft, active participants in making the book come alive. When you read a novel, for example, you are your own director, casting agent, stunt man, designer and lighting technician.

What does reading mean to you? This September sees the launch of a whole year of events to celebrate books and reading.

Sponsored by the Department for Education and Employment and co-ordinated by the National Literacy Trust, the National Year of Reading is more than just a dry PR exercise dreamed up by worthy government bodies. The aim is to create opportunities for people to get involved in changing the

Reading for Life - National Year of Reading

culture of this country and its attitude towards reading, so that more people read for pleasure and information, more widely and more often.

The idea must have struck a chord, because hundreds of projects and events are springing up. Schools, local authorities, libraries, literacy organisation, voluntary and community groups, publishers, and even businesses are all planning to promote reading in 1998/1999.

The emphasis is on the participation of people of all ages, abilities and interests, and on partnerships between different localities, groups and organisations. The year will include not just the usual festivals and one-off events, but also some brilliant ideas aimed at promoting the enjoyment of reading within groups in the community who traditionally may not have seen themselves as readers.

How about, for example, Bookstart – Books for Babies? Starting from the belief that it is never too early to start reading with your child, the Book Trust began Bookstart in 1992, when 300 families with nine-month babies received, via health visitors, a free children's book, poster, poem card, bookmark and

information about joining the local library. This led to more book sharing and library enrolments. As well as this starter pack, new parents in some areas can contact a Babies Need Books volunteer for practical examples of ways to introduce babies to reading.

In another original project, Millwall Football Club has developed a reading and sport scheme to run in school holidays for 9-12 year-olds, with the aim of combining the obvious attractions of football clubs with reading. A range of football-related activities designed to enthuse young readers (such as treasure hunts and quizzes) are organised, followed by football training.

Behind much of the work going on during National Year of Reading lies the perception of readers as, far from being the passive consumers of a writer's craft, active participants in making the book come alive. When you read a novel, for example, you are your own director, casting agent, stunt man, designer and lighting technician. Within the pages of a book you support the writer in creating a world – without your imagination it can't happen. For more thoughts on this, and a stimulating guide

to choosing and enjoying what you read, try *Opening the Book* by Olive Fowler and Rachel van Riel. You can order it from your local library.

For more information on National Year of Reading, contact *NYR, Swire House, 59 Buckingham Gate, London SW1E 6AJ, tel. 0171 828 2435, Website www.yearofreading.org.uk.*

As part of the Fed's own celebrations for the National Year of Reading, the magazine would like to feature members' recommendations for a good read throughout the year. Can you think of the five best books you've ever read? A good book to read when you're depressed? The book that has inspired you most in your life? Or just a few recent books you've enjoyed? If there is a book (or books) that you are burning to recommend to other Fed members, write a sentence or two saying why you liked the book and send to the magazine address.

Christine Bridgwood

The first in the series of members' recommendations is overleaf

Reading for Life - Writers Should Be Readers?

Who's Reading Who: Fed Members and Their Influential Writers

What influences people to write?

It's often said of community writing, especially poetry, that more people write than actually read. To find out whether this is true, and also to celebrate National Year of Reading Federation will carry a series of pages featuring members' recommendations; their favourite and influential reading books. Does your group exchange information about other writers - if you feel that certain books have played a major part in your life why not write in. Tell us which books, and say something about why they are important to you.

Federation went to a writing weekend at Pecket Well College and asked people from PWC, Heeley, Commonword, and Project 101 to list their 5 favourite or most influential books:

"I loved the word play, and because the last pages were missing I felt never finished with it."

Helen Clare:

The Day Jean Paul was Pignapped, by Paul Gallico: "The girl searching for her missing guinea pig is told (by the clock!) that she must look at things properly. Before she finds the clues that lead her to her pet she is able to see the things around her in a new way. This was a revelation as a child and still worth remembering as an adult."

Anne of Green Gables by L.M. Montgomery: "Those who give us on books take us on journeys. An old lady gave me a linen bound copy with thick yellow pages. It was the first time a book transported me to a different time and place. It's probably the reason I dye my hair red."

It Shouldn't Happen to a Vet by James Herriot: "This book planted in me a desire to become a vet, leading me to take sciences at O and A level and eventually landing me with a Biology degree and no idea what to do with it except teach."

Fanny, by Erica Jong: "After years of reading I suddenly found a heroine who was beautiful and intelligent, sexy and strong, as resilient as she was foolish, and above all prepared to take responsibility for herself."

The Periodic Table, by Primo Levi: "This was the first time I realised that any split between science and arts was entirely artificial, and that the stories of people and the stories of atoms are part of the same".

Jan Holliday:

Black Beauty, by Anna Sewell: "It was the first book which made me cry"

Jane Eyre, by Charlotte Bronte: "I could see in the paper the people and the places there"

The White Dragon, by Anne McCaffrey: "A book that gave me back all the forgotten myths and legends of my childhood."

Lorna Doone, by R.D. Blackmoor: "Gave me a wider vocabulary, history, and the sounds of a different dialect."

Elephant Song by Wilbur Smith: "Made me want to know more about world wide ecology and how we are crippling the earth with our greed."

Writers Should Be Readers?

Paul King:

1984, by George Orwell: "The deep hidden messages I found within this book made it something you have to read more than once."

Diary of a Madman, by N. Gogol: "Only a short story but the passages on insanity were fascinating and you really feel the mood and atmosphere of the time."

Cancer Ward, by Alexander Solzhenitsyn: "I really hated this book but it certainly had an influence on my own writing: less is more. Probably would have been a good read if it had been compacted into fifty pages."

Meanwhile by Max Handley: "I read this book in teenage... extremely odd... probably LSD induced... would love to read it again if I could find it, but would probably hate it now."

Z for Zachariah: "Post nuclear war book done in English Literature at School. Everyone else in the class including the teacher hated it. I really enjoyed it. Don't drink the water."

Alan Brown:

"Going back to the earliest book I can remember, one that Mum got for me from a jumble sale. We had very few books at home, so this was one I read and reread until I could have recreated it myself if all the other copies had been lost - Lewis Carroll's **Alice in Wonderland**. I loved the word play, and because the last pages were missing I felt never finished with it.

My love of adventure books was fuelled by the inexhaustible list of Leslie Charteris **Saint** books - pure hokum but entertaining story telling that was right for me at the time.

I read lots of children's books for the first time when much older than the target readership, and loved them for their imagination and sense of fun. Susan Cooper's **Dark is Rising** trilogy stands out, but I might have easily chosen Tolkien or Alan Garner.

For some reason I find adult books less memorable, but after enjoying Peter Ackroyd's mix of legend and modern reality in **Hawksmoor** I do read most of his new books. The formula is always the same and is palling a little. These last three choices all influence me in my own writing, which often uses myth and legend.

My last choice is Arundhati Roy's **God of Small Things**, the 1997 Booker Prize winner. The writing in this book is superb. I have never admired craft more, but did not enjoy the second half where the reader knows the doom that is unfolding but just has to watch it happen. I found that very disturbing - and as such, influential."

Steven Waling:

The Left hand of Darkness, by Ursula K LeGuin: "An intelligent, well written science fiction book that makes you think about sexual politics while still being a very entertaining read."

Little Johnny's Confession, by Brian Patten: "The first book of poetry that said poetry can be about my life, your life, anybody's life."

Lunch Poems, by Frank O'Hara: "Wild, wacky, surreal city poems, written on the hop. I took this book with me everywhere for a year or more."

Selected Poems, by T.S. Elliot: "Yes I know he's difficult and elitist but when I first read him he was mesmerising, strange and beautiful."

Brighton Rock, by Graham Greene: "His best book, full of Catholic guilt and intrigue and a dark core. A Thriller with a head and a heart."



Writers Should Be Readers?

Nick Pollard:

Picking only five books is very hard, especially as different books have seemed important at different times, and blues, folk and popular song are also major influences. A family friend, Gaby Weber, recommended that I read **Steppenwolf** by Herman Hesse. When I was 17 this was ideal reading for a youth groping at the door of adulthood. I read a lot of Hesse, and have often reflected on his exploration of the conflict (as in *Narziss and Goldmund*, and *The Glass Bead Game*) between the worldly and higher knowledge. *Steppenwolf* set me off on a dietary change from SF to “serious” literature...

An Duaniare/Poems of the Dispossessed, edited by O Tuama and Kinsella marked a sea change in my writing, brought about by an Irish writing workshop one Federation festival. In here I found mouth music, and through it - or at least Daniel Corkery’s interpretation of late bardic writing in *The Hidden Ireland* - a precursor for the kind of community of writers the Fed, and Heeley can sometimes be. I’ve found much of value through a continuing interest in contemporary Gaelic writing, a personal tie with natural landscapes and politics: Nuala Ni Domhnaill, Sorley Maclean. Even had a crack at learning Gaelic to improve my understanding. *Pionta, le do thoil*, is my limit.

No Regrets by Will Muckle has also been cited by Arthur Scargill as a book which affected his thinking about history. If there’s any one book I found through the Fed, this probably woke me up to what we are about. But there are many others. Centreprise’s *Working Lives*, *The Republic of Letters*, Ken Worpole’s *Dockers and Detectives* and many individual pieces which mean all the more to me knowing the people who wrote them. Will Muckle and some other miners derailed the Flying Scotsman during the 1926 strike. Read on...

The Penguin John Lennon. This was my first poetry purchase at fourteen. I read this till it dropped to bits, quoted it, leant it out and lost it. I can still remember most of *Good Dog Nigel* and *The Fat Growth on Eric Hearble*. Lennon’s quirky drawings and word play excited me into writing my own poems, mostly more angst-ridden and much more spotty.

Under the Volcano by Malcolm Lowry. Don’t read this without first reading the other Lowry stuff, (but save yourself the sequel *Dark Wherein the Grave My Friend is Laid*), because it’s his apogee. Lowry writes so well what he knew about self destruction and personal chaos. Massive, rich scenes, poetic.

John Carley

The Narrow Road to the Deep North, by Basho: “my first encounter with minimalist poetry - still the best.”

In Cold Blood, by Truman Capote: “for introducing the idea of the non fiction novel”

La Ragazza dela Notte d’Aprile, by Madio Donadei: “non fiction short stories I’ve had the pleasure (and pain) to translate”

The Big Sleep, by Raymond Chandler “daft misogyny but beautifully written” and **Empire of the Sun** by J.G. Ballard “prose that’s better than most poetry”

Il Nome della Rosa by Umberto Eco (in the original) “Just how many levels is it possible to write on at the same time? And successfully.”

Christine Potter -

five favourite books (at the moment)

Dogsbody by Diana Wynne Jones. “Fantasy. Allegedly for children. The personification of the Dogstar Sirius, trapped in a dog’s body.”

The Leopard by Guiseppi di Lampedusa: “Written in the 19th century, an authentic picture of the decline of a noble Italian family. Elegiac.”

Photo-finish by Dick Francis: “The best of his books. The technical information and the unravelling of clues is riveting.”

The Decipherment of Linear B: “The story of the deciphering of the Cretan language and of the Cretan civilisation based at Knossos.”

Hammer of the Gods by Davies: “The unauthorised biography of Led Zeppelin. It didn’t quite accuse them of pacts with the devil, but mentioned them...”

Other Places

At the end of July, Eastside presented a performance by 40 schoolchildren, reading their own poetry to an audience of over 100 at Maurice Agis's multicoloured inflatable Dreamspace at Mile End Park. The event, involving three Tower Hamlets schools, celebrated the life of Helen Rosenthal, and East London teacher who died, aged 47 in 1996.

Helen Rosenthal, who taught at Columbia Road Primary School, realised that children had a talent for poetry, and even when they were not fluent in English could use it to express what they had to say. Later, during her illness, she discovered a significant talent for writing poems. Helen's husband David Sloan, family and friends approached Eastside to arrange a poetry programme in her honour. Working with children from

Columbia, John Scurr and Arnhem Wharf Primary Schools, poets Shamim Azad, Alistair Roberts and Leah Thorn worked to produce poems for performance on the theme of Other Places. Dreamspace, the venue chosen for the performance, is a giant inflatable structure which provides an interactive environment accessible to a wide range of people to enable them to become directly involved in the creative process.

Writers Should be Readers?

Audrey Bradley -

Early Books Which Influenced me as a Writer

The first novel which impressed me was Austen's **Pride and Prejudice**, the interchange in social affairs in the book fuelled my interest in people's attitudes towards each other. When I was 16 an old lady bought me **The Angel in the Mist** by Robert Speight. I was fascinated to see it was set in the future and contained flashback, also the theme of a woman being "used" by a man was quite new to me. Thornton Wilder's **The Bridge of San Luis Rey** appealed to my strong sense of drama, a book asking the question why some people died when the bridge collapsed and others were saved.

"Rain", one of **Somerset Maugham's** short stories, was made into a film called "*Sadie Thompson*", the part of Sadie being played by Rita Hayworth. This was on the theme of a priest tempted by a prostitute, which arose in another of my favourites "*The Singer, Not The Song*", also a film with John Mills as the priest, and Dirk Bogarde as the bandit, portraying good against evil. These romantic novels inspired my love poems and dramatic short stories, while **Francoise Sagan's** novels taught me to incorporate sadness and real life into my writing.

I read these books many years ago and reread them, but am also interested in contemporary writers such as Beryl Bainbridge, who writes so wittily about family life in a working class family in "Journey Round England" - and then there is Edna O'Brien's "August is a Wicked Month", which brings me back to the theme of relationships.

"Just imagining:

There was this beach on the planet Jupiter
and there was lots of seaweed
in a red hot sea
All around were sharp rocks
and everywhere smelled like
burning cabbage.

I couldn't do anything
the sea was too hot
to swim in
and the sand on the beach
burnt my feet.
I couldn't see because
the sun was too bright."

Children from Arnhem Wharf: to read more watch out for Eastside's publication from this project to come out later this year...

Source: What's The Word, summer 98

Eastside Children's Literature Day

Eastside are planning a Children's Literature Day happening in November. If you want to take part contact Denise Jones at Eastside on 0171 247 0216, or write to 178 Whitechapel Rd, London E1 1BJ.

Reciprocal Membership

A new opportunity for networking

At the 1998 AGM FWWCP members agreed a new type of Membership, Reciprocal. What exactly does that mean and why do we need it?

Simple

Reciprocal Membership can be as simple as swapping magazines and publications. Or, an agreement where members of the Fed and members of the Reciprocal group can attend each others training, festivals, performances, share skills, etc.

Each Reciprocal Membership will be in the form of an agreement between the Fed and that group. Those agreements and their content will be made known to Fed members, so they may take full advantage of any benefits.

Swaps

Reciprocal Members can be from anywhere, and will celebrate the many 'swaps' of magazines and information already occurring with organisations and groups in the USA, Australia, Holland, and so on.

The scheme will formalise the already close links the FWWCP have with a number of other community based organisations

in Britain, such as the **Community Dance and Mime Foundation** and **Sound Sense**, (the umbrella group for community music). These groups have similar aims and objectives to the Fed, but are working in different art forms. Their training schemes and publications are similar, and working together, we can encourage even more people to participate in the arts, whatever form they may be.

Positive Dimension

Reciprocal Members will have no vote or say in the policy and work of the Fed. But they will be encouraged to attend our events and training, adding a different and positive dimension to those. Reciprocal Membership will show to all how broad our networking and links are, and how open we are to others' ideas and art forms.

We also want to offer the opportunity for our membership to participate in other art forms to broaden their experience. One only had to see the performance at the 1998 Festival of Writing by **Survivors' Poetry Scotland** to see how music, drama, dance, and words can be successfully incorporated .

Reciprocal Membership is

now a part of the FWWCP Constitution. New members will have to be agreed by the Executive Committee and AGM in the same way all others are. There are checks and balances to ensure that agreements are fairly undertaken, by both parties. This new form of membership offers an opportunity for the FWWCP to develop parcipitative working relationships with similar minded organisations.

How to Introduce Reciprocal Members

If you know of an organisation that may like to work with us as a Reciprocal Member, or if you would like a copy of the latest FWWCP Constitution, write to: The FWWCP, Box 540, Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent ST6 6DX, or e-mail fwwcp@cwcom.net.

For a copy the Constitution enclose a large A4 S.A.E. (39p) or let us know what file formats you can accept by e-mail.

Courses and Events

Landscapes of Memory:

Oral History and the Environment

The Oral History Society Annual Conference with the Centre for Continuing Education, University of Sussex

at the University of Sussex, Brighton, England

15-16 May 1999

Call for Papers

Offers of papers and other forms of presentation are invited for this interdisciplinary international conference which will explore the relationships between memory and place and the contested meanings of diverse human and physical landscapes. Proposed themes are:

Memory and Place

Protest

Green Lifestyles

Heritage

Oral History and Development

"We intend to organise an exciting participatory conference which will include the wide range of media in which memories of place are represented and explored."

Proposals (2 copies on a single A4 sheet with name, address phone, fax, and e-mail numbers, title of presentation, format of presentation, relevant conference themes and a brief summary of the presentation to:

Steve Hussey, History Department, Essex University, Colchester CO4 3SQ (email:huss@essex.ac.uk) by 1 November 1998

E-mail enquiries to Steve Hussey (email:huss@essex.ac.uk), Joanna Bornat (bornat@open.ac.uk), Al Thomson (a.s.thomson@sussex.ac.uk) or Rob Perks (rob.perks@bl.uk)

The Poetry School

The Poetry School is running a variety of courses and workshops at venues around London, including Long Poems, Versification and Advanced Versification (3 courses) with **Mimi Khalvati**, reading poets present and past as a companion to writing with **Graham Fawcett**, and a novel, short story and poetry master class (to start in January) with **Alison Fell**.

Courses start in October. Details from The Poetry School, 130C Evering Rd, London N16 7BD

Centerprise

Centerprise Black Literature Development Project

...has an exciting array of courses and there still might be time to sign up for some of them. Highlights include the **Poetry Artisan** course which includes focus on style and techniques, performance, obtaining bookings, Swahili poetry, publishing and promotion in two ten week slots between September and April 1998-1999.

Screen or Stage: What's Best is a one day script writing workshop with **Ade Solanke** on 14th November

...Elsewhere at Centreprise is a one day poetry workshop with **Alison Fell** on 7th November, and lots of workshops (some with a particular focus, women of colour, Asian writing, men). For details telephone 0171 254 9632, or write to
The Literature Development Project,
Centreprise,
136-8 Kingsland High St, London E8 2NS.

The Policy for Poetry of the English Arts Funding System

Copies of the above policy document are now available. If you perform, write or publish poetry, this is an important document to read.

For full details contact:
*The Literature Department,
The Arts Council of England,
14 Great Peter Street,
London*

SWIP 3NQ
Tel: 0171 333 0100

Website:
<http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/>



The Story of a House:

Askham Grange Women's Open Prison

Edited by Brian Lewis and Harry Crew

Foreword by Helena Kennedy QC

**Published by Yorkshire Art Circus in association with
Askham Grange 1997**

ISBN 1 898311 30 7, 147pp £7.95

When it comes to community publishing, Yorkshire Art Circus still sets the standard. They have shown us from the start that community books do not have to be worthy, dull and badly produced. They can also look good, read well and be as professionally produced and edited as anything on the commercial market.

This year they have won the Raymond Williams Community Publishing Prize, against strong competition, with their story of Askham Grange, the first women's open prison in the country when it opened in 1947. With editors of the quality of Brian Lewis, whose history in community publishing is worth a book in itself, and the present governor of Askham, Harry Crew ('no mean writer himself' according to Brian), the book could hardly fail.

Voices

What lifts it above the merely professional are the voices of people whose story this is- those who work and have worked there share their passionate belief in the prison and its ethos (Carole Burke's pieces are particularly strong), and those who are its temporary residents whose stories and emotions are honestly recorded. The editors

were also fortunate in having access to two fine books, published in the 1950s, one by the first governor, Mary Size, a compassionate and farsighted woman, and the other by a former prisoner. Jean Henry, as she calls herself is a writer of considerable talent whose extracts give an absorbing insight into prison life.

Structure

The judges of the Raymond Williams prize were particularly impressed by the structure of the book and this, often the most problematic part of constructing a readable and flowing narrative from a disparate collection of texts, is indeed its great strength. As Brian writes in his introduction: "The book has been structured to reflect the history of the house through its rooms and the voices which have echoed through them. This is a very natural structure. A house needs to be systematically built of stone, brick or concrete but is a very mean building if it does not contain embellishment in the form of decoration and social purpose. The chief embellishment of Askham Grange will always be the people who live inside its walls."

First Times

by Jenny Bradley, Published by Pecket Well College
36 Gibbet St, Halifax, West Yorks

The apt use of quotations, facts and figures in the side-bars, some very high quality black and white photos (the printers have cracked the continuing problem of reproduction) and some excellent proof reading complete a highly successful and satisfying book. And although the overall tone is optimistic and life-affirming, one never forgets (especially when reading about 18-month children being taken from their mothers) that Askham Grange, as Carol Burke points out, "for all its excellent qualities, is still a prison."

Alison Haymonds

When Jenny Bradley was newly married, she walked into her living room one evening and discovered her husband dressed in women's clothes and wearing full make up. "I didn't know whether to laugh or cry," she writes. "I didn't know people were like that." During her short life Jenny must have wondered many times whether to laugh or cry and it is to her credit she has generally chosen to laugh.

Jenny Bradley is a pen name, for although the author of *First Times* has reached the point in her life when she wanted to tell her story, she is still wary about the attitude of people to her experiences and is reluctant to expose her family to any feelings of guilt.

It is clear from this little book that Jenny has the two most important things needed to help her survive the hardships she has faced - humour and a loving family. Jenny concentrates on the positive things in her life, but often just a sentence or two reveal starkly what must have been long dark passages in her life.

The youngest of a large Yorkshire family, Jenny had learning difficulties and attended a special school until she was 16. But the traumatic moment of her life was the day she was raped at the age of nine. When Jenny told her mother what had happened she heard for the first time

the word 'rape' without fully understanding what it meant. The man was caught the same day. "I don't know what happened to him after that. I just felt empty inside of me," she writes.

There was no counselling for her for many years and it was not until she attended a Real Chance course at Pecket Well College that she was encouraged to talk about her experience. With the help of a sympathetic counsellor she was able to unlock feelings that had been hidden for so long. Her new confidence has made her determined to share her experiences. "I felt I wanted to write about this, as it may help somebody else who's been through the same thing, and it's not easy, I know," she writes.

Jenny's journey to recovery started, as it has for so many others, with education. Pecket Well opened up a world of new possibilities through learning and teaching. What Jenny has achieved in writing her own story cannot be underestimated; it's another step in her long journey of self knowledge as well as an inspiration to others who have not yet reached that stage themselves.

Alison Haymonds

Writing and Therapy

Writing for Self Discovery

by Myra Schneider and John Killick, Element Books, £8.99, 230pp, ISBN 1 86204 205 5

This book is a valuable value for money compendium of exercises aimed at personal development through creative writing. One of the most useful aspects of it is the inclusion of examples for every exercise - everything in the book has been tried and tested, and the kinds of results one might achieve are presented along with the stimulus material.

Later sections of the book encourage the development of your writing beyond the exercises, the writing of autobiographies and the keeping and using of personal journals, along the way recommending many other things to read. The reading list is carefully selected, containing a good mix of favourite and less commonly known writers.

I'd recommend this book to anyone and everyone. Anyone who wants to develop their writing, everyone who writes and needs something to dip into or work through to challenge their own writing. Many writing courses and guides provide examples of technical feats for writing so that their adherents stultify their workshops with grim sestinas and trite fifty word short stories. This book encourages writing that deals with the spirit, and will enable you to trawl those rich and deep resources of your own experience and creative soul.

The Self on the Page

Theory and Practice of Creative Writing in Personal Development

Edited by Celia Hunt and Fiona Sampson

Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 116 Pentonville Rd, London N1 9JB, ISBN 1 85302 470 8, 222pp £14.99

Despite the wide use of creative writing in therapy and in personal development there has been, until now, little critical examination of the issues concerning its use. This book, therefore, offers a welcome and long awaited discussion. The editors have put together a compilation of practitioners' experiences and theoretical approaches which contains examples from various therapeutic areas where creative writing is used - hospices, learning disabilities, dementia. Although some of the questions concerning using writing as therapy are raised I feel the approaches offered lack the perspective which might have come from a Survivors' Poetry, community publishing and, dare one say it, worker writing direction. And I say this, since Fed groups and publishers are amongst a number producing significant amounts of material in this field and have been doing so for some time. Furthermore, the practices which some of these groups have formulated (particularly Survivors Poetry, Gatehouse, QueenSpark and Pecket Well in this country, we might also think of CREAMI and GAMA) would have benefited some of the discussions presented here.

However, this is not so much a criticism as an indication of new avenues to pursue. The use of writing as therapy has long awaited serious examination, and before it becomes "professionalised" and perhaps sequestered from the Survivor movement this is a useful opener in the discussions which need to take place.

Nick Pollard

A Picture Paints A Thousand Words...

A Pictorial Panjabi - English Dictionary

by Surjit Singh Kalra

Illustrated by Ms Jaskanal Kalra-Phul
Panjabi Language Development Board,
2 Saint Annes Close, Handsworth Wood,
Birmingham B20 1BS ISBN 0 907108 77 6,
48pp with 8 pages supplementary Panjabi
alphabet, £2.50

New Pictorial Dictionary English- Urdu

by Parveen Malik, Urdu Language
Development Board, 16 Brean Avenue,
Solihull, West Midlands B26 11S, 115pp, £4.99

**Please note SPECIAL OFFER - for both
dictionaries send a cheque for £3 to PLDB,
2 Saint Annes Close, Handsworth Wood
Birmingham B20 1BS**

If ever you've needed to talk to someone with memory problems and an only language unrelated to yours you'll probably appreciate these two handy little pictorial dictionaries at a very low price. The Panjabi-English dictionary is organised around the Panjabi alphabet, and so may be of more use to Panjabi speakers searching for the right English words than the other way around. The English-Urdu dictionary is better organised. Divided into topics, such as Garden Tools, School Objects, and Kitchen, and with dual texts showing translation into English and Urdu characters of both words and pronunciation, first speakers of either language can easily use it to communicate basic information.

Some of the pictures (especially the tree and flower section of the English-Urdu book) are a little ambiguous, but resources like these are bound to be useful to supplement language teaching, or as a communication device where interpreters are not always available and there isn't enough time to learn another language. Three quid well spent if you've got these to hand in your community centre.

Charles Trent

Fields of Learning

Hope Valley College

1958-1998

Hope Valley Community
Education Forum

Community Education Office

Hope Valley College

Hope, Derbyshire S33 6SD

£3.50 (cheques to Hope Valley
Community Education Forum)

72pp

Fields of Learning is a celebratory history produced for the 40th anniversary of Derbyshire's first village college. Often amusing, this is an interesting collection of memories from teachers, pupils, dinner ladies, night class students, lunchtime supervisors and users of the college. In it are the stories of the teacher who hid behind his paper to eat Mars Bars in class, the cookery teacher who washed the spaghetti down the plug hole, and the boy who, caught cuddling with his girlfriend, was told by the head that he was only fit to be a dustbin man - and became head of refuse services!

Sometimes a bit too cosy - it is, after all, a celebration - but nonetheless a lively portrayal of a resource which is the hub of a valley of communities. Fields of Learning was funded as part of the Arts for Everyone scheme, and the book is a collective effort resulting from the school's relationship with the communities it serves. All the best for the next 40 years...

Chas Trent.



The Tragedy of Education

Edmond Holmes and 'The Tragedy of Education' by
Chris Shute (*Educational Heretics Press, 1998*).

I must admit that I didn't exactly relish the prospect of reading this account of the life and work of the Senior Chief Inspector of Schools at the turn of the century; I expected a worthy but dull biography. How wrong I was. I was riveted by the story of Edmond Holmes' working life, and by Chris Shute's accompanying heartfelt plea for us to radically rethink our perceptions of what 'education' should be.

Fresh from Oxford, Edmond Holmes was appointed as an inspector of elementary schools in 1875. He spent the next 35 years working as a schools inspector, supervising the first National Curriculum and working his way up to the powerful position of Senior Chief Inspector. He was at the pinnacle of the education system, but at the end of his career he wrote an explosive book in which he condemned all that he had been doing for the last 30 years, and admitted his sense of shame for being involved in a system he despised.

Chris Shute outlines Holmes' passionate critique of schools in his own time and shows the relevance of Holmes' analysis to what is

going on in education today. It's not dry and worthy at all, but is refreshingly angry about how the education system - then and now - is under a stranglehold of prescriptive, examination-based instruction. Shute also writes movingly of his delight and relief at discovering Holmes' work: 'Holmes' book broke on my consciousness like a sunburst.'

Although Shute admits that schools have become more liberal since Holmes' time, he argues that the education system is still largely about cultural control and preparing for exams and inspections. Don't be put off by the unappealing title and cover - this is a genuinely radical and readable book which is guaranteed to get you thinking.

Christine Bridgwood

New Books

Origins

Personal Stories of Crossing the Seas to Settle in Britain

A new book by people who have travelled the world to settle in Bristol. From Poland, the West Indies, India, Vietnam, Somalia, Uganda and South America, these stories are about living in a new city and a new culture, searching for lost identities, they are about survival and courage, and the mix of cultures which are the life of Bristol and many other urban areas in today's Britain. Introduction by Yasmin Alibhai-Brown.

Copies from *The Origins Project, Bristol Literature Development, 20-22 Hepburn Rd, Bristol BS2 8UD. Cost £6.99, cheques payable to The Origins Project.*

Riposte - Broadsheet

Riposte is a monthly broadsheet of poetry. Each issue features 12 poems (no more than 30 lines - this should be new work. Your name in print can rub shoulders with illustrious Irish poets and other figures merely by subscribing. The verse is at least as interesting as the mailing list, however. I liked *A Wonderful Love* by Patrick Carr and *The Carpenter* by Anne Meehan in this issue (7&8, vol. 3). Eight quid gets you a years subs including postage, from Riposte, 28 Emmet Rd, Kilmainham, Dublin 8, Ireland.

Nick Pollard

New Books

Africa

Adult Education Chronicles in Commonwealth Countries

This new book edited by James A. Draper, traces the development of adult education by leading educators from 12 African countries. It shows how providers outside the formal systems have responded to the needs of the people in each country in many ways. These range from agricultural extension to literacy, health and political education.

Copies available in Britain through NIACE, 21 De Montfort Street, Leicester LE1 7GE and costs R68 (SA Rands), check for cost in sterling.

Poetry London Newsletter

The excellent PLN for Autumn 1998 will be out soon. The issue will look at whether it is possible to teach poetry, with many poems by poets, teachers and students. There are the usual extensive reviews and articles as well as the indispensable listings section. As ever, PLN will be launched at a 'much-enjoyed' reading on Sunday 4th October 8pm at Jackson's Lane, in Archway Road, Highgate. There's free entry and free wine(!). Readers will include Carol Rumens, Nicki Jackowska, Anna Robinson, Mimi Khalvati and John Sewell. For more information contact PLN Subscriptions on 0181 806 6121 or e-mail: pdaniels@easynet.co.uk

A Journey Into Words Real Lives and Fictional Lives

A new book created and written by adult learners in the Northwest of Northern Ireland. This book is aimed at similar groups and has grown out of the "Next Step" community based programme, based at The Verbal Arts Centre in Londonderry. "Next Step" helps adults to take up the challenges of achieving full literacy.

The "Next Step" project itself was inspired by the work of the FWWCP and its members, coming about after people read Federation Magazine and other Fed publications.

A Journey Into Words aims to be an inspiration for all those who have wanted to write but who have never had the courage. As the book quotes: 'If someone asked me, "How do I go about starting to write?" I would say, it's like a picture - except you tell it in words. Anyone can write; we all have the same emotions and feelings' - Debra.

The book costs £5.95 (isbn 1 898701 51 2) and a taped selection £2.00 (£7 for both). Available from *The Verbal Arts Centre, Cathedral School Building, London Street, Londonderry BT48 6RQ*, add £1 p&p for UK orders, check for posting abroad. To find out more about The Verbal Arts Centre, their Website is: <http://www.verbart.demon.co.uk>

Workshops & Training

QueenSpark Books

FWWCP's Member group in Brighton, QueenSpark Books have announced an Autumn programme of workshops, including *Write into Radio; From Fact to Fiction; Young Writers Workshops; CROW (Community Radio Open Workshop)*. **For full details phone 01273 571710.**

Arts Training North West

ATNW have an extensive series of one day training courses taking place this Autumn in Liverpool and Manchester, which includes *Cultural Diversity (7/10); Working as a Team (14/10); New Skills on the Board (31/10); The Essentials of Event Management (4/11); Raise Your Profile (5/11); Making Sense of Marketing (25/11); Fund-raising - A Strategic Approach (2/12)* and many more. **For full details phone 0151 794 2918.**

Training Listings

There is a very useful guide to trainers in arts management, administration and personnel skills for arts and cultural workers. It is "**The Pocket Guide to Arts Management Training Providers**", published by Arts Training Central at £1.95. It is available from:
Annette Leech,
Arts Training Central,
31-33 The Hollins, 16 New Street, Leicester LE1 5NJ.



Jim O'Brien

We are sorry to have to publish the sad news of the sudden death of FWWCP Regional Rep, Jim O'Brien, on July 29th. We are sure that all FWWCP Members send their deepest sympathy and thoughts to his widow Sandra O'Brien, a member of the FWWCP Executive Committee. They had far too few years together.

Jim was a very dedicated member of Pecket Well College and great supporter of the FWWCP. Many around the country will fondly remember Jim as a lively presence at the Festival of Writing, where Jim often performed and took an active role, (see Federation Magazine issue 14).

Jim is best remembered through his own words, and below was one of the first things he wrote at Pecket Well College:

"Jim O'Brien - born in Glasgow - feels that he is a bit of a gypsy, now hails from Calderdale.

As a boy, he was inspired by the works of Robbie Burns, and was awarded a prize for reading prose and verse.

He started writing his own poetry when he was about 17 years old.

He has been inspired by many sources, such as love, relationships, natural environment, natural world, nature, dreams and imagination.

He hopes that his poems will give people some feelings of enjoyment and happiness through reading them, as much as he felt in writing them."

Jim's last poem written on the day he died is featured in Broadsheet 3, available from the FWWCP and on our Website -

<http://www.fwwcp.mcmail.com>

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Since 1977 The Gatehouse Publishing Charity has developed writing and published books written by and for adults with reading, writing and language difficulties.

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Deadline for completed applications: 1pm, Friday 2 October 1998.

Interviews: **Tuesday 13 October**

Details from:

**Gatehouse Publishing Charity,
Hulme Adult Education Centre,
Stretford Road,
Manchester M15 5FQ**

Tel./fax: **0161 226 7152**

Charity reg. no.: 1011042

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<small>*Money back guarantee - if after receiving the 2nd issue of Writers' Monthly you are not entirely satisfied - you may cancel your subscription, no questions asked and receive a full refund.</small>			

FWWCP Current Membership

Please note, the addresses below are contact addresses and **not** necessarily where the group

Apples & Snakes
Unit 7, Theatre Place
489a New Cross Rd.
London SE14 6TQ
Tel: 0181 692 0393

Arts Disability Wales
Chapter Arts Centre
Market Road
Canton
Cardiff CF5 1QE
Tel: 01222 377885

Aurora Metro
4 Osier Mews
Chiswick
London W4 2NT
Tel: 0181 747 1953

Basement Writers
7 Lulworth Road
Welling
Kent DA16 3LQ
Tel: 0181 856 4009

Big Issue Writing Group
Fleet House
57-61 Clerkenwell Road
London EC1M 5NP
Tel: 0171 418 0418

**Bromley By Bow Centre
Youth Project***
1 Bruce Road
Bromley by Bow
London E3 3HW
(*still to be ratified)

Centerprise
136 Kingsland High Street
Dalston
London E8 2NS
Tel: 0171 254 9632

Commonword
21 Newton Street
Manchester M1 1FZ
Tel: 0161 236 2773

Corridor Press
21 South Street
Reading RG1 4QR
Tel: 0118 901 5177

CREAFI
125 rue du Marche
59000 Lille
France

Eastside Wordcentre
178 Whitechapel Road
London E1 1BJ
Tel: 0171 247 0216

Eastside Writers
(same address as above)

Editions Sansonnet
73 rue de Rivoli
59800 Lille, France

**Ethnic Communities
Oral History Project**
The Lilla Huset
191 Talgarth Road
London W6 8BJ
Tel: 0181 741 7138

Exposure Magazine
Muswell Hill Centre
Hillfield Park
London N10 3QJ
Tel: 0181 883 2906

Forest Artworks
Lydney Y&C Centre
Naas Lane
Lydney, Gloucs.
GL15 5AT
Tel: 01594 844563

GAMA
Vent 22-24 AT. 3A
08031 Barcelona
Spain

Gatehouse Books
Hulme Adult Ed. Centre
Stretford Road
Manchester M15 5FQ
Tel: 0161 226 7152

Heeley Writers
60 Upper Valley Road
Meersbrook
Sheffield S8 9HB
Tel: 01977 658063

Key-in Publications
Bilston Community Coll.
Green Lane Site
Wellington Road
Bilston WV14 6EW
Tel: 01902 821 317

Le Temps des Cerises
6 ave. E.Vaillant
93500 Pantin
France

Ledikasyon pu Travayer
153 Main Road
Grand River North West
Port Louis
Mauritius

Leeds Survivors Poetry
54b Shoresbroke Ave.
Leeds LS7 3HB
Tel: 0113 562 6408

London Voices
c/o 70 Holden Road
Woodside Park
London N12 7DY
Tel: 0181 445 0090

Northern Voices
10 Greenhaugh Rd.
Whitley Bay
Tyne & Wear
NE25 9HF
Tel: 0191 252 9531

**Ontario Workers Arts
& Heritage Centre**
PO Box 83034
Jamesville Postal Stn.
Hamilton
Ontario L8I 8E8
Canada

Pecket Well College
36 Gibbet Street
Halifax HX1 5BA
Tel: 01422 347665

Prescot Writers
12 Aspinall St.
Prescot
Liverpool L35 5RU
Tel: 0151 426 0188

QueenSpark Books
1st Floor
49 Grand Parade
Brighton BN2 2QA
Tel: 01273 571710

Shorelink Writers
1 Powdermill bank
Crowhurst
Battle
East Sussex

Snowball Arts
4 Argyll St.

Ryde, Isle of Wight
PO33 3BZ
Tel: 01983 567825

Spread the Word
Unit 51b

Eurolink Business Cntr
49 Effra Road
London SW2 1BZ
Tel: 0171 207 2025

Stepney Books
19 Tomlins Grove
Bow
London E3 4NX
Tel: 0181 980 2987

Survivors Poetry
Diorama Arts Centre
34 Osnaburgh Street
London NW1 3ND
Tel: 0171 916 5317

**Survivors Poetry
Scotland**
30 Cranworth Street
Glasgow G12 8AG
Tel: 0141 357 6838

**Victorian Fed of
Community Writing
Groups**
PO Box 55
Bonnie Doone 3720
Victoria, Australia

Working Press
47 Melbourne Avenue
Palmer's Green
London N13 4SY
Tel: 0181 889 3530

Write Now
4 Brook Cottages
Hay Mills
Birmingham B25 8DR
Tel: 0121 789 9331

Yorkshire Art Circus
School Lane
Glasshoughton
Castleford
WF10 4QH
Tel: 01977 550401

The 1999 FWWCP Festival of Writing

April 9 to 11 1999, at The Alsager Campus of
The Manchester Metropolitan University, Alsager, Cheshire

The Really Good News

The good news is that the cost for FWWCP Members, Friends of the Fed, and Magazine Subscribers will be **£78** per person, full board. This is nearly £20 cheaper than the 1998 Festival! The cost for non-members will be **£98**, £25 lower than 1998. Contact us at the address below for a booking form. NOTE: All bookings **must** be made and paid for by March 24th.

The Even Better News!

We have a special offer for FWWCP Members, Friends of the Fed, and Magazine Subscribers. If you book and pay in full before **February 14th 1999**, you will get a further **£14** knocked off the cost of the weekend! That makes the cost just **£64**, over £30 lower than 1998. This offer also includes anyone who wishes to take up the staged payment offer below. Our Valentine present to you!

Staged Payments

If it is easier for you to pay in five monthly staged payments, please contact us at the address below for a form. This offer is open until the end of November 1998.

Workshops

The theme for 1999 will be education and learning, such as - using memories of education as a basis for creative writing, and the practicalities of working as a writer in schools and colleges.

So, if you wish to convene a workshop, please start thinking about the Education theme. If you wish to discuss this and any ideas you may have, contact us as soon as possible.

So where on Earth is Alsager?

Alsager is a large village in Cheshire, about 10 miles north of Stoke-on-Trent and 5 miles east of Crewe. It has a local railway station and is about 3 miles from the M6 Motorway.

Festival Contact

For more information and booking forms write to:

Deborah Rogers
FWWCP Festival Co-ordinator
PO Box 540
Burslem
Stoke-on-Trent
ST6 6DR

or, e-mail: fwwcp@cwcom.net

Forms will be available from November on our Website: <http://www.fwwcp.mcmail.com>

We look forward to hearing from you and seeing you at the 1999 Festival.

Federation Magazine is published quarterly.

Subscriptions are £7.00 per year or £13 for two years. Subscribers get a generous discount on training and other events (see back page) and free copies of *The Broadsheet*. To Subscribe send your name and address and a cheque/PO made to "FWWCP" to the address below.

The Deadline for your writing to be considered for the next issue of *Federation Magazine* is November 13th 1998. If you wish to review books, write an article or advertise contact The Editors at the address below.

Federation Magazine is published by The Federation of Worker Writers and Community Publishers. The views and opinions published are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of The FWWCP or our funders.

All correspondence, reviews and articles (on disk if possible) should be posted to
**FWWCP, PO Box 540, Burslem,
Stoke-on-Trent ST6 6DR
or e-mail fwwcp@cwcom.net**

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