

Autumn 2010  
Volume 1, Issue 1

ISSN 1179-7681

## Inside this Issue

1

Welcome

Mark Pirie on Robert J. Pope

2

Anthony Rudolf visit

Poetry by Cameron La Follette

3

New publication by PANZA member

4

Recently received donations

About the Poetry Archive

PANZA  
PO Box 6637  
Marion Square  
Wellington 6141

# Poetry Notes

## Quarterly Newsletter of PANZA

### Welcome

Hello and welcome to *Poetry Notes*, the first newsletter of PANZA, the newly formed Poetry Archive of New Zealand Aotearoa.

*Poetry Notes* will be published quarterly and will include information about goings on at the Archive, articles on historical New Zealand poets of interest, occasional poems by invited poets and a record of recently received donations to the Archive.

The newsletter will be available for free download from the Poetry Archive's web site:

<http://poetryarchivenz.wordpress.com>

### Mark Pirie on Robert J. Pope (1863-1949)

*Wellington poet/publisher Mark Pirie came across some 'forgotten silver' recently in the library of the Poetry Archive of NZ Aotearoa (PANZA).*

I discovered two poetry books published by colonial poet Robert J. Pope, a "Kaiwarra" (now known as Kaiwharawhara) School Principal and well-known Wellington cricketer (old Star club and Wellington club). Robert grew up in Dunedin and was the son of Henry Pope who founded the native school system.

Robert Pope, among other things, wrote two poem tributes to the late Wellington College Headmaster and Wellington

cricketer J.P. Firth as well as music and lyrics for various songs. The two world wars had a significant impact on Pope's verse. Firth himself was well known for his morning verse recitations taken from the *Spectator*, and must've appreciated the poems and song. In Archives New Zealand, I found, among the Robert Pope manuscript books, a hand-written note from J.P. Firth to Robert:

*My Dearest Bob,  
It was most kind to send me a copy  
of your verses, which I like very  
much.  
The dedication to me makes me feel  
very proud...  
Your generous words will always be  
treasured and will give me never  
failing pleasure...  
Yours sincerely,*

*J.P. Firth*

Here are Pope's verses for Firth:

#### **MOURN FOR THE BRAVE** 1914-1918

To J. P. FIRTH, E.S.Q., C.M.G.  
(Late Headmaster, Wellington College.)

*(Published in the NZ School Journal)*

Mourn for the brave,  
That loyal steadfast band  
Who sleep their last lone sleep  
Far from their Native land,  
Roused by their country's call,  
Unmindful of the cost,  
These risked in Freedom's cause  
Their all – and nobly lost  
With wreaths of laurel green  
Sweet rosemary entwined,  
Fit tribute to the dead,  
Whose mem'ry we enshrine.

Mourn for the brave:  
Now low in death they lie;  
So long as Time remains,  
Their glory shall not die.  
They shrank not from the blow  
That made the wide world quake;  
They leapt into the breach,  
And died for England's sake,  
No more with kindling eye  
Ambition's height they climb;  
They reached Life's utmost peak –  
The sacrifice sublime.

Mourn for the brave;  
Though tears must vainly flow;  
Our grief can ne'er repay  
The boundless debt we owe.  
What monument can we  
To their great name upraise  
Whose honours far transcend  
The clarion voice of praise?  
O let our off'ring be  
A brotherhood so wide  
That all the world shall know  
'Twas not in vain they died.

**“THE BOSS”**

(An affectionate tribute to Mr J.P. Firth on his retirement, after nearly 30 years as Headmaster of Wellington College.)

Who taught us how to play the game,  
How might and right are not the same,  
That honest work is more than fame?  
“The Boss.”

Who led us all to strive with vim,  
To scorn all methods that were “slim”,  
To prize a word of praise from him?  
“The Boss.”

Who, happ'ning on us unaware,  
When mischief dire was in the air,  
Politely asked, “How will you square?”  
“The Boss.”

Who from his modest six-feet-five,  
Would hope in four-feet-two revive,  
Thenceforth the proudest boy alive?  
“The Boss.”

Who in our school-days sowed the seed  
That blossomed in the Empire's need,  
And gave us Honour for our creed?  
“The Boss.”

Who shared our joys of bat and ball,  
Who roused us at our country's call,  
And won the hearts of one and all?  
“The Boss.”

J.P. Firth was known after he retired as “The Boss”.

I note further that Robert J. Pope (1863-1949) was a regular contributor to the *Evening Post* and the *NZ School Journal* and had a reputation as a violinist and composer. His two books of verse published late in his life (*Some New Zealand Lyrics* (1928) and *A New Zealander's Fancies in Verse* (1945)) appear to be the only poetry he published in book form. He also wrote many prose works. His song ‘New Zealand, My Homeland’ was published in the *School Journal* and became used in schools from North Cape to the Bluff. There is a copy of the sheet music in the National Library of New Zealand. In 1970 there was newspaper correspondence over the song being made the National Anthem. I am currently preparing a fresh selection of his poems for publication and will donate the book to archive once it is published.

Anthony Rudolf visit



The distinguished British poet/translator Anthony Rudolf visited the archive while he was in New Zealand in April. Anthony Rudolf is an autobiographer, poet, literary critic, editor and translator. Recently he completed a volume of short stories and is now working on a new memoir. His many books and pamphlets include *Mandorla* (poetry, 1999), *The Arithmetic of Memory*

(autobiography, 1999), *Wine from Two Glasses* (Adam Lecture, King's College, London) and *At an Uncertain Hour: Primo Levi's War against Oblivion* (literary criticism, 1990 and 1991).

He has translated fiction, drama and, in particular, Yves Bonnefoy's poetry (most recently *Yesterday's Wilderness Kingdom*, 2001). His other books include pioneering anthologies of contemporary French Poetry and 20th century Jewish poets from all languages.

His reviews, articles, poems, translations, obituaries and interviews with writers have been published in journals such as *TLS*, *New Statesman*, *London Magazine*, *Time Out*, *Stand*, *Poetry Nation Review*, *Modern Painters* and the *Independent*. He has written an introduction to *R.B. Kitaj* (National Gallery 2001).

Anthony is an occasional broadcaster (BBC TV, Radios Three, Four and World Service: Arts World) and Visiting Lecturer in Arts and Humanities at London Metropolitan University. He has lectured and read at conferences, festivals and universities in many countries. He is the founder of Menard Press. In 2004 he was appointed Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French minister of culture, and has recently been elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature.

We asked to include one of his translations of Bonnefoy here:

**BEAUTY by Yves Bonnefoy**

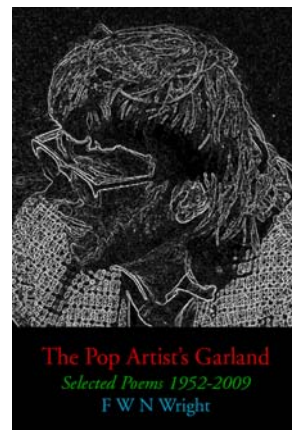
She who ruins being, beauty  
Shall be tortured, broke on the wheel,  
Dishonoured, found guilty, made into blood  
And cry, and night, of all joy dispossessed –  
O you, torn apart on iron gates before the dawn,

O you, trampled on every road and pierced,  
Our high despair shall be to see you live,  
Our heart that you may suffer, and our voice  
To humiliate you in your tears, to name you Liar,  
procuress of the darkened sky,  
Yet your crippled body is our object of desire,

Our pity this heart leading only to mire.

*Translated by Anthony Rudolf, from Yesterday's Wilderness Kingdom (MPT Books, King's College, London, 2000)*

## New publication by PANZA member



### *The Pop Artist's Garland* F W N Wright

Editor: Mark Pirie

ISBN: 978-0-473-16871-1

Price: \$24.99

Extent: 103 pages

Format: 138x210mm

Publication: June 2010

Publisher: HeadworX

The celebrated poet Eileen Duggan and the influential editor J H E Schroder were among the early appreciators of Niel Wright's verse. This selection draws on six decades of writing, 120 Books of Wright's epic poem *The Alexandrians* as well as his *Post-Alexandrian* work, and displays an extraordinary and wide-ranging talent. Avoiding the narrow constraints of a regionalist poetry or the bohemian outlook of the Wellington group of poets, Wright has consistently forged his own path and poetic style since the 1950s often at odds with contemporary fashion and modernist/postmodernist tendencies. As with the English poet Robert Bridges, he has sought above all to renew the prosody. Skilled in many traditional forms such as the triolet, the epigram, the ballad, the sonnet and the lyric as well as classical and epic narrative verse, the selection presents for the first time a

Photo of Anthony in Paris 2008 by Althea Northcross.

## Poetry by Cameron La Follette

Cameron La Follette works as an environmental land use advocate, and is the co-founder of Salem, Oregon's Classic Poetry Group, whose members read and study older poetry. She lives and works in Salem, Oregon.

*"Cameron La Follette's poems reveal an elegance of phrase and form matched only by her love of place: a Pacific Northwest both real and imagined; a Celtic world both found and lost."* – Alan Contreras

Her first collection is *Anamchara*, 2006, Crane Dance Publication, Salem, Oregon, USA.

Cameron helped to have New Zealand poet Ruth Gilbert's work accepted for the prestigious University of Toronto Library's website.

She is involved with archival poetry projects in Oregon and we asked to include some poems by her for our newsletter.

### Autumn fire

Winds toss the sparkling air  
I am green and fair,  
O the flame, the fire  
Rising sap, the mead of desire;  
The days are pale as wine  
I am strong and sure,  
The sacrifice shall be most fine.  
The touch of stars is ice  
I glow rust and bronze,  
The frost is thin and silver  
I am fierce and scarlet,  
The rime is white and crystal  
I am crimson to gold,  
Walking in the heart's cold.  
Rushing winds come this night;  
Moon, silver moon, I pray  
Cloak me all in purest white,  
Raise me up on spears of light

### Owl Mother's Gift

Sun strikes over the desert's gold,  
Wind parts the bowing grasses;  
Owl gives birth as morning rises cold,  
Star-scattered night glows and passes.

Owl burns fire in her watching eyes,  
Owl never turns her head;  
Blue and pale turn the skies,  
Silent burns the rainbow's tread.

Young Owl sees sun and cloud,  
He sees the desert purple and gray;  
Coyote beyond the moon laughs out loud,  
The wind answers far away.

Coyote laughs not far to the west,  
Coyote howls down his hungry jaw;  
Owl hears the stranger in her breast,  
Owl lifts her shining claw.

Dawn dances in the whirlwind,  
Desert arches over the flame;  
Owl wraps herself in feathers and skin,  
Owl gives Young Owl his own name.

### Prophets at Dusk

The sun is sinking crimson to the west,  
Dusk is settling warm and silent and gold;  
The prophets are coming, fire upon their  
breast,  
Eyes fierce and hooded and bold.

The sky is glowing silver and yellow,  
People are talking, children play in the  
street;  
The world beyond opens on this world  
below,  
We hear the slap of the prophets' sandaled  
feet.

They are clad in camel hair and goatskin,  
Fiery souls raised on eagle's wings;  
They are bowed down in the dust and the  
wind,  
On the blaze of offerings.

The prophets ask us to speak of our death,  
And give them the soul's binding of shadow;  
They breathe upon us with flaming breath,  
And whiteness falls from the sky like snow.

Twilight lowers her purple veil in the dusk,  
The prophets heap burning words at our  
door;  
The soul stands pure and bright above its  
pale husk,  
And the prophets speak no more.

Out of the soul gushes a fierce lantern-light,  
Moths flutter upon it in the darkening  
gray;  
Sparkling stars rise over the clear blue night,  
The prophets' footsteps fade away.

Cameron La Follette

generous sampling of his prolific output and reveals his original and remarkable voice in New Zealand poetry.

‘... a witty turn of phrase ...’ – James K. Baxter, *New Zealand Listener*

‘...a pot-pourri of astonishing richness, lyrical in its presentation but with a strong narrative thread.’ – Michael Gifkins, *New Zealand Listener*

**About the Author**

Frank William Nielsen Wright was born in Sydenham, Christchurch, in 1933 and educated at Christchurch Boys’ High School and Canterbury University and Victoria University of Wellington (where he was awarded his PhD in 1974). His major literary work is the epic poem, *The Alexandrians*, published in 120 Books from 1961–2007. In 1966 he received international recognition with the publication of his collection, *The Imaginings of the Heart* (Book 7 of *The Alexandrians*), through The Chiron Press, Kansas, USA. His awards include the Bevan Brown Memorial Prize for Classics, 1951, and the W E Collins Prize in English Literature, 1965. As a publisher, writer, and critic, Wright has authored and published since the 1970s a wide range of books/pamphlets on literature, mostly focusing on New Zealand literature. Father of two children, he lives in the Wellington suburb of Northland with his wife. He is currently involved in running the Poetry Archive of New Zealand Aotearoa, with Michael O’Leary.

Recently received donations

Seraph Press, Wellington: 4 titles (from Helen Rickerby)

Steele Roberts Ltd, Wellington: entire poetry list plus poetry posters (from Roger Steele)

*Journal of NZ Literature*: 5 back issues (from Kirstine Moffat, *JNZL*, University of Waikato)

*Our Own Kind: 100 NZ Poems About Animals* (from Siobhan Harvey)

*David McGill’s Rude New Zealand Limericks* (from David McGill)

PANZA kindly thanks these donators to the archive.

About the Poetry Archive

*Poetry Archive of New Zealand Aotearoa (PANZA)*

**PANZA contains**

A unique Archive of NZ published poetry, with over three thousand titles from the 19th century to the present day.

The Archive also contains photos and paintings of NZ poets, publisher’s catalogues, poetry ephemera, posters, reproductions of book covers and other memorabilia related to NZ poetry and poetry performance.

**Wanted**

NZ poetry books (old & new)  
Other NZ poetry items i.e. critical books on NZ poetry, anthologies of NZ poetry, poetry periodicals and broadsheets, poetry event programmes, posters and/or prints of NZ poets or their poetry books.

DONT THROW OUT OLD NZ POETRY! SEND IT TO PANZA

**PANZA will offer:**

- Copies of NZ poetry books for private research and reading purposes.
- Historical information for poets, writers, journalists, academics, researchers and independent scholars of NZ poetry.
- Photocopying for private research purposes.
- Books on NZ poetry and literary history, and CD-ROMs of NZ poetry and literature
- CDs of NZ poets reading their work
- Inspirational talks on NZ poets

- Video/DVD/film screenings of documentaries on NZ poets
- Readings/book launches by NZ poets
- Educational visits for primary schools, intermediates, colleges, universities and creative writing schools/classes.
- The Northland Writers’ Walk (in planning)

You can assist the preservation of NZ poetry by becoming one of the Friends of the Poetry Archive of New Zealand Aotearoa (PANZA )  
If you’d like to become a friend or business sponsor of PANZA, please contact us.

**Contact Details**

Poetry Archive of NZ Aotearoa (PANZA)  
1 Woburn Road, Northland, Wellington  
PO Box 6637, Marion Square, Wellington  
Dr Niel Wright - Archivist  
(04) 475 8042  
Michael O’Leary - Archivist  
(04) 905 7978  
email: pukapuka@paradise.net.nz

**Visits by appointment only**

**Current PANZA Members:**

Mark Pirie (HeadworX), Roger Steele (Steele Roberts Ltd), Michael O’Leary (Earl of Seacliff Art Workshop) and Niel Wright (Original Books).

PANZA is a registered charitable trust