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Poetry Notes

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Newsletter of PANZA

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Welcome

Hello and welcome to issue 32 (following issue 31, Spring 2017) of *Poetry Notes*, the newsletter of PANZA, the newly formed Poetry Archive of New Zealand Aotearoa.

Poetry Notes will now be published from time to time 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.

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

<http://poetryarchivenz.wordpress.com>

Rugby poetry at the NZ Rugby Museum

PANZA archivist **Mark Pirie** discusses the New Zealand Rugby Museum's holdings of rugby poetry after a recent visit in June this year.

In June, as HeadworX publisher, I launched Damian Ruth's poetry collection *On Edge* at the Palmerston North City Library. Before the event I had arranged to meet with the New Zealand Rugby Museum Director Stephen Berg who had told me via

email that there are some holdings of rugby poetry at the museum.

I hadn't been expecting to find poetry at the Rugby Museum but I was pleased to find that the holdings of New Zealand poetry there are reasonably substantial. From the well known early poets like William Pember Reeves, who wrote on the All Blacks "Invincibles" tour of 1924/25, or the UK poet/raconteur A P Herbert in the 1960s, to the more recent poems donated by various people who are not known as poets themselves, there is certainly a wide range of voices on New Zealand rugby.

Two poets stand out from the rest: Tulo Regos and a Miss Browne of Levin who wrote under the pseudonym of Betty May. I expect Tulo Regos is also a pseudonym. Regos = Troubadour in Turkish.

Regos identifies himself as a Manawatu local in poems on the Manawatu rugby team, but mostly he was a very able reporter on All Blacks tours and matches 1972 to 1984. Chiefly he had the knack of writing or filing a report poem on each All Black test as it happened. His verse style is journalistic and factual without much poetic flair and always in rhyming form. Was he himself a journalist? Nothing much is given by Regos to identify himself, except for his location. The Director had asked previous museum directors if they knew anything on Regos but nothing has turned up. Presumably he has now passed away as no more poems arrived after 1984. Sometimes he has a variant spelling of "Toula Regos". The poems also include a 'Homage to Pinetree' (Colin Meads) when Meads retired and turned out for a President's side in 1973

and helped them to defeat the All Blacks.

Here is an example of Regos’s writing on the 1983 All Blacks fourth test v the British and Irish Lions, 16 July 1983:

Out-classed and out-manouvered
There is no other-way
To describe the fourth test of the tour
At Eden Park today.

Fifty-four thousand packed the stands,
And the fans knew from the start,
N.Z. All Blacks in this test,
Would take the Lions, apart.

They really swamped those pussy-cats,
Of that there is no doubt.
And the 1983 Lions – now,
Know what Rugby’s all about.

Now Hewson, Hobbs and Hayden too,
Scored a try each, of the best.
While super-Stu the flying-wing
With three tries did the rest.

Six tries, would you believe it!
Thirty-eight – six to boot.
That the All Blacks are the greatest,
Even Willie can’t dispute.

So there you have it Rugby-fans
We all of us agree
That the Lion’s tour of eighty-three
Made Rugby History.

Not for the Lions, believe you me,
But that great All Black fifteen
That gave the fans the greatest game
New Zealand’s ever seen.

Betty May’s manuscript poems were forwarded to the museum by the NZRFU in 1990. They date from the 1960s and appear to be poems sent to men serving in the armed forces in Viet Nam as general support for those serving at the time. The reason for the donation appears to be the allusion to an old All Black player, Tiny Hill, a Sergeant-Major, portrayed in one of the poems as the army’s rugby selector, and rugby certainly doesn’t seem to be the only focus of May’s thoughts. The humorous subjects are wide ranging and general, with rugby only featuring in two of the manuscript poems.



Stanley Frank (Tiny) Hill, All Black and New Zealand Maori Rugby Union Football team member. Evening post (Newspaper. 1865-2002): Photographic negatives and prints of the Evening Post newspaper. Ref: EP/1956/1805-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. [/records/22905387](https://records/22905387)

The following example features the hooker Bruce McLeod of the 1967 touring All Blacks that Alex McKay’s recent book considers “changed rugby forever”:

CHEQUE MATE (8-11-67)

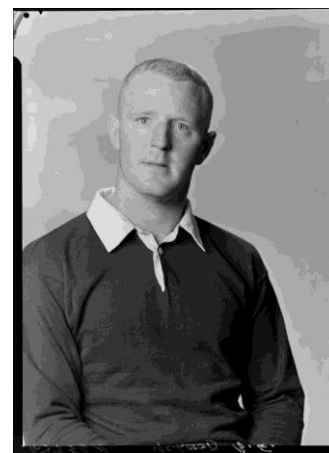
My “Rogues,” this is your “Joy Germ”
calling S.O.S. real loud.
The Cong, I fear, will have to wait –
you’re needed by *McLeod*.
Through no fault of his own he’s in a
most disastrous plight.
Half England and his “*All Black*” mates
have picked with him a fight!

It happened when he walked into a bank
to cash a cheque.
With care he’d dotted all the “I’s” and
crossed the thing, by hec!
Well naturally, the teller went to check
our hooker’s slate
Found out he didn’t *have* one and went
full tilt off his pate.

Our hooker boy by now was getting
good and mad himself.
“My cheque’s O.K.” he roared: “Now
fetch my dough down off that shelf.
A Kiwi wouldn’t rob you and *I’m* with
the “*All Black*” team.
So just hand out my money, mate,
before I burst a seam.”

The teller stood his ground and vowed
McLeod and cheques were fakes.
The boss was called and who should be
there with him for lands sakes!
None other than two “*All Black*” pals,
who’d just dropped in for tea.
Our hooker said: “For Pete’s sake boys,
just tell them all *I’m me*”!

Well, *Blimey*! our poor hooker near
collapsed upon the floor
When his scoundrel pals said: “Never
seen this creep before.”
So now that you, my “Rogues”, all
understand my S.O.S.
I’ll leave it *up* to you to get *McLeod out*
of this mess.



Bruce McLeod. Crown Studios Ltd :
Negatives and prints. Ref: 1/2-207933-F.
Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington,
New Zealand. [/records/22908766](https://records/22908766)

Elsewhere the poet known to PANZA Trevor Rowe has donated his ‘Ode to the All Blacks’, and some of the other poems in the museum from old papers like *NZ Truth* also feature in Ron Palenski’s *Touchlines: Rugby Poetry*, published in 2013.

Of the more recent poems, there is a poem donation from Jane Stevenson-Wright on the All Blacks’ semi-final defeat to France at the 1999 World Cup, and an anonymous poem ‘To the Wounded’ donated by Chrissy Hollander. Historically perhaps the All Blacks “Invincibles” of 1924/25 have contributed the most poetry as a subject, if you include Robert J Pope’s poems I have recently republished into the mix.

She married James Alan Coster in 1938 and lived in Northland. We include two of her poems.

Honor Gordon Holmes

SPRINGTIME IN PIGEON BAY

I'm glad that Spring is here again, and that it has brought back
The daisies and the dandelions that are
flowering on the track.
The cuckoo on the tree-top, and the lark
upon the wing,
The bushy manuka's white flowers,
where tuis love to sing.

The grey warbler is building, and very
hard he tries
To hide his little pear-shaped nest from
cuckoo's prying eyes:
The bell-bird sucks the honey from the
kowhai's golden cup,
And everywhere on every hill wild
flowers are springing up.

The kingfisher is busy now, he has no
time to shriek,
For he is digging out his home in a bank
beside the creek.
I know beneath a hawthorn hedge a
quail has built her nest
And fourteen pretty eggs are hidden
there beneath her breast.

A fantail's made her nest in a little tree
of green,
And in it there are four of the sweetest
eggs I've seen.
The busy little white eye keeps the roses
free from blight.
But when the fruit is ready he is there
from morn till night.

The prickly old bush lawyer has his
starry blossoms sweet,
While the pretty little wind flowers
wave their white arms at his feet.
The hedge sparrow has built her nest in
a macrocarpa tree.
And in it snugly hidden there are blue
eggs, one, two, three.

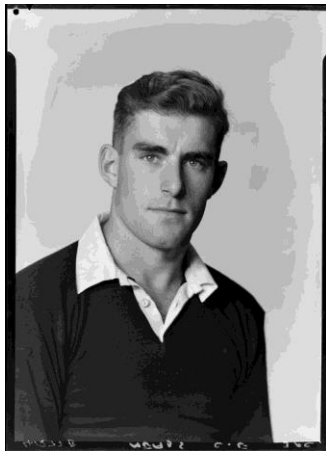
The chaffinch sings his happy song of
welcome every day,
He sings about his little nest made out
of moss and hay.

It was heart-warming as a poet to see the poetic attention given to our national sport. When I started publishing my own rugby poems, it was often seen by some as a lone wolf operation in the rugby world but the museum's holdings reveal a Kiwi pastime of making poetry comments on rugby games in this country.

Leaving the Museum, I took several photos of three wall-mounted "acrostic" poems by John Richard Bryan dedicated to Sir Colin Meads, a national rugby treasure.

PINETREE by John Richard Bryan

Can you think of someone better in the
history of our Game
For players come and then retire but
we revere his Name
One of a kind is what he was, a colossus
of a Man
Now name me someone better, I do
not think you can
Legend is our word of choice when
describing someone great
With guts and pride he just stood tall
when playing with his mates
Into those grounds of Battle he wore the
colour **BLACK**
No quarter asked or given as there was
no holding back
New Zealand's finest Player in this
Sport we all acclaim
This forward from the Heartland who
brought our Nation fame
Mention him to one and all and those
foes that he opposed
He strived for eighty minutes with skill
he proudly showed
Enjoyment he gave plenty through his
running with the Ball
With flair and pace and in one hand
this **ALL BLACK** had it all
Against all odds he triumphed through
commitment on the field
And in those eighty minutes he was the
true real deal
Doing what all forwards do in this game
he chose to play
He scrummed, he rucked and tackled
and how he made our day
So **COLIN** we remember all those
years that you did give
And in the hearts of your supporters
your memory always lives.



Colin Earl Meads. Ref: 1/2-207960-F.
Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington,
New Zealand. records/22737724

Mark Pirie is an archivist for PANZA and a Wellington poet, editor and publisher. His rugby poems, Sidelights, were recently featured at the national Rugby Jamboree in Palmerston North in May 2018. Mark's poems are currently also sold at the New Zealand Rugby Museum gift shop.

Classic New Zealand poetry by Honor Gordon Holmes

Poetry Notes has recently included a number of poets from the Star group 1922-1926 in Christchurch. Perhaps the most surprising of these poets was the child poet Honor Gordon Holmes (an early Laura Ranger), who seemed to have stopped writing in her adult life and no books were found by her in the National Library of New Zealand. Honor Gordon Coster (nee Holmes) b. 1911 d. 1953 contributed verses to the *Star* from 'Holmes Bay', Pigeon Bay, Banks Peninsula, winning their children's competition in December 1923 and December 1924. She moved to Auckland and attended Epsom Girls' Grammar School and Pukekohe Technical High School. She lived in Auckland till the end of the Thirties.

Goldfinches with their caps of red and
coats with golden lines,
Are building in the pear trees, in the
hedges and the pines.

Down at the heads on a rocky point a
seagull's eggs are lying,
She does not make a careful nest, she's
far too busy flying,
She cracks a cockle on the rocks, she
darts into the bay,
She rises with a little fish and then she
flies away.

A fresh nor'-east blows down the bay,
let's sail away together,
I'm glad that Spring has come again and
brought the sailing weather.

*(The Star, Christchurch, 14 December
1923)*

GOODBYE TO HOLMES BAY

The summer sun shines brightly upon
the sapphire seas,
And on the white winged fishing boats
which speed before the breeze:
The lambs run happily about among the
rocks and ridges,
While the kingfishers look all around,
from tops of trees and bridges.

The tuis on the treetops build, the
seagulls on the ledges,
The goldfinches, with sticks and straw,
build nests among the hedges;
The creeks run gently down the hills,
like many silver lines,
To lose themselves among the clumps
of manukas and pines.

The ribbonwoods and totaras upon the
hillside stand,
They overlook a sleepy bay of shells
and golden sand.
The black pines and the ngaio on banks
and steep cliff grow,
The cloudless sky above their heads, the
splashing sea below.

The purple misty hills look down upon
the happy Bay,
So will they stand and still look down
when I am far away;

So will the sails spread to the wind, the
breeze below fresh and fair,
The sailing boats slip down the bay, but
I will not be there.

The birds will build another spring, the
cuckoo come again.
The kowhai throw its golden glow o'er
grass and leafy lane,
But our dear happy childhood's home,
by valley, hill and sea,
Will never more be seen again by Peter
or by me.

*(The Star, Christchurch, 12 December
1924)*

**Paul McCartney 2017
Auckland concert
poem**

PANZA archivist and co-founder Dr
Michael O'Leary recently made the trip
up to Auckland for Sir Paul
McCartney's world concert tour.
We reprint Michael's poem from
broadsheet 21 (May 2018) in honour of
McCartney's contribution to popular
song and poetry.

**PAUL MCCARTNEY AT MOUNT
SMART STADIUM
(16 December 2017)**

I nearly didn't go to the concert
I put forth several excuses such as:
Too expensive, too far to go, it was
Too obvious as I had been such a
Beatles' fan most of my life

When The Beatles came to Auckland
In 1964 I had their pictures all over
My bedroom wall. I had a small
Turntable which played their records
Slightly slowly and off key

But my father was preparing to go
To prison and we couldn't afford life's
Basics, let alone such extravagances
As going to concerts, so I missed out
On experiencing the four

People who were and would be my
Main inspirations to become an artist
Whether with words, painting or
Music throughout my life. Lennon's
Witty drawings and verse

McCartney's elegiac Eleanor and his
Rock and blues voice; George's gently
Laughing and weeping guitar; while
Ringo never let a beat pass him by
All wrapped up in artistic

Packages by Brian, George M, Astrid,
Klaus, Blake, alligarters, wild boats,
Garriffes, lepers and Uncle Tom Cobra
And all, R Hamilton, I Macmillan, Bold
Rumple, B Freeman and all

John, Paul, George and Ringo took our
Poverty stricken lives, whether
financial,
Intellectual or spiritual makes no matter,
As they had done for themselves, and
Had given us MUSIC

The Chinese word for music translates
As 'Enthusiasm for Life' which is what
The Beatles imbued our lives with, so
When I walked up towards the stadium
On that Saturday evening

I began to feel the anticipation of the
Uncertainty, like it feels when greeting
A lover. What would I think and feel
After all the intervening years of
hardship
And heartache, the years

Of struggle and successes, the life I
Had lived through, the light and dark.
The sun was up, the sky was blue
The crowd had come out to play
And then it struck

The blackness of my mind and soul
That so often underpins and undermines
Was stalking me, trying not to let me
Enjoy the beauty and extraordinary
Ordinary rituals of life. I knew

I was in for a battle, but as the night
Transformed into a magnificent triumph
Of Paul McCartney's humour, sound
And vision, I was dancing and singing
The blues away

So, once there was a way to get back
Homeward, and this was it ...
resonating
From the first iconic chord of A Hard
Days
Night right up to The End I was
transported
Back to a happier time

When our mother would sing to me and
my
Brother and sisters, one of whom was at
The concert with me, words to the effect
of:
'Sleep pretty darling, do not cry, and I
will
Sing a lullaby' – arohanui

Poem © Michael O'Leary



Beatles (Paul McCartney, John Lennon and George Harrison) singing during their Wellington concert. Dominion post (Newspaper): Photographic negatives and prints of the Evening Post and Dominion newspapers. Ref: EP/1964/2083/37-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. /records/23179271

Comment on the poetry of Dan Davin

DAN DAVIN AS POET by Niel Wright

Dan Davin (1913-1990) is better known as a New Zealand novelist, short story writer and general literary notable, but he also wrote poetry of which a selection, *A Field Officer's Notebook*, appears in 2018 from Cold Hub Press in an edition by Robert McLean, also a poet who shows independence of mind. Do internet searches for "Robert McLean nz poet editor".

McLean writes an interesting and intelligent introduction and afternote. I welcome the publication of Davin's poetry in book form as well as that of any other New Zealand literary or academic notable, because this background the culture and talents of people who promoted and controlled New Zealand public traditions.

McLean gives necessary information. Some annotation to Davin's poems might also be useful. For instance sangar = a military breastwork of stone or sod (from Pasto).

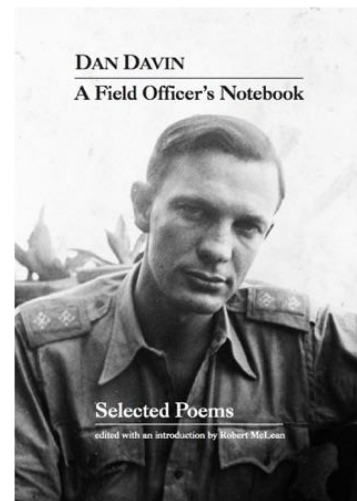
Davin was immensely well educated in the academic sense, quite likely better than any other New Zealand poet till now (2018). But he is also a New Zealand country boy with a sense of his Irish family origins. He lived life of a bohemian order in European exile, overworked and finally ill and depressed. All of this is reflected in his poetry.

The pessimism that is pervasive in Davin's poetry other poets share with him, for instance A E Housman. But Housman has an aesthetic effect that Davin may lack, possibly as Yeats also does often enough. Davin is well aware of Yeats and may be the worse for his influence.

Davin's age grouping may suggest he is a modernist poet, but in fact he never entirely escapes the lure of traditional rhyming, which inclines me to be more tolerant of his poetry. He is less traditional in mode than his friend and coeval M K Joseph (1914-1981). Davin also seems to have a sense of alternative sorts of rhyme, what is covered for some people by the term slant rhyme. It can't be said that Davin demonstrates an achieved poetic, but perhaps he is feeling his way to one.

Perhaps it is worthwhile to explore New Zealand poetry in the last 150 years to see if there is evidence for a mode of poetry that is less traditional than the Georgians, less open form than the Modernists, but in all round ways highly confident, productive and aesthetically effective. If Davin was showing the way from 1936, possibly there has been time since then for an all round demonstration to have taken place outside the standard assessments of which we still hear too much.

Niel Wright is the co-founder of PANZA. Niel was recently interviewed about the Poetry Archive on Radio NZ National for the Jesse Mulligan show in July of this year. His selected poems, *The Pop Artist's Garland*, were published by HeadworX.



Poetry by Mark Young (Australia/NZ)

Mark Young, a poet and editor now living in Australia, who has previously been written about in *Poetry Notes* and has donated a number of books to PANZA, recently featured in PANZA member Mark Pirie's journal *broadsheet: new new zealand poetry*, issue 21, May 2018.

We include several poems from Young to mark his substantial contribution to New Zealand and world poetry.

Five things I never told my Rōshi

#1

I seek my
inner self
not for

the essays
but for the
centerfold.

#2

My first visit to a zen-dō was a mistake. I saw the sign & misread it as Zeno; but, since I was seeking infinite pleasure, I entered. I thought it was a bit strange being asked to seat myself in what I now know to be the position of zazen, but went along with it, thinking kinky thoughts about auto-erotic asphyxiation of the groin area.

Was more puzzled when the Rōshi asked me *What is the Buddha Mind?* I suspected it might be some aspect of tantric sex, & so, determined to heighten my pleasure but still conserve my seed, I began by imagining a point on the perimeter of my conscious mind beyond which lay the unconscious. Then I mentally covered half the distance to it, then half the remaining distance, then half the remaining

I was brought out of it by the Rōshi's staff falling across my back. *You were drifting*, he said. *But you may have been making progress so finish up for the time being & come back in two or three days.*

Puzzled by it all, feeling some sort of inner calm but no sexual satisfaction, gratification, or even titillation after I left, I googled the question the Rōshi had asked me & discovered just what a difference a "d" makes. I was more than a little embarrassed. Still, some good had come from it, so I returned as the Rōshi had suggested.

Once again he pointed me to the raised zazen platform, &, as I settled myself, he asked another of those paradoxical questions that are designed to help the neophyte find enlightenment. *What would you rather be: the tortoise or the hare?*

#3

I used to think satori was

just another brand of Japanese whisky.

#4

When I sit crosslegged during zazen in the zen-dō, I seek to find, as the precursor to clearing my mind of all thoughts, that single point of equilibrium for what Alan Watts called "the woman in man" — &, obviously, the opposite / the same, "the man in woman." But as I draw nearer to it, I am distracted by the conflict of those gender stereotypes that have imprinted themselves on me over the years. Even now, when I have resolved most of the physical issues, they flutter, like trapped moths, at the edges of the empty plain I seek to surround myself with.

I see myself wearing workman's boots & a tutu. When I dance, I dance alone. Nobody wants to catch me in my jetés because I have been known to draw blood from my partners when I accidentally land on them on the points of my steel caps.

& I am reluctant to climb ladders. It is not the height that frightens me, simply that the other firemen look up my skirt.

#5

My navel is pierced with a five-carat diamond.

It is an impediment to meditation.

Seek the light, find it, & the facets start strobing.

Epilepsy not epiphany.

the / glazed ambiguity / of the moon

He raised his glass & toasted her across the table-lands. She smiled back; but in the black beyond her eyes he suddenly saw in widescreen the hatred that colonization had engendered. He started,

startled. Wine sopped but no servants ran to mop it up. They were alone.

She smiled again, a different kind of smile, ice in the desert. *Morricone?* she said. *Maricon* more like it. &

shot him where he sat. In the valley the monuments stirred, began marching. Soon the stucco porches would be the playgrounds of tortoises & vultures. For a moment she watched the future

from the balcony, then turned back to clear the table, deliberately bumping the slumped body as she did so. She was singing. A Carole King song but the way Aretha did it. *When my soul was in the lost & found...*

for Cindy, bird song

In the combined book & record store I think about buying the new translation of Proust

but the sound of The Supremes on the in-house speakers draws me away & lost times

written about in a time that was lost long years before I was born go out the

window as I go out the door with a Motown compilation to listen to when I find time.

Poems © Mark Young

broadsheet /21
new new zealand poetry RRP\$10.00



FEATURING MARK YOUNG (AUSTRALIA/NZ)
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MARK YOUNG



May 2018

Mark Young, *broadsheet* 21, May 2018

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You can now become a friend of PANZA or donate cash to help us continue our work by going to <http://pukapukabooks.blogspot.com> and accessing the donate button – any donation will be acknowledged.

Recently received donations

C A J Williams – *35 Short Poems* by C A J Williams.

Judith Haswell – *Poems from the Pantry* anthology of NZ poetry.

Paul Thomson – *Poem Waikanae River* (poem scroll/wall hanging).

Mark Pirie – 51 titles.

New Zealand Poetry Society – *After the cyclone* (2017 anthology).

Puriri Press – 5 titles.

Mary Creswell – 2 titles.

Niel Wright – *Poetry* (USA), includes feature on New Zealand poetry.

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 around five 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.
- 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.

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Visits welcome by appointment

Current PANZA Members:

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

Current Friends of PANZA:

Paul Thompson, Gerrard O'Leary, Vaughan Rapatahana, Cameron La Follette (USA), Riemke Ensing and the New Zealand Poetry Society.

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