

Earl of Seacliff

Christmas Surprise 2009

Featuring work by:

Michael O'Leary (Godfather, Editor in Chief)
B E Turner, aka Brian E Turner (Technical Editor)
Mark Pirie (Friend of the Family)
F W Nielsen Wright, aka Niel Wright
(Friend of the Family)

Earl of Seacliff Art Workshop
Paekakariki
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Michael O'Leary, B E Turner, Mark Pirie and FW Nielsen
Wright

The cover shows a work entitled 'What a scream' from the Earl of Seacliff's exhibition 'A Helen Clark Retrospective' held in 2002 at One Eye Gallery, Paekakariki. The Earl is seen holding an original Edward Munch painting signed by Helen Clark. The photograph appears courtesy of the Dominion newspaper.

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PO Box 42

Paekakariki

Aotearoa, New Zealand

E-mail: pukapuka@paradise.net.nz

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*You may be a boy and you may be a girl
You may be bald or you may have a curl
You may dance a jig, waltz, or do a twirl
But wherever you are in the world
It's Christmas Surprise from the Earl*

Michael O'leary's poems have been published in *G'Day Country Redux* by David McGill and Michael O'Leary, Silver Owl Press, 2009.

Michael O’Leary

Kupe Street to Kupe Strait

(Two Ōrākei Bastards and the Ngā Pēpeha of the ancestors)

E hokihoki Kupe? O yes, he will return.

E hoki Kupe? With a different shade of meaning.

Ngā taero ō Kupe, e, Ngā rōri o te whare ō Uenuku

The bush lawyer and his questions

Made it difficult for him to think. But think of this:

Tai hauāuru i whakatūria e Kupe

Ki te Marūwhara. If there had been

Trains to the West Coast back then

Kupe’s daughter would not have been left there.

Titiro e Kupe, tiritiri ō te moana! Looking

From the deck of the rail ferry, Aratika,

Kupe could see the vastness of the sea.

Tūtū āniwaniwa, ka tere Poupaka i te uru tai.

Think again. If Poupaka had been in charge of the Wahine

She would not have gone down when the heavens were dark

But would have floated on the deep sea like an Irish cork.

Picton Railway Station

Sitting in the station waiting room
A fire burning hot in winter gloom
Goods trains lining up to board
The next roll on roll off sea lord
The hills outside are misty green
Closed in, closer than they seem
Their silence broken in regular
Rhythm of the shunting car
Picton Railway Station, where journeys begin and end
A good olde world place for those with time to spend

Greymouth

Running to catch the railcar

Along the backstreet of this West Coast early morning town

The guard had given the whistle to go, waved his green flag

But then saw me running along the tracks

At the back of the pub, stopped the train, waited . . .

I had been in Blackball

Visiting Hugh, now long dead, but back then he played

The fiddle while I played the fool, I remember being amazed

Maybe, at going into his back garden to pick

Not vegetables, but lumps of coal which were then grated . . .

In the coal range at Blackball

Last train past Clarksville Junction

I met a young woman on the overnight train
She gave me a hand, I didn't complain
A saucy encounter can sometimes ease the pain
Of loneliness and despair . . .

I still see her picture in the early morning
As she, mini-skirted walking, me yawning
Through the misty southern station, falling
Stumbling, towards town . . .

So this really is the end of the line
The train no longer goes late or on time
To Dunedin, Invercargill, it's a crime
Putting an end to love . . .

WAIATA - a chant: te manga aho o te rerewe ki Dargaville

Clickety clack, Karakiti karakati – TANGO-WĀHINE

A woman abducted, or is she weeping for her whaling lover

Clickety clack, Karakiti karakati – KIRI-KŌPUNI

My dark-skinned mama, as slippery as a black-skinned eel

Clickety clack, Karakiti karakati – RŌTU

I put a spell on you, an incantation proceeding from the
heat-oppressed brain

Clickety clack, Karakiti karakati – PARORE

Awha, nearly made a century, tipuna of Adam, first Māori
to do so

Clickety clack, Karakiti karakati – WHĀTORO

Stretch out, thrust forward, wine, poetry, virtue: whatever
you will

Clickety clack, Karakiti karakati – MAROPIU

A swinging, swaying loin-mat, akin to the swirl of the kilt
at that

Clickety clack, Karakiti karakati – ARANGA

Its so surprising, this act of rising, tra la lala la

Clickety clack, Karakiti karakati – AHIKIWI

The bird looks perplexed, the *Apteryx*, the kiwi, is ready
for the hangi

B. E. Turner

Furtive Love (a play)

CAST:

ROGER: A young man dressed in a gorilla suit. He has taken the head off and placed it on the table.

NEMO: Captain Nemo. An older man dressed as a super hero.

SETTING: *It is a restaurant. Roger is sitting at a table reading 'Alice in Wonderland'. Captain Nemo enters.*

NEMO: May I join you?

ROGER: That is a matter which requires some deliberation.

NEMO: *(Sits at table)* Take your time.

ROGER: She's jumped down the rabbit hole.

NEMO: Who?

ROGER: Alice.

NEMO: Yes, I thought she would.

ROGER: Why don't you join me?

NEMO: Yes, I'd like that very much.

ROGER: Fred's the name.

NEMO: Captain Nemo *(They shake)*

ROGER: Captain of the Nautilus?

NEMO: That was a past life. Now I fly through the air and save damsels in distress as they fall out of tall buildings.

ROGER: I wish I could do that. I can only swing from branch to branch.

NEMO: Did you say your name was Roger?

ROGER: No, Chester.

NEMO: It's got Roger in the programme.

ROGER: That's just the author's idea. Don't take any notice of him.

NEMO: OK. Chester then.

ROGER: No. Bartholemew.

NEMO: I'd like to order.

ROGER: You can't.

NEMO: Why not?

ROGER: There's no waiter in this play. The author decided to give him a rest.

NEMO: To hell with the author, I'm hungry.

ROGER: They don't serve Kryptonite in this restaurant anyway.

NEMO: I don't want Kryptonite, I want sea food.

ROGER: What about mushrooms?

NEMO: In a pinch.

ROGER: Here, read this, it's got a mushroom in it.
(*Passes over book.*)

NEMO: (*Opening book*) This is a hallucinogenic mushroom.

ROGER: Entirely in keeping with the play.

NEMO: That's true Julian.

ROGER: The problem is neither of us have characters, we don't have a past, I don't even know my own name. It can't be a realistic play.

NEMO: It doesn't have to be. My name won't change though Percival.

ROGER: Why not?

NEMO: 'Nemo' means 'no name'.

ROGER: He gave you that name so he wouldn't have to think of new names all the time.

NEMO: Who did?

ROGER: The author.

NEMO: True. How many people went to your 21st birthday?

ROGER: I wasn't alive when I had my 21st birthday.

NEMO: I find that remarkable.

ROGER: How many people went to your party then.

NEMO: My mind is a blank. I don't remember a thing before today.

ROGER: That's why you're called Nemo. You're not a real person at all.

NEMO: Neither are you then.

ROGER: We can still be in a play though. You don't have to have real people for it to be a play. (PAUSE) Do we know each other well?

NEMO: We've only just met.

ROGER: I'd like to make love to you.

NEMO: That's hardly appropriate.

ROGER: Why not?

NEMO: I'm a super hero and you're a monkey.

ROGER: Give me my book back.

NEMO: No.

ROGER: Why not?

NEMO: I want a cup of tea.
ROGER: Is there a cup of tea in it?
NEMO: There's a whole tea party.
ROGER: Take your time.
(Nemo glances at a page the hands the book back..)
NEMO: You could change your sex.
ROGER: Why?
NEMO: So we could make love.
ROGER: You'll have to pay for the operation.
NEMO: That could be arranged.
ROGER: Not today though.
NEMO: No. I have a great aunt called Penelope, she's
one hundred years old tomorrow.
ROGER: Did she have a 21st birthday?
NEMO: She has one every year.
ROGER: How many people attended?
NEMO: One.
ROGER: Why did you mention Penelope?
NEMO: All the plays have a Penelope in them. It's a
signature.
ROGER: All the plays have a hundred year old great
aunt?
NEMO: No, just someone called Penelope.
ROGER: I find that remarkable.
NEMO: It's time we finished this isn't it?
ROGER: It seems to be about that time.
NEMO: There needs to be a twist to round off the
plot.

ROGER: There isn't any plot.

NEMO: True.

ROGER: How can we have a twist then?

NEMO: *(Takes a pink satin handkerchief from his pocket and twists it.)* How's that?

ROGER: Perfect.

THE END

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Mark Pirie

Islands of Cricket

When cricket came to India,
the natives were at first left out,
then, after watching the English
play, looked to join in.

The English let them, as
something of a novelty. The Indians
soon grew competitive, seeing a chance
to beat their English rulers.

After a while cricket spread from Mumbai
to Kolkata, infecting most of
the locals. The English were content;
they were hooked, and it was easier to rule.

I think of how cricket first came to
New Zealand through the settlers,
but, unlike India, the islands
here did not effect the same results.

Māori didn't take to cricket
like the other colonial countries. Whereas in
Australia a famous team of Aborigines
toured England in the 1860s,

Aotearoa offered no such
colourful touring party for the game.
I often wonder what it would've been
like to have had a Māori cricket team,

or even one active in world sport today,
linking itself with other indigenous
teams in the Windies, Africa, Sri Lanka,
Pakistan, Bangladesh and India.

These Māori teams might have formed
warrior islands in the currents of
the cricket mainstream, bringing their
haka to Lord's and the monarchy.

First published in *Landfall* 218.

The Record*

When Crowe neared a triple,
cans flew in celebration.

He wouldn't do it, said one.

The board read 299,

The hush implied a triple.

He needed just the one,

to dab it, play it cool.

It was going to be a spectacle.

Greatbatch watched, ready to run.

But oh — he snicked one.

**Martin Crowe's 299 against Sri Lanka, is the Highest Test Score by a New Zealand batsman.*

First published in *Valley Micropress*.

Cricket in Afghanistan

A powerful image I saw recently is of
young Afghan boys playing cricket

in a Pakistan refugee camp.
To me, it was especially poignant.

During the Taleban's rule, one of their
most tyrannical symbols was

the destruction of the Giant Buddha statue.
They also banned public entertainment,

and forced many to flee to Pakistan.
Now they're ousted, a new symbol of

hope creates excitement on Afghan streets.
Cricket, the unlikeliest beacon of Hope

in the war-torn country, now spreads
like wildfire. Afghanistan (mostly former

refugees) in their first official One-Day match defeated Scotland. Once again the old colonial sport

pops up in the most unlikely places, bringing people of vast cultural differences

together, and uniting them in what Byron once described as cricket's 'manly toil'.

F W Nielsen Wright

OUTBACK

Tuis up to a dozen twitter

In the sycamores outback ;

Everyone a songster : never quitter.

Tuis up to a dozen twitter

Melodious nonsequitur ;

Darting about at beck and call.

Tuis up to a dozen twitter

In the sycamores outback.

CONTENTS

If this poem should be my last ;

I could live with that.

So came the end to Dennis List.

If this poem should be my last,

This or the next ; concludes the list

With it or without.

If this poem should be my last ;

I could live with that.

QUARTET

We all have a use by date ;
And are kiboshed on expiry,
Without exception on the dot.

We all have a use by date,
Shakespeare no less than C K Stead
O'Leary Wright and Pirie.

We all have a use by date ;
And are kiboshed on expiry.

THESE ISLANDS

These islands are a human ark ;
Exposed to ; varied weathers.
Repository, unholy archive :
These islands are a human ark.

Where chains of islands ocean arc ;
Here thrives ; what elsewhere withers.
These islands are a human ark ;
Exposed to ; varied weathers.

GARDEN WALK II

I was fifty three then, now seventy five.

Am I still in love with you? probably.

But nothing practical so late survives.

I was fifty three then, now seventy five.

Even yourself no longer so vivacious

Remain, so effervescent bubbly.

I was fifty three then, now seventy five.

Am I still in love with you? probably.

FOREPLAY

The foreplay that we had no time for ;

In old age is ? all we are left with.

Affection is another term for

The foreplay ; that we had no time for.

The women we have most esteem for ;

Remain the women ; that we laughed with.

The foreplay that we had no time for ;

In old age is ? all we are left with.

MOMENTS

Youth has its moments ; as has age.

But those of age are more surprising
In show of drive and sexual urge.

Youth has its moments ; as has age ;
Both perilously skirting edge ;
Both desperately enterprising.

Youth has its moments ; as has age.
But those of age are more surprising.

FINAL MOMENTS

A poem shall I write ? for each
Day in the year, three sixty five.
So many eggs could the Muse hatch?

A poem shall I write ; for each
Find subject terse and humour arch,
With pith : the moment to survive.

A poem shall I write ? for each
Day in the year, three sixty five.

CONCLUDING IMAGE

Last of the 1960's men

Lives an ; incarcerated spectre ;
Through years whatever there remain.

Last of the 1960's men
So far diminished in domain ;
Walls not of sound confine Phil Spector.

Last of the 1960's men
Lives an ; incarcerated spectre.

KULTURKAMPF

We who bestride Avon and Leith ;
A nation's culture must relitigate,
To be at odds : however loath.

We who bestride Avon and Leith ;
Laws of a modern megalith
Seek : to unsay ; not just to mitigate.

We who bestride Avon and Leith ;
A nation's culture must relitigate.