

The Storyline

Magazine of The New Zealand Guild of Storytellers Nga Kaikorero Purakau O Aotearoa



DECEMBER 2015

Love is human nature.

All kinds of experiences are just different shapes of love.

You chose this place in order to experience all kinds of love.

You came here to remember that you are love itself.



Editorial

This is my home, where are stored treasures that invoke story. See the lace curtains in the window of my bedroom? They were bought in a market in Amsterdam in 1976 when I was travelling the world to increase my awareness of people, story and much more. I call them my Freedom Curtains but that is another story.

Invercargill is at the southernmost tip of the South Island of New Zealand. Founded by Scottish settlers in the nineteenth century it can be seen as a wintry place even in summer.

But no, we can have a very warm, even hot summer. I am editing this piece with all my doors and windows open and it is 10.30 at night.

It's almost the last stop before the Antarctic, whalers established a base just to the south of it and the Maori creation myth describes how it was formed from the sinking of a canoe belonging to Aoraki, the first child of the sky god Raki. It has majestic streets built on the Champs Elysee style of wide boulevards, tree lined, with a centrally planted reservation. There are grand buildings built to impress with Greek colonnades, majestic banks and town halls to rival those left behind in the cities of Scotland. The town is frozen in its heyday of prosperity, built on gold and refrigerated meat and butter in the 19th century. There are some beautiful homes and some fairly basic homes.

Mind you, with each house in its own large plot that would destroy the planet if we all followed suit.

I have lived here all my life – well since I was about three years old. My parents and my older brother lived for three years in a cave on the banks of the nearby Clutha River making a living from gold prospecting when the great



depression hit in the 1930's. One of my most precious possessions is a gold child's bracelet my father had made for me, his first daughter, from gold he panned.

I wear it on a chain, along with my mother's wedding ring, whenever I tell stories and those two items I would fight to keep as they keep me grounded and tell me who I am. Almost every other object I hold on open hands.

Relative prosperity returned to our family after my birth and I grew up with Dad back in his original profession of journalism. He wrote for the Southland News and later the Southland Times but was most famous for his poems, publishing one nearly every day for 40 years, making him a competitor for the Guinness book of records as the most published poet.

I started out as a teacher then became one of the first children's librarians to establish programming in New Zealand. It was as a librarian that I truly began to see the power of storytelling and to begin to hone my skills.

Maybe this little introduction to my beginnings will help our members to understand why I have such a passion for story. It is bred in my very genes, I believe.

Liz Miller
lizm@xtra.co.nz

President's Report

December 2015

When preparing to write this report I read through last year's missive and, somewhat surprisingly, I see that this year is a slight step up from last. Oh, it's been another busy year with my gorgeous girls, and teaching still takes up way more time than I'm ever paid for, and there never seems to be enough time to do all the reading, walking, relaxing, catching up with friends etc,etc that I would like to do (or washing windows and weeding gardens that I should do but who does keep up with all of that??)



No, the improvement is in our AGM attendance. Last night there was a statistically significant increase in participation over last year – we had three phone-call participants instead of two! Tragic, I know, to be so excited by this, but it was lovely to hear someone else's voice, opinion, laughter and wisdom. So thank you, Gaye! Here's to another year of continued growth, however little the acorn may be...

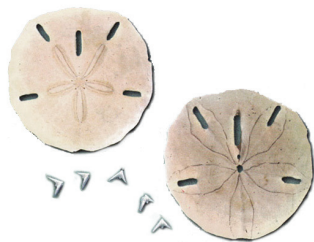
Remember to keep posting things on our awesome website, and Gaye has created – in the blink of an eye – a Facebook page, so please also keep a look out for this. The whole point of our Guild is to support and connect storytellers within Aotearoa. Those of us actively involved passionately believe in the necessity and power of story – that is the reason we are doing what we do. Liz and I count ourselves amongst those, so, we will keep the Guild heart pumping and available to those who would want it.

May the holiday season and the year ahead bring you happiness, laughter, joy, wisdom and story – and the time to do the things you want to do (and maybe some of those things you should do, too...)

Happy telling, all.

Tania
andrewtania@hotmail.com

Legend of the sand dollar



The sand dollar or the Holy Ghost shell is one of the most unusual specimens of marine life. The markings on the shell symbolize the birth, crucifixion and resurrection of Christ.

On the topside of the shell, an outline of the Easter lily is clearly seen. At the centre of the lily a five pointed star representing the Star of Bethlehem appears. The five narrow openings are representative of the four nail holes and the spear wound made in the body of Christ during the Crucifixion.

Reversing the shell you will easily recognise the outline of the Christmas poinsettia and also the Bell. When broken, inside the shell are five little birds called the Doves of Peace. Some say they are the angels that sang to the shepherds the first Christmas morning.

Secretary Report

We have 33 members. 3 live in the USA, 3 group memberships. This means just 27 individual memberships in NZ.

We welcome new members. Tuaratini-Takitua lives in Auckland and we are so glad to have him on our list. He practices this art through work with the Pacifica Arts Centre, the Pacifica Mamas and Papas, as well as his work with the TangiReka Youth programmes for NZ born Cook Islanders and so he is a very exciting addition to our membership. Ann Hodge joined earlier in the year.

We called the AGM for 29th November.

We had 3 present on the phone and 7 present by proxy.

We kept the subscriptions the same - \$25 for individuals, \$30 for groups and international.

We have two new members this year as you will see above and sadly had Bertha Tobias move to Australia which is their rich gain.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

President	Tania Faulkner-McKenzie	<i>Antoinette Everts/Liz Miller</i>
Secretary/Treasurer	Liz Miller	<i>Antoinette Everts/Gaye Sutton</i>
Vice-President	Antoinette Everts	<i>Liz Miller/Tania FM</i>
Committee	Mary Sheddon	<i>Tania F.M/Liz Miller</i>
	Gaye Sutton	<i>Liz Miller/Tania F.M</i>
Moved that the nominations all be accepted.		<i>Gaye Sutton/Liz Miller</i>

Liz will continue as editor unless someone else offers.

Dear storytelling friends,

I'll try to join you from California for the AGM. If I don't manage, have a great sharing and updating, and the start of another year of sharing the treasures of storytelling, friendships and mutual support

All praise for Liz and Tania for their faithful and wonderful dedication to the NZ Guild of Storytellers - and support for all of you.

I support nominations.

I support payments to be made.

I support keeping the fees as they are.

Hugs to all from

Antoinette Everts (now in California). Need a bed ?

***For there is hope for a tree, though its roots have grown old in the earth...
it may sprout and bud against the touch of water. Job 14:7-8***

Editor's Report

It is really good to know that Gaye Sutton is going to contribute a regular column. That will be such a boost to our magazine.

DEADLINE for next issue is mid-March 2016 for April Issue.

Treasurer's Report

The audit was complete and we sent out the balance sheets by email.

We had \$7,335.11 when the audit was complete.

We had \$7,351.49 at mid-November.

We still do not know who, in the name of A.F. Simpson, banked \$25 electronically last February.

Website Matters

Remember all members have a personal code for our website so you can just go in and use it.

If you are unsure how to add your profile, an event or anything else you can send it to our webmaster, Hemi, and he will do it.

Hemi has added all the past copies of the Storyline (back to July 2013 which is all he had available) and will keep each issue as a new one is published in that file.

Things you can do on the website:

- Create a storytelling profile to advertise your storytelling services.
- Add your profile as a member interested in this amazing art.
- Post ideas, news and stories.
- Post upcoming events.

To login go to storytelling.org.nz and click the yellow "Member Login" button in the bottom right corner of the website.

We also have a more direct login – www.storytelling.nz

Then follow the instructions. If you have forgotten your password click the request for a new one.

Have a question or need help? Simply email the site administrator at: hemi.ruatoto@gmail.com

A web-site is only as effective as the members make it. We cannot make up things to add to it.

Some of our members have not posted their profile at all. Why?

Even just your name and what and where you tell or listen will at least let people know we don't only have the few members listed.

A new story on the web-site would be good.

Regional News

Southern Storytellers

November has been an action month for this group, although a lot of action went on beforehand to ensure the success of the events we've enjoyed.

The first week of the month saw the children's workshop with 31 year 6,7,8 pupils from many local schools arriving with their prepared stories. This event has been held now for at least 20 years. The five workshop sessions helped the pupils hone their stories and telling skills.

On the Friday we gathered at Ascot Park Hotel for a wonderful dinner and then the concert where we heard a selection of stories from the workshop day. All the pupils who attended were invited to the dinner and the 14 best actually told at the concert. The audience was made up of the pupils and their invited guests as well as the Southern Storytellers and so it was a very positive experience. These events owe their success to dedicated teamwork of our members and generous grants from the Invercargill Licensing Trust Foundation.

On the 20th November we offered our final concert for the year with a good attendance, a range of well-told stories (including from three of the pupils) and the usual sustaining supper.

The following week we held our final general meeting for the year. Our two Bevs presented us with an exercise. We were asked to present, as a story, our most embarrassing moment. It's a good discipline to craft what could be just an anecdote into a tailored story. What a field day! If there were no alcoholic drinks, bodily functions, cases of mistaken identity, revolving doors, expectant mothers, donkey droppings, big cherries, misunderstood toilet signs (and the list goes on) we'd have to look elsewhere. Actually, sometimes you just don't know where to look.

The year will conclude with a Christmas gathering at Lindisfarne Methodist Community Centre, the same adaptable venue where many of these events took place. We will see the New Year in with a late January gathering at Nicol's home...outdoors if summer has arrived by then.

With events like these, new members, shared skills and cheerful teamwork Southern Storytellers continues to function well.

Nicol Macfarlane

News from Canterbury

Otautahi Story Circle

7.30-9.00pm

Third Wednesday of every month (no gathering January)

Sydenham Room, South Library, 66 Colombo Street

A friendly, warm and relaxed gathering of lovers of story in all its forms. We gather around a theme each month to share stories in various forms and try our hand at storytelling skills in a supported way. It's also a safe space to try out work in progress. Everyone welcome – listeners, storytellers, writers, poets, musicians and more...

Visiting UK storyteller: Louise Coigley!

Louise is a highly acclaimed speech language therapist and storyteller sharing her Lis'n Tell approach around the world. She is coming to Christchurch to offer training in this unique approach! Valuable to parents, teachers, storytellers, librarians, therapists, support workers, allied health professionals and more.

Working with Speech, Language & Communication needs through Lis'n Tell: live inclusive storytelling 2 day workshop.

Christchurch: 3-4 March 2016

Cost: \$140-200 (scholarships available, please make contact if this is not affordable)

Contact: Sharon Mob 022-121-3548 tel (03)9677-888 thestorycollectivechch@gmail.com

More info: www.facebook.com/Lisn-Tell-live-inclusive-storytelling-with-Louise-Coigley

Workshops also possibly available in: Hawkes Bay, Wellington and Auckland/Northland.

Enquiries for these areas to Judy or John Frost-Evans, In the Belly of the Whale School of Storytelling Tel (04) 239-8346 Mob 021-112-1244 Email judytravelling@hotmail.com

Launch: Natural Born Storytellers (Down Under!)

XCHC Exchange Christchurch, 376 Wilsons Road

Thursday 18 February 2016, bar and café opens 6.30pm with stories starting 7.30pm

Theme: New Beginnings...

Based in Camden Town, London with sell-out tours of the UK, we're collaborating with the founders to develop our very own Kiwi-Christchurch version of Natural Born Storytellers! Everyone has a story to tell so we're creating a fun, supportive and welcoming space for anyone to tell true stories. Each night is themed with prepared storytellers, combined with stories from the audience. Get in touch with Sharon if you have a story you'd like to share! Support to create it available. Email thestorycollectivechch@gmail.com mob 022-121-364

Sharon Moreham

Events In Southland

We will have two amazing international storytellers here for the Southern Festival of the Arts.

Dates will be from 13th May until the 18th May 2016.

Once the posters are available we will email them to all members (and snail mail to those who haven't email). We will also place them on our web-site but you may need time to plan if you are hoping to join us.

Antonio Rocha was here in 2010 and was sheer magic.

Dovie Thomason is a First Nations American Indian, Lakota Sioux on her mother's side and Kacocoa Apache on her father's side. I think I have that correctly. She was in Masterton many years ago for a Glistening Waters Festival and loves New Zealand.

Wellington

Wellington Storytellers' Cafe is the home of storytelling in the capital.

We welcome all storytellers and story lovers to share a feast for the heart and soul on the first Tuesday of every month.

It's a lot of fun and everyone's welcome.

Storytellers, prepare to move on to a new venue in 2016. More details to come.

For more information, phone 04 381 3307, send an email to blackcherokee@actrix.co.nz or text only 027 737 3185

Also for your interest:

Dear story tellers and listeners and lovers.

In the Belly of the Whale School of Storytelling.

Storytelling Events in Paekakariki - 1st Thursday monthly Kapiti Storytelling Circle, St James Hall, Ocean Rd, 7pm to 9pm. \$5 on door. All welcome

Enquiries to Judith Frost-Evans judytravelling@hotmail.com or 04-239 8346/021-112 1244 Look for In the Belly of the Whale on Facebook.

But wait there's more... Poetry at the Fringe, 26-32 Allen Street, (just off Courtenay Place) 4-6pm, happening on the 3rd Sunday of every month . Plus open mic and more... Contact: 027 248 3540

AND...Coming up at Wairarapa Word,

Come along if you can and help spread the word by including this in any newsletter you publish, post it on your facebook page and bring your friends, colleagues, and family along. "Like" our facebook page Wairarapa Word www.facebook.com/WairarapaWord Madeleine M Slavickmmslavick@gmail.com

Wairarapa Word is a free community event supported by your Koha, Almo's Books, and the Carterton District Creative Communities Scheme.

04 381 3307 / 027 737 3185

Tony Hopkins Storyteller Facebook

Wellington Storytellers Cafe by WellingtonStorytellersCafe

Toi Poneke Arts Centre 61/69 Abel Smith Street TeAro 6011 Wellington, New Zealand

Friendship is the only cement that will ever hold the world together.

A teddy bear teaches the child that love means being there when you're needed.

Information

Barbara Rhodes has the following books up for grabs. If you want any or all of them you just need to email Barbara at rhodesb@ihug.co.nz

All she is asking is the postage.

Claymore & Kilt. Tales from Scottish History & the Ballads. By Sorche Nic Leodhas. Victor Ambrus illustrated. Ex library book.

A Book of Heroes selected by William Mayne. Ex library book. Soft bound.

The Second Virago Book of Fairy Tales. Edit. Angela Carter. Corinna Sargood illustrated. Ex library book.

Women Who Run With the Wolves: Myths & Stories of the Wild Woman Archetype. By Clarissa Pin-kola Estés. Soft bound.

Tales of Magic and Enchantment. Edit Kathleen Lines. Alan Howard illustrated.

Tales of the Uncanny. Written by Václav Cerný, Zlata Cerná & Miroslav Novák. Illust. by Jaroslav Šerých.

Stories from the Raj: from Kipling to Independence. Selected by Saros Cowasjee. Ex library book.

African Heroes. Retold by Naomi Mitchison. Ex library book.

The Oxfam Book of Children's Stories: South & North, East & West. Edit. Michael Rosen. Soft bound.

Classic Folk Tales From Around The World. Introd. Robert Nye. Soft bound.

Conjure Tales by Charles W. Chesnutt. Retold by Ray Anthony Shepard. Ex library book.

Myths and Legends of the Middle Ages. By H.A. Guerber. Soft bound. Dover reprint of 1909 original. Soft bound.



This message came to me in my emails and neither Tania nor I could name the book.

If anyone out there knows which title it could be I will forward it on to the enquirer.

Liz at lizm@xtra.co.nz

Good evening! A long time ago I had the pleasure of meeting a book that now I cannot remember the name or author, it was about storytelling and it had stories in it as a guide so children could act the stories out. I am currently in a teacher aide position working with a school new entrant who is blind and I would love to find this book again. The only clues other than those above are there was a story of a sick dragon or taniwha, or the dragons party something along those lines. Do you have any ideas that could help me discover the name of this book? I am sure it had a picture of a dragon on the front of it.

I am sure it was the subject of storytelling for early childhood problem solving strategies. It was so the children had to work out ideas and plans.

Shonaleigh Cumbers

Remember her visit here? Yes, she has gone blonde!



The storyteller Shonaleigh Cumbers has been performing and sharing stories from her Jewish heritage at the UK International School of Storytelling for many years. Last autumn, Roi invited her down to tell again but this time Roi heard something new: Shonaleigh had outed herself as a Drut'syla, a teller of tales from an ancient female Jewish tradition. She'd originally learnt the stories from her grandmother, and had been telling them for many years to her son Isaac and husband Simon but in 2010, encouraged by them both, she began telling them in public. Since that time she has been trying to find another Drut'syla still alive, but with no success – Shonaleigh appears to be last in line of this once flourishing female storytelling tradition.

Once she started telling these stories in public, she was approached by universities eager to purchase and house this unique archive of the female Jewish storytelling tradition. However, Shonaleigh was looking for “a safe haven”, so that the integrity of the work would not be compromised by researchers or storytellers who might use the stories without understanding and acknowledgement or reference to the tradition in which they were forged and to which they belong.

To cut a long story short (!), ISOS has offered the safe haven that Shonaleigh had been looking for and are very much looking forward to supporting and working with her in a collaborative way to develop her trainings and help establish a Trust, so that the stories themselves are honoured and the archive available to researchers in the best possible way. Welcome to the International School of Storytelling Shonaleigh!

Keep an eye out for news of Shonaleigh's courses and trainings as they should be finalised by the end of November.

Child of Peace?

Sign and gift of love?

Really?

In these times, this world,
ablaze with violence,
torn by hatred,
slashed with killings?

Yes! Oh yes! And again, Yes!

Even amongst devastation
HOPE unfurls,
reminding us that it is love
that lives and grows
and gives life.

David Russell



INTERNATIONAL BOARD ON BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

iBBY
AUSTRALIA

The International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) is a non-profit organisation which represents an international network of people from all over the world committed to bringing books and children together.

35th IBBY International Congress, Auckland 18th-21st August, 2016

Over 200 submissions have been received for the parallel sessions and poster presentations for the above Congress, and acknowledgements will be sent out by the 31st January. Details of the tentative programme can be found at <http://ibbycongress2016.org/programme.html>

For those interested in attending, library tours have been suggested for the 18th August. There are a range of accommodation styles available within walking distance of the Aotea Centre, which can be found by checking the Accommodation link on the Congress website.



Jenni Woodroffe, who was one of the Australian storytellers at the very first Glistening Waters Storytelling Festival in Masterton, keeps me informed of the activities of IBBY.

If you would like me to forward the quarterly newsletters to you just let me know.

Liz Miller

Meet the Press

- News from Jonesborough



In 2014, ISC welcomed Ellie, our first kid correspondent, to the National Storytelling Festival. This year we knew we had to step up our game—so for 2015, we invited not one, but two, new members of the (small) press for exclusive behind-the-scenes coverage.

Our intrepid reporters were Alex, a 7-year-old student from South Side Elementary School, and her friend Olivia, a 12-year old from University School.

“Peter Cook was the first storyteller I saw,” says Alex, who has officially declared the experience one of her “favorite days ever.” “He was very funny. He used sign language to tell stories. Kim Weitkamp told a story about Christmas and flying pigs. She’s really nice. Bill Lepp told about a Pop Tart. That made me laugh. Waddie Mitchell told a nice story that made me feel good.”

A stickler for the facts, she added, “He has a fancy mustache.”

The question of the day was “What’s your favorite story?” Alex and Olivia put many different storytellers to that test, and were occasionally surprised by what they heard.

“They had lots of favorites and so did I,” Alex reports.

“Peter Cook told a funny story about his mother’s birthday party,” says Olivia. “He communicated to us through sign language and an interpreter. He said that he started storytelling about 30 years ago, at the Illinois Storytelling Festival, and that his favorite story was the story that he told us.”

The girls spoke to many other tellers over the course of the day, including Bil Lepp, who Olivia says told a very funny story about his teenage

years. "He said that he has told stories since 1990," she adds. "He also said that his favorite story is when his tongue got frozen to a train and it left a trail of frozen saliva behind him."

While ISC could not independently verify that information, that definitely sounds like something Bil Lepp would say.

"Kim Weitkamp used her talent for singing in her Christmas show today," Olivia tells us. "She was very animated and happy. She also included Bil Lepp as guest star Thug Santa. She said she has been telling stories since she was...well, Alex's age."

Both reporters were attending the Festival for the first time, so they enjoyed hearing the perspective of old-timers. "Waddie Mitchell has been in the storytelling business since he can remember," Olivia says. "He grew up on a ranch, where he says, 'Instead of watching TV, we sat around and talked.' When asked what his favorite story is, he said that, 'Picking a favorite story is like picking a favorite child.

I got five kids.'" (At press time, ISC could not verify whether or not any of them has a fancy mustache.)

The girls also enjoyed a hamburger lunch and an afternoon stop at the Lollipop Shop, where they bought Coke and jellybeans to celebrate Alex's Papaw's birthday.

It was, according to the reporters and the accounts of their subjects and a wide variety of eyewitnesses, an altogether enjoyable day in Jonesborough, rain notwithstanding. Alex in particular enjoyed the opportunity to interview the talent. "Storytelling makes me feel happy because it brings together a lot of nice people," she says. "And it was fun to meet the storytellers after everything. It was like meeting the president or something!"

**Photo by Angelica Ares*

The Art of Storytelling

Nancy Mellon

"Storytelling is relating a tale to one or more listeners through voice and gesture. It is not the same as reading a story aloud or reciting a piece from memory or acting out a drama – though it shares common characteristics with these arts.

The storyteller looks into the eyes of the audience and together they compose the tale. The storyteller begins to see and re-create, through voice and gesture, a series of mental images; the audience, from the first moment of listening, squints, stares, smiles, leans forward or falls asleep, letting the teller know whether to slow down, speed up, elaborate, or just finish.

Each listener, as well as each teller, actually composes a unique set of story images derived from meanings associated with words, gestures, and sounds.

The experience can be profound, exercising the thinking and touching emotions of both teller and listener."

National Council of Teachers of English in support of storytelling in the academic classroom.

"Because there is a natural storytelling urge and ability in all human beings, even just a little nurturing of this impulse can bring about astonishing and delightful results."

Between the Parentheses:

Don White on the National Storytelling Festival



**Photo by John W Edwards*

One of the new voices welcomed to the National Storytelling Festival this year was Don White. A folk singer with a background in comedy—he quickly won over his audience...and the feeling was mutual. He kindly shared a few thoughts about his experience this past October.

I knew the National Storytelling Festival in Jonesborough, Tennessee would be unlike anything I had seen before by the way my storyteller friends would get all dreamy and tongue-tied when I told them I was going to be a featured teller there.

"Jonesborough." They would say the word as if, when spoken, it released a euphoria serum into their brains. And then these people who have dedicated their lives to verbal communication would become uncharacteristically inarticulate. "Don, you're going to love it there." Yes, I would reply. Everyone says that. I waited for elaboration, but they'd always walk away without telling me why.

Looking back, I think the best way to communicate the effects of this event on the uninitiated is through what it did to my wife. My wife is cool. I knew it when I met her in tenth grade. She dressed cool. Her musical tastes were cooler than everyone else. After high school we hitch hiked around North America for three years seeking out the most interesting little groups of non-conformists the continent had to offer. If something is fake or artistically

insincere she sees it right away and has no patience for it—no desire to spend an extra minute in the presence of it.

It's now been 10 days since the festival, and she hasn't stopped talking about it. We were both completely blown away by the level of talent. We discuss it at length and with reverence every day.

Picture a sleepy town with five BIG tents strategically placed throughout – the smallest holding 700, the largest holding 1,700. Picture all five tents filled to capacity at the same time. (It's hard to believe, right?) The audience is as attentive as any you will ever find. They are supportive and polite, but they also know exactly where you stand in the hierarchy of every storyteller who ever lived within six minutes of hearing you speak.

For my part, I learned something new about how to approach a story from every performer I saw. I've never seen anyone use the space between sentences like Donald Davis. (The silences in his stories were somehow more articulate than the parts with words. It was masterful.) And Bil Lepp is one of the greatest performers I have ever seen. I wanted to grab the people beside me in the audience by the shoulders and say, "Do you know how hard it is to be this funny with this level of storytelling precision? What this guy is doing is almost impossible."

()

The space between these parentheses is where I had hoped to sum up my experience at Jonesborough with words so eloquent that you would be compelled to make the journey there next year. But, like all the people who tried to describe it to me before I went, I'm just sitting here, dreamy and tongue-tied.

You're going to love it there.

Don White

Contributions

International School of Storytelling in UK

21 was traditionally the time when you received your own key to the door: it marked a coming of independence, a maturing to step out into the world with the gifts you had gathered and to come and go as you pleased.

Hodja Nasruddin went a step further. Apparently he took his front door with him wherever he went! Why? Maybe so that he would be at home everywhere, maybe so that he could close the door sometimes and replenish himself while the rest of the world went mad, maybe to welcome you, should you ever come knocking...



A favourite story we have often told is the Golden Key, the last story in the collection of the Grimm's Fairy Tales. It is printed below and every time I look at it I find myself somewhere in the story for it was once wisely said that "When you enter a story, you find that story inside yourself."

So sometimes I am doing soul work 'clearing the ground' or I'm 'searching for the keyhole' or 'forced to go out' but the end of the tale holds a promise: it asks us to wait until things are completely unlocked, only then will we see what wonderful things are lying in that box.

The Golden Key

In the winter time, when snow lay on the ground, a poor boy was forced to go out on a sledge to fetch wood. When he had gathered it together and packed it, he wished, as he was so frozen with cold, not to go home at once but to light a fire and warm himself a little.

So he scraped away the snow and, as he was thus clearing the ground, he found a tiny, golden key. Hereupon he thought that where the key was, the lock must be also, and dug in the ground and found an iron chest.

"If the key does but fit it!" thought he, "no doubt there are precious things in that little box."

He searched but no keyhole was there. At last he discovered one, but so small that it was hardly visible. He tried it and the key fitted exactly. Then he turned it once round, and now we must wait until he has quite unlocked it and opened the lid and then we shall learn what wonderful things were lying in that box.

ISIS attacks seek to spread hate and fear to divide the world's 1.5 billion Muslims from everyone else. Let's answer their hate with wisdom. By fiercely welcoming each other into our one human family like never before.

From Gaye Sutton

One hundred and five years ago, when I was reasonably young, certainly much younger than now, I was introduced to Laurens Van der Post by a dear friend and important teacher who loaned me *Jung and The Story Of Our Time*. I became an avid reader and devoured his books, reading some over and over again. I was inspired by the stories and philosophies of the Kalahari bushmen that Laurens delivered in his lyrical writing. Even if I had some concerns about whether his process was colonising.

I was especially captured by concepts like the little memory and the great memory. In fact I think this may have lead me to my practice of seeking the threads of universal stories and myths in my personal story. Stories like that of the *Women in the Moon... you probably know this story...in which a man discovers that women from the moon are tripping down a silver ladder every evening and stealing the milk from his precious cows. As he chases them away, he captures one and, of course, marries her. He is very contented for a long time and they build a prosperous life together. BUT, when he caught her she was carrying a tightly woven basket and as she agreed to marry him, she made him promise he would never look inside it. After a time, the fact that he had made this promise begins to tease him and exercise his mind as to what kind of man would allow his wife to subjugate him in this way. So, he goes home from the fields with a headache or somesuch and takes a look. He sees nothing. When his wife returns she knows immediately that he has looked and accuses him. He scorns her and laughs. She picks up a basket and walks quietly out of the house and out of his life...* this spoke to me at a deep level as I left a marriage where I felt my husband never connected with my soul.

However, much later I began to read a biography of Laurens, *The Storyteller*, which claimed that he was a liar and that his stories were untrue and because I am at heart an adolescent idealist I stopped reading the biography and reading or thinking about Laurens Van Der Post for a long time. Except, that is,

whenever I married couples when I would misquote his famous lines: we think of love as a pink and white confection like marshmallow... it sits at the back of the tongue and melts, sweet and delicious, as it trickles down the throat but love is a call to battle...

I never stopped thinking about the philosophies of African nations nor the stories of the Kalahari Bushmen and Women and bringing them into my work, albeit without reference to him.

But recently, on Facebook of all places, I was sent this by a very old friend at a time when I, we indeed, our global community, really needs this reminder:

Ubuntu is a Xhosa word which serves as the spiritual foundation of African societies. It basically means what makes us human is the humanity we show each other. It articulates a basic understanding, caring, respect and compassion for others. Ubuntu is a belief in a universal bond of sharing that unites all of humanity – the conviction that no person can be truly full while his neighbor remains hungry. It represents a world-view that sees humanity as a web of family, rather than a mass of individuals. This philosophy affirms that a person is a person through other people; that we are all related, interdependent and connected to each other. This is similar to what we know as compassion, compassion for our families, our community, the global community, the earth and ourselves.

And I re-membered Laurens, re-membering is a Narrative Therapy term used to talk about the relationships we have with our nearest and dearest who have gone. I guess this poem of Owen Marshall's expresses it well.

The People Whom You Love

Be calm and still long enough
the people whom you love will
come as the deep stream clears
when surface ripples are all done.

Nothing will be said, but you

Recognise the true expression
On each face just as you remember
them. Nothing will be said but
they will come not conjured by
your dreams or grief, but just
wishing to call by. Nothing will
be said, but the people whom you
love will walk at ease and smile
and take no notice of your tears.

I believe we have to change the stories we are
telling each other. And I am going to be bold
about this next year. I'm re-mem-bering Laurens,

warts and all with gratitude and love because
love is a call to battle and because he's one of
those message carriers we need. Hopefully, I'll
get to tell you more about my projects for next
year, next year! Suffice to say I'm calling it,
Changing the World One Story At A Time.

Happy Christmas everyone, may you have re-
creational holidays and come back to the work
with love brimming.

Gaye Sutton

A folktale from Germany

In the Black Forest of Germany there once lived
a mother and father and seven children. It was
hard to find food enough for seven children. The
family was poor, but they survived. Then one
year, just before Christmas, the father fell ill. He
could not go into the forest to hunt. So the family
had no meat. He could not go into the forest to
cut wood. Soon the family had no wood left for a
fire. On Christmas Eve the children sat cold and
hungry. The father lay in bed, quite sick.

"I will go into the forest and gather pine cones,"
said the mother. "Then at least we will have a
warm fire. And the sweet scent of burning pine
may cheer us."

The woman took her basket and entered
the dark forest. But she could find no pine
cones. Deeper and deeper into the forest she
wandered.

Suddenly she came into a glade surrounded by
tall pines. Overjoyed, she began to gather up
handfuls of pine cones from the forest floor.

But as soon as the first pine cone hit the bottom
of her basket... A fierce voice spoke out!

"BY MY BOOTS AND BY MY BEARD!
WHO'S STEALING MY PINE CONES?"

"It's just me," gasped the frightened woman.

There behind her stood a dwarf. He was short
but very stout. On his feet he wore big black
boots. On his face he wore a long grey beard
and a terrible scowl.

"BY MY BOOTS AND BY MY BEARD!
WHY ARE YOU STEALING MY PINE CONES?"

"My husband is sick and cannot cut wood. My
children are cold and hungry. I was gathering
pine cones to make a fire this Christmas Eve. I
didn't know they were yours."

"BY MY BOOTS AND BY MY BEARD!
PUT THOSE PINE CONES BACK!"

The woman put the pine cones back where she
had found them. She picked up her basket and
started to leave. The dwarf stroked his beard
and scowled.

"BY MY BOOTS AND BY MY BEARD!
YOU'LL FIND MORE DOWN THAT PATH!"

"Oh, THANK YOU!" The woman hurried down
the path in the direction he had pointed. Sure
enough there was another grove of pines. The
woman stopped to gather a handful of the pine
cones. She tossed them into her basket. But as
soon as the first pine cone hit the bottom of the
basket, pine cones began to pelt down from the
trees! From all around they rained down.

Pine cones fell on the woman's head.
Pine cones fell into her basket.
Pine cones fell until they covered the ground.
And still they did not stop.

"Bewitched! Bewitched! This place is bewitched!" The woman grabbed her basket and ran from the magic pinegrove. Behind her she heard a fierce voice booming out:

"BY MY BOOTS AND BY MY BEARD!
THAT OUGHT TO BE ENOUGH PINE CONES!"

The woman ran for home as if a forest full of dwarves were after her. As she got closer to home, her basket seemed to get heavier and heavier. By the time she had reached her little cabin she could barely carry it. She pushed open the cabin door and fell inside. Her basket dropped to the floor and turned over. Pine cones rolled across the floor. The children sat up crying, "Oh MAMA!" For the pine cones which were rolling across the floor were not ordinary pine cones... They were cones of solid silver!

"It's enchantment! Wicked enchantment!" cried the mother.

"Wait a moment," said the father. "Tell me what happened in the forest."

So the mother told about the dwarf and the forest which had pelted her with pine cones.

"This is not BAD magic," said the father, "This is GOOD magic. That dwarf you met in the forest must have been King Laurin, the Dwarf King himself! He is known to be very grumpy. But he is also known to have a kind heart where poor people are concerned. He has tried to help us! You must take some of these silver pine cones to town and sell them. You will be able to buy food and wood! Our fortune has changed."

So the mother went to town with three silver pine cones. And when she had sold them there was enough money to buy food for the family and gifts for the children besides! What a feast they had that Christmas Day!

But the father still lay ill in his bed.

After Christmas dinner was done, the mother took raisins and spices and made a Christmas

cake. She iced it prettily, wrapped it, and placed it in her basket. Then she set off for the forest once more.

When she reached the pine forest of the Dwarf King Laurin, the mother set the cake gently on the ground and started to leave. A fierce voice boomed after her:

"BY MY BOOTS AND BY MY BEARD!
WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS?"

"It's a gift. I wanted to thank you."

The Dwarf King grumbled and stroked his beard.

"BY MY BOOTS AND BY MY BEARD!
THEN I'LL GIVE you A GIFT!"

The Dwarf King leaned over and scraped away the snow from the ground. He picked a small herb that was growing there beneath the snow and handed it to the woman.

"BY MY BOOTS AND BY MY BEARD!
MAKE TEA FOR YOUR SICK HUSBAND!"

The woman took the herb and hurried from the forest. She put the herb in a pot of water. She boiled it and made tea. But when the tea was done the water was a bright GREEN!

"Husband this is bad magic. Maybe the Dwarf King sent you poison."

"Would the Dwarf King send us silver yesterday and poison us today?" said her husband.
"Give it to me. I will drink it."

And the husband drank down all of that green tea. As soon as he had swallowed the tea, his health returned. The strength came back to his arms. His head cleared. He was as well as ever. From that day on things went well for this family. The children grew and prospered.

They worked hard and earned their daily bread. But once in a while, when something special was needed, the mother would go to town and sell a silver pine cone. Much joy came of them. But all of the pine cones were not sold. One silver pine cone was given to each child for a keepsake. Those children are grown now and their children are grown. But I am told that each family still treasures its silver pine cone...

Storytelling Groups/contacts

Regional Contacts

The person nearest to you should be happy to talk to you or help you arrange an occasion or start a group or just talk storytelling! If there is no one in your area perhaps YOU would be the regional contact. Let us know.

Auckland	7.30pm 1st Thursday of month	Margaret Blay 09 630 6774	40 Croyden Street, Mount Eden, 1024 margaretblay@gmail.com
Thames	7.30pm 1st Wed of month	Jackie Black 07 868 1181	29 Station Road, Puriri, RD1 Thames
Central Hawkes Bay	Phone for details	Mary Kippenberger 06 856 8367	212 Argyll Road, RD1 Otane marykipp@hotmail.com
Wairarapa	Email for details gaye@storyweaver.co.nz	Gaye Sutton	Gaye Sutton, Te Pukeko, Chester Road, Rd1
Manawatu	Phone for details	Ken Benn 06 359 5024	3 Hardie Street, Palmerston North, kenbenn@paradise.net.nz
Wellington	7.30pm 1st Tuesday of month	Tony Hopkins 04 381 3307 txt 027 737 3185	blackcherokee@actrix.co.nz
Blenheim	7pm, 2nd Thursday monthly	Katrina Oliver 03 577 7787	katrinao@xtra.co.nz
Canterbury	7.30pm third Wed of the month Sydenham Room, South Library, 66 Colombo Street	Sharon Moreham Tel 03 9677 888 Mob 022-121-3648	thestorycollectivechch@gmail.com
Timaru	3.30pm last Tuesday monthly in Timaru Library	027 292 5270	dockrill@xtra.co.nz
Dunedin	Phone for details	Kaitrin McMullan 03 467 9550	305 Malvern Street, Dunedin mail@kaitrin.co.nz
Invercargill	7.30pm 4th Tuesday of month	Heather Perriam 021 180 6690	hrp@xtra.co.nz
Balclutha	7pm 2nd Wednesday monthly	Vicki Woodrow, Clutha Library	raine@ihug.co.nz
Okato	7 pm 1 st Thursday of the month Step into Story	Lesley Dowding 06 772 4545	lezley@xtra.co.nz

If there are any changes, please let me know.

Sender
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c/o Elizabeth Miller
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