

The Storyline

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



*To learn and never be filled.
Is wisdom:
To teach and never be weary
Is love*



MARCH 2018

Editorial

We have no control over the past.

What we do next is the issue.

"Don't let anyone's opinion kill your belief in yourself" – author unknown.

This was in our newspaper.

Kenny Rodger's dad once said: "A man/woman is really judged by how much he/she gives back."

This from our father of storytelling, Derek Gordon:

Greetings One & All,

Today is my 71st birthday. I have spoken to some of you about recent events in my life. To some I have not. Here goes.

Before Christmas I experienced discomfort while swallowing food. On January 17th I had a gastroscopy, which revealed a 10 cm cancer in the esophagus. On Jan 30 I had a CT scan. Yesterday, Jan 31st, Pamela & I sat down with the medical team at North Shore Hospital. By that time they also had results from biopsies & blood tests. Cancer cells have migrated from the esophagus to the liver and other places. Lymph. Lung. (Although lungs were basically clear in X-ray a week or so ago.) The team has explained that they cannot cure this. Mainly because it has gone to the liver. The word 'palliative' was mentioned quite a lot. In 2 weeks time I will have an appointment with the Oncology people at Auckland Hospital. They will advise on options. Mainly perhaps to reduce the cancer in the esophagus for comfort of eating. At present I am fine with soft & blended foods. Later if I am in too much discomfort in this regard they can put in a metal stent.

I might not reach my next birthday. Depending. I am fit in every other way – but I am a pragmatist and understand scientific evidence. On the other hand, I am not giving up myself to doom & gloom – it is not my style to become self-absorbed in my own suffering. I have an extraordinary woman in my life. Pamela is responding with enormous strength, love, wisdom and support.

I have wonderful daughters, wider family & friendship networks. I'm continuing to live life and enjoy life.

Now, please do not be inhibited about phoning me or emailing or whatever!!

I am up and running, smiling still, making my usual black humour (some of you will recall the Monty Python skit about the dinner party and the salmon mousse, with Death plus scythe calling - 'Well that's put a bit of a blight on the evening!' - quite - and you'll be thinking, yes, poor blighter, but look, for the moment, it is live for the moment, have courage, love one another, keep on giving, keep on counting blessings, keep the lovelight flowing...

Ph no.: landline 09 426 7032, mob 027 496 9296. Some of you will probably get calls from me too.

Yours truly,

Derek Gordon .

P.S.

I am happy to look at 'alternative medicine' but I am not going to go silly on that – not going to search the planet for a John of God or some darned miracle worker. If some of you have some ideas, great, feed them to me, but I don't want to go wacky. Although I have an open mind, I also have great respect for scientific evidence.

Talking to Derek on the phone after his email came through he passed on a piece of wisdom he said I had given him many years ago and that he had passed on, with acknowledgement, ever since. I don't recall saying this:

"Always look for the magic in people because everyone has some magic regardless of their dross."

I believe it, even if I don't recall saying it. Thank you, Derek



*The flower that Blooms in Adversity is the most
Rare and Beautiful of all. - Emperor Mulan*

Liz Miller,
Editor
lizm@outlook.co.nz

President's Report March 2018

Isn't 2018 rushing by? We've already said goodbye to summer and are racing through another autumn. Stop the planet - I want to get off... We all lead such busy lives, even Liz who is supposedly retired, is a very busy lady doing many things for many groups and individuals, including keeping this Guild ticking along – she is both secretary and treasurer, as well as magazine editor.

It's been great to hear recently of some more storytelling events happening around the country. Wellington's Storytelling Café's monthly 'Story and Laughter' events, several international tellers visiting our shores and getting in touch with local groups, a small company offering storytelling workshops in schools, all the wonderful things that are happening in Christchurch, the Belly of the Whale folk, the plans to bring Shonaleigh back in 2019... There seems to be a momentum around storytelling in New Zealand at the moment. And that is very heartening!

It's still a mystery to me, though, why some people / groups that are active in storytelling do not support the New Zealand Guild. We've heard tell that we must be a stuffy, stuck-up bunch if we are calling ourselves a 'Guild'. Well, would it be any better if we used the word 'Association'? Or 'Society'? 'Guild' was chosen many years ago and reflected what other storytelling groups around the world were calling themselves. Who cares what name is used, anyway?



The entire point of the guild was – and still is – to connect those that have a passion for stories and storytelling. To connect us. That's it. And, honestly, if you've met Liz or myself, or talked with us or emailed us, you would know that there is nothing stuffy or stuck up about either of us. We are two very ordinary people trying our very best to keep the Guild ticking over, and we do this because we believe it is important.

So, if you know anyone who is active in storytelling – or even not active but is passionate about it – please pass onto them some information about our Guild, encourage them to make contact. Because maybe we can't do anything for them beyond connecting them to other Guild members, but maybe they can offer something that will help our Guild grow.

And to Derek, Bringwonder, one of the founding members of our Guild, we offer our thoughts, prayers, wishes and love. Kia kaha, Derek.

Happy telling, all.

Tania Faulkner-McKenzie
andrewtania@hotmail.com

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.

The website has brought some interesting enquiries and told us about some interesting people.

We had Louise Weeks asking about storytelling workshops available in Auckland and Jill

Johnson was here from USA. I did try to call her on the phone but didn't ever quite make it.

Then there is:

Hi,

My name is Hiroshi, a Rakugo storyteller based in Auckland. Rakugo is a Japanese traditional art of comedy storytelling with a history of over 300 years. I have 3 years experience in this art form, and I am now considering sharing it with the New Zealand audience in the English language. My website is www.rakugonz.com

As I am very new to storytelling, especially in English (though I have lived in NZ for 15 years), I am looking for opportunities to develop my storytelling skills in general. I was wondering if you offer any workshops, mentoring programmes, etc. in Auckland. Do you have a storytelling group here? Please let me know. Thank you!

Hiroshi.

I sent this on to Margaret Blay but some of you may like to look on his website or connect with Hiroshi.

Then there was Tsunio who sent from Japan to find out about our tellers visiting here in Southland as he thought he might come. It will be so good if he does.

We emailed the Festival Booklet so he could see what else was happening.

Sometimes we get enquiries about joining and although the form is on the web site I still answer and send one on just in case.

We are a small group and sometimes I wonder why we keep on as even some of the people who are professional tellers do not pay the \$25 a year and add their voice to the list.

Do you know anyone in your area?

Have you suggested that they be a member?

Sometimes I wonder who will keep it alive when - well I won't suggest that but you might like to finish that thought yourself.

Secretary/Treasurer/Editor

Regional News

Sharon has asked me to put something together for Storylines.

Our next Natural Born Storytellers evening is 6 April ('Family Myths and Urban Legends'), and then 15 June (theme to be announced). I have attached the poster for April.

Warm wishes, Celia

Natural Born Storytellers 'Family myths & urban legends'

This month we are after stories of heroes, legends and fools. Every family has its own lore – the stories that are told again and again... the eccentric uncle who was a champion yodeller... the second cousin who foiled a bank raid... the day grandma cast a spell and it worked! These are the tales that grow taller in the telling – and we like them the better for it. Bring yours or come and listen.



Each month we partner with another creative enterprise,
more information to come.



Friday 6 April

XCHC @ 376 Wilsons Road

Stories from 7:30pm (Free Entry!)

www.thestorycollective.nz

XCHC

The
Story
Collective

True-life tales are catching on

The Story Collective, Christchurch-Otautahi, is now in its third year of hosting Natural Born Storytellers evenings at the cafe/bar 'Exchange Christchurch' on Wilson's Road. The evenings are proving popular with an invitation to anyone who feels inclined to tell a tale that happened to them in real life. Each evening follows a theme, usually volunteered by the audience, and we encourage a broad interpretation. The result is a mix of funny, tragic, astounding, touching and terrible tales. With a warm and attentive audience, even people who have never told a story in public before find themselves taking hold

of the microphone and speaking up. It's great to watch a vibrant story community developing.

The next NBS evening is on 6 April when the theme will be 'Family Myths and Urban Legends'. Did you have a relative who was a hero on the quiet? Was your uncle a local celebrity? Did a distant cousin do something extraordinary? Or perhaps you lived nextdoor to a famous film star - or witnessed a 'curious incident' in the neighbourhood. If you would like to tell a story - get in touch (or come along to listen.) Free entry.

WELLINGTON

Last Sunday of the month, The Scruffy Bunny Improv Theatre Courtenay Central, 100 Courtenay Place, Te Aro, Wellington 6011, 4pm. Admission by donation

Stand & Deliver is proud to present, Story and Laughter at The Scruffy Bunny Improv Theatre located within The Courtyard, monthly storytelling shows starting from Sunday 25th February at 4pm.

This month's tellers are Susan Gordon and Caroline Welkin. See <https://www.facebook.com/events/1989061894689947/> for more info. They're seasoned, sassy comedians and storytellers.

Storytelling, so they say, is the reason people invented fire, so they could stay up late listening to the stories.

And if you believe that, you'll believe all of our tall tales and true! You're just our kind of audience. It'll be the perfect spot for entertainment for an hour or so for you on the last Sunday of the month.

Storytellers bring old tales to life with lively interpretations, and new tales to light, some tales come from the moment and some are finally revealed. All are crafted with care for your enjoyment. If you're bored hearing those

same old family stories over dinner again and again, come and hear some new tales. If those tales are so good they should be shared, here is the place to do it.



Each month there will be feature tellers and stories, as well as an opportunity to share tales yourself, or pick up some ideas to create them. Look out for our different themes. We will feature tellers old and new, and also hope

to collar any national or international tellers passing through Wellington to share stories too.

Please be aware that whilst there is no age restriction, generally tales are told by adults for adults, so parental guidance may or may not be required. We hope to have at least one special event just for children during the year.

Produced by Caroline Welkin, a regular with The Storytellers Café over the years, and a stalwart of the comedy scene since most of the current comedians don't know when, this show will bring all styles of story to this spoken word venue.

Story & Laughter by Story & Laughter

Messages to and from Derek

Thank you so much dear, dear friends for your loving, kind, and thoughtful words. I am attempting to reply individually to all messages that I am receiving during this extraordinary time - but it does take time! Please know that I so much appreciate your responses. They give me strength, even more courage, and spiritual calm.

Love to all,
Derek Gordon

Thank you for this sharing. I don't know Derek, but I have emailed him with well-wishes and ideas for healing resources I can share if he's interested. Since I lost a beloved sister in 2011 to metastasised cancer, part of my mission is to support others in creating a different end to their stories.

Arohanui and blessings to you
Lethea

Dear Derek

So good to get your message of love and care.

We have shared many occasions of storytelling - and we had so much fun ! And gave a lot of enjoyment.

I'm now in Southern California, and the main recipients of my stories are my three lovely grandchildren 3,5,7 years old, who are now using their own vivid imaginations to make up stories.

God bless you and give you strength, dear Derek!

Warm hug
Antoinette Everts

What a sad thing. I only spoke to him a few times at Glistening Waters, and remember his wonderful rendering of Homer. A measured, resonant voice. A wise soul, true to his art. Be strong for him.

With love
Barbara

Fantastic letter! Good luck with the storytelling at the Scruffy Bunny!! Congratulations to Caroline Welkin and everyone who has put energy into this.

At present, I am reminding myself that my story is not yet finished! We are seeing Oncology for the first time today at 2.30, they might have some strategies, though they are talking palliative not curative...I am feeling good, very positive, still living my creative life, accepting some complementary medicines.

Go you all! Stories empower, fill us with love (is all you need) inspiration - and they give direction! (remember Homer, THE ILIAD, 'to the singers also belong the pathways...', remember Odysseus, ever seeking a good direction home, remember the two paths in the story of Ivan and the Firebird...

Take strength, courage, energy and love where'er you go, whatever you tell...

Love you all,

Derek Gordon (aka Bringwonder the Storyteller)



SOUTHLAND

Your president and I have been quite busy and are about to be even busier.

We told stories at the Southland A&P Show which was interesting and exhausting but valuable.

Then we told at the Plunket Teddy Bears' Picnic which drew on more of our skills.

As this next weekend looms we have a full day sharing heritage stories and workshoping for people working in museums, transport museums and such.

Quite daunting as it is not our usual storytelling style. We have four students who will share their stories, too, and working with them to get them ready is heartwarming indeed.

I was looking through a treasured notebook which was given to me many years ago – 1987 – and found this on one of the pages which I want to share with you all:

***Travel.
if you must,
leave your home
and find your highway,
ride the desert lands
and the mountains.***

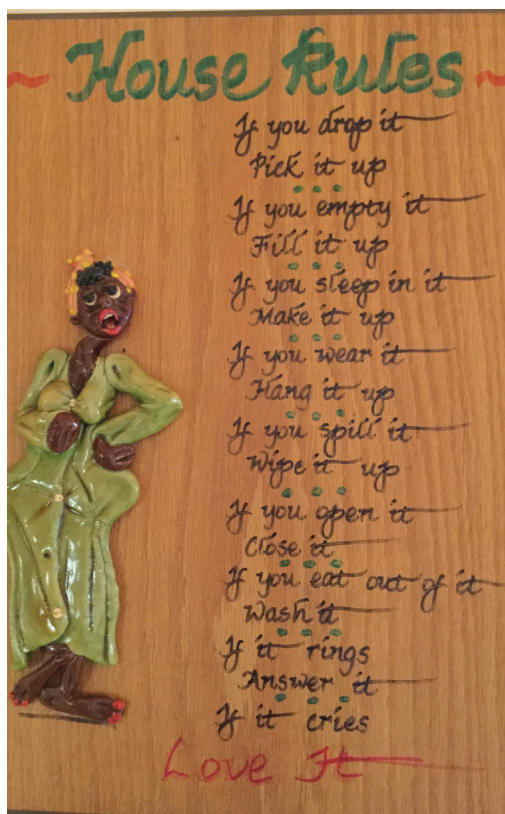
***Do what you want,
but don't forget what
you have been,
because what you are,
and what you will be
cannot be separated
from what you were
before your travels
began.***

And then there is our big event coming in May.

Things are slowly falling into place with 3 of the 6 schools already fully booked, somewhere to stay when we have a night in Queenstown and our Invercargill Licensing Trust has come to the party with a voucher to take Diane and Anna to the Ascot with the committee on the Saturday night.

We think that National Radio will be interviewing our tellers one Sunday afternoon soon and that will be so good as it brings our art to the public mind.

When we have stayed with Diane in Oakland I have always valued her House Rules and I took a picture last time I was there. She said I could share them with you all.



The dreams of three little trees

Once upon a mountain top, three little trees stood and dreamed of what they wanted to become when they grew up. The first little tree looked up at the stars and said: "I want to hold treasure. I want to be covered with gold and filled with precious stones. I'll be the most beautiful treasure chest in the world!" The second little tree looked out at the small stream trickling by on its way to the ocean. "I want to be travelling mighty waters and carrying powerful kings. I'll be the strongest ship in the world!" The third little tree looked down into the valley below where busy men and women worked in a busy town. "I don't want to leave the mountain top at all. I want to grow so tall that when people stop to look at me, they'll raise their eyes to heaven and think of God. I will be the tallest tree in the world."

Years passed. The rain came, the sun shone, and the little trees grew tall. One day three woodcutters climbed the mountain. The first woodcutter looked at the first tree and said, "This tree is beautiful. It is perfect for me." With a swoop of his shining axe, the first tree fell. "Now I shall be made into a beautiful chest, I shall hold wonderful treasure!" The first tree said.

The second woodcutter looked at the second tree and said, "This tree is strong. It is perfect for me." With a swoop of his shining axe, the second tree fell. "Now I shall sail mighty waters!" thought the second tree. "I shall be a strong ship for mighty kings!"

The third tree felt her heart sink when the last woodcutter looked her way. She stood straight

and tall and pointed bravely to heaven. But the woodcutter never even looked up. "Any kind of tree will do for me." He muttered. With a swoop of his shining axe, the third tree fell.

The first tree rejoiced when the woodcutter brought her to a carpenter's shop. But the carpenter fashioned the tree into a feedbox for animals. The once beautiful tree was not covered with gold, with treasure. She was coated with saw dust and filled with hay for hungry farm animals.

The second tree smiled when the woodcutter took her to a shipyard, but no mighty sailing ship was made that day. Instead the once strong tree was hammered and sawed into a simple fishing boat. She was too small and too weak to sail to an ocean, or even a river; instead she was taken to a little lake.

The third tree was confused when the woodcutter cut her into strong beams and left her in a lumberyard.

"What happened?" The once tall tree wondered. "All I ever wanted was to stay on the mountain top and point to God..."

Many, many, days and nights passed. The three trees

nearly forgot their dreams. But, one night, golden starlight poured over the first tree as a young woman placed her newborn baby in the feedbox. "I wish I could make a cradle for him." Her husband whispered. The mother squeezed his hand and smiled as the starlight shone on the smooth and the sturdy wood. "This manger is beautiful." She said. And suddenly the first tree



knew he was holding the greatest treasure in the world.

One evening a tired traveller and his friends crowded into the old fishing boat. The traveller fell asleep as the second tree quietly sailed out into the lake. Soon a thundering and thrashing storm arose. The little tree shuddered. She knew she did not have the strength to carry so many passengers safely through with the wind and the rain. The tired man awakened. He stood up, stretched out his hand, and said, "Peace." The storm stopped as quickly as it had begun. And suddenly the second tree knew he was carrying the king of heaven and earth.

One Friday morning, the third tree was startled when her beams were yanked from the forgotten woodpile. She flinched as she was carried through an angry jeering crowd. She shuddered when soldiers nailed a man's hands to her. She felt ugly and harsh and cruel. But on Sunday morning, when the sun rose and the earth trembled with joy beneath her, the third tree knew that God's love had changed everything. It had made the third tree strong. And every time people thought of the third tree, they would think of God. That was better than being the tallest tree in the world.

Traditional folk tale sent in by Mary Sheddon

*"Stories make us
more alive,
more human, more
courageous,
more loving."*

Madeleine L'Engle

It is no co-incidence that just at this point in our insight into our mysteriousness as human beings struggling towards compassion, we are also moving into an awakened interest in the language of myth and fairytale. The language of logical arguments, of proofs, is the language of the limited self we know and can manipulate. But the language of parable, and poetry, of storytelling, moves from the imprisoned language of the provable into the freed language of what I must, for lack of another word, continue to call faith. *Madeleine L'Engle*

Also sent in by Mary Sheddon

THIS DAY'S Greatest GIFT

We can't change the past...
But we can gather up
It's lessons and move on,
Stronger and wiser.
We can't control the future...
But we can send our dreams
Ahead of us
To help prepare the way.
We can live each moment...
Heart and soul,
And cherish this day's
Greatest gift...
The gift of now.
And faith in the future,
Gently guide you through each
Precious moment of Today.

Timely tale of a horse.

By Neville Guthrie of Timaru

Times were tough for Northland farmers in 1921. The Great War was over but their incomes had not risen much, there were more imported things to buy but prices were high. Dome Farm provided most food for Grandfather's large family of ten children but fertiliser, many tools and items of good clothing were imported and expensive so to raise extra money he'd become a part time drover. This often involved being away from home for days at a time. He travelled long distances on horse-back to drive cattle and horses to and from stock sales. Some cattle were quite wild, difficult to control and easily frightened.

A number of Auckland businesses had recently begun importing those new-fangled automobiles from America and selling them to wealthy businessmen. Grandfather considered them noisy, smelly rattle-traps which had no right to be on country roads. All they did, he said, was kick up a lot of dust and frighten horses and cattle.

Early one morning, while bringing a mob of east coast cattle along a country road towards the sale-yards at Warkworth, he noticed a pair of wheel-tracks made by one of these automobiles which veered off into roadside scrub. Investigating, he discovered a broken-off fence post, snapped and tangled wires, leaving a gap in the fence which stock could easily escape through. Knowing the farmer Grandfather guided his cattle to a grassy patch to rest then hurried to inform him of the damaged fence.

"Thanks very much, Mark. I'll get Old Rangi onto fixing that right away."

Rangi was an elderly Maori who'd had a disagreement with his iwi so wasn't welcome to live with them anymore. Jake Grimmer, the farmer, had let Rangi live in a hut on his property in return for doing odd jobs around the farm. Rangi was considerably over-weight, moved slowly and relied on an old grey horse to carry him wherever he wanted to go.

That particular morning a retired Auckland couple decided to go for a drive in their new automobile.

"What's the time, Albert?" asked his wife as the couple's shiny new horseless carriage chugged and spluttered its way along a narrow country road.

"Sorry, dear, I don't know. My watch stopped yesterday. I haven't had it fixed yet."

"Well, ask that man over there," she said, pointing at the severely stretched trouser seat of Rangi who was bent over digging a post hole.

"Excuse me, my man, could you tell me the time, please?"

"I'll cost ya," replied Rangi.

"What! You expect payment just for telling me the time? How utterly preposterous!"

"Suit yourself," was the reply.

"Do hurry up, Albert," came a voice from the car.

"Oh, alright," said Albert handing Rangi a silver thrupence.

"I'll have to ask me horse," Rangi told him, pocketing the coin and slowly walking to where his old, sway-backed grey horse stood in the shadow of a totara tree. Kneeling down behind the animal he gently raised the offside rear hoof. Then rising to his feet he returned to the fence and pronounced,

"The time is five minutes past ten." Albert returned to the car, informed his wife of the time adding,

"Well, that's what his horse told him!" He shoved the gear lever aggressively sideways causing the vehicle to lurch forward in a cloud of dust. About ten minutes later he brought the car to a halt in the small township of Kaipara Flats, right in front of the Post Office. This building had a small tower projecting from its roof which housed the town clock. Albert noticed it showed the time

as ten fifteen so realised the horse's estimate of the time must have been quite accurate after all. The more he thought about it the more amazing it seemed.

That evening Albert attended the automobile club and reported on his trip into the northern countryside. His remarks about the amazing accuracy of a horse at telling time brought a few chuckles and surprised looks. A couple of characters then decided they might be able to make money for such a horse so next morning set out to find it. Sure enough there was Rangi still fixing the fence. Brian approached him and asked the time.

"It'll cost ya," was Rangi's reply.

"Yes, yes I know. Here's your thrupence."

"I'll have to ask me horse," Rangi he told him and headed over to the resting animal. Brian and his associate, Joe, watched the Maori's every move as he picked up the horse's hoof to examine it. When he returned to the fence and reported the time as being a quarter to eleven Brian promptly drew from his pocket an elaborately engraved gold pocket watch and stated,

"The time is actually precisely – ten forty-five. Oh my god, the horse got it right. How did you do that?" he demanded of Rangi. "How could a horse possibly know the correct time?"

"You must tell us. We need to know," pleaded Joe.

"I couldn't do that," said Rangi. "It would ruin me business."

"We'll pay, we'll pay," they both chorused together.

"Cost ya two bob," Rangi told them. Joe immediately dug into his pocket and produced a silver coin which he dropped into Rangi's outstretched hand.

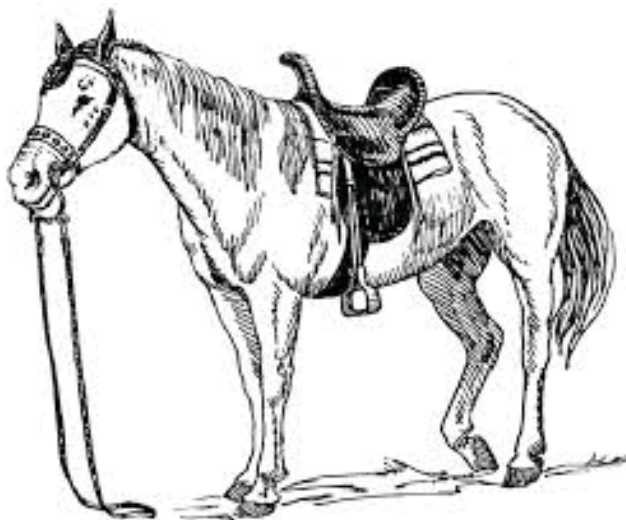
"Well, you'll have to come this side of the fence." The two townies scrambled over and joined Rangi in his walk to the horse. Brian dropped to his knees beside it saying,

"Now give me the hoof."

"You don't need a hoof," said Rangi. "Just look under the horse's belly. See that ridge of hills on the horizon over to the west?"

"Yes."

"Well, you'll see a clump of kauri trees on the top of it and a bit to the left of them you'll see a little wooden tower just showing over the ridge. That's the Kaipara Flats Post Office clock tower. Best clock I know of. Never been wrong in years."



The Blue Rose

An adapted folktale from China

Once, long ago there lived a king. He had but only one daughter who was his pride and joy. But now that the king was aging he feared that when he died she would have no one to care for her and protect her as befitting a princess. He set forth a proclamation to summon the young men to court. Many came, but all were turned away. One day the princess said to her father,

“Let me stay with you and care for you. I have no desire to marry and leave you.”

Her father remained steadfast. But, finally, he did agree to allow her to name one qualification that her chosen husband must meet – wealth, looks, strength, intelligence or ability, whatever. The princess said she would name that qualification on the morrow.

That evening the princess went for a walk in the royal garden with the gardener’s son – her childhood friend.

“If I say my husband must be fair of face, he may be handsome, but have a hardened soul. If I say he must be wealthy, he may be rich, but stingy in the ways of the heart. Oh, what qualification should I make?”

“Perhaps, you should make it some sort of test,” mused the gardener’s son. “Difficult, but not impossible. Make it ambiguous enough that it will up to you to determine whether the man qualifies.” Far into the night they discussed what that test should be.

The next morning the princess met with her father. “Father, I will marry the man who can bring me a blue rose.”

As you can imagine the line of suitors came to an abrupt halt – for none could find a blue rose.

Several months passed before a wealthy merchant decided he wanted to marry the princess. After all the added wealth of the king’s ransom would make him the richest man in the whole kingdom. He did not want to waste any of his precious time looking for a blue rose. Time was money! So, he went to a flower vendor. He

placed a bag of gold on the vendor’s cart and said,

“If you can acquire a blue rose, this bag of gold is yours.” The vendor took a strong blue dye and added it to a vase. He cut the end of the stem of a white rose and let it sit. Soon the petals of the rose turned pale blue. As the vendor gladly accepted the gold he said, “Keep the rose in the vase until you are ready to present it to the princess or it may wither and die.”

The merchant brought the rose to the princess. When she reached out to take the rose, a drop of blue dye puddled in her hand. She looked not only at the blue rose, but the bluish-green leaves and then into the eyes of the merchant. He could not look at her. “You have tried to deceive me. What you have given me is false. I would have a husband that is true.” And the merchant went away in disgrace.

Several more weeks passed when a handsome young warrior decided he wanted the hand of the beautiful princess. After all, she would look lovely on his arm as he came home from war. He was strong and powerful and no one dared to stand against him. Since there were no blue roses to be had in this kingdom, he went to see the king of a neighbouring kingdom and said,

“Bring me a blue rose or I will kill you and half the people in your village.” The king, who valued peace and did not wish to fight, called for an artisan who carved an exquisite rose from a blue sapphire.

When he presented it to the princess she looked into his eyes and could see they were as cold and hard as the rose made of stone.

“This is not a rose. I cannot marry you. I must have a rose that is soft and gentle not cold and hard.”

Now the youngest of the king’s advisors also



sought the hand of the princess. He was very smart. He knew how to play all the angles. He knew if he married the princess he would be the most powerful man in the kingdom. So, he went to see the wizard. "Fashion me a blue rose," he commanded. "It must fool all who look but most especially the princess." The wizard was able to capture the essence of a blue rose in a hologram that appeared inside a glass box.

When he presented it to the princess, the court was astounded. Surely, the princess would recognize this as a blue rose. It was magnificent. And indeed, the princess was fascinated. However, when she reached out to touch it, the image slipped through her fingers.

"This is not a blue rose, but merely smoke and mirrors. I will not marry someone who twists and turns things around to his advantage. I will not marry you."

Later that night the princess sat in the garden with the gardener's son. "None of them could bring me a blue rose. I must marry someone who is honest and true – as you have been. He cannot be hard and cruel, but someone kind and patient – as you have been. I do not want a husband who seeks only the power of one day becoming king, but someone who will value me for who and what I am – as you have."

"Princess," said the young man, "Tomorrow, I will bring you the blue rose. Wait for me in the blue room just before sundown."

The next day the sun was almost gone when the Princess and the royal court met in the blue room. The gardener's son appeared in the doorway carrying an ordinary white rose.

"Look! It's the gardener's son. What is he doing here?"

"Is that a common white rose he is carrying?"

"Surely someone will send him away."

The young man knelt before the princess. Through the blue stained glass, the rays of the setting sun lit upon the petals of the white rose. The princess reached out and put her hand upon his. And through the murmurings of the court she said, "My people, let me tell you what I see. I see a young man who has always been honest

and true. I see a man who has the courage to be patient and kind enough to wait until I knew what was in my heart. I see a man who values me for myself. In his hand he holds the gift of love. It is a blue rose, because I say it is a blue rose

Need I tell you that the princess and the gardener's son were married, and that they lived happily ever after – not because this storyteller said it should be so nor that all good fairy tales say that it should be so. But because the princess and the young man knew their happiness was in their own hands and that each was responsible for making sure the other was happy.

We have a columnist in our newspaper who offers snippets of history.

This last week Lloyd Esler had a piece about the very first visit by a jet to Invercargill.

May 6th 1946 when I was ten years old. It was Wing Commander Johnny Checketts who flew a Gloster Meteor over the city. The next jet didn't fly here until 1953. Lloyd says that one spectator says the Meteor came down Dee Street and then turned down Tay Street before I realised it was there. It was a terrifying impression created by the low level of fast flying. Then there was the impression given by the daily poet, Fred Miller, who was my father.

***"Oh yes I saw the Meteor
But still I have a grouse.
To keep it in my sight I had
To scamper round the house.
And round and round and round I went
And nearly met disaster.
For with a roar the Meteor
Circled round much faster.
I heard of other folk indeed
Who as the plane they viewed
Found in their annoyance that
Their necks had come unscrewed.
Up and down the streets it roared
Shaking every rafter
The noise it made it left behind
To stagger lamely after.
Oh yes we saw it as it came
A rush and then a roar –
Here it comes, a distant speck –
That WAS the Meteor!"***

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.

NORTHLAND/ FAR NORTH		Keith Levy The Roaming Rhymester	027 477 0211 keith@keithlevy.com
AUCKLAND		Margaret Blay (09) 630 6774	40 Croyden Street Mount Eden, 1024 margaretblay@gmail.com
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
WELLINGTON	The Scruffy Bunny Improv Theatre 100 Courtenay Place Last Sunday of the month	Caroline E Welkin (04) 934 0033 027 642 7222	
CANTERBURY		Sharon Moreham (03) 967 7888 022 121 3648	thestorycollectivechch@gmail.com
TIMARU	3:30pm last Tuesday of month in Timaru Library	027 292 5270	dockrill@xtra.co.nz
INVERCARGILL	7:30pm 4th Tuesday of month	Heather Perriam 021 180 6090	hrp@xtra.co.nz
OKATO	7:00pm 1st 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
New Zealand Guild of Storytellers
c/o Elizabeth Miller
191 Princes Street
Invercargill - 9812
New Zealand