

## APRIL

### Writing from in-person group which takes place Wednesday 10.30-12.30

People share (non-obligatory) homework at the start of each session before further writing, reading and discussion. (Apologies, some items reformatted to save space):

#### Rest and be thankful (Pauline)

Rest and be thankful. That is music to my ears. I've had a hard life. Work, work, work makes Pauline a dull girl. No time to have fun is no time at all. But now I'm retired it's like all my birthdays have come at once, because I can please myself what I do and when I do it. Hats off to Britain's pension scheme.

#### Spring awakenings (Rachel)

Flowers starting to bloom in the garden, morning dew on the grass. Spring is in the air. Lighter nights and sun reflecting through my bedroom window. Animals getting ready to come out of hibernation. Spring is awakening at last.

#### Word (Jane)

Everybody's heard about the word. But what is the word? It's not the bird I can assure you. Hearing that song in my head and repeating it over and over but no bird is not the word. So, what pray tell is the word. Well, I suppose the word could be anything you wanted it to be. Your favourite sounding word perhaps. Or maybe the word of a book. A single word title or maybe the word can be something that gives a feeling. One that brings a whole new meaning to any word. Only one word is needed. Hope.

#### Fog (Andy)

John, bless him, helped alleviate the feeling of depression by telling me that fog was just the earth being wrapped in a protective blanket. (Extract from a longer piece)

#### The Ooja (Jo)

In a kettle in the wood, the little ooja sleeps,  
He waits until the dark, dark night before he dares to creep.  
Towards the large old bongo tree, where all his food is stored:  
Bits of bacon, cold rice pudding, these are the things to gorge.  
His batlike ears twitch to and fro, his ginger fur gleams bright,  
His large brown eyes and snuffling nose searching through the night.  
A cracking twig makes him jump, his tail he flicks in fright,  
He runs ---- at last his home he sees, now he's safe for night.  
(5/10/1973)

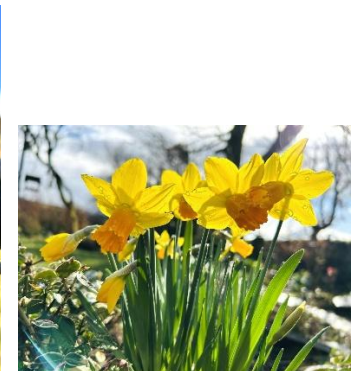
#### The shed (Tina)

It was once a cast iron meat hook. Now used  
As an old, rusted hanger for Granddad's  
Brown jute sacks. Sacks hung all  
threadbare and sad  
As they'd hung for a decade unused.  
Filled once with home grown prize  
winning  
Varieties only. And there is an old box  
In the corner, to the left. It's my box  
The musty smell of the shed is leaving  
Me now. I'm sitting in a car he had  
Made from a box. All around is the tang  
Scent of Sweet peas, Snapdragons  
White Stocks and Snowdrops  
I pick up the box, with no regret  
As I think I have found  
What it was I came to get.

#### Beautiful things (Tia)

A story can have a beautiful ending. Nature is beautiful in many ways; its wonders make us smile. A newborn baby, a new life, an added family photograph on the sideboard. Photographs of friends celebrating the mystery within their faces – sharing a secret. A song, all things bright and beautiful puts life into perspective, all creatures great and small, appreciation of everything around us all – that we can take for granted.

Just some of the wonderful **photos** taken at BV and Pam's, guided by **Cathy Bower; cotton tote bags and notebooks** with the images applied; **Tia's bag**, further embellished.



## APRIL DETAILS

### You, our participants

currently contribute to our rent in Fountain Street and help keep our services going with donations, large and small, in cash and in kind.

**Vitaly, you are also supporting one another.**

#### Stage (Will)

She stood upon the stage and gazed out over the empty seats, it's been years since this place was filled and tickets flew from the ticket booths, it wasn't due to the decline of the town or the lack of interest, it was by the hands of time and mainly the fog, so little few wander the streets nowadays, they hide behind their shutters or simply vanished on one of the fishing vessels that disappeared a few weeks after the fog arrived or... she banished the rest of the thought from her mind, took in a deep breath and exited the stage.

#### Beautiful things (Bill)

You lift your small, purple faces slowly, tentatively feeling your upward way. Shyly embracing the great "yellow orb" till you meet in a warm embrace.

#### Space (Maggie)

I have so little space now.  
One room, one bedroom and a tiny office space.  
I need that space to lay my papers out to have my folders all to hand.  
I cannot bear it to be crammed.  
A sofa bed for visitors?

I can spread out on the dining table  
And then my Indie can stay over  
or my Max, or Tom, or Dave or Sue.  
And it will fold away most of the time.

I'll add some squashy cushions,  
which my Stanley cat will love.  
That's a better use of such a space.



#### Contact details:

Leek Health Centre, Fountain St  
Leek, ST13 6JB (Andy collects mail weekly)

**Phone: 01538 528708**

**Mobile: 07760 138395** (now on a better connection)

Email: [info@borderlandvoices.org.uk](mailto:info@borderlandvoices.org.uk)

Website: [www.borderlandvoices.org.uk](http://www.borderlandvoices.org.uk)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1398672493722468>

Borderland Voices contact **Andy Collins: at home but Wed in Leek**

# Borderland Voices

27 years of arts for mental wellbeing



## The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

### Newsletter APRIL 2025

**In-person sessions, Leek Health Centre, on Wednesdays.**

**Every Wednesday: All now back in original room**  
10.30-12.30 **Creative Writing**; 1.30-3.30 **Expressive Art**;  
4.00-5.30 **Informal DIY Drop-in.**

**To ask about spaces** email [info@borderlandvoices.org.uk](mailto:info@borderlandvoices.org.uk)

**Images:** photos, taken both at the Health centre and on the visit to **Pam's Stone Caravan**; images applied to **cotton tote bags** and **note books**; **Tia's bag**, further embellished.

**April art:** 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup> **Spring Patterns** + **Andy** (twigs, flowers, leaves, fruit and veg); 16<sup>th</sup>: **Easter cards** & gifts + **Andy**.  
**Apr 2<sup>nd</sup>** also to **catch up** with unfinished photography projects.

**Apr 30: BV Annual General Meeting** 7.30 pm, venue to be confirmed. Your chance to talk to trustees about BV's work.

**New Weekly Informal DIY Drop-in** 4.00-5.30 every **Wed.**  
**All welcome**; write, colour, or just chat over a cuppa.