

NOVEMBER

Writing from online 'Zoom' workshops (send anything to share)

People write at home and exchange their work via email, post and at regular online 'Zoom' meetings on Tuesdays at 10.30:

Psalm of Chester the Dray Horse (Mary)

Harry Carter is my Drayman: I shall not fall dead
in the shafts. When I draw over cobbles he
seeks the driest path: I will fear no slippage.
From pub to pub we earn our living: I know my
own way: a handful of bran during the un-
loading, my burden coming lighter and lighter.
He maketh me a stable under the arches in
Selby Street; he combeth my hide taking away
the day's filth: he scrapeth my shoes and oileth
my hooves: he leadeth me onto dry straw.
Before his own or his boy's meal he prepareth
a warm mash for my nosebag. A week by the
hop fields in Kent to restore our condition: here
I will be turned out when I am too old to pull:
and we shall serve the House of Charrington forever.

Happy accidents (Sheena)

It helps to lose the map. To let the compass set itself. Going the wrong way can lead to new discoveries, be a catalyst and bringer of unplanned for joys; a previously undiscovered lane or track, a different perspective or a different view. Round the next corner you may find the unexpected emergence of an unknown wood, a slinking stream, a cave within the rock. They've done a wonderful job, those painstaking, patient cartographers, making the complex earth intelligible for travellers across the world. Without them, meetings and trysts and appointments would be hard to plan. Their efforts give us satisfaction, rarely joy. For that we need the unexpectedness of serendipity. So, go, delight in diversion signs and signposts twisted round by callous youths, in altered timetables and buses missed. Something wonderful may be around that corner in an unknown street.

Mixed-up (excerpt) (Pauline) (... of all collectives) my favourite is Malapropism. Years ago my friend, Christine, was soon to become a single Mother. Claiming benefits she was asked about the unknown other. She explained to me her embarrassment, 'Oh!' she said. 'I did feel awful.' She seemed to think it wasn't lawful. 'Well!' said I, 'Your ego must've been deflated.' 'I don't know about that.' She replied. 'But I did feel illuminated.' Getting mixed up can be scary if we take things too seriously. So do we really want to miss out on the laughter? I can now embrace anything mixed up without taking it too seriously. I consider myself extremely fortunate. Not many folks can boast of having a friend called Christine Malaprop. In fact, I find it all most illuminating.

Through the looking glass (Jane)

Through the looking glass what do I see?
A face is staring back at me
Is it the type from twisted tales?
That tells of fairest femme fatale
Appearing there in a whirl of smoky hue
Which turns out to be my sleepy eyes
staring back at you.

Through the looking glass (Marlene)

What a surprise to me! After twelve days
in hospital to see the massive loss of fluid.
Weight-programmed to take the pressure
off my heart, I am now a little thin thing
which I don't mind at all. My friends say I
am too thin. I take that very little food
with a pinch of salt!

Photos, artwork and a preview of our 'Land Girls' flier

Becca's recent packs featured monochromatic colour and Halloween.



NOVEMBER DETAILS

You, our participants

currently contribute to our rent at Bank House and help keep our 'virtual' services going with donations, large and small, in cash and in kind.

You are also supporting one another through this time.

Autumn at St Luke's Churchyard

(Mark) Starlings circle and fall upon the church tower; alerted, start sudden up at a shadow across the near sky: starlings now, scattering like a charismatic prayer exploded from the sanctuary below. But only a pigeon alights, poses, primp, on a roof pinnacle. Elevated, it pivots its head, kestrel-for-a-day, silhouetted against the slate sky.

Happy little accidents *(Bill)* It seems to me, the older I get the more 'happy little accidents' I need to help me through the day, those out of the blue reminders that somehow trigger the mind at the right moment. Just small things really which can be important. The regular taking of tablets at the proper time, that phone call I intended to make, the appointment that was scheduled. I suppose it would be quite easy at this particular time to blame everything on the aging process or the pressures of daily life but this is not necessarily true. So the more 'happy little accidents' that happen to me, the better. Bring them on.

Gateway to better times *(Marion)* They wandered round the field. The gate was locked but they had berries, nuts, leaves and herbs, and the air was fresh. Soon the gate would open and they would be with their friends and loved-ones once again.



Contact details:

Bank House, 20 St Edward St
Leek, ST13 5DS (Andy collects mail weekly)

Phone: 01538 528708 (calls come up on Andy's tablet; she will respond to numbers she knows and picks up messages weekly)

New mobile: 07760 138395 (use Whatsapp if possible, as Andy's mobile signal is poor at home)

Email: info@borderlandvoices.org.uk

Website: www.borderlandvoices.org.uk

Borderland Voices contact **Andy Collins: working from home**



Borderland Voices

21 years of arts for mental wellbeing



The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service

Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2020

Zoom writing every Tues 10.30: All welcome, contact Andy.

A link to **Becca's fourth art pack** (a Halloween card) is on our website. Andy will send round a date for the next **Zoom art catch-up** later this month.

We should be in our **new premises** (in rear part of Leek Health Centre, Fountain St) by 30th November; Andy will give you the address next month.

Andy will contact you this month about **collecting any artwork** you have at Bank House – we'd rather not move it again!

The Covid situation postponed our planned **2-day drop-in arts event last month** designing **Women's Land Army posters**. But see inside for a sneak preview of fliers which will appear eventually.

The **2021 calendar** is shaping up beautifully – nearly ready for printing – so **should be ready for Christmas**.