

# Eucalypt eNews May 2019

**Submissions to Issue 27 close 30 September**

Email up to 6 tanka to [editor.eucalypt@gmail.com](mailto:editor.eucalypt@gmail.com)

Dear Poets and Friends,

By the time this newsletter reaches you, I hope that Issue 26 will have arrived in your letterbox, or at least be winging swiftly across the seas to you.

This year has been a fast-moving one for me so far, hence the lateness of the first *Eucalypt* e-newsletter for the year.

*Eucalypt* continues to publish the work of tanka poets near and far, with poems that respond to universal themes ranging from sadness to joy.

Thanks so much for being part of it!

*Julie*



## Eucalypt Writing Challenge

I've noticed that so many of our poets often write about cherished animal companions. Let's celebrate the four-legged, feathered and webbed ones in our lives!

Send up to three tanka about your dog, cat or other pet

to [editor.eucalypt@gmail.com](mailto:editor.eucalypt@gmail.com)

by 1 July 2019

to be included in a special e-newsletter  
featuring dogs, cats, birds, chickens, hamsters . . .

# Twentieth Bowerbird Tanka Group Meeting

Report by Michael Thorley



On a cool damp morning, after overnight rain, Beverley George welcomed us again to Crommelin Cottage in the Arcadian setting of the Pearl Beach Arboretum. A young kookaburra and a glossy raven joined us for lunch. Mischievous trees showered the iron roof with nuts and berries from time to time in a vain bid for attention.

Tankaists present were: Beverley George (convenor), Anne Benjamin, Kathy Kituai, Catherine Smith, Julie Thorndyke, Hazel Hall, Margaret Grace, Beatrice Yell, Kent Robinson, Colleen Keating, Gail Hennessy, Carole Harrison and Michael Thorley. Apologies from Carmel Summers, Marilyn Humbert and Yvonne Hales.

The day followed the sequence that has proved so successful in previous Bowerbird workshops, beginning with three poets sharing a favourite tanka, with an explanation of why that tanka appeals to them. This session always provides insights into the reader, the tanka, and tanka in general. It also gives richness to our understanding of 'dreaming room'. The readers today were Catherine Smith on a tanka by Claire Everett, Colleen Keating on a tanka by Kirsty Karkow and Beverley George on a tanka by Dorothy McLaughlin. These appreciations will be available on the *Eucalypt* website under ['Bowerbird'](#).



*Beverley George and Gail Hennessy*



*Colleen Keating*

Everyone joined in the second session, where a favourite tanka is read, twice, with no background, response or comment. The tanka stands on its own merits entirely.

Anne Benjamin presented the first workshop entitled 'Being Present in the Past' which opened the vast possibilities in writing tanka about events in history. Anne suggested that doing so is a two-way activity: that we can derive inspiration from history for our tanka, but also provide inspirations into history for others. Anne displayed a range of historical material around the room for our inspiration, as well as tanka written by others for us to use as stimulants. She also gave us a detailed and interesting handout to take away. The activities and discussion were involving and challenging.

At this point we congratulated Hazel Hall on her new book of tanka, tanka prose, sequences and renga – “Moonrise over the Siding.” Hazel and Kathy read one of the renga they had composed together, as did Hazel and Beverley. Beverley George read a section from Carmel Summers’ launch speech and preface to Hazel’s book.

A relaxed lunch outside followed in the sunlight of the afternoon, with the kookaburra and raven as guests. In the worst tradition our modern culture, there was a momentary culinary dispute between these two, but peace quickly returned and Our Tanka Ruled.

Kathy Kituai presented the afternoon session – “Say That Again” – on deriving inspiration from the tanka of others. She worked us through a number of intriguing exercises where we responded to initial and ending lines of others’ tanka. The results of this exercise were often surprising. Kathy emphasised that this is not plagiarism, that our tanka need to be our own, but we can build on the work of others in an original way. Kathy also shared some of the secrets of her own excellent skill with tanka: sit with the tanka and give it time to reveal itself, and always ask yourself what is the essence of the tanka, what is it centrally saying.



*Kathy Kituai*



*Anne Benjamin*



*Hazel Hall*



*Catherine Smith*

The final session, reports from other tanka groups, showed a continuing flowering of interest in this small form and a stimulating variety of activities in the groups. We heard news from Moonrise, Tanka Huddle, Bottlebrush, and Limestone. Contact details for these groups are available on the Eucalypt website under ‘[Bowerbird](#)’.

After a brief discussion with those present Beverley decided that for the immediate future the Arboretum will be the setting for Bowerbird meetings.

The meeting concluded at 3:30pm.

*Michael Thorley*



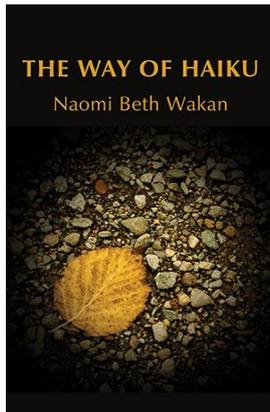
# BOOK NOTES

*Publications we have heard about . . .*

**Please send your book news to:**  
[editor.eucalypt@gmail.com](mailto:editor.eucalypt@gmail.com)

## The Way of Haiku

by Naomi Beth Wakan

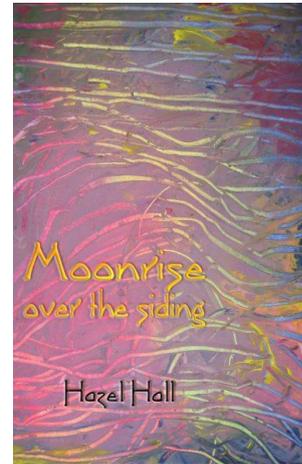


\$ 15.95 [more information](#)

## Moonrise over the Siding

by Hazel Hall

This masterful collection of tanka features the work of Hazel Hall in collaboration with other leading practitioners of the form.

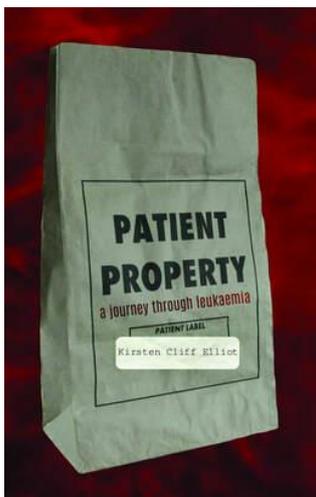


Interactive Press \$26.00  
[more information](#)

## Patient Property:

a journey through  
leukaemia

by Kirsten Cliff Elliot



Velvet Dusk Publishing \$18.40  
[more information](#)



## Mrs Rickaby's Lullaby



Published by  
Ginninderra Press, 2019.  
ISBN 9781760417093  
RRP \$27.50

## Mrs Rickaby's Lullaby

by Julie Thorndyke

Mrs Eileen Rickaby, a semi-retired botanical illustrator and Orchid Society member with a penchant for Mozart, lives a quiet ordered life with Missy, her cat. Her tranquillity is disturbed when close friend and neighbour Irene brings home a twice-widowed younger man of dubious character, and introduces him as her future husband. Petty theft, vandalism and violence disrupt the peaceful retirement village. How can Mrs Rickaby protect her friend from this con-man lover?

Ginninderra Press \$27.50  
[more information](#)



## A NEW ERA

It is known world-wide that Japan's leader, Emperor Akihito, has stepped down from office and a new era announced, currently observed by a ten-day national holiday. Those who read and write the tanka genre will be further interested to learn that the new *genko* (era name), Reiwa, relates directly to the *Man'yōshū*, Japan's oldest imperial anthology from the eighth century which contains in its 20 volumes 4, 200 tanka among its total of 4,500 poems. <sup>1</sup>

The May issue of the monthly alumni newsletter from the Ishikawa Foundation for International Exchange states: "The prime minister, Shinzo Abe, explained that Reiwa means that culture can grow when people sincerely care about each other. The Japanese people thank the current, closing Heisei era and pray that the upcoming Reiwa era will be full of hope and peace."

*Beverley George*

## ON THE WEB

*Titbits and other interesting reads . . .*

Rafael Campo reads William Carlos Williams's poem "To a Poor Old Woman" and speaks with Elisa New about enjambments, plums, and empathy <https://www.pw.org/theater?tag=To+a+Poor+Old+Woman>

Clever eucalypts remember heatwaves  
<https://www.sbs.com.au/news/clever-eucalypts-remember-heatwaves>

The sexy gum  
<https://theconversation.com/the-sexy-gum-a-love-story-115363>

Classic Poem

drifting deeply  
snow is blown by the wind  
on this cold night  
while I wonder if my love  
must also sleep alone

*Ten Thousand Leaves: Love Poems from the Man'yōshū*,  
translated by Harold Wright (1979) p.74

# Subscriptions for 2019

If you would like a PayPal invoice emailed to you for your 2019 *Eucalypt: a tanka journal* subscription, please [email me](#) as soon as possible.

**Cheques should be made out to Julie Thorndyke, please.**  
Overseas cheques incur a deposit fee, so PayPal is preferable.

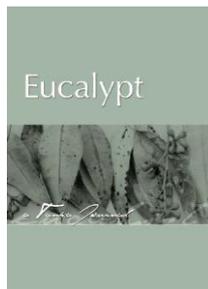
Thank you for your support!



## Missed a Eucalypt newsletter?

Back issues are archived [HERE](#)

<https://jthorndyke.wordpress.com/eucalypt-a-tanka-journal/>



### SUBMISSION CLOSING DATES:

MARCH 31  
SEPTEMBER 30

Please email poems to  
[editor.eucalypt@gmail.com](mailto:editor.eucalypt@gmail.com)

With the subject line:  
**Submission – [your surname here]**

Australian subscriptions still only \$30 AUD.  
\$40 for NZ and Japan subscribers;  
\$50 AUD for other international subscribers.  
PayPal is available.

## ABOUT EUCALYPT

Eucalypt is the first Australian journal devoted to this ancient Japanese poetry genre.

Japanese waka (now called tanka) are five-segmented poems. In English, they are usually written in five lines. Often they address profound human emotions, such as love or mourning, but can also be used to record everyday experience.

The genre is 1300 years old, but is surprisingly relevant to the way we think and feel today.

Eucalypt is a print magazine which showcases contemporary tanka poetry written in the English language, and publishes only those poems its editors consider to be of the highest standard.

Its objectives are to offer wider publication opportunities to tanka poets and to make more people aware of the delights of reading and writing tanka.

There are two issues per year, in May and in November

Julie Thorndyke  
3 Forest Knoll  
Castle Hill 2154  
NSW AUSTRALIA  
[editor.eucalypt@gmail.com](mailto:editor.eucalypt@gmail.com)