



WRITE ON!



BEFRIENDERS HIGHLAND LITERARY NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NUMBER 10

Autumn/ Winter 2016

Welcome to Issue 10 of *Write On!* We proudly have a great selection of our talented writers work published on these very pages. Enjoy the issue. As we approach the winter months why not consider starting a creative writing project of your own. Small steps could see you opening up a world of Inspiration & enjoyment, if you are looking for a starting point, we can help!

You can submit your own personal work, from stories to non-fiction & poetry or limericks along with anything else you have in mind. Alternatively we are always open to submissions in our review section; you could share your thoughts on an interesting book you have read or film/program you have seen. Muriel's writing challenge from Issue 9 is still open. Have a read of Colyn's fantastic contribution to this which he calls "Bugs".

If you are in need of some inspiration, *Write On* now has a small library of books to lend out. Thank you to members Lizzy & Isolde for their donations. Have a look in this issue at the seven books in our collection thus far. You can't beat getting cosy & curling up with good book at this time of year!

Scottish Mental Health Arts & Film Festival 2016



This year's Scottish Mental Health Arts & Film Festival was a big success with lots going on throughout the month of October. The Highland leg's opening night, held at *The Bike Shed* in Inverness on October 6th, included an art exhibition, performances and films. A lively evening was had by all. Our very own member: Graeme gave an improvised performance and The Befrienders Highland film 'Passion' from last year's Scottish Mental Health Arts & Film Festival was shown.

As part of the festival, BHL hosted a film night at Eden Court on the 9th October, a short film by group members called *Alone* premiered before the main feature, 'Planes Trains & Automobiles'



BHL members Graeme, Lizzy & Andrew worked together to create "Alone". It was great to see their work come to life on the big screen with a lively audience.

Our executive director Keith and the writer & performer Graeme, introduced the film before it started and hosted a questions & answers session afterwards. This open discussion generated lots of interesting conversation. Congratulations on a fantastic film and a big thank you to all those who made a contribution, especially the film's music director Ben and music producer Iain.

The closing night was held on October 26th at the Townhouse in Inverness, included a rich program of films & performances and was a fantastic way to finish off this year's festival. 'Alone' will be available to see on the *Scottish Mental Health Arts & Film Festival* (Highland) *Youtube* channel. search **Youtube.com** with '**Highland SMHAFF**' There'll be lots more interesting content created by other groups available to see there as well.

Information about further exhibitions and events going on throughout the Highlands can be found on the festivals website & Facebook pages:

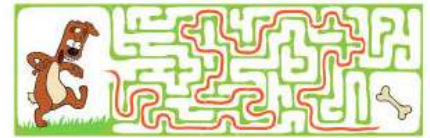
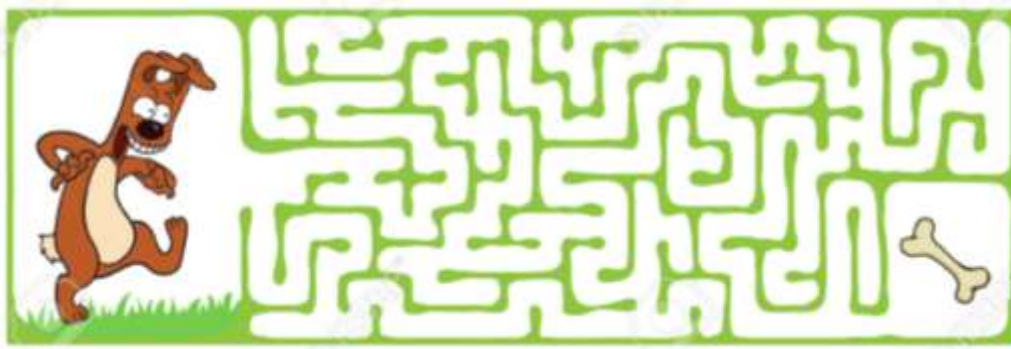
www.mhfestival.com

www.facebook.com/HighlandSMHAFF/


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GONE TO THE DOGS



PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

 orcn _____	 yindw _____
 kare _____	 kippunm _____
 quislrer _____	 palep _____
 coran _____	 efal _____



Dog Breed Word Search SOLUTION

BEAGLE	CHIHUAHUA	COLLIE
CORGI	DALMATION	GREYHOUND
LABRADOR	POINTER	POODLE
PUG	SCOTTIE	SHIHTZU
SPANIEL	TERRIER	WHIPPET

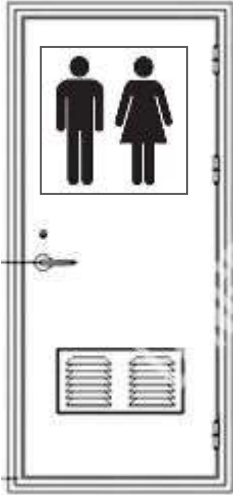
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M	A	E	K	K	E	K	F	P	R	O	M	Z	P	I
C	U	B	H	T	I	W	A	W	I	S	T	C	O	M
M	H	D	R	W	S	N	E	T	J	H	O	T	O	T
P	A	F	H	A	I	U	A	E	I	R	P	B	D	E
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E	H	F	L	J	L	O	S	I	J	U	J	U	E	R
P	I	P	S	A	A	Q	R	T	P	M	Y	A	F	I
P	H	E	D	R	R	J	Y	K	C	D	G	U	Q	E
I	C	G	I	N	G	R	E	Y	H	O	U	N	D	R
H	N	D	S	T	O	D	C	O	Z	I	L	M	V	B
W	M	D	T	V	T	V	N	B	E	A	G	L	E	W
G	T	K	N	R	N	O	A	U	O	F	M	I	I	I
R	E	T	N	I	O	P	C	G	U	P	Q	D	V	E
T	Z	P	H	F	H	R	Z	S	N	N	W	I	W	J

Anagram SOLUTION

Windy	
Pumpkin	
Acorn	
Leaf	
Apple	
Corn	
Rake	
Squirrel	

Caution

Rant in Progress



NOT ENOUGH FACILITIES by Jenny

*The Highlands have plenty of beautiful views
But are sadly lacking in public loo's.
In summer, what few that are open 24/7,
In winter, they close the very same.*

*In Tarbert they open it all year round
Beautifully cleaned by Mary Margaret's fair hand
In Scourie, though tended by the same scrupulous person,
They need painting and renovating but at least they're open*

*I believe there are some in Kyle Sku
But to visit these, I have had no reason.
The next ones are situated in Elfin's Coffee Shop
Which are only open in the season.*

*Towards Ullapool a new walk has been created
With loo's on high nigh up the sky
This one we shall call "two loo's la trek",
For people on sticks such as I.*

*In Ullapool we will stop; there're three in Safeway.
Those we shall find on the way through the town to garage,
There're also one or two in this "Guide to the Loo",
In some cafés on the way through the village.*

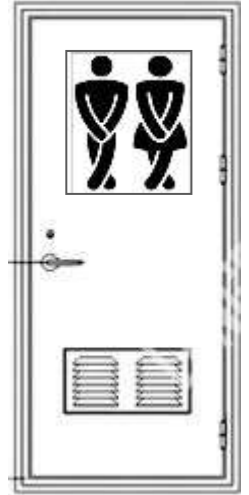
*Then there's Corriesshalloch, which is shut out of season.
I suppose lack of money is the main reason.
The cubicles inside are so tiny that a large person like I
Must remember -breath in-don't, for heaven's sake, sigh.*

*Then there is Rogie Falls; it's hit and miss if they're open.
Next comes Tarvie, always open to refresh such as we,
They are warm and welcoming, happy and cheery,
As they call "Hello. How are you?. "Tea and Pee?".*

*My friend V reckons God gave us facilities so if you're ever in a rush,
Don't rely on Councils handouts, just grab the nearest available bush.
So for us that are not so agile, with bladders that are much more fragile,
Please give us all year round access to more Loos!*

NOTICE

WE ARE PRESENTLY
NOT OPEN BECAUSE
WE ARE CLOSED



THE OLD CANAL by Keith

**A late willow-warbler.
A jogger.
A woman with a pram.
Fish rising, leaving circles
In the oily water and
Nobody to catch them.
Too murky to swim in,
Sometimes you see old
TV's and motorbikes
Dumped in the canal.**

**The hot August sun brought out
A galaxy of walkers.
Despite the council clean up,
There was rubbish in the bushes.
I didn't go and see
In case of vipers.
Once I saw a skip full of debris
Dumped nearby.**

Various watercraft steam past.....



WORDS by Irene

Let's use them wisely for good, not bad
To offer comfort when someone's sad
To speak the truth and not to lie
To say hello, not just walk by
Humorous words to cause a smile
Let someone know they are worthwhile
Words of love to someone dear
The tender words they never hear
Use words to praise, to apologise
To appreciate and sympathise
Don't use them in anger, don't speak in haste
Those words achieve nothing, they're simply a waste
Have fun with words, write a story or rhyme
Do a crossword puzzle from time to time
Open a dictionary, take a look
It really is a marvellous book
Don't ever be stuck for something to say
Learn a new word each and every day
There are words a-plenty, so much choice
Select with care and give them voice.



Summer's Summons by Isolde

Gliding smoothly on speedy wheels,
Unimpeded by congested roads
"Redskin" skims between the hills.
Bound for Glasgow with the Post.

A magic journey with entrancing scenes
Beckons the wee van further along,
Pulled by a tarmac thread that gleams
After a summer's rain, not long gone.

Bushes and bracken adorning verges
And leafy limbs of bordering trees
Envelop travellers with onward urges,
Waving buoyantly in the passing breeze.

Weaving its sinuous turning way,
In gentle bends the course flows on.
Redskin makes it seem like play,
Hugging the curves and holding strong.

Leaving village crossroads far behind,
Nature awaits us with even more delights.
Here in a glen browse many doe and hind
And velvet antlered stags engage in fights.

The road narrows and slips into shadow,
Beneath the cover of a forest canopy
And skirts alongside glistening waters below,
That leafy foliage won't quite let us see.

Messages for a Close Friend

PEN PALS by Susan [March 2016 Heather -]

It's when words go on paper
If you don't see their face,
As are too distant from home
Not easy to reach your place

The only way to be close
With heart and love to say
You're thinking of them most kind
Till you meet up one day

You're happy to hear from them
So you send a letter back to
To catch up keeping in touch
With a friendly hobby to do

Doesn't have to be a friend
Could be a relation you're not near
To let know that you miss them
And just wish they were here



Left at the Tarbert corner with no delay,
Sparkly loch views drift from sight.
Quickening the pace on the straightaway,
Swiftly moving, red bird takes flight.

Grand old wall zips by as it rambles along,
Heading toward the gold club's entry gate.
No time at all to stroll across the grassy lawn,
Driver and driven must never be late.

Spilling out onto the motorway's flow
Like a school of metallic fish,
Each who've waited for the moment to go,
Circle the round-about with a swish.

The rhythm of four wheels turning round
Careful to watch the speed and obey,
Matches every other car, all city bound
Advancing down the dual carriage way.

Running with the pack, going like the wind,
Passing through Milton and across the bridge,
Now onto the M8, curling each bend,
Exit 15 – Springburn just over the ridge,

Redskin arrives at his destination.
Journey's end is close at hand.
Mail bags received with much elation,
On time and that's just grand!



GREETING CARDS & LETTERS By Susan

You give them for special reasons
Not just out of the blue,
Could either hand or sent it
And be sure to sign too.

To put it up for display
Will help to let you see,
Someone is thinking of you kindly,
Whatever the occasion may be.

People like to make their own
Or use blank just to say
They wish you all the best
To trying cheer up your day

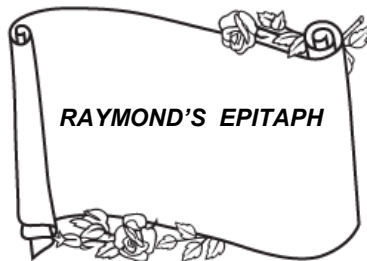
Some write long messages or verse
So it's more uplifting to read.
Others don't know what to say
Or might not feel the need.

It's when pen goes on paper
And is printed or typed too
Sealed in envelope through the post
To be personally sent to you.

It could be love or just friendly
Business or some junk mail too.
What you do with it all
That is entirely up to you.

You might just get a few
When others get quite a lot,
Need to keep some of them
Whether it's good news or not

It's known to be your own
That is addressed just for you.
Nobody should open and read it
Unless you have asked them to



*I hope this poem for Rae can show still friendship
and even humanity for someone who may be different.
I also hope the reader gets food for thought here and
a few "alarms" against unwanted prejudice. – John H.*



A MAN I QUIETLY ADMIRER
POLISH RAE FOUGHT BRAVELY

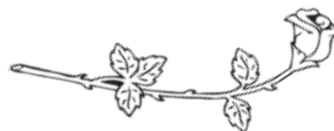
RAYMOND, RAE TO HIS FRIENDS
WAS QUIET AND UNASSUMING
KNOWING WHEN TO MAKE AMENDS
WHEN ON PRINCIPLE OPINION TO WING

ONLY WITH A BUS PASS I KNEW HIS ROLE
HIS APPLICATION GAVE FULL I.D. TO READ
QUIET YET THE STUBBORN STAND OF A POLE
STANDING ON PRINCIPLE BUT WITH HUMANITY SEED

HIS ILLNESS HE KEPT TO HIMSELF
ITS CROSS HE CARRIED ALONE
HIS FAITH PATIENCE ON THE SHELF
STOICALLY HE KNEW BRAVERY GROWN

HIS FAMILY HE CHERISHED DEARLY
THE SURPRISE VISITS MADE HIS DAY
HIS GRANDCHILD, LOVE OF LIFE CLEARLY,
A SPARKLE IN HIS EYE – HOPES ANCHOR TO STAY

SUPPORTING CELTIC THE JUNGLE BHOYS
THE CELTIC FLAME AS IN JOHN PAUL
THE CANDLE OF HOPE, THE CENTRE OF QUIET JOYS
SCOTLAND HE ADOPTED, HE GAVE SCOTIA HIS ALL



MAY THE LORD WATCH OVER THEE
NO MORE PAIN OR HURT BUT LIBERTY
THROUGH THE VEIL ALWAYS BE FREE

Just beyond the reach of the porch light there awaits
A gateway to a shadowy wild world ruled by the fates.
A torch beam makes images shift about weirdly and insane,
And an eerie tunnel of light under trees arching over the lane.
Moving quietly, I listen intently for any faint forest sound,
A rustle in the autumn breeze and leaves are falling all around.
A padding of them many times driven over, muffles my steps.
The old metal fencing bars my gaze into the forest's depths.
The clouds part above and a silvery white half-moon appears,
Bright enough to extinguish my torch and allay my fears.
As my eyes adjust to the darkness and to the forest gloom,
In an open patch of ground an unidentifiable shape looms.
I hear air whistling repeatedly, expelled with mighty blasts
Like an alarmed dragon breathing fiercely in loud rasps.
But wait, this is no beast of fantasy ready to attack.
It's a timid wee cow startled by me and taken aback.
She stands all alone this night, without other herd members.
Our unexpected evening encounter, we will both remember.



A Carer's Thoughts by Stephen

Once again, in soul-searching free verse, Stephen shares with our readers his struggle with depression and loneliness, following his partner's admission into care.



I love dogs but this one I hate every bit.
It's not a dog you ever see
But you know when it's with you; that's for sure
And anyone who hasn't had it with them
Shouldn't disbelieve that it exists
Or try to tell you how to deal with it
Because only those who know the dog,
Know the dog

So... what is the dog like?
Is it all teeth and claws, barking and snarling?
No, no... nonetheless, it tears you to pieces
But doesn't finish you off
Although when it's with you, it feels like it will
And makes you wish it would.

It all adds up, builds up until it's too much,
Then the dog comes and gets inside your head,
Takes over your mind and gets hold of your tongue.
It speaks for you and says what it has made you believe.

The dog messes everything up; makes you see only the dark,
No light or hope or goodness in anything or anyone,
Least of all yourself
It makes you feel very, very much alone, alone with it
Until you are utterly desperate for help

For someone to see that it's at you, in you,
Feeding on your tiredness,
Hiding from you what little hope and strength you have left,
Making you think there is nothing and no one.

Anger builds. Bitterness.
And the dog talks in those tones to those in the way,
To those you love the most who love you the most
If they are there and please, please be there.
If not, then it's just you and the dog for hours and hours
And tormented days and sleepless nights.
The dog robs you of everything - of vitality. It tears away energy
You can only take it for so long, until you want out
It makes you think that there is only one way out: *That* way out.
You think of it. Imagine it. Picture it - a way out.

And that's when it will go one way or the other,
Usually then or thereabouts, hopefully the right way
When slowly, you reappear, an emotional wreck,
Shattered, desperate for understanding,
Seeking relief and sorry for the way you were,
For the things you said.
But it wasn't you – it wasn't. It was the dog.

And the dog – it doesn't go right away.
It hangs around, always there, loitering,
Making sure that you're not much more than existing,
Waiting to get back at you, which it will.
Sometimes you can fight it off
Though mostly, not a chance
But you have to keep trying to fight it,
To not let it win – not altogether.
Time and time again, the dog will beat you
But it won't finish you off – it won't.
However, it will make you want to finish it.

And those who know the dog
And know when it's at you,
Will ask you this: Are you safe?
And tell you this: You must be safe.
Most who live with the dog, live with it
But some don't.
So, yes – I hate the dog,
Every bit of it.



Isolde's short presentation given at the 2016 AGM for Befriender's Highland, Inverness

*As a girl in high school I earned pocket money by working for a lady named Lila Forbes. She owned **Forbes Poodle Paradise**, a professional dog grooming business specializing in grooming poodles. "Teacup", "Miniature" or "Standard" whatever size of poodle, they all received the full make-over, transforming them into sparkling show dogs - all with the aid of a team of well-trained employees including myself. Our staff could basically be divided into two groups: the first being those who painstakingly brush out the tangled coats of the poodles then shampoo and rinse them and finally blow-dry them by hand until the wet wiry hair is utterly and completely straight. I was among this hardworking lot who prepare the dogs to be sent along to the second group- the elite "artistes" who clipped the poodles following various time-honoured style cuts to produce living works of art - signing their artwork with pretty painted doggie toenails and cute colourful bows and ribbons tied to the silken tasselled ears of these pampered pooches.*

From beginning to end, I took particular care in lovingly taking a dog through the grooming process which would ultimately bring out a hidden beauty which had just needed a fair amount effort on my part to reveal and then, the ladies who clipped the dog further enhanced that beauty to near perfection. Occasionally I was called upon to take a finished poodle out to the lobby when the owner came to fetch his or her dog. Gazing upon their fully groomed poodle, the delighted expression on this person's face made it worth all that work I'd put into beautifying Fifi or Frankie. Of course I gained my own personal satisfaction in doing an excellent job but when the owner was pleased as well, it was like icing on the cake.

*Now you may be wondering how this ties in with my experience as a member of Befrienders Highland? There is indeed a similarity between my poodle grooming and my endeavours relating to producing each issue of the Befriender's magazine, **Write On!** When I receive the pieces written by our members for inclusion in the upcoming issue, the works that arrive on my desk are in simple typed form or in photocopied handwritten text. Just like the poodles on my table, I comb out the spelling and punctuation tangles before a shampoo and rinse to edit any unintentional confusing content. Then a quick towel dry to make sure the final text reads right and onto the blow drying to make the arrangement of the lines lay on the page in a pleasing form.*

We have arrived at that stage where the artistry comes into play. Just like the dog clippers who sculpt the poodle coat into visually pleasing contours that flatter the dogs shape, a poem or story is given an outlining border or a background colour or design to enhance its appearance. The "look" of a contributor's literary creation should stand alone but ideally also complement the look of others situated on the same page. I liken this to making sure that both sides of the dog are trimmed exactly the same. And the final

touch, like the nail polish and pretty ribbons on the poodles, is to decorate each piece of writing with wee illustrations dispersed within the text so as to bring to life characters and aspects of the poems and stories.

And I am as gratified to hear that *Write On!* readers and contributors are pleased with my efforts to make each person's written piece sparkle like a diamond in each issue, as I was to see delight in the face of a poodle owner on seeing their dazzling perfectly groomed dog.

Thank You. It is a pleasure to be here tonight to share my experiences with you.



WHO YOU ARE by Graeme



It was Christmas Eve, two days from one of the worst days of his life. Even worse the pain in his legs was even more excruciating than normal. He was loathe to use the stick that his Doctor had recommended but without it he was finding it difficult to move around his small studio flat. But, as he always thought, no pain was greater than that from being apart from his family. Especially at this time of year, the thought of not seeing his two young children open their presents was a pain even greater than the injections he had to give himself on a daily basis.

Rising from his chair slowly but with a bit more confidence than he had exhibited recently, he went over to the table where sat pictures of his family. A tinge of regret came over him. He did understand that his disease and the ever increasing pain levels were a bit of a burden for his lovely wife, especially with the two young children. The side effects that came with his medication, particularly the mood swings that were difficult enough for him to manage, had caused friction that had become too intolerable for him to bear. He had tried his hardest to explain to her on numerous occasions his condition and all that came with it but it had become futile and frustrating. The decision had been a joint one for the sake of the children. She had been supportive and his accommodation was good, all things considered. In some ways, being on his own was a bit therapeutic as he did not have to look forward to the relentless arguing which made his symptoms worse. But this Christmas was going to be hard.

His doorbell rang. It was a bit late and he was curious as to who was at his door. He was limping to the door when he heard excitable voices. That was his kids! What a surprise! Excitedly he quickened his step, as much as was allowed anyway. Fumbling at the lock, he was struggling to contain his excitement. Eventually he was able to open the door. Staring back at him, were three excited faces; the smile on his wife's face was heart-warming to him. Although the reason for the visit was still unknown to him.

After the hugs and excited conversations, he and his wife had a conversation. She expressed her regrets about her misunderstanding and lack of empathy at times. This was his early Christmas miracle. She wished for him to spend Christmas and beyond where he should be, in the bosom of his family. Once the festivities were over they would look at support networks for both of them. They had always agreed the children were the most important part of their family. His wife had accepted that people with arthritis and other invisible illnesses had issues of which the general public needed to obtain a greater understanding. **People with arthritis and other issues are who you are!**



Muriel's Writing Challenge



Muriel has set all **Write On** members the challenge of taking an unusual object and creating a piece of creative writing around it. To get us all started she offered us the curious looking object pictured here for inspiration. Write On! contributor Colyn tells us that he knows this object is not a virus but to him it looks a wee bit like one. He says that when we get a bit down with a virus, we often say, "I just got a bit of a bug". So he offers the following story that I'm sure you will agree, fits in well with his line of thinking. Well done Colyn for meeting Muriel's challenge!

"BUGS" by Colyn

As a rule, bugs are quite unloved. People tend to avoid them. However, let me tell you about myself, for I, too, am a "bug," but I think quite an exception. Although German by birth, I have become an international figure, equally at home in all parts of the world. I have been the butt of friendly jokes in any number of languages and the subject about which even movies have been made. But now I'm getting on in years and things are beginning to change. I'm afraid they will never be quite the same again. May I tell you my story?

My Birth

Actually, I'm not a bug at all, but a car. But my nicknames, "Beetle" or "Bug," as is so often the case, are used as much as my real name. I was originally christened "der Kraft durch Freude Wagen" (translated "the strength through joy car"). This was derived from a popular slogan ("Strength through joy") of the government that was ruling in Germany at the time of my conception. Quite a mouthful for the name of a car! Later, I became better known as the Volkswagen, meaning "people's car."



Although the idea of building such a car had originated much earlier, it was not until 1934 that the German government ordered Ferdinand Porsche, auto designer and inventor, to produce one. To bring it within the reach of every pocket, the government decreed that it was to cost no more than 990 reichsmark, the equivalent of \$396 U.S. at that time. It was to be for the people, a "people's car." You might say it was a Teutonic version of the American "chicken in every pot" dream of the 1930's.

◀ Printed in 1938, this brochure shows and describes in detail, the KdF Wagen, or "Strength Through Joy Car"

Preparations for my birth were both extensive and elaborate. Not only was a new factory to be built, but plans were drawn up to construct an entirely new city with a population of 90,000 persons! The city's cornerstone was laid on July 1, 1938, about five weeks after work had begun on the factory buildings where I was to be born. This new city had the rather unimaginative and awkward name "City of the Strength Through Joy Car." Today named Wolfsburg.

So you see, although I may be nothing more than a "bug," I dare say few human babies ever had such extensive plans and preparations made for their birth! My future prospects were promising indeed.

Disaster Strikes

Then World War II erupted, bringing an untimely end to many a bright future, including, at least for the time being, mine. Scarcely born, I was abandoned in lieu of more urgent matters. The entire production apparatus prepared for me was now geared to military purposes. In fact, this turn of events even called into question the legitimacy of my existence. A shadow fell across my path, for I was accused of being part of a giant swindle. William L. Shirer, explains:

"Since private industry could not turn out an automobile for 990 reichsmark, Hitler ordered the State to build it and placed the Labor Front in charge of the project. The Labor Front advanced fifty million marks in capital. But that was not the main financing. Dr. Ley's ingenious plan was that the

workers themselves should furnish the capital by means of what became known as a 'pay-before-you-get-it' installment plan, five marks a week, or, if a worker thought he could afford it, ten or fifteen marks a week. When 750 marks had been paid in, the buyer received an order number entitling him to a car as soon as it could be made. Alas for the worker, not a single car was ever made for any customer during the Third Reich! Tens of millions of marks were paid in by the German wage earners, not a pfennig of which was ever to be refunded."

Whether, as some persons claim, the government knowingly did this to raise money for the war effort or not, the sad fact of the matter is that an estimated 170,000 persons did lose their money. Although not my fault, this is a chapter in my history of which I am not proud. I was determined to live down my shame, and permit me to brag just a bit, I think I have succeeded quite nicely in doing so.

A Rebirth

At the end of the war, the Wolfsburg facilities were in shambles, over 50 percent destroyed. None of the occupying powers wanted them as reparation payments. As I later learned, all the Allied Powers auto makers thought me too simple and I dislike the word too ugly to be taken seriously. Nevertheless, the British occupying troops ordered the plant reopened under German management, and production of the long-delayed "people's car" began. It was at this time that the Americans and the British dubbed me "Beetle" or "Bug," a nickname that was destined to stick. And, in all honesty, I must admit that there is a resemblance. But beetles are not really all that ugly, do you think?

My early years were difficult, but they were marked by steady progress. From less than 2,000 cars in 1945, production figures rose by the early 1970's to well over 2,000,000 cars annually. By 1974 almost 18 million look-alike "bugs" had been produced, all of them sporting the emblem of a wolf and a castle on their steering wheel. Did you ever wonder why? Simply because Wolfsburg, my birth place, means in German "wolf's castle." Yes, we "bugs" do look alike. The original concept and my general appearance have not changed over the years, but this has not ruled out technical improvements. In fact, every one of the more than 5,000 individual parts that go into each "bug" has in one way or another, undergone improvements or changes over the intervening years.

It did not take long for me to become a familiar sight throughout Germany. But many foreigners also began taking a liking to me, and by 1947 you could find me in our neighboring land of Holland. In 1949, I crossed the Atlantic to the United States for the first time. Many an American military man took a "bug" home with him when his tour of duty in Germany was over.



As the trend toward smaller, more compact and more economical cars gathered momentum in such places as the US, my popularity grew. More and more "beetles" were exported; in fact, at times during the 1960's and 1970's as much as two thirds of the entire production was reserved for export. Factories were built in foreign countries to facilitate the work done in Wolfsburg and in the five additional plants that meanwhile had been built in Germany.

◀ 1952 Classic Volkswagen

Oh, what treasured memories! Like in 1955 when the one millionth "bug" was driven from the production line, or when the 15 millionth was whisked off to a place of honor in the Washington, D.C., Smithsonian Institution. But the climax came on February 17, 1972. I had broken the all-time production record of slightly over 15 million cars set by the famous Ford "Tin Lizzy" back in 1927. I was now the new champ, the most successful car of all time! For a "bug" I had come a long way!

The End of an Era

While in many countries the trend toward smaller cars continued, here in my homeland the trend began to move in the opposite direction. As Germans became more affluent, ironically, I myself had done much to bring this about, they wanted bigger, more powerful and more comfortable cars. I must admit that I am not the most comfortable car in the world, and my small size and light weight can put me at a disadvantage in an accident or when I am being driven under hazardous conditions. But, then, who is perfect?

January 19, 1978: the saddest day of my life, the day that "bug" production in Germany ceased. From now on only more sophisticated models would be turned out in Volkswagen's six domestic plants. The last "made-in-Germany bug" would never thrill to the excitement of the open road, but was destined to spend the rest of its life tucked away in the safety of a museum. Still, I took pride in the fact that the original "beetle" was still being manufactured in Volkswagen plants in Mexico, Brazil, Nigeria and South Africa. This turn of events put the German who is a "beetle" lover in a paradoxical situation: should he want a new "bug", now almost as much a symbol of Germany as are leather shorts, beer mugs and cuckoo clocks, he would have to import it. Imagine!

Excuse me for crying on your shoulder. I guess prominent persons always tend to live in the glories of their past. Maybe I'm just getting old and sentimental. The last of us "bugs" No. 21,529,464, was born on the 30 July 2003 in Mexico. Of course, there are still millions of my kind roaring around the German autobahns and roads and byways of over 140 countries throughout the world. So even though I have retired, I am still around, alive and kicking, just not as strongly as before. But at least you can be sure of one thing: because of my simple and reliable design, and the fact I was so loved, engineers and enthusiasts can and will keep me going for a very long time to come.

It's going to be a long time before anyone forgets us made-in-Germany "bugs"

The 'Ultima Edicion' Beetles sold for 84,000 Mexican pesos or \$8,000.00 USD ▶ although number 21,529,464 wasn't for sale but went to a museum in Wolfsburg, Germany.



The Legend of Tarzan (film review by Isolde)



Here comes ***The Legend of Tarzan***, Hollywood's latest and arguably best rendition of a classic Edgar Rice Burroughs' tale which has been made into a movie so many times in the past. Ever since Elmo Lincoln, starred in *Tarzan of the Apes* back in 1918, Tarzan has become one of the most durable movie characters; played over the years by many actors with varying degrees of success. Actor **Alexander Skarsgård's** interpretation certainly excels any of Tarzan's previous film incarnations. Here is Tarzan the super-hero, standing up against corruption and respecting and fighting for human rights.

The film believably depicts Tarzan's double life, as both lord of the jungle and John Clayton, lord of the manor. An Earl with an exceptional past, he's suddenly called back to his childhood home and all of its memories. This is where the story line delves into the realm of historical fiction as its main plot line is set against the backdrop of the very real, very horrifying Belgian genocide in the Congo.



Two major characters here are **George Washington Williams** and **Léon Rom** who are both real historical figures. George Washington Williams (played by actor **Samuel L. Jackson**) is an African-American veteran of America's Civil War who the US sends to King Leopold II's Congo *Free State* to investigate reports of enslaving the natives there. He accompanies Lord Clayton, who is invited as a British trade delegate. They then walk into an elaborate trap set by Belgian officer and murderous racist Captain Rom (played by actor **Christoph Waltz**) who attacks the village Jane and Tarzan are guests at and captures them. With Washington's help Tarzan escapes and sets out to rescue Jane by going across

the jungle. Washington joins him despite the rigorous journey and dangerous encounters. Naturally much of the battle is done with the help of jungle creatures summoned by Tarzan to help him.

The high tech visual effects are masterfully achieved so I recommend this action packed adventure be seen on a big screen in a cinema for the full effect.





October saw the tenth annual *Scottish Mental Health Arts & Film Festival*. The aims of SMHAFF are to challenge perceptions, make connections, develop audiences, and encourage participation and creativity. If you are interested in a creative project such as: film, performance, creative writing recital, music, art or anything else. Speak to us and we can tell you more. You can get involved in the festival as part of our group projects or perform your own work. Or you can simply come along and enjoy some of the events together with us.

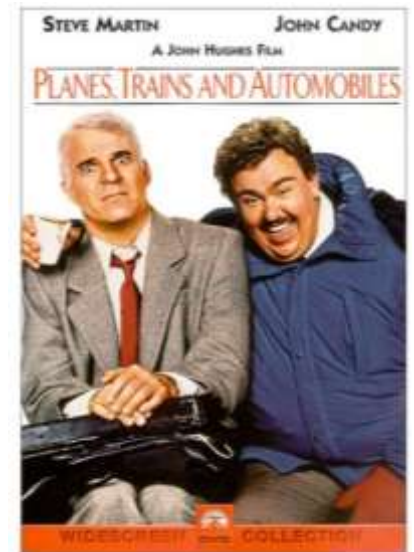
The genre of movies plays a big part in this. This year **Graeme**, a film maker himself, had the pleasure of working at Eden Court in Inverness, giving him the chance to see the local films produced which he tells us were all excellent and well done by all involved. Graeme also watched the main film features shown in aid of the charities: Befrienders Highland, Creativity In Care and Birchwood Highland.

He has written reviews for these three main features:
 Befrienders Highland – *Planes, Trains and Automobiles*
 Creativity In Care – *Infinitely Polar Bear*
 Birchwood Highland – *It's Kind of A Funny Story*.

FILM REVIEWS by Graeme

Planes, Trains & Automobiles

The film tells of a man who struggles to travel home for Thanksgiving with an obnoxious slob of a shower curtain rings salesman as his only companion. Despite his best efforts, he cannot escape him and the pair have several escapades. Slowly but surely, a friendship develops. This is a classic comedy but with a serious message; its core, typical of a John Hughes film.



Infinitely Polar Bear

In Boston, a bipolar individual (Mark Ruffalo) takes over sole responsibility for his two spirited daughters while his wife (Zoe Saldana) attends graduate school in New York. Based on a true story, this is a wonderful uplifting film, showing the issues of bipolar and showing the ignorance of mental health in the 1970's, sadly which is prevalent today.



It's Kind Of A Funny Story

Stressed by adolescence, 16-year-old Craig Gilner (Keir Gilchrist) checks himself into a mental-health clinic. Unfortunately, the youth wing is closed, so he must spend his mandated five-day stay with adults. One of them, Bobby (Zach Galifianakis), quickly becomes his mentor -- and protégé. Based on the book by author Ned Vizzini, whom has stated 85% of the film's events did actually take place, this was a great example of the mental health issues facing young people, again issues which are still receiving a lot of misunderstanding in the modern age.



Alone (A film review by **Keith**, Executive Director, Befrienders Highland)



Alone was premiered at this year's *Mental Health Arts & Film Festival*. It's a revealing window into the life of someone who is struggling with regrets over past events and feels trapped by their consequences. The main character is played by **Write-On!** short-story editor/ contributor Graeme. In the film he plays the part of Michael whose negative thoughts about past events and perceived failures play in his mind.

It's a powerful story but one which ends on a hopeful note.

His perspective has a profound effect on his well-being and on his relationships with other people. He's at odds with himself over looking for solace in the wrong places. Cathryn, playing opposite to Graeme, delivers a fine performance in the film. Joined with the story, Lizzy's narrative puts the issues in perspective for the viewer, while Andrew's music provides a beautifully calming canvas on which the story is painted.

Befrienders Highland Mince Pie Days

To Celebrate Christmas, Befrienders Highland will be having our annual Mince Pie Days in Inverness & Nairn. We welcome you to come along to share a mince pie together, meet other folk and get in the festive spirit!



These will on the following dates:

Inverness: Tuesday 13th December from 11am – 1pm, 19 Church Street, Inverness

Nairn: Wednesday 14th December 11am – 1pm, Nairn Community centre.

Thanks to *Write On!* members Lizzy, Keith W. and Isolde, **we now have a small library!** If you fancy giving one a read we are happy to loan them to you. Simply get in touch stating the book you are interested in below and we will mail it out to you. Perhaps you could even write a review of one if inspiration takes you!

Recently, **Lizzy** kindly donated a fantastic independent local publication '**Twenty Three In A Bed & A Cat**' which is an anthology of poetry, short story and illustration created at the first Art Angel/Luna/W.I.A.M.H. arts residency on the Western Isles in 2004. **Here is a sample of the book:**

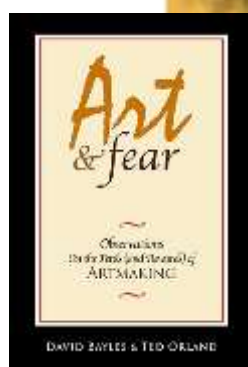
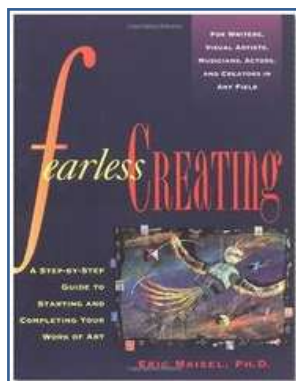
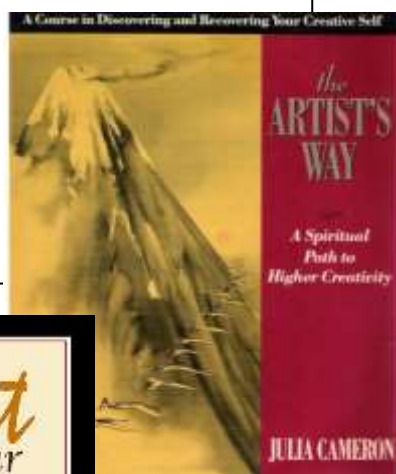
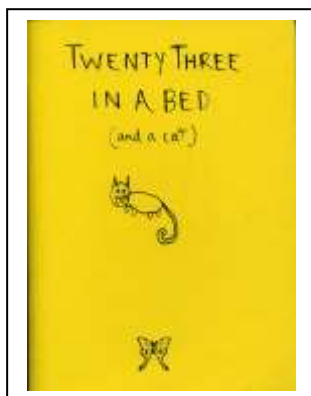
"Rosie, Aaron, me"

composed by Lesley McLuckie

We danced
We played
We ran
On Hebridean sand
A fairy tale king
An Elvin queen
An elder from another land

We built castles
Splashed in turquoise sea
The old
And the young
As one
Right until the sinking of the sun

And as we headed homeward
A happy, adventurous band
We left behind us
Three angels made of sand
And each
Imprinted softly
And waiting by the sea
An angel for Rosie
An angel for Aaron
And an angel for me



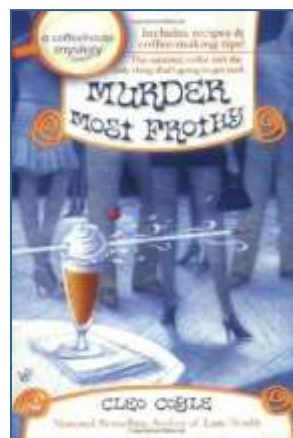
Fearless Creating

by Eric Maisel Ph.D.

Art & Fear

by David Bayles
& Ted Orland

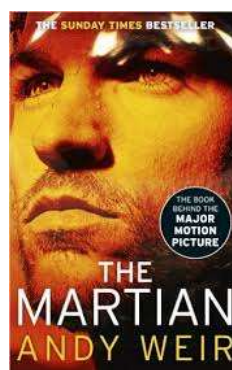
- * Exercises related both to the world at hand and the ongoing struggles of artistic life.
- * Counselling for artists, writers, and performers to overcome creative blocks.



"Murder Most Frothy"

**Book 4 of the
Coffeehouse Mystery
Series by Cleo Coyle**
donated to library by
Isolde

Clare Cosi, who manages The Village Blend Coffee House in New York City investigates another richly dark expresso murder.



THE MARTIAN

Andy Weir's terrific 'lost in space' novel is "edge-of-the-seat" storytelling.

Mark Watney is one of the astronauts on the Ares 3 mission to Mars but when the Ares 3 mission leaves Mark is left behind.

The Artist's Way is a bestselling self-help book penned together by **Julia Cameron** and Mark Bryan. The book contains a series of exercises and exploration that aims to provide artists the self confidence that they need to maximize their productivity

A seminal, much-beloved handbook on the creative life, exploring its gateways, its obstacles, and how we can get out of our own way. It's at once a practical set of techniques and a timeless philosophical meditation on the quintessential human impulse to create.



MY FAVOURITE PLACE

A Tribute to Scotland's best loved places
The book contains over thirty stories including contributions from Michael Palin and Sally Magnusson and also includes a series of illustrations from leading Scottish artists including Alasdair Gray, Louise Hopkins and Kate Davis. The book's contents were collected as part of a project run by Scottish Book Trust and BBC Radio Scotland in 2012.

Befrienders Highland new groups for 2017 in Inverness & Nairn

We have some exciting news; Befrienders Highland will be home to some new groups in Inverness & Nairn next year. The new groups will be starting off in early 2017. They will be for all members of Befrienders Highland. You can come along, share an activity with other members, learn something new and perhaps trying something you have never done before. All whilst having a good time & enjoying the company of others. All groups are completely free to participate in.

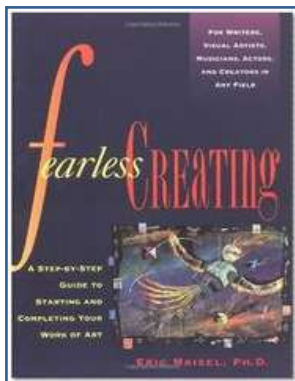
The new groups are outlined below. Get in contact with Alan to register your interest. More Information to follow in the New Year.

Gardening Group



Beautiful Gardens & allotment along the canal in Inverness.

A tranquil environment to relax in.



help and give advice

plants, vegetables & fruit

the produce

provided

other members to chat to and

Potential to start your own ideas & projects

Group will meet once a month

'Walk & Talk' Walking Group



Routes in & around Inverness & Nairn

Share a scenic walk together followed by teas & coffees in local Café.

Get exercise & see new places

Socialise & get to know others in a relaxed way

Select routes & places to visit

Group will meet once a month

Film Discussion Group

See film releases with the group in the cinema

Pay what you can afford for tickets

Group discussion afterwards with teas & coffees

Group will meet once a month



To find out more & to register your interest speaks to
Group Coordinator: Alan on 01463 235675 or
alanduncan@befriendershihand.org.uk 19 Church Street
Inverness IV1 1DY

These are your groups, we welcome your input!