

# The Creative

*A Special Edition by Centrepieces Creative Writing Group*

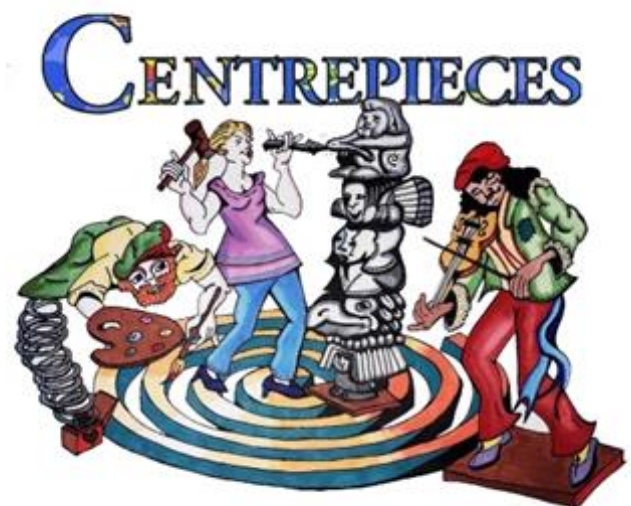
MAY/JUNE  
2023

## *The Inner Me*

*A Centrepieces &*

*William Kendall's Charity Project*

WILLIAM  
KENDALL'S  
CHARITY



## FOREWORD by Liam Davies ~ Creative Writing Lead

Over the course of three workshops our Creative Writing Group focused on the 'Inner Me' as a means for expressing ourselves through the written word.

We thought about what is inside of us and who the 'Inner Me' really is. This gave rise to some very emotional pieces of writing and brought out some very deep work from the group.

Following on from this we gave consideration to what really mattered the most to us, in our lives. There was some quite heavy reflection here.

We also looked at bringing out the positive within ourselves by creating our own positivity quotes. Some of these were truly empowering and motivational pieces of written art.

This zine shows a small portion of the creative writing work that came out of these workshops.

NB ~ Each piece is un-named as the Group chose to keep all writings anonymous

## The INNER ME:

I am an optimist - I try to see the positives in everything I do. This does frequently leave me feeling low when things do not go my way or turn out how I envisaged them being.

I can be quite angry and conflicted at times - more often than I would like. This can highly impact my motivation.

Some days I want to take on the world, whilst others I just want to be left alone with a pot of coffee and my smart speaker.

There are parts of me that I want those close to me and the world to see. Other parts I do not even like to see myself. Sharing my positives, as I see them, with family and friends and usually keeping what I see as my darker energies to myself.

Music channels those dark energies for me, tuning me into my positive vibes. Trance music is my usual go to, which really

gives a lift. Metal or Grunge if I am having a really bad day.

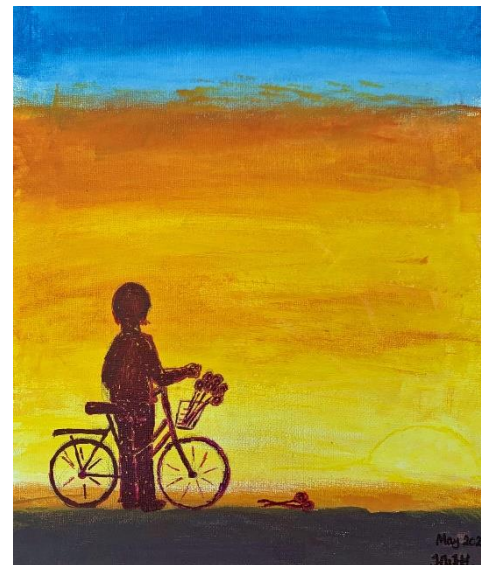
Regular exercise and cooking also help to calm my anxieties and mood. The arts are a huge part of who I am - visual and written. They are an outlet for the creative energies that I am aware of, that need to be channelled, as well as freeing what ticks away inside subconsciously.

I enjoy quality time with the people that make me feel good about myself and the world. I try to surround myself with the people that bring these good feelings to the surface and distance myself, as much as possible, from those that do not.



*A beautiful walk  
I experienced Monday,  
A long walk  
Two buses gone past me  
I grumbled  
Then ...  
My sat nav showed me a new way  
to go!  
A grassy trail to ...  
Jubilee Country Park!  
Verdant stretches of grass  
Warm coloured leaves painting  
The bright morning sky  
  
I happened upon ...  
A Vicar of Dibley pool of water,  
Its surface had a shiny opal green  
hue.  
That's not natural ...  
Not investigating ...  
Walking on ...  
  
I met ...  
An enthusiastic 6-month brown  
Labrador  
Called Holly!*

*We became best friends,  
Then she wanted to explore some  
more  
And Ann dragged behind her!  
Cheery-bye!  
We went our separate ways,  
Glad of our brief encounter  
  
“Morning! Morning! Morning!”  
Brisk walking  
Content faces greeting  
  
Looking up at the stretched-out  
trees,  
Looking down on golden leaves,  
Carpeting the way home.  
  
A good walk  
A long  
walk  
Before I got  
home  
I, ever so  
slightly...  
Peed  
myself!*



A Time to Contemplate – Nadia Halliday

## The INNER ME:

To some people I am a happy fun person who copes well with what life throws at me. Like my disability.

But that's not true. I feel like there are two sides of me. The inside of me does not always show how I feel on the outside. I am a person that fights so many emotions that are inside of me on a daily basis. One morning I can wake up and be in lots of pain. So, it affects how I feel inside. I feel down. Upset with my body. Other mornings I can wake up and not feel too much pain. So inside I feel happier to go through the day. My illness is like a roller coaster. But I feel I am stronger inside because of what life has thrown at me. I have always had to fight to be heard.

As a child I struggled with walking coordination and dyslexia. I have had many operations and life has not been easy. My life challenges have led to me suffering from mental health. But my mental health journey has led me to some good things, like Centrepieces, that

have made a good impact on my life.

I have found art and creative writing classes that have helped me with dealing with my emotions and mental health. I have made friends that understand where I am coming from. I have become a volunteer at Centrepieces. It has given a purpose, a reason to get up. But the most important things in my life are being a wife and a mum. But there are times that I feel I am letting my family down because I am not as active as I used to be. But they will always be my world.



*One of the best things that I ever did in my life was giving up smoking. I had stopped trying, I was 64, nearly 65. I was coughing my heart out, with a sore throat, and smoking, all at the same time.*

*I asked myself what I was doing; I asked myself why I smoked. I replied that it helped me concentrate.*

*I realised that smoking stopped oxygen getting to my brain. I was on nearly 60 a day. I instantly stubbed out my cigarette and that was the end of it. I never touched another cigarette, and*

*that was nearly ten years ago.*

*But I am still tempted, but haven't yet succumbed, I don't think that I ever will. My coughing stopped, my throat healed itself, and of course I had a lot more money. I gave all my cigarettes and lighters away.*

*It was much more social, I could go where cigarettes were banned, and I stopped smelling like an ashtray. I could smell other smokers, it was an awful smell, and I realised that that was how I used to smell.*

EVERY DAY YOU ARE BORN  
AGAIN, LIVE IT LIKE IT'S  
YOUR LAST

A caterpillar  
lays to rest,  
preparing to be  
born again

*Your glass is always  
half-full not half-empty*

Every day is a fresh opportunity to flourish

It's always darkest before a storm

With a coffee - or wine - it's a space trouble  
free, to sit and read or enjoy a CD, or perhaps  
best of all, simply to 'be',



---

Every day you are born again. Live it like it's your last day!

---



## **“Follow the Plot”**

### **A year in the life of an allotment holder**

The four seasons on an allotment broadly encompass all activity. That much could still be added is true. Why not accompany the year, for instance, with the music of Vivaldi's 'Four Seasons'. That, perhaps, would be termed, 'armchair gardening at its best!'

Life on the plot often begins in the Autumn. Preparation starts then too with clearing the ground. Unwanted weeds and the debris of civilisation are eradicated. Soil is then enhanced with manure, mulches and man (or woman), plotting.

By now, seed catalogues will have arrived. Cosy chats suggest next year's rewards. Potatoes are an excellent crop for

beginners as their method of cultivation, not least 'earthing up', benefits the land. A wide choice of varieties is available on site.

An intrepid Committee with industrious volunteers is always helpful. The site has a trading hut offering relevant items at competitive prices.

As the year ends and days become short, nature rests. The busy horticulturist might improve his shed on the plot, select new implements and repair old.

The work is healthy, absorbing and beneficial to all, as are Christmas get-togethers and New Year's resolutions.

Next year, with past experience, will always be better, working with and not against nature.

As Spring approaches, buds and shoots begin to appear. First signs give an added incentive to sow seeds and plant. Even now brassicas such as Brussel Sprout and Cabbage, for instance 'January King', excel rival concerns for freshness, quality and price. The hoe is useful, especially near Easter and watering the plot may be necessary.

Something that isn't useful and not necessary is vandalism and theft by unwanted visitors. Those responsible for these negative actions must expect to be caught whether by others or by man-traps.

Thanks to dedicated organisers a yearly outing is provided to members. Usually Royal Horticultural Society Wisley, in Surrey, is visited by coach, making a delightful day out for all.

All year tenants cultivate the soil. By early June strawberries are ripe and broad beans gathered (beware, blackfly). Gooseberries, with blackcurrants and raspberries often crop well.

Harvest time looms and with it the Annual Show in Bexleyheath. The Show is usually held at the Boys' Brigade Headquarters, adjacent to Christchurch. Members of Bexleyheath Horticultural Society are encouraged to exhibit in a wide range of classes. With many awards. The public is welcome to attend.

Then the yearly cycle begins again. As with the farming community, an almost parallel saying: 'Sow for today and cultivate for a thousand years.'



## MY SUMMERHOUSE

My summerhouse is a place  
of peace, with chairs inside  
for me - and 3 cats,  
With comfy cushions to help  
us relax.

In spite of the fact that we  
live in a town, with plenty of  
traffic all around, it's  
surprisingly peaceful sitting  
in there

Away from the everyday  
hubbub and care.



Neurography Garden in Watercolour – Lesley Etienne

### Gardening and Me

Well, what can I say!

I don't do gardens, I do  
pots!!!

From an early age my Mum  
always tried to get me  
involved with helping in the  
garden - pulling up weeds  
and planting bulbs - but I've  
either forgotten the good  
memories or didn't have  
that many!

When I was a young  
teenager, we moved into the  
house my Mum still lives in  
now - the garden is massive!  
I remember seeing it for the  
first time and begging my  
Mum and Dad to consider  
putting in a swimming pool  
- that didn't go down too  
well though - tennis court  
maybe - nope.

Anyway, zooming forward to  
the present and I count  
myself very lucky as my  
Mum still enjoys gardening  
with the help of a gardener  
and even better than that  
plants up lots of pots for my  
patio - which hubby waters  
for me - so I can't kill off  
anything.

Conclusion - gardening and  
me are not compatible.

# WORDSEARCH – POSITIVE WORDS

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

DEPENDABLE - LAUGHTER - SOFT - PEACE - HOLIDAYS

FUN - HAPPY - THOUGHTFUL - GOOD - OPTIMISTIC

DELIGHTFUL- ENJOY - HOPEFUL - EMPATHY

WARM - SINCERE - CARING - JOY - BRIGHT

LUCKY - HOPE - CAKE - GLAD - JOLLY

CHEERFUL - HUG - GRIN - WELL - HUM

SING - SAFE - WOW - NICE

## Art and Me

Where do I begin, my journey goes back so far. To finger painting and colouring pages and those magic playdough figures that would come to life through my imagination.

Art was never important at school, Maths and English and Science ruled the day, but being creative is in the blood and escapes whenever it can.

Turning creativity inwards and embracing my imagination, leads pens to paper in an explosion of patterns and shapes.

Colour takes a new meaning as I express my emotions, shapes become angry or happy as the subconscious takes hold.

Representation is the key to whatever is created.

Paint rolls over the canvas and spills onto a tray.

Clay and its textures feel with expression as a creature emerges that resembles a dragon from my mind.

Hope rises and takes over like a Phoenix from the ashes.

My story goes back far, but is not over yet.



Hope - by Karen Larkin

## ***A Positive Approach***

*I never really knew what started my mental health illness; I awoke one night, many years ago, with a racing heart and palpitations which terrified me.*

*A visit to my GP provided me with pills and assurance that my problem was 'just nerves' but little else, and it was the fear of these symptoms as much as anything else that kept my mental health in a fragile state for several years. But I eventually found a self-help book\*, which helped me to evaluate my life and change my attitude to the symptoms.*

*It took time, patience, and a lot of false starts,*

*but eventually I succeeded in understanding my mental health issues; I do still get stressed from time to time but I now have the skills to prevent these events taking over my life.*

*Some mental health issues are more complex though and not everyone will be able to deal with their problems as easily, but without doubt it is possible in most cases to improve, if not eliminate, the symptoms and improve your life by changing your mindset and adopting a positive approach.*

*\*Self Help for your Nerves:*

*Dr. Claire Weekes*

Can you write something a bit lighter you ask,  
As your usual stuff, though really good, is a bit dark,  
With a mind like mine it's no easy task,  
But maybe this poem will really leave a mark.

As I find myself turning fifty this year,  
My mood has become a more reflective one,  
Looking back at all the events that have led me here,  
Not a single moment would I see undone.

Though painful and cruel I got through,  
I now have a fantastic and wonderful son,  
A group of friends: steadfast and true,  
A life worth living has been spun.

Though at times my mind is trash,  
And from it I'll never truly be free,  
There is now no way I'd do anything rash,

---

*I had a dream that I was Simon of Cyrene, he who carried Christ's cross. I was singled out by a Roman soldier, to carry the cross, but I didn't want to be involved. He put his sword to my back, so I obeyed him. I picked up Christ's cross and carried it. I looked at Christ, he was smiling a smile I had never seen before, a smile of pure compassion.*

*We got to the mound and he was nailed to the cross. I disappeared back in the crowd. I looked at him on the cross, his whole body was shining pure white light, at an intensity greater than the sun.*

---



