

# The Bangor Literary Journal

## ‘Memory of Snow’



Photograph 'Winter Light in the War Memorial Gardens'  
by Maria Hayden.

Title 'Memory of Snow' taken from the poem by Maeve McKenna.  
Guest Poetry Editor Gaynor Kane.  
A beautiful collection of seasonal poetry, flash fiction, art and  
photography.

## Editors' Welcome

Welcome to this beautiful seasonal issue of The Bangor Literary Journal.

The title 'Memory of Snow' was taken from the powerful poem by Maeve McKenna; while the stunning cover image was photographed by Maria Hayden. This issue is packed with stunning poetry, flash fiction, art and photography for you to enjoy this holiday season.

We were delighted to welcome award-winning poet Gaynor Kane on board as Winter Guest Poetry Editor. Gaynor has done a fabulous job in choosing fifteen stunning poems for this issue, to sit alongside exceptional flash fiction, photography and art.

Peace and Love

### Amy and Paul

Gaynor said: *'I found the majority of the poems to be well crafted and suitable for this Winter issue, and I'd like to offer my congratulations to the selected poets.'*

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### About Gaynor Kane

Gaynor Kane has been published in journals and anthologies in the UK, Ireland and America. In 2018, Hedgehog Poetry Press published her micro-collection '*Circling the Sun*'. Her chapbook '*Memory Forest*' was released in December 2019. Gaynor is working towards her debut full collection, with thanks to an Arts Council NI grant. Gaynor was the winner of The Seventh Annual Bangor Poetry Competition in 2019.

The Bangor Launch of Gaynor's chapbook '*Memory Forest*' takes place on 11th January 2020 at 1.30 pm. Everyone is most welcome to attend.



Find out more about  
Gaynor here: <http://gaynorkane.com/>

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## **Memory Of Snow**

The crunching sound of feet, aligned for now,  
trudging among snow deep enough to challenge  
our ill equipped shoes, every unison step  
as temporary as each flattened flake.

I take your hand, bigger now, yet smallled by a cover  
of pink fleece, your fingers tips forging through.  
You ask; *when did it last snow, Mum*, and I follow the  
white puff of breath sifting from your lips, dissolving  
like a childhood between us.

For a moment, I can't endure the loss of years,  
but steady myself and offer this; *you were seven,*  
*remember?* I say. You and your two  
brothers on a makeshift sleigh, a rope  
in my hand that I might hold still each of you,  
reverse motion, as you careered head first towards  
the thorny hedgerow, the sly white camouflage of the  
land drop waiting, flimsy limbs rigid, faces petrified.

*The forecast says it will be gone tomorrow*, you say,  
as if I didn't know.

**by Maeve McKenna**

## **Christmas Road**

Christmas road is a curved memory:  
wild deer and tree-scapes,

sketched in charcoal, on paper  
so bright it hurts my eyes.

I remember the darkness came,  
made houses nod with twinkle strings,

frightened a fox onto the road —  
his tail almost a flame.

Only the car's engine sang, deep  
and loud on an ancient note,

took me back to Christmases  
gone: my sister's caroling friends

in the front room, Mum's box of dates,  
Dad fixing the tree in a bucket of sand.

All through the season  
we missed the sea.

**by K. S. Moore**

## Footprints in the Snow



*Footprints in the Snow*

Nature facilitates our need to make an imprint

by Karen Mooney

## **Donaghadee, Christmas Eve, 1960**

The High Street abuzz this morning. Queues outside butchers, while others flit in and out of Bakers and Greengrocers.

Release is in the air, from the tyranny of 'The Rush.'

Everywhere, nativity scene stenciled windows. Tonight the family gathers, in a town that knows all about stables, and starry starry nights of deep silence.

Then nature also puts on a display - somehow fitting for this special day.

You walk to the harbour, where it's as if a conjurer has removed a rippling silk handkerchief to reveal a towering vault of sky burnished blue.

Seagull wingtips now luminous as they soar above a low sun. The Lighthouse and the whites of houses glow in a golden hour that will last all day. Light for the fleet, to find their way home by.

You can see for miles in the crackling air. Out past Ailsa Craig, to a whaleback of Scottish coast rising, about to blow. Everywhere, the world a lustrous cinema screen.

Gulls cry, hung in the breeze. With all your roads before you.

Then you close the photograph album, gaze out at Toronto snow, and whisper, 'Next Year.' You left to see new things, then saw home with new eyes.

**by Roy Uprichard**

## **Christmas Day, Daughter Arriving**

*After Toi Derricotte*

You arrive early, impatient and purple but  
beautiful, gaping the air for milk, small fists

battering without aim. The turkey is put  
in the freezer for New Year, won't be missed.

The midwife got back in time to sweep you out  
of the water, after a sneaky roast dinner

with her grown-up kids, swift half of stout  
and back to welcome you as one of the winners,

making your entrance into our world of tinsel  
and trees, what a cracker you were: our

bubbles, our flaming rum pudding, and since  
you were everything we needed, we poured

ourselves clumsily upstairs, our bed very far  
from the world, our brightest Christmas star.

**by Rachel Bower**

## **In a Manger**

The cattle are lowing, yak the men of the inn,  
full knowing it's Mary, woman under each arm  
bearing down next to the donkey, out in the barn.  
The kettle boils brightly, the women bring gin-

soaked cloths to swab the trough, disinfect the floor  
so it shines under bright skies, under her cries  
of *don't leave me, I can't do it, don't let me die*  
grabs a hand as Joe sways nervously at the door,

wondering should he come in and sweep  
or go back for a drink, get his head down  
then a woman grabs him, the head is crowning,  
shoves him to Mary, and he holds her, deep

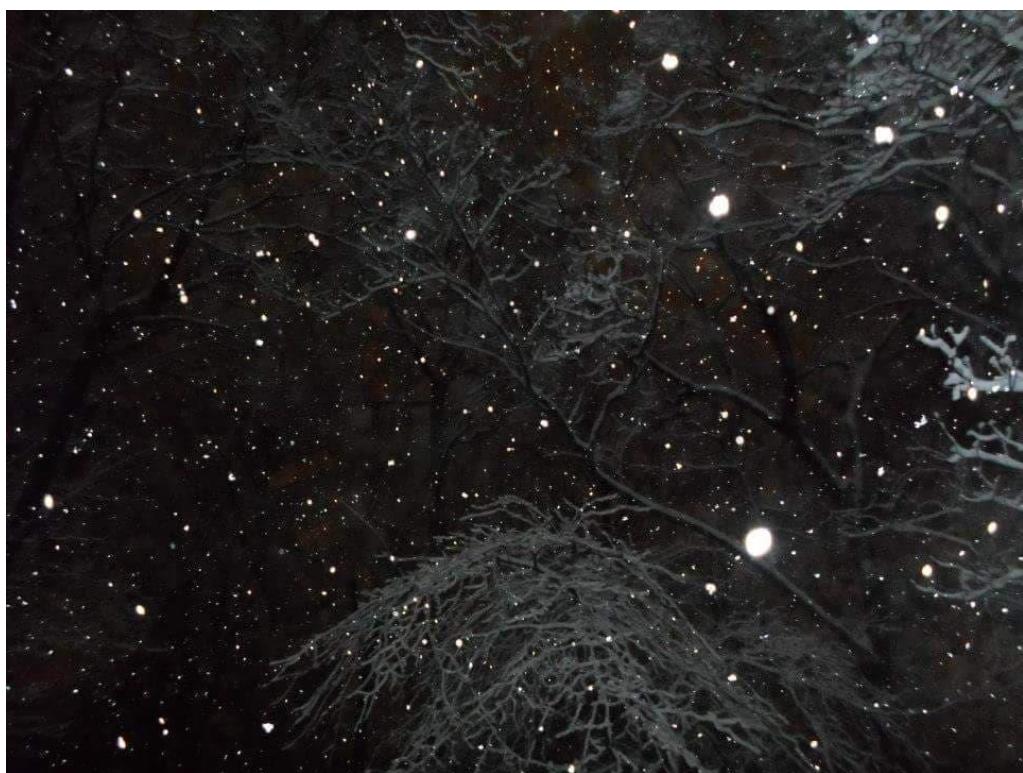
within the earth; a star looks down where they lay  
this belly strong woman, birthing on hay.

**by Rachel Bower**

## **Snowfall and Bare Branches**



Cavehill forest park in the heart of Winter.



Snow falling from the sky in late December.

**by Sinead Cameron**

## **The Day We Discovered You Had Lung Cancer**

*For Rita Tyrrell*

It is only now that we learn of your summer  
how, when the winds of spring subsided  
you felt breathless

how, as the solar panels smiled  
finally turning sunshine into energy  
you were losing yours

how, flowers were confetti  
landing everywhere  
like the rash you found in June

how, the ladybirds on your windowsill  
were like the specks of blood  
on your trembling tissue paper

how, as autumn begins to fall  
we learn that you  
are in the depths of winter

**by Steve Denehan**

## **The Truth about Santa**

'Mummy, is Santa real?'

'Of course Santa's real. Santa is the Spirit of love and love is what makes Christmas happen for everyone. Love cleans the house from top to bottom, including the oven for the turkey, and cooks everybody's favourites, even red cabbage, which nobody actually likes except Granny. Love climbs into the roof space for the decorations, then puts them all up, buys cards, addresses them and queues in the Post Office, vowing to buy stamps earlier next year.'

Love makes chutney and knits scarves, late at night when everyone else is asleep. Love tries to sleep sitting up cradling a coughing child, then struggles to find someone to mind him next morning because of a massive day at work.

Love spends lunchtime sprinting round shops, eating a sausage roll from Gregg's and pushing through the crowds to find the extra-special things. Love wraps all the presents and sets them out on Christmas Eve, gratefully slugs down the sherry and mince pie and falls into bed at 3am.

Christmas wouldn't happen without the magic of love.

'Mummy, is it really Santa or is it just you?'

'It's just me.'

**by Linda Hutchinson**

## Donegal



Capturing moody skies on winter days.

by Brige Kearney McCaughan

### **Colours of Grief (A Winter Requiem)**

Falling from a beech tree straight into winter  
a charcoal angel on blank canvas.  
Her orange beak a pickaxe, abandoned in the snow;  
my gloves a vermillion blaze warming her heart.  
Her breath was too little, and I was too late.  
Life slipped into the grass; first fleck  
of green we'd seen in weeks. My tears: icicles  
in feathers. She loosened her neck  
with a dignity that passed all understanding.

**by Tracy Gaughan**

## Questions to Ponder

How much do we know about this Santa character? And how much do we know about the naughty and nice list? For example, how often is it updated? These days, it's likely stored on a computer - probably on an Excel spreadsheet - but is Santa making best use of the 'function' facility to total up the nice deeds against the naughty deeds and gain an average? Because no child is naughty or nice *all* the time. I remember one summer's night, many years ago, me and a few boys threw eggs at our Science teacher's house. But then on another summer's night, I stood up for a kid that was getting bullied. I forget his name now, but the point is, those nights were about a year apart - and I was equally well rewarded when Christmas came. And what if you do a *really* naughty thing on Christmas Eve? Jolly old St. Nick will already be airborne. Maybe that counts for the following year's list. Either way, I'd like to place on record that a lot of this doesn't add up – and that I've been mainly nice this year.

by Colin Hassard

## **Myrrh**

In the old telling, embellished  
over centuries, men of wisdom  
bring the red tears, wept  
only after the thorny tree  
is wounded, its twisted trunk  
slashed over and over,  
its sapwood pierced,  
the fragrant droplets  
gathered to dry in the sun.

Yet for all we know, a woman  
said “Take myrrh” to ease  
the mother’s pain, not knowing  
the coming sorrow, her labor  
forgotten until she held him  
once more, his body heavy  
and torn. Then the women  
opened the myrrh to help her  
dress him again.

**by Caroline Collins**

## The Heart Of Winter



Textured acrylic. Nature rests in the cold winter dusk waiting to awaken as the days lengthen. Hare is sheltered by an ancient thorny tree.

by Linda Murray

## березы (Birch trees)

All sound that is not crows is forgotten – forever  
has passed. The blank-bellied sky is torn open  
by black warnings - beaks, trees – bleeding fat snow.  
No bell of colour marks an hour, a leaf, a fingertip, the march  
of trees trudges as I do, a scar between white earth, white air.  
In this place, on the echo of this day, they sang sap-rush into the birches  
the white goat stamped back the spring, shook  
ancient winters from her horns  
but my tongue took no northsongs with its milk – Mother Russia  
smooths my heartbeat quiet slow silent  
her feast-day given to crows.

by Ankh Spice

## **Mercury Falling**

The woods are full of sunken ships  
an endless sea of unmade masts,  
the crumple soft of dropping snow  
from branch to drift to otherworld.  
Flightless birds below the fog,  
and ancient spirits sniff the air  
fox mask muzzles raised and rimed.  
Feral night spilling its bounds  
to hunt and chase and wolf away  
the buttered light of summer days,  
while earth lies still as frozen sea,  
furrows standing like the waves,  
forever fixed by an angry glare,  
bleak in beauty, lean of life  
as small seeds sleep  
through the long rolling dark.

**by Mick Corrigan**

## **Toothpaste and Tinsel**

Advent. The season of waiting. Sat in Medicare pharmacy she counted forty-two types of toothpaste on neat shelving.

‘Happy to go ahead with the vaccinations today?

She nodded. *Happy* wasn’t quite the right word. *Charity? Humanity?*

‘I’ll mix your yellow fever,’ said the pharmacist. His reindeer antlers wiggled.

‘Chances of mixing a Margarita?’

Polio. Typhoid. Malaria. Hepatitis. Diphteria. Tetanus... Half the list escaped her. Needs must. The 80’s festive music was driving her nuts. Couldn’t someone just ask them if they knew it was Christmas time? Demented critters lugging laden bags seemed well prepared to feed the world – and drink it too.

The pharmacist apologised. With NHS cutbacks, the voluntary act of pincushioning would cost several days wages.

Twenty-five quid was a month’s salary in Togo. It’s what she paid to sponsor Dogbeda. He wrote. He was nine. Top of his class. His goat had died. He drew a mango tree and a table with a vase of flowers. His village had no well. His mother farmed peanuts.

Leaving, she selected a small tube of Colgate Sensitive Pro-Relief and considered the whole Peace on Earth thing. Journeying to see a boy and his mother in a hut. Was she half-wise?

**by Sue Divin**

## A Cat in a Christmas Tree



Our outdoor cat, who's decided to move indoors to live in the Christmas tree.

by Trish Bennett

## **Questions for the Paper Wasp Who Wants to Leave Me**

And here you are  
wings buzzing against my kitchen window  
your bare legs crawl up the glass, fly down again  
crawl, fly, crawl, fly, repeat until  
I am breathless with your longing.  
Do you hope the pane will melt,  
whisper away and set you free?  
Don't you see the snow with your multitudinous eye  
Can't you feel the cold, despite the shining sun?

Listen. Last fall, hiking the Shades Loop Trail  
my daughter found a large wasps' nest hanging  
like a dimmed paper lantern, dark but alive  
with your cousins, back from golden rod, back from fallen fruit  
back from the bloated bodies of rodents dead in the leaf litter  
circling and crawling, drunk on nectar, high on the warmth  
of the last day before the cold wind comes.  
We kept back commenting on the delicacy,  
amazed some drunk Hoosier  
hadn't knocked the nest to the ground.

So I ask you, do you know what you want?  
Are you heading for home or were you formed —  
egg, larva, pupa — safe here in my walls?  
Should I lift the sash and usher you out,  
or save you the pain  
and end you now?

**by Ann Hart**

## Love Song: Kingfisher

*Although all birds aspire  
to be birds, no bird  
aspires to be a poet. —Mary Ruefle*

I offer you sustenance,  
wild salmon fry  
from clear water

snug shelter carved  
with my clawed toe  
into the dirt dry bank

the tatter  
of my staccato  
call: sharp, protective

You may be Ceyx  
to my Alcyone,  
the good omen

of seven days of calm  
on the flipped coin  
sides of winter solstice.

by Kersten Christianson

## Horses at Christmas



With steaming breath on thunderous hoof, the horses of Christmas come. Taken on a Christmas morning in Cloonfower, Roscommon using Canon Powershot SX170 IS.

by Tracy Gaughan

## Nendrum in November

*for Kim Rhiannah.*

A thousand years of wind and rain  
have not affected it's dissolution.  
Gable ends, the stump of a round tower,  
enclosing walls, suggest a former glory.  
A sundial no longer governs monastic life  
but chides today's pensive pilgrim.  
Wire brush winter trees roughen the horizon,  
as the clotted cream orb of the Super Moon  
rises slowly, as if being inflated, yet  
invisibly tethered to the earth.  
Looking south, the tin foil silver of the lough  
shivers and shimmers in the twilight.  
The reflected light of lonely farmsteads,  
moored yachts and a lightship is  
a tachograph, oscillating across the water.

All is glistening in this gloaming.  
On a summit I stand behind you,  
encircling you in my arms.  
The Vikings have come and gone,  
and our Vikings too,  
rogue cells, burst arteries,  
the longships of dread sailing  
into our lough- side contentment.  
Yet, like this monastery, we have survived  
and tonight exult in the lough's evensong;  
the soft, caressing whispers of the tide  
against a shingled shore,  
the distant cack and caw  
of roosting rooks,  
diving into their own delirium.

**by Robin Holmes**

## **Dressing up for Christmas**

I didn't ask to be Joseph. Who would? He doesn't do anything. Our teacher said we were going to do a contemptuous version so I was going to have to wear a shirt and tie. I hate wearing ties. I've never worn one in my entire life. My mum disagreed with my teacher. She said that if I was to look like a modern dad I should wear a Liverpool top and have my neck tattooed.

Then she suggested I wear a spaceman's outfit to stand out more. "And" she had added "when you knock on the Inn door and they say there's no more room you can deliver those famous lines *Houston, we have a problem.*" I wish she would learn an American accent. Everybody knows astronauts don't come from Belfast.

Then she said I needed a hammer and saw because Joseph was a carpenter. She was going to borrow some power tools but I told her it wasn't a good idea. Joseph was meant to be on holiday. If his union had caught him working they'd have been on him like a heap of doughnuts and he would have lost his job and nobody likes a sad ending.

**by Sarah L Dolan**

### **Christmas Clothes Line.**



Photography. Clothes on a line at my sister's house on a windy Christmas Day.

**by Yvonne Boyle**

## Resolutions

January comes.  
It will not be antiseptic, or crisp,  
Or wind-chapped, as it has been before.  
Not in this climate.  
Not in this year.

But Natasha is coming.  
She brings with her the wings of the soul of winter,  
Pulled up like a comforter  
From the foot of the bed in the east.

She is bedridden, catatonic,  
Consumptive with a love in her lungs  
That is both perfectly golden like the wheat field  
And as silvered as the dead and bloodless craters  
Of the moon. Her face  
White like that moon, sunken in spots,  
And it is waning.

But look.  
Look in her hope chest.  
The glove is already there.

by Stapleton K. Nash

## Slieve Donard Hotel



I took this photo in January a few years back after driving to Newcastle from Bangor for a vintage car show at the Slieve Donard Hotel. Just as I arrived, it started to snow heavily. As I was walking past three vintage cars parked outside, which for some reason weren't part of the display, I just had to photograph them. The snow added something special.

by Clark Chambers

## New Year Swim

Below the dunes at Cudlaff they stand,  
ready for dousing, the cleansing of old sins.  
Shoulders raised against the gale, they brace  
to take the mantle of a year, twelve months  
newly minted, pure as silver.

In mottled hides of patchwork pink,  
this herd of swearing bison  
dredge solace from the heat  
of nearby strangers, steaming  
in the bellows of their breath.

The clock ticks on and a roar rears up  
from the belly of the crowd till a young bull  
lowers his head, charges against the sea.  
The rest rise, stampede as human tide,  
the thunder of a thousand feet on sand.

The ocean accepts it all, the sloughing  
of jaded forms, the donning of new.  
They lift themselves from this baptism,  
raw as new-born calves,  
dripping with aspiration.

by Ruth Quinlan

## **The Phoenix Park**



A photograph from the series 'Don't be late for your tea'.

**By Tommie Lehane**

## As the Year Begins

*for Gill and Alan*

I would like my grave to be  
marked not by a stone but glass:  
a sturdy panel, windowing my life  
in a mosaic of seeing / seeing-through.

Here, in a piece of most particular – almost royal – blue,  
won't you remember  
how, from a height,  
we watched the unhurried, strategizing sea  
re-take the estuary plain,  
spreading in ever-widening fans  
a rippled, supple mirror for the cloudless sky  
and how we plunged  
to stride out to its quick  
where water, headlands, seal-black cliffs  
and sunlight sang on one note?  
We knew our luck, that day.

In another pane would be  
a bud of densest white  
burning against brown,  
flaring in orange up to an indigo sky,  
to a blackness tinkled with pin-prick stars  
for that November night on a *cwm*'s flank,  
so mild it was *maes yr haf*  
and our fire leapt  
mostly for joy  
of being in the dark, alive.

And then a roundel  
bisected by a silver line –  
pearl-pink above a smudge of grey –  
for all my precious after-sorrow dawns.

So, passing, anyone might say,  
*This grave is bright.*  
*What must the life have been?*

by Angela Graham

*Welsh words: cwm = narrow valley;  
maes yr haf = summer meadow*

## **Winter Light in the War Memorial Gardens**



I took this photograph during the big snow of 2010. During the snow storms I was often the only person there with my dog Max, it was magical and pristine and ripe for paw prints, foot prints and memories.

**by Maria Hayden**

## **Biographies**

### **Maeve McKenna**

Maeve McKenna is from Dublin and now lives in Sligo. In 2018, two poems were shortlisted for the Red Line Poetry Competition and highly commended in the iYeats International Poetry Competition. In 2019, she was Highly Commended in the Frances Ledwidge Poetry competition and longlisted in the Over The Edge Poetry competition. Her work has been published in The Cormorant and Sonder Magazine and her poems have appeared online.

### **K. S. Moore**

K. S. Moore's poetry has recently appeared in New Welsh Review, Anthropocene, Ink, Sweat and Tears, Boyne Berries, The Lonely Crowd and The Stinging Fly. Work is upcoming in Atlanta Review. Shortlists have included: Trim Poetry Competition, Americymru West Coast Eisteddfod Poetry Competition and Blog Awards Ireland. K. S. Moore shares poetry and other thoughts at [ksmoore.com](http://ksmoore.com).

### **Karen Mooney**

Karen enjoys capturing images of nature, she also writes poetry and lyrics as well as volunteering for four different organisations.

### **Roy Uprichard**

Roy Uprichard is a retired teacher who developed a benign addiction to the Camino de Santiago. The writing came later. He has published two books on the Caminos Frances and Portugues: 'Restless Hearts,' and, 'Stone and Water.' He has read at events such as the Conversations Festival at Mount Stewart. He lives in North Down and is a member of Holywood Writers.

### **Rachel Bower**

Rachel Bower is the author of *Moon Milk* (Valley Press) and *Epistolarity and World Literature* (Palgrave Macmillan). Her poems and stories have been published widely, including in *Magma*, *Stand Magazine* and *New Welsh Reader*. Her work has been shortlisted for the *London Magazine Poetry Prize* and the *White Review Short Story Prize*, and she was recently longlisted for the Royal Society of Literature's V.S. Pritchett Short Story Award 2019.

### **Sinead Cameron**

Born in Belfast. Sinead has recently graduated from Queens University with a Masters degree in architecture. She has a keen interest in exploring the boundaries between art and architecture, having exhibited her sculptural work as part of a group exhibition in Platform arts Belfast in October 2019.

### **Steve Denehan**

Steve Denehan lives in Ireland with his wife Eimear and daughter Robin. He is a widely published, award-winning poet and the author of two chapbooks and two full collections (one upcoming with Salmon Press). He has been nominated for The Pushcart Prize, Best of the Net and Best New Poet.

### **Linda Hutchinson**

Linda Hutchinson writes everything that occurs to her - poems, stories, shopping lists and responses to idiots on Facebook. She especially enjoys writing Flash Fiction and historical novels for children. She also loves to cook, sew and be a Granny.

### **Brieger Kearney McCaughan**

Brieger studied Sociology at university then went on to work in various environmental and horticultural organisations. The natural world and the environment has become a common theme in most of her work to date.

### **Tracy Gaughan**

Tracy Gaughan is a writer based in Galway. Her poetry and short fiction has featured in *The Honest Ulsterman* and *The Blue Nib*. She presents the arts show 'WestWords' on Ireland's Community Radio Network and recently completed an MA in International Literature and Media at NUIG.

### **Colin Hassard**

Colin Hassard is a poet from Banbridge via Belfast. He was Runner Up in the Seamus Heaney Award for New Writing 2018 and is currently developing his first collection of poems with support from the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

### **Caroline Collins**

Caroline Collins holds an MFA in Creative Writing and a doctorate in American literature from the University of Arkansas. Her poetry collection *Presences* was published in 2014 by Parallel Press. She teaches writing and American literature in the USA, at a college in Georgia.

### **Linda Murray**

Linda Murray - Biography - Graduated in Textile Design from The University Of Ulster. Lectured in Art and Design at SERC. Interested in the natural world, folklore, weather, astronomy and photography. Paints in acrylics and exhibits several times a year.

### **Ankh Spice**

Ankh Spice is a poet from Aotearoa (New Zealand), whose poetry and photography has been published in a number of international literary journals and magazines. His first poetry chapbook is currently out for consideration. You can find him, including a list of his published work, @SeaGoatScreams on Twitter, or @AnkhSpiceSeaGoatScreamsPoetry on Facebook.

## **Mick Corrigan**

Mick Corrigan's work has been rejected by some of the finest publications around though he has also had poems nominated for the Pushcart Prize and The Forward Poetry Prize. His debut collection "Deep Fried Unicorn" was released in to the wild in 2015.

## **Sue Divin**

Sue is a Derry based writer but, hailing originally from Armagh, can't quite classify herself a 'Derry Girl.' Peace worker, knackered mammy, musician and juggler of life, she remains clueless how she finds time to write. Her début novel, *Guard Your Heart*, will be published by Macmillan in 2021.

She tweets @absolutelywrite

## **Trish Bennett**

Trish Bennett is a border bandit from County Leitrim who's settled herself into a bee loud glade in Fermanagh. She writes about the shenanigans of her family, and other creatures. Sometimes she rants. Bennett's won, or been placed in over a dozen poetry competitions in the past few years, including The Allingham, North West Words, The Percy French, Head Stuff, Bailieborough, and The Bangor Literary Journal. She's won The Leitrim Guardian Literary Award for poetry twice. Bennett has been awarded a Support for the Individual Arts Award, by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland in 2019 to aid work on her debut poetry collection. She's a Professional Member of the Irish Writers Centre. **Twitter:** [@baabennett](https://twitter.com/baabennett) **Facebook:** [trishbennettwriter](https://www.facebook.com/trishbennettwriter) **Blog:** [Bennett's Babblings](https://bennettbabblings.com)

## **Ann Hart**

Ann Hart is a poet, writer, and teacher in Central Illinois. Her work can be found in the Monterey Poetry Review, *The Vehicle*, Rattle.com, *Light - A Journal of Photography & Poetry*, *Crows On A Line*, and *The Tomato Slices Anthology*. She is an editor for CU Haiku.

### **Kersten Christianson**

Kersten Christianson is a raven-watching, moon-gazing, high school English-teaching Alaskan. She serves as poetry editor of the quarterly journal *Alaska Women Speak*. Her latest collection of poetry, *Curating the House of Nostalgia*, will publish in 2020 (Sheila-Na-Gig Editions). Kersten holds an MFA from the University of Alaska.

### **Robin Holmes**

Robin Holmes is a retired former social worker who now jointly leads the Causeway U3A Creative Writing Group. He has been shortlisted in the past two Annual Bangor Poetry Competitions.

### **Sarah L Dolan**

Her mother wanted her to be a doctor but Sarah L Dolan was too arty-farty. A long distance member of Cross Border Poets she belongs to an art class and attends playwriting scratches. For a sneaky peak visit [lemoninkproductions.home.blog](http://lemoninkproductions.home.blog)

### **Yvonne Boyle**

Yvonne Boyle has had a range of poems published in a variety of magazines, books and online anthologies, including the Bangor Literary Journal. She was a recipient of a NI Arts Council SIAP Award 2018/9. She is member of WomenAloudNI.

### **Stapleton K. Nash**

Originally from Vancouver Island, Nash lives in Taipei, where she teaches English. Her poems have been published in *The Mark*, *NewMag*, *Amethyst Review*, *Teen Belle*, *Lunate Fiction*, *Nymphs*, and *Castabout Lit*. She can be reached on Twitter @NashStapleton.

### **Clark Chambers**

Clark uses his camera phone to capture images that intrigue him. Clark has had his photographs published in journals and has also exhibited his work in a range of exhibitions, including Aspects Festival.

### **Ruth Quinlan**

Ruth Quinlan was selected for the Poetry Ireland Introductions Series in 2019 and was awarded an individual artist bursary in 2018 by Galway City Council. She has won the 2018 Galway University Hospital Arts Trust Poems for Patience competition, the 2018 Blue Nib Summer Chapbook competition, the 2014 Over the Edge New Writer of the Year Award, and the 2012 Hennessy Literary Award for First Fiction. She is also co-editor of *Skylight 47*, a poetry magazine based in Galway.

### **Tommie Lehane**

Tommie Lehane is a photographic artist focusing on a multi-faceted approach to the idea of “place”. His practise is mainly focused on small villages in West Kerry and the Middle East. Originally from Westport, he now resides in Dublin. Tommie has been widely exhibited in Ireland, Europe and the Middle East and his work is in many private collections.

### **Angela Graham**

Angela Graham is a film-maker and writer. She received an Arts Council of Northern Ireland SIAP Award for a project on Place and Displacement in N Ireland in 2020. Her short story collection *A City Burning* is due from Seren Books in 2020.  
@AngelaGraham8

## **Maria Hayden**

Maria Hayden is a writer/poet, actor, holistic therapist and amateur photographer living in Dublin. She has worked professionally as an actor in Los Angeles and recently completed a Masters in Dramatherapy. As a writer she contributed to a devised piece of work which was performed in the Dublin Fringe Festival.