

# Museletter 6

February 2025

**Quarterly Showcase:** Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2025

MC: Pete Calvin, Alexandra Coates

Headliner: Chris Oliver.

The evening started with an opening from MC Pete Clavin, who kicked off proceeding with his poem *French Dressing*. Further DIY slots were taken by Clare and Andrew, who slipped in a plug for his event in Sherwood in June 2025.

Open Mic slots followed and were taken by Kevin, with his visceral plea for understanding of mental health issues, Alex whose wonderful descriptions of the trials of student teachers struck a frighteningly familiar chord and Takara with his untitled poem that seemed to me to be a poem of hope.

After a short break the featured poet Chris Oliver took to the stage with a brave set that included personal poems tracing his growth both as a parent and a person. Chris is a Nottingham based spoken word poet, workshop facilitator and event organiser. His insights are heartfelt and thought provoking, taking inspiration from his personal

growth and perspectives on life. He ended his excellent set with a poem inviting us all to *Spread the Love*.

The remainder of the evening included contributions from Lytisha, John, Helen, Melissa and, closing the evening, Guy.

Thanks to our MCs, to the person who took donations to cover the evening's costs (sorry, I didn't make a note of the name) and to Guy for the Zoom connection.

## **Zine**

Issue 66 was distributed at the Showcase. Not all of it has been folded and distributed and a folding party is planned for 3pm Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> February at Broadway. The Zine always includes information about how to get work included but also always include the warning that if a poem is over 25 lines it won't get in. (Eat your heart out G. Chaucer or W. Shakespeare)

## **Interview with Frank McMahon**

**Whereabouts in Nottingham are you from and have you lived there all your life?**

I live in Mapperley (for twelve years) and have lived in Nottingham since I was eighteen. I'm from Wolverhampton originally.

### **When did you start writing poetry?**

I started writing poetry properly in my mid-twenties although I did write some poetry as a teenager, none of which has survived thankfully.

### **Who are your poetic influences? Who do you admire?**

In terms of influences Seamus Heaney, Edward Thomas, John Clare, Philip Larkin, Wendy Cope

I admire the poetry of Liz Berry her collection Black Country is amazing and she uses a lot of Black Country dialect words.

### **What made you start writing poetry?**

I think I started writing poetry as a form of self-therapy and emotional catharsis.

### **Do you have a short poem to share that you have written and that you are especially proud of?**

#### Navvies

You built Britain's roads and canals  
Not as pharaohs build the pyramids,  
But as slaves did the job.

You worked on the embankments and cuts,  
Not because of any menace of rifle butts,  
But because today's Celtic Tiger  
Was then a runt street cat,  
Without an ounce of fat.  
You moved, bewildered,  
From four green fields  
To four hundred car parks,  
Ghost writers of the book of modern Britain.

**Please will you nominate the next poet for  
this?**

I nominate **John Humphreys**.

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