



Meg Campbell

19/11/1937 – 17/11/2007

Poems Adrift

Launched 18 November 2007

By Prof Roger Robinson

Meg Campbell is one of New Zealand's most original poets. No-one thinks like her, or perceives the world with its mysteries and contradictions as she does. To Lauris Edmond, "Meg was a remarkable person; she had a capacity for strange, sudden insights and a way of uttering them, a sort of inspired blurting out, that made her as prophetic and uncomfortable to listen to, as any Cassandra."

Some of Meg's finest poems have the same feeling of suddenly taking off to another level, unexpected, strange, and sometimes disturbing. Her main theme is love: a deep love of family and friends, love of the natural world, and especially love of her husband of nearly fifty years, Alistair Te Ariki Campbell, with whom she and Mozart live in Pukerua Bay.

Poems Adrift

\$20 + \$1.50 p&p Cheques payable to A. Campbell

4B Rawhiti Road

Pukerua Bay 5026

Or email your order to poemsadrift@xtra.co.nz

Contemplation

I want to shut down my life,
leave behind untidy pieces,
feel no feelings.
I want to smell flowers
and remember a face. I want
to be tidy as never before.
If only the ink didn't
run out – life will make sense
and I'll be at ease
like trees and flowers
and the weight of the earth.

Poverty is a Cage

Poverty is a cage like no other.
No such thing as "poor but honest".
Poverty is life in prison; just cages,
no choices, everything dictated
by circumstance. You stoop,
not to conquer, but to live.
You visit a food bank, you sleep
to shut out the crying, and
you make poems that rap.

Publishing My Poetry

I should have known
that the large spider in the bath
and the dead bumblebee
in the dining room were,
of course, bad omens.
The news was that my brave
book was in danger of being
aborted so late in its gestation -
not aborted, but miscarried!
How wrong I was, how foolish,
my serene child! You see,
expecting the worse, I lost
all hope, and just wanted
to free myself to return
to my gardening. I still do.

“Meg and Alistair have made Pukerua Bay one of our national literary locations.” John O’Connor

St Mark’s, Rawhiti Road

20 March 1992

You might say

“It was the only time she sang,
the only time she drank red wine
or kneeled, a supplicant in company
with others.” You might say, “She was
too old for love”, but she felt like
a young girl. Why? Because
she could bring her illness here
and lay it down, remove its sting
and rest her mind. Fear retreated:
no-one saw it leave. Forty
years, and she was back,
asking, asking again. (To know
what to ask for was the thing.)
Sanctuary, she asked for,
an hour of quiet pleasure, listening,
answering, and watching those hills.

