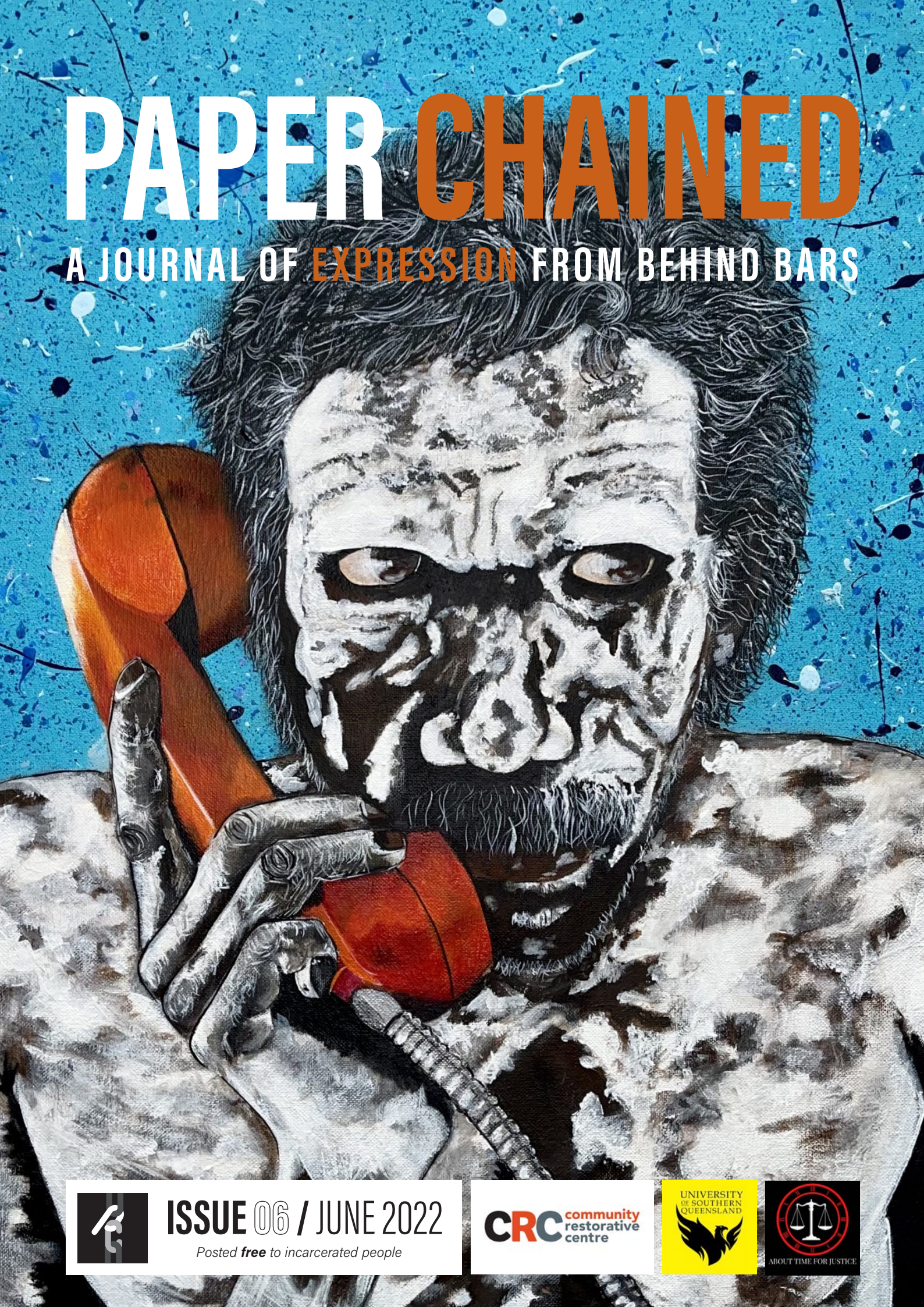


PAPER CHAINED

A JOURNAL OF EXPRESSION FROM BEHIND BARS

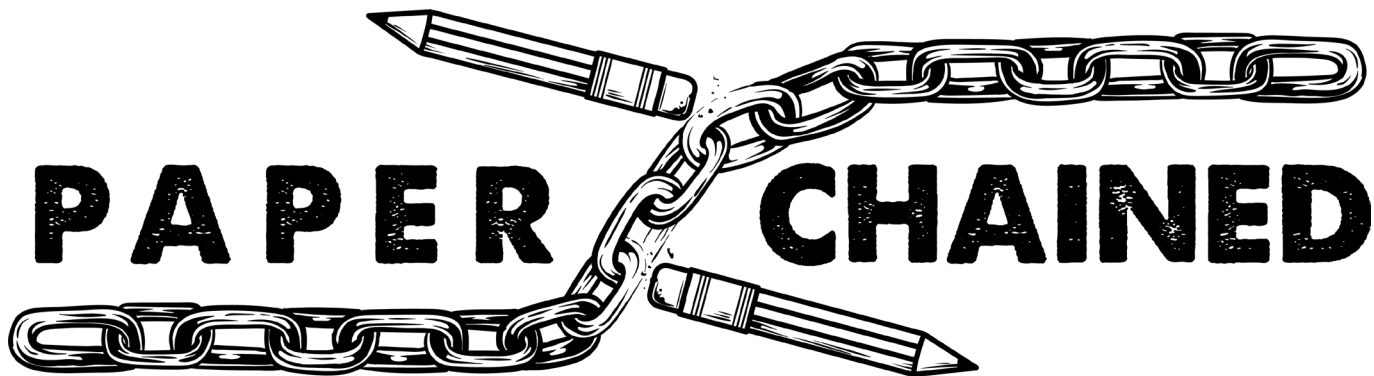


ISSUE 06 / JUNE 2022

Posted **free** to incarcerated people

CRC community
restorative
centre





PAPER CHAINED



Editor: Damien Linnane
Associate editor: Jedidiah Evans
Graphic design: Katie Fox

Website: PaperChained.com
Email: damien.linnane@crcnsw.org.au

Postal address:

**PO Box 2073
Dangar, NSW
2309 Australia**

Published by Vigilante Studios

Issue 6, June 2022

ISSN 2653-0775 (Print)

ISSN 2653-0783 (Digital)

Front cover art by 'N21' at SQCC

Inside cover art by Damien Linnane

Back cover art by Sylvia Roberts



WHAT'S ON THE INSIDE

***Paper Chained* is a not-for-profit journal posted free to incarcerated people, funded primarily by the Community Restorative Centre. This issue is also made possible through the generous sponsorship of the University of Southern Queensland and About Time For Justice.**

If you would like to support *Paper Chained* through sponsorship, please contact us. Donations can also be made via our website.

If you are currently in prison, have experienced time in prison or have a loved one in prison, we welcome your contributions to the next edition of this journal. Contributions from people supportive of prison reform will also be considered. Submissions are accepted all year round.

Contributions can be writings or artworks in any style. While exceptions can be made, we strongly prefer that text does not exceed 1,500 words per contribution. Please advise us if you would like submitted art returned.

Please specify if you would like your contributions to be anonymous. If you choose to publish under your own name, please specify if you do not want the postal details of your prison published alongside your contribution.

If you are currently in prison and would like to receive a posted copy of the journal, please provide us with your name, MIN/ID number, and postal address. Readers outside prison may access the journal free online via our website, **PaperChained.com**.

TERMS OF PUBLICATION

Handwritten contributions will be typed unless the author requests to have a scan of the original text presented in the journal. Typed contributions will be edited for spelling and grammar unless the author specifies NO EDITS on their entry. In such cases, we will type the piece exactly as presented to us.

Copyright for art and writing is retained by the contributor. Contributors are free to have any of their work published in *Paper Chained* republished elsewhere at a later date. However, please advise us if submitted contributions have previously been published elsewhere.

Please be aware that due to limited printing space and other logistical concerns, accepted contributions received may not necessarily appear in the next issue of *Paper Chained*, and may be held on file for subsequent issues.

We will not publish any contributions that contain racism, sexism, transphobia, nationalism, xenophobia, ableism, evangelism or other forms of oppressive language, or any material that encourages violence or violates the privacy of others.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 03 Green Fox Studios | 16 The Ballad of Reading Gaol <i>by Oscar Wilde</i> |
| 04 Staff profiles | 22 Contributions <i>by Jeffery A. Shockley</i> |
| 05 University of Southern Queensland: Supporting Incarcerated Students | 23 An interview with Boom Gate Gallery |
| 06 About Time for Justice | 25 I Knew A Bloke <i>Prison writing from 1970</i> |
| 07 Artwork <i>by David Gay</i> | 26 A History of Prison Newsletters <i>by Damien Linnane</i> |
| 08 A Future With No Prisons <i>by Stacey Stokes</i> | 29 Sudoku |
| 09 Podcast info | 31 Stuck in the System <i>by Luke Duxbury</i> |
| 10 Reading Makes You Free <i>by Bobby Bostic</i> | 32 Next issue preview |
| 11 Artwork and poetry <i>Various contributors</i> | |

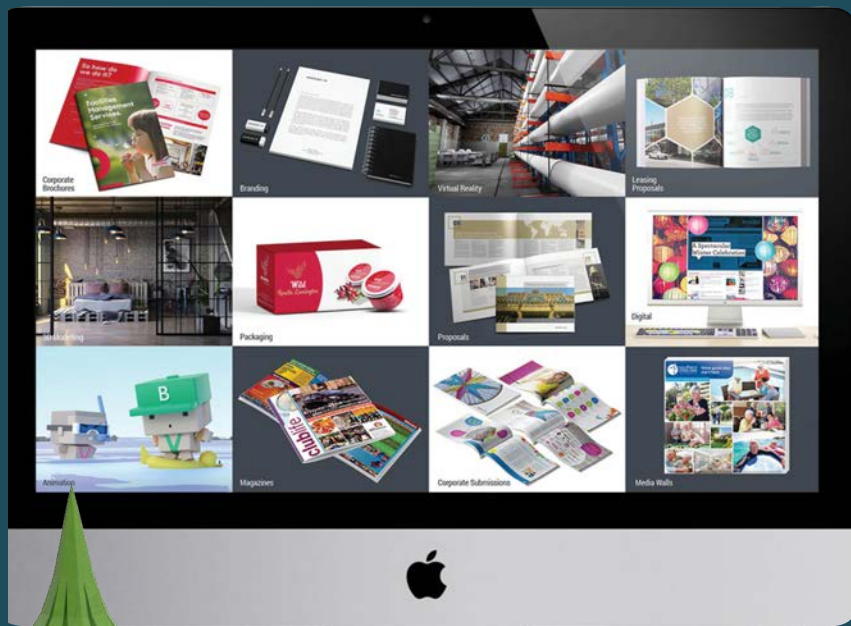
WE WELCOME CONTRIBUTIONS FROM:
PRISONERS
EX-PRISONERS
FAMILY OF PRISONERS

Post submissions to:
Paper Chained
PO Box 2073
Dangar NSW 2309
Australia

GREEN FOX TRAINING STUDIO



- 🌿 Are you **creative or artistic**?
- 🌿 Do you **want to learn computer skills**?
- 🌿 Would you **like a new career**?



We're looking for new students!

You could learn graphic design, digital skills, 3D modelling and animation, professional skills, and writing and editing.

If you're a woman leaving prison

in Brisbane or Melbourne, you may be able to participate in our free community-based program after your release.

greenfoxstudio.com.au

Contact our friendly foxes for more info at: manager@greenfoxstudio.com.au

PAPER CHAINED

STAFF



DAMIEN LINNANE. EDITOR.

Damien was sentenced to two years' imprisonment in NSW in 2015 for burning down the home of a man accused of raping someone close to him. While in prison, he wrote a crime novel, *Scarred* (Tenth Street Press, 2019), and also taught himself to draw. Since his release he has completed a masters degree in Information Studies, and has illustrated the book *This Is Ear Hustle* (Crown Publishing, 2021). In addition to working on *Paper Chained*, he is completing a PhD in law, focusing on barriers that people with disabilities face when impacted by the criminal justice system.



DR JEDIDIAH EVANS. ASSOCIATE EDITOR.

Jedidiah Evans is a lecturer in the Department of Writing Studies at the University of Sydney. He has published articles on U.S. Literature and higher education, and is the author of *Look Abroad, Angel* (University of Georgia Press, 2020). Jedidiah runs a weekly writing workshop in a maximum-security prison in NSW, and his current research focuses on the impact of creative arts in prison. With colleagues at the University of Sydney, Jedidiah is working to develop collaborative learning opportunities between incarcerated students and university students.



KATIE FOX. GRAPHIC DESIGN.

Katie Fox is a graphic designer, writer, and accredited editor. Her lived experience has given her valuable insight into the impact of disadvantage on the person and its relation to crime, and into issues in the Australian criminal justice system that lead to injustice. She is currently working through a Bachelor of Laws (Hons), and has developed interest in human rights, intellectual property, and legal structures for social enterprise and not-for-profits. She is currently employed at Green Fox Studio, a creative agency operating a not-for-profit graphic design training studio through a maximum-security prison.



Supporting Incarcerated Students

At USQ, we believe everyone should have the opportunity to access higher education. To support our incarcerated students, we've developed a selection of programs that can be studied whilst incarcerated.

We understand that as an incarcerated student your needs are unique and internet restrictions will impact how you are able to study. USQ has developed learning materials in an 'offline' format which is available in the Offline Enterprise Platform or the Offline Personal Device. This means you will be able to complete your program without the need for online resources or internet access.

During your studies, Correctional Centre staff such as an Education Officer may be able to provide you with support throughout your program including:

- communicating with USQ
- applying and enrolling
- assignment submission
- coordination and facilitation of exams
- referral to a career development practitioner
- accessing resources that will help inform your career decision making

Are you unsure if studying a university program is right for you? We've developed a series of workbooks called *Unlocking a Future Career*, which is designed to help you with the decision to study at university and provide support for students soon to be released from a correctional centre. If you would like a copy of these workbooks, please ask your Education Officer.

The programs you can choose from include:

- Tertiary Preparation Program (TPP)
- Associate Degree Business and Commerce
- Certificate of University Studies
- Diploma of University Studies
- Bachelor of General Studies (Management, Journalism and Social Sciences disciplines).

Not all courses within these programs are available in a correctional centre, and unfortunately not all correctional centres can facilitate students studying at a tertiary level.

For further information, and to talk about enrolling, please talk to your Education Officer.

ABOUT TIME FOR JUSTICE



Todd and Jacob Little. About Time For Justice founders, former prisoners and survivors of institutional abuse.

About Time For Justice is an Australian organisation specialising in assisting victims of historical sexual abuse seeking possible justice through the litigation process.

Our passion is helping victims who have been affected by abuse within private and public institutions across Australia. The team from About Time for Justice understands that taking the first steps towards seeking justice can be intimidating, especially for those who have had issues with trusting people, systems or organisations they have been exposed to in their past. Our experienced team, many who have shared their own story and experience in this area, are trained to eliminate stress and navigate the complex process of approaching and dealing with the most appropriate legal representatives.

We provide full support to our clients so they know all the options available, taking away the anxiety of having to tell your story to many people and assist in liaison with legal firms and lawyers to minimise fears of the processes involved in taking legal action. We partner with legal representatives from some of Australia's largest firms, as well as smaller specialised law firms that provide targeted legal advice based on client needs. Our team have the skills to explain what is happening with your matter in simple terms and is available to answer any questions and work flexibly with each client based on meeting the best outcome for their individual circumstances.

Call or write to us on the details provided for an obligation-free chat.



**PO Box 1182
Kingscliff
NSW 2487
Australia**

02 5632 1291 • 07 4911 3237
AboutTimeForJustice.com
@abouttimeforjustice

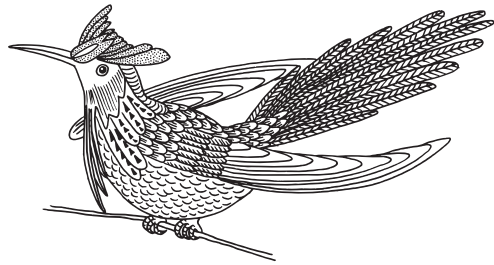


I make matchstick motorbikes to kill time in my cell and I like making things with my hands. Making things out of matchsticks is a good way to forget any bad thoughts you had through the day. Working on them makes me feel happy and good inside myself and I like what I'm doing.

*Art and writing by
David Gay
New Zealand*



A FUTURE WITH NO PRISONS



If we maintain our current course, the future of prisons is an ever-expanding series of storage facilities for broken people. Our society would rather make those who struggle to conform to society's laws "sit in the naughty corner" than delve into the reasons for their behaviour.

We are put in a cage. Given no therapy to fix why we are broken. We are alone in a world of predators. And no one cares. Every complaint is met with, "If you don't like it, then you shouldn't have come to jail". Nothing to do but think, angry and bitter, surrounded by negativity and still broken.

And then we are released. Because we will be released.

We are still broken. The reason we couldn't conform to society's laws still remain. But now we have a criminal record. So we can't get a job, and police visit us first whenever a car goes missing in your neighbourhood, to remind us: "We don't trust you". Because society cannot forgive us and will never forget the one thing we may have done.

If your children were naughty, would you just lock them in their room and not discuss the issue? Then constantly raise that they're naughty for the rest of their lives? That sounds emotionally abusive...

Many of us have had extremely traumatic events take place in our lives at a young age. And this has stunted our emotional growth and development. Many of us are emotionally still children. We need access to therapy.

For some, drugs have been our escape, our coping mechanism, and after jail, the only thing that makes life worth living. We need help and healing.

But that's our problem, right?

Wrong.

When you're waiting for an ambulance and none comes because they are all at a shooting? An overdose? A stabbing? It's your problem now.

Your house is broken into by someone with a drug addiction? Maybe if they had gotten support, your house would never have been burgled, your car stolen, your comfort zone violated.

How about we consider the cost of the whole useless system.

Victoria spends \$130,000 per inmate per year. Australia spends \$3.8 billion annually. Is it really worth spending \$130,000 a year to keep someone struggling with addiction off the streets for the year?

You can still get drugs in jail, and there's still no support. Then you get out and do drugs again – there is nothing to show for it. That money could go to education and health care. Your struggling children who need that little bit of extra help at school, could get that help. You need surgery? The waiting list could be shorter with the money spent on health care. Not to mention what we could offer to society if we were allowed back in.

The future we need is one centred on healing and education. One where we are all given the support to address the broken parts, not create more. Where real pathways exist to learn and be connected. A future without prisons is a world where we all have a place and no one is left behind.

*Written by Stacey Stokes #208153
Langi Kal Kal Prison
Private Bag 4
Beaufort, Victoria 3373*

PODCASTS

**WANT TO SHARE YOUR STORY
ONCE YOU'RE RELEASED,
OR LISTEN TO THE STORIES OF OTHERS?**

Tune into these shows, available from all the major podcast providers.



Broken Chains

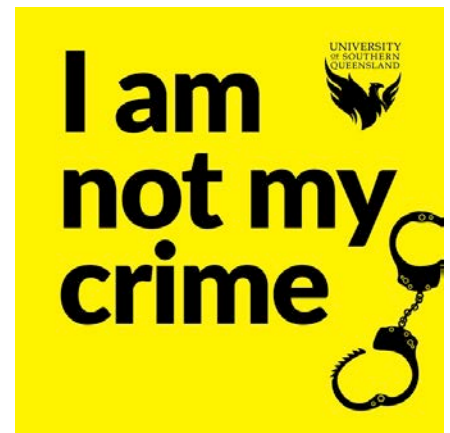
BROKEN CHAINS

Hosted by *Paper Chained* editor Damien Linnane and commissioned by the City of Newcastle, *Broken Chains* interviews formerly incarcerated people about their experiences in prison.



TALKING TIME WITH LUKAS AND ALICIA

Talking Time is a place where uncomfortable conversations about incarceration and everything to do with it take place. It is where the voice of those who have lived it, have loved ones that have or are living it, work in it or have an interest in it, come together in a safe and supportive place.



I AM NOT MY CRIME

I Am Not My Crime features courageous people telling you the story about the crimes they have committed and their journey to redemption.

READING MAKES YOU FREE

How can I explain the joy I get from reading? Words can't express it. Nevertheless, I want to try to express what reading means to me and how it has made me free even while inside of prison. Locked in a cell for twenty-four hours a day when I was sixteen years old, I had no company except the books in my cell. When I picked those books up, I discovered a much larger world than the one I had limited myself to on the streets in my city of St. Louis, Missouri. Reading allows me to go wherever I want to in the universe. Books take me so many places. The books I read opened up worlds to me that I didn't even know existed.

It's difficult to explain the feelings that you get from reading. Emotionally, books make you feel whole. You can find your life's purpose between these pages. When you read, you get feelings that can be likened to love. This is how deep and meaningful reading is. As you read the stories of someone else, you wonder how the author knew your own story so well although he was writing about someone else. How does that author know your thoughts as if he was already inside of your mind? When we read about history, the author takes us back in time and we feel like we are right there on the scene experiencing those events. Reading a book is better than watching a movie. The page just takes you away. This is how we get lost in the words as we read. For me, life on the page is real because I feel what the authors are talking about. Reading lives inside your heart. I can feel it just as I am taking a breath now and have sight to see. This is what reading does for me.

It does more than just pass time, it surpasses time. Reading has no limits. If it weren't for words and language, how can we function? This is why I promote reading with extreme passion. Reading changes people's lives and allows them to excel to their highest heights. There is real power in words. Reading helps us to see a clearer path. It inspires us to want to become better when we read about someone else accomplishing their goals. Reading is ecstasy. Reading gives us a natural high. It is intellectual intoxication. There are no side-effects. There is no coming down from this high: You just stay high, just turn the page and get even higher. This is why I love reading. What about you?

The mind is a wonderland. It allows you go where you want to go despite incarceration. Books take us to places that we have never been or seen. We read books from centuries ago and feel like we are right there. The mind is like a machine that is

always turning, always coming up with new ideas and creative means and ways of doing things. I love reading. I read some of everything. Books are my sanctuary. Reading is where I find peace and meaning. The more books I read, the more I find myself. It seems like the books I read are the exact books that I needed to read at exactly the moment that I read them.

Books and reading can make us free. It was books that lifted me out of prison. My 241-year sentence is no longer my destiny. Books allow me to see beyond my own time. Life is bigger than prison and books will teach you that. The authors seem to put words into things that you wanted to express your entire life. The right sources of reading can make any man free. It is like the old saying of an older person drinking from the fountain of youth. Reading revives and heals the soul.

Malcolm X said that when he was in prison, books opened up a new world to him. He said that from that moment on, he read with every second of free time he had on his hands. This is because reading made him free. In fact, he said that he did so much reading that the months passed without his even thinking of the fact that he was in prison. He said that at that point in his life he was truly free, and had never been freer.

At first, he read without a particular aim. Then he began to read selectively, with a purpose. He said that he knew right there in prison that reading changed the course of his life forever. He also said that reading awoke in him a craving to be mentally alive. He said that if he could just spending the rest of his life reading books that he would do just that to satisfy his curiosity. This was a man that understood the importance of reading.

We also must come to understand the importance of reading and how it will affect the course of our lives from this moment on. Man, I am telling you that reading can make us free, free from ignorance, free from mediocrity, free from not having a purpose, and free from slavery. Reading can surely make us free.

*Bobby Bostic #526795
Algoa Correctional Centre
8501 No More Victims Road
Jefferson City, MO 65101, USA*

I AM AN ADDICT

I'll tell my story with a rhyme
Once upon an addicted time
Stuck on a loop just like a train
Non-stop searching for a vein
Continuously feeding myself with pain
Empty promises spat from my lips
Whilst poison was fed by my fingertips
Desperate & sick trapped by its grip
Blinded by self-centred greed
My family & I continued to bleed
By the filthy habit I used to feed.
Now I've stopped & given up
If I lapse it's just a hiccup
Cause I've found the strength to stay away
By talking it out here at N.A.

SINE QUA NON



Lysergic, Psylocibin & MEOS's I've tried,
When I say exploring some others say fried,
Into the place where auras don't hide,
Straight past my alter ego to whom I confide,
Direct to the sanctum where my thoughts reside,
I'm now a visionary because before I was blind,
Understanding the reasons for the tears that I've cried,
Accepting the problems previously denied
This alternate view enables me to decide,
ALL of life's issues begin to subside,
Whilst soul searching upon a PSYCHEDELIC RIDE!

Poetry by 'C'

Artwork by Joe Salazar #1057110 • Ellis unit, 1697 FM 980 • Huntsville, Texas • 77320 United States
Editor's note: Prisoners in Texas are unfortunately not allowed to receive letters from other incarcerated people.



Pain Is
Temporary
quitting
Lasts
FOREVER



SIMON EVANS/2021

Artwork by Simon Evans #1833561
Auckland Prison
Private Bag 50-124
Albany Auckland 0752
New Zealand

HOLLOW

The Halls When Inmates
Are Locked In Tight
The Day Rooms Still
And Silent At Night
Promises Made
By Those In Blue
Eyes That Users
Try To see Through

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

Why Didst Though Summon Me
What Is The Purpose, Of This Discourse
Is It My Face, Thy Loved To See

Why Bring Me Here By Force
Bound That I Am Before You Now
Surely You Don't Expect To Bow

For Life and Death
You Have Condemned Me
Let Me Be, Or Set Me Free

PROS + CONS

Something To Eat
Somewhere To Sleep
Shoes For My Feet
Clothes, Warmth To Keep
Water, To Wet My Throat
No Pen Or Paper To Note
Blatant Torture – Forbidden
Mental Torment – Hidden
Therapy – Or Punishment
Rehabilitation – Public Humiliation
Society's Retaliation
Justice Recommendation

Poetry by David McGettigan, NSW



Artwork by Joe Salazar



PENITENCE

Sometimes you feel alone, and sometimes out of place
And sometimes you just feel like you are a disgrace
People look at you like you're a strain on the Earth
And I'm telling you, that can really hurt

Don't listen to what people say
This is not who you are today
You've done your time, left that life behind
Time to not live a life of pain, it's time to start your life again

You may feel like you're wicked, and in a world you don't belong
But that's no way to feel, just because you did something wrong
Yet you may feel defeated, damaged and reviled
But living this new life, will make you and others smile

A life of repentance, remorse and sorrow
You can show the world you're not hollow
You can now understand, sadness heartache and woe
I will just leave you with one word as I go

Penitence

THE PRISON JOURNEY

Do you ever feel broken hearted
And don't know where to start
Lost and insecure
Feels like a bullet to the heart

Sitting in a cell all day long
Thinking this is home
This is where I belong

Now that you're trying, and trying hard you are
This time in life you will go far
Keep going and keep going and keep going strong
Show the world society is where you belong

Poetry by W. Mason, NSW



Artwork by Katie Fox

Tragedy Strikes at unexpected moments
 Tragically saturated with unsuspecting components
 A bleat disguised as opportunity
 The elaborately simple schemata that manipulates an entire
 community
 Affecting birds of all feathers in this Cockatoo unity
 Like congenital ailments used to decor
 Taking two zeros to disguise two fours
 Distressing aspersion is disorder
 Even Trump couldn't build a wall to hide that border
 So many watts nobody can hear
 We're gonna need a circuit breaker up in here
 I feel it ain't clear
 Ain't no bum steer...
 This is a message just for you
 No doubt true

Poetry by 'Belly'
 Incarcerated in NSW

19 MAY 2021 DAWN

NOWRA GAOL

It is light enough to write
 The night was long, long
 But the dawn comes bright
 Her fingers still rosy

Night in this place is silent
 So quiet that I heard my tears hit the pillow
 Silence embraces me like a lover
 So much more than just the absence of sound

I don't cry much, only once before last night
 When I saw Flynn's photo
 Different tears then - body shaking, uncontrolled sobs

Last night silent tears, sad, soft and slow

My beloved is in trouble
 Her back is bad
 Fusions - such a fear filled word
 The cysts are back and suddenly she is at the Last Resort

I am here and can do nothing
 I can't carry or bend down for her
 I can't bring her tea or breakfast
 I can't kiss her hands or feet
 She can't rest her head on my lap

I am helpless, so I cry
 My heart aches and my eyes water

She is strong and brave but I know she is afraid and will worry
 She will be more afraid as time for surgery approaches

I will still be far from her
 She needs my help and I can give her none

Am I sorry for her or myself?
 Or for both of us?
 I don't know

This hard, really hard
 When the Black Dog held me I did not cry
 Even when Dani died
 I was numb
 Joy and sorrow both far, far away

Now I feel again - emotions quicken
 Pain is on top for now, but I am alive again

Writing lightens the burden

Poetry by Mark O'Brien #647908
 PO Box 538, Nowra 2541

THE BALLAD OF READING GAOL

BY OSCAR WILDE

I

He did not wear his scarlet coat,
For blood and wine are red,
And blood and wine were on his hands
When they found him with the dead,
The poor dead woman whom he loved,
And murdered in her bed.

He walked amongst the Trial Men
In a suit of shabby grey;
A cricket cap was on his head,
And his step seemed light and gay;
But I never saw a man who looked
So wistfully at the day.

I never saw a man who looked
With such a wistful eye
Upon that little tent of blue
Which prisoners call the sky,
And at every drifting cloud that went
With sails of silver by.

I walked, with other souls in pain,
Within another ring,
And was wondering if the man had done
A great or little thing,
When a voice behind me whispered low,
"That fellow's got to swing."

Dear Christ! The very prison walls
Suddenly seemed to reel,
And the sky above my head became
Like a casque of scorching steel;
And, though I was a soul in pain,
My pain I could not feel.

I only knew what hunted thought
Quickened his step, and why
He looked upon the garish day
With such a wistful eye;
The man had killed the thing he loved
And so he had to die.

Yet each man kills the thing he loves
By each let this be heard,
Some do it with a bitter look,
Some with a flattering word,
The coward does it with a kiss,

The brave man with a sword!
Some kill their love when they are young,
And some when they are old;
Some strangle with the hands of Lust,
Some with the hands of Gold:
The kindest use a knife, because
The dead so soon grow cold.

Some love too little, some too long,
Some sell, and others buy;
Some do the deed with many tears,
And some without a sigh:
For each man kills the thing he loves,
Yet each man does not die.

He does not die a death of shame
On a day of dark disgrace,
Nor have a noose about his neck,
Nor a cloth upon his face,
Nor drop feet foremost through the floor
Into an empty place

He does not sit with silent men
Who watch him night and day;
Who watch him when he tries to weep,
And when he tries to pray;
Who watch him lest himself should rob
The prison of its prey.

He does not wake at dawn to see
Dread figures throng his room,
The shivering Chaplain robed in white,
The Sheriff stern with gloom,
And the Governor all in shiny black,
With the yellow face of Doom.

He does not rise in piteous haste
To put on convict-clothes,
While some coarse-mouthed Doctor gloats,
and notes
Each new and nerve-twitched pose,
Fingering a watch whose little ticks
Are like horrible hammer-blows.

He does not know that sickening thirst
That sands one's throat, before

The hangman with his gardener's gloves
Slips through the padded door,
And binds one with three leathern thongs,
That the throat may thirst no more.

He does not bend his head to hear
The Burial Office read,
Nor, while the terror of his soul
Tells him he is not dead,
Cross his own coffin, as he moves
Into the hideous shed.

He does not stare upon the air
Through a little roof of glass;
He does not pray with lips of clay
For his agony to pass;
Nor feel upon his shuddering cheek
The kiss of Caiaphas.

II

Six weeks our guardsman walked the yard,
In a suit of shabby grey:
His cricket cap was on his head,
And his step seemed light and gay,
But I never saw a man who looked
So wistfully at the day.

I never saw a man who looked
With such a wistful eye
Upon that little tent of blue
Which prisoners call the sky,
And at every wandering cloud that trailed
Its raveled fleeces by.

He did not wring his hands, as do
Those witless men who dare
To try to rear the changeling Hope
In the cave of black Despair:
He only looked upon the sun,
And drank the morning air.

He did not wring his hands nor weep,
Nor did he peek or pine,
But he drank the air as though it held
Some healthful anodyne;

With open mouth he drank the sun
As though it had been wine!

And I and all the souls in pain,
Who tramped the other ring,
Forgot if we ourselves had done
A great or little thing,
And watched with gaze of dull amaze
The man who had to swing.

And strange it was to see him pass
With a step so light and gay,
And strange it was to see him look
So wistfully at the day,
And strange it was to think that he
Had such a debt to pay.

For oak and elm have pleasant leaves
That in the spring-time shoot:
But grim to see is the gallows-tree,
With its adder-bitten root,
And, green or dry, a man must die
Before it bears its fruit!

The loftiest place is that seat of grace
For which all worldlings try:
But who would stand in hempen band
Upon a scaffold high,
And through a murderer's collar take
His last look at the sky?

It is sweet to dance to violins
When Love and Life are fair:
To dance to flutes, to dance to lutes
Is delicate and rare:
But it is not sweet with nimble feet
To dance upon the air!

So with curious eyes and sick surmise
We watched him day by day,
And wondered if each one of us
Would end the self-same way,
For none can tell to what red Hell
His sightless soul may stray.

At last the dead man walked no more
Amongst the Trial Men,
And I knew that he was standing up
In the black dock's dreadful pen,
And that never would I see his face
In God's sweet world again.

Like two doomed ships that pass in storm
We had crossed each other's way:
But we made no sign, we said no word,
We had no word to say;
For we did not meet in the holy night,
But in the shameful day.

A prison wall was round us both,
Two outcast men were we:
The world had thrust us from its heart,
And God from out His care:
And the iron gin that waits for Sin
Had caught us in its snare.



In Debtors' Yard the stones are hard,
And the dripping wall is high,
So it was there he took the air
Beneath the leaden sky,
And by each side a Warder walked,
For fear the man might die.

Or else he sat with those who watched
His anguish night and day;
Who watched him when he rose to weep,
And when he crouched to pray;
Who watched him lest himself should rob
Their scaffold of its prey.

The Governor was strong upon
The Regulations Act:
The Doctor said that Death was but
A scientific fact:
And twice a day the Chaplain called
And left a little tract.

And twice a day he smoked his pipe,
And drank his quart of beer:
His soul was resolute, and held
No hiding-place for fear;
He often said that he was glad
The hangman's hands were near.

But why he said so strange a thing
No Warder dared to ask:
For he to whom a watcher's doom
Is given as his task,
Must set a lock upon his lips,
And make his face a mask.

Or else he might be moved, and try
To comfort or console:
And what should Human Pity do
Pent up in Murderers' Hole?
What word of grace in such a place
Could help a brother's soul?

With slouch and swing around the ring
We trod the Fool's Parade!
We did not care: we knew we were
The Devil's Own Brigade:
And shaven head and feet of lead
Make a merry masquerade.

We tore the tarry rope to shreds
With blunt and bleeding nails;
We rubbed the doors, and scrubbed the
floors,
And cleaned the shining rails:
And, rank by rank, we soaped the plank,
And clattered with the pails.

We sewed the sacks, we broke the stones,
We turned the dusty drill:
We banged the tins, and bawled the hymns,
And sweated on the mill:
But in the heart of every man

Terror was lying still.

So still it lay that every day
Crawled like a weed-clogged wave:
And we forgot the bitter lot
That waits for fool and knave,
Till once, as we tramped in from work,
We passed an open grave.

With yawning mouth the yellow hole
Gaped for a living thing;
The very mud cried out for blood
To the thirsty asphalte ring:
And we knew that ere one dawn grew fair
Some prisoner had to swing.

Right in we went, with soul intent
On Death and Dread and Doom:
The hangman, with his little bag,
Went shuffling through the gloom
And each man trembled as he crept
Into his numbered tomb.

That night the empty corridors
Were full of forms of Fear,
And up and down the iron town
Stole feet we could not hear,
And through the bars that hide the stars
White faces seemed to peer.

He lay as one who lies and dreams
In a pleasant meadow-land,
The watcher watched him as he slept,
And could not understand
How one could sleep so sweet a sleep
With a hangman close at hand?

But there is no sleep when men must weep
Who never yet have wept:
So we—the fool, the fraud, the knave—
That endless vigil kept,
And through each brain on hands of pain
Another's terror crept.

Alas! It is a fearful thing
To feel another's guilt!
For, right within, the sword of Sin
Pierced to its poisoned hilt,
And as molten lead were the tears we shed
For the blood we had not spilt.

The Warders with their shoes of felt
Crept by each padlocked door,
And peeped and saw, with eyes of awe,
Grey figures on the floor,
And wondered why men knelt to pray
Who never prayed before.

All through the night we knelt and prayed,
Mad mourners of a corpse!
The troubled plumes of midnight were
The plumes upon a hearse:
And bitter wine upon a sponge
Was the savior of Remorse.

The cock crew, the red cock crew,
But never came the day:
And crooked shape of Terror crouched,
In the corners where we lay:
And each evil sprite that walks by night
Before us seemed to play.

They glided past, they glided fast,
Like travelers through a mist:
They mocked the moon in a rigadon
Of delicate turn and twist,
And with formal pace and loathsome grace
The phantoms kept their tryst.

With mop and mow, we saw them go,
Slim shadows hand in hand:
About, about, in ghostly rout
They trod a saraband:
And the damned grotesques made
arabesques,
Like the wind upon the sand!

With the pirouettes of marionettes,
They tripped on pointed tread:
But with flutes of Fear they filled the ear,
As their grisly masque they led,
And loud they sang, and loud they sang,
For they sang to wake the dead.

"Oho!" they cried, "The world is wide,
But fettered limbs go lame!
And once, or twice, to throw the dice
Is a gentlemanly game,
But he does not win who plays with Sin
In the secret House of Shame."

No things of air these antics were
That frolicked with such glee:
To men whose lives were held in gyves,
And whose feet might not go free,
Ah! Wounds of Christ! They were living
things,
Most terrible to see.

Around, around, they waltzed and wound;
Some wheeled in smirking pairs:
With the mincing step of demirep
Some sidled up the stairs:
And with subtle sneer, and fawning leer,
Each helped us at our prayers.

The morning wind began to moan,
But still the night went on:
Through its giant loom the web of gloom
Crept till each thread was spun:
And, as we prayed, we grew afraid
Of the Justice of the Sun.

The moaning wind went wandering round
The weeping prison-wall:
Till like a wheel of turning-steel
We felt the minutes crawl:
O moaning wind! What had we done

To have such a seneschal?

At last I saw the shadowed bars
Like a lattice wrought in lead,
Move right across the whitewashed wall
That faced my three-plank bed,
And I knew that somewhere in the world
God's dreadful dawn was red.

At six o'clock we cleaned our cells,
At seven all was still,
But the sough and swing of a mighty wing
The prison seemed to fill,
For the Lord of Death with icy breath
Had entered in to kill.

He did not pass in purple pomp,
Nor ride a moon-white steed.
Three yards of cord and a sliding board
Are all the gallows' need:
So with rope of shame the Herald came
To do the secret deed.

We were as men who through a fen
Of filthy darkness grope:
We did not dare to breathe a prayer,
Or give our anguish scope:
Something was dead in each of us,
And what was dead was Hope.

For Man's grim Justice goes its way,
And will not swerve aside:
It slays the weak, it slays the strong,
It has a deadly stride:
With iron heel it slays the strong,
The monstrous parricide!

We waited for the stroke of eight:
Each tongue was thick with thirst:
For the stroke of eight is the stroke of Fate
That makes a man accursed,
And Fate will use a running noose
For the best man and the worst.

We had no other thing to do,
Save to wait for the sign to come:
So, like things of stone in a valley lone,
Quiet we sat and dumb:
But each man's heart beat thick and quick
Like a madman on a drum!

With sudden shock the prison-clock
Smote on the shivering air,
And from all the gaol rose up a wail
Of impotent despair,
Like the sound that frightened marshes hear
From a leper in his lair.

And as one sees most fearful things
In the crystal of a dream,
We saw the greasy hempen rope
Hooked to the blackened beam,
And heard the prayer the hangman's snare
Strangled into a scream.

And all the woe that moved him so
That he gave that bitter cry,
And the wild regrets, and the bloody sweats,
None knew so well as I:
For he who lives more lives than one
More deaths than one must die.

IV

There is no chapel on the day
On which they hang a man:
The Chaplain's heart is far too sick,
Or his face is far too wan,
Or there is that written in his eyes
Which none should look upon.

So they kept us close till nigh on noon,
And then they rang the bell,
And the Warders with their jingling keys
Opened each listening cell,
And down the iron stair we tramped,
Each from his separate Hell.

Out into God's sweet air we went,
But not in wonted way,
For this man's face was white with fear,
And that man's face was grey,
And I never saw sad men who looked
So wistfully at the day.

I never saw sad men who looked
With such a wistful eye
Upon that little tent of blue
We prisoners called the sky,
And at every careless cloud that passed
In happy freedom by.

But there were those amongst us all
Who walked with downcast head,
And knew that, had each got his due,
They should have died instead:
He had but killed a thing that lived
Whilst they had killed the dead.

For he who sins a second time
Wakes a dead soul to pain,
And draws it from its spotted shroud,
And makes it bleed again,
And makes it bleed great gouts of blood
And makes it bleed in vain!

Like ape or clown, in monstrous garb
With crooked arrows starred,
Silently we went round and round
The slippery asphalt yard;
Silently we went round and round,
And no man spoke a word.

Silently we went round and round,
And through each hollow mind
The memory of dreadful things
Rushed like a dreadful wind,

And Horror stalked before each man,
And terror crept behind.

The Warders strutted up and down,
And kept their herd of brutes,
Their uniforms were spick and span,
And they wore their Sunday suits,
But we knew the work they had been at
By the quicklime on their boots.

For where a grave had opened wide,
There was no grave at all:
Only a stretch of mud and sand
By the hideous prison-wall,
And a little heap of burning lime,
That the man should have his pall.

For he has a pall, this wretched man,
Such as few men can claim:
Deep down below a prison-yard,
Naked for greater shame,
He lies, with fetters on each foot,
Wrapt in a sheet of flame!

And all the while the burning lime
Eats flesh and bone away,
It eats the brittle bone by night,
And the soft flesh by the day,
It eats the flesh and bones by turns,
But it eats the heart away.

For three long years they will not sow
Or root or seedling there:
For three long years the unblessed spot
Will sterile be and bare,
And look upon the wondering sky
With unrepentant stare.

They think a murderer's heart would taint
Each simple seed they sow.
It is not true! God's kindly earth
Is kindlier than men know,
And the red rose would but blow more red,
The white rose whiter blow.

Out of his mouth a red, red rose!
Out of his heart a white!
For who can say by what strange way,
Christ brings his will to light,
Since the barren staff the pilgrim bore
Bloomed in the great Pope's sight?

But neither milk-white rose nor red
May bloom in prison air;
The shard, the pebble, and the flint,
Are what they give us there:
For flowers have been known to heal
A common man's despair.

So never will wine-red rose or white,
Petal by petal, fall
On that stretch of mud and sand that lies
By the hideous prison-wall,
To tell the men who tramp the yard;

That God's Son died for all.

Yet though the hideous prison-wall
Still hems him round and round,
And a spirit man not walk by night
That is with fetters bound,
And a spirit may not weep that lies
In such unholy ground,

He is at peace—this wretched man—
At peace, or will be soon:
There is no thing to make him mad,
Nor does Terror walk at noon,
For the lampless Earth in which he lies
Has neither Sun nor Moon.

They hanged him as a beast is hanged:
They did not even toll
A requiem that might have brought
Rest to his startled soul,
But hurriedly they took him out,
And hid him in a hole.

They stripped him of his canvas clothes,
And gave him to the flies;
They mocked the swollen purple throat
And the stark and staring eyes:
And with laughter loud they heaped the
shroud
In which their convict lies.

The Chaplain would not kneel to pray
By his dishonored grave:
Nor mark it with that blessed Cross
That Christ for sinners gave,
Because the man was one of those
Whom Christ came down to save.

Yet all is well; he has but passed
To Life's appointed bourne:
And alien tears will fill for him
Pity's long-broken urn,
For his mourner will be outcast men,
And outcasts always mourn.

V

I know not whether Laws be right,
Or whether Laws be wrong;
All that we know who lie in gaol
Is that the wall is strong;
And that each day is like a year,
A year whose days are long.

But this I know, that every Law
That men have made for Man,
Since first Man took his brother's life,
And the sad world began,
But straws the wheat and saves the chaff
With a most evil fan.

This too I know—and wise it were
If each could know the same—

That every prison that men build
Is built with bricks of shame,
And bound with bars lest Christ should see
How men their brothers maim.

With bars they blur the gracious moon,
And blind the goodly sun:
And they do well to hide their Hell,
For in it things are done
That Son of God nor son of Man
Ever should look upon!

The vilest deeds like poison weeds
Bloom well in prison-air:
It is only what is good in Man
That wastes and withers there:
Pale Anguish keeps the heavy gate,
And the Warder is Despair

For they starve the little frightened child
Till it weeps both night and day:
And they scourge the weak, and flog the fool,
And gibe the old and grey,
And some grow mad, and all grow bad,
And none a word may say.

Each narrow cell in which we dwell
Is foul and dark latrine,
And the fetid breath of living Death
Chokes up each grated screen,
And all, but Lust, is turned to dust
In Humanity's machine.

The brackish water that we drink
Creeps with a loathsome slime,
And the bitter bread they weigh in scales
Is full of chalk and lime,
And Sleep will not lie down, but walks
Wild-eyed and cries to Time.

But though lean Hunger and green Thirst
Like asp with adder fight,
We have little care of prison fare,
For what chills and kills outright
Is that every stone one lifts by day
Becomes one's heart by night.

With midnight always in one's heart,
And twilight in one's cell,
We turn the crank, or tear the rope,
Each in his separate Hell,
And the silence is more awful far
Than the sound of a brazen bell.

And never a human voice comes near
To speak a gentle word:
And the eye that watches through the door
Is pitiless and hard:
And by all forgot, we rot and rot,
With soul and body marred.

And thus we rust Life's iron chain
Degraded and alone:
And some men curse, and some men weep,

And some men make no moan:
But God's eternal Laws are kind
And break the heart of stone.

And every human heart that breaks,
In prison-cell or yard,
Is as that broken box that gave
Its treasure to the Lord,
And filled the unclean leper's house
With the scent of costliest nard.

Ah! Happy day they whose hearts can break
And peace of pardon win!
How else may man make straight his plan
And cleanse his soul from Sin?
How else but through a broken heart
May Lord Christ enter in?

And he of the swollen purple throat.
And the stark and staring eyes,
Waits for the holy hands that took
The Thief to Paradise;
And a broken and a contrite heart
The Lord will not despise.

The man in red who reads the Law
Gave him three weeks of life,
Three little weeks in which to heal
His soul of his soul's strife,
And cleanse from every blot of blood
The hand that held the knife.

And with tears of blood he cleansed the
hand,
The hand that held the steel:
For only blood can wipe out blood,
And only tears can heal:
And the crimson stain that was of Cain
Became Christ's snow-white seal.

VI

In Reading gaol by Reading town
There is a pit of shame,
And in it lies a wretched man
Eaten by teeth of flame,
In burning winding-sheet he lies,
And his grave has got no name.

And there, till Christ call forth the dead,
In silence let him lie:
No need to waste the foolish tear,
Or heave the windy sigh:
The man had killed the thing he loved,
And so he had to die.

And all men kill the thing they love,
By all let this be heard,
Some do it with a bitter look,
Some with a flattering word,
The coward does it with a kiss,
The brave man with a sword!



Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) was an Irish poet and playwright. One of the most popular playwrights in London in the 1890s, he is also remembered for his 1891 novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, and his imprisonment in 1895 for 'gross indecency' (consensual homosexuality), which was illegal in England at the time.

Wilde was sentenced to two years' imprisonment with hard labour, the maximum penalty. He completed part of his sentence at Reading Gaol. About five months after Wilde arrived at Reading Gaol, Charles Thomas Woolridge, a former soldier, was brought in on the charge of murdering his wife. Woolridge was sentenced to death, and executed on July 7, 1896.

Wilde was released from prison on May 19, 1897, and sailed to France that evening. He never returned to the UK. Wilde wrote *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* about Woolridge's execution, shortly after arriving in France. The success of the poem and its subsequent sales generated a small income for Wilde for the rest of his life. He also wrote two long letters to the editor of the *Daily Chronicle* newspaper, describing the brutal conditions of prison and advocating for prison reform.

Wilde's health deteriorated greatly in prison due to the hard labour and poor diet. He spent two months in the prison infirmary after suffering a fall, during which he sustained injuries that would contribute to his death at the age of 46. – DL

COMMUNITIES



Tune in for 90
Awesome
minutes
every week!

HOW DO I LISTEN TO A JAILBREAK PROGRAM IF I'M INSIDE?

At some centres via your In Cell DVD Channel

Not at your centre? Ask for it! Get Welfare to call us.

Podcasts on the Green Machine coming soon

If you have a radio in your cell, tune in via community radio

Sydney - 107.3FM 2SER - Sun 9:30pm & Thurs 5:00am
93.7FM Koori Radio - Mon 10:00pm & Sun 10:00pm
88.9FM Skid Row - Thurs 2:00pm
Melbourne - 3CR 855AM - Tues 9:30am
Broken Hill - 107.7FM 2Dry - Mon 8:00pm

HOW CAN MY FAMILY LISTEN TO JAILBREAK?

By tuning into their local community radio at the stations listed in the green box

By using the net anywhere to listen to live streams at www.2ser.com; www.radioskidrow.org; www.kooriradio.com or www.3cr.org.au or a Podcast any time at www.2ser.com/jailbreak

Families can send dedications and song requests by writing, calling or emailing us.

HOW CAN I TAKE PART IN A JAILBREAK PROJECT?

Write to us if you want to get involved in making Jailbreak and

Ask welfare to invite Jailbreak to visit your centre!

GETTING IN TOUCH

Inmates can write to:
Jailbreak, 2SER PO Box 123 Broadway NSW 2007

Welfare and Family can also email:
jailbreak@2ser.com

Or Call:
0420 946 709

Inside Out

Sistergirls, brotherboys & LGBTIQ+ prisoner solidarity network.

We send out a free newsletter every 3 months with writing and artwork by and for LGBTIQ+ folks who are (or have been) in prison, anywhere in Australia. All genders and sexualities are welcome to join the mailing list. If you want to read or contribute to the newsletter, we'd love to hear from you!

PO Box 2446, Footscray Vic, 3011

WHAT GOES THROUGH THIS MIND ...

What goes through this mind that in time I must resign to be what I was not taught to be by a man I thought would be free for his family within a society that waited for me to be everything he was not to be?

And as I wish to see the ability within me there is a loss at the cost of becoming more of what I'm not free to see for fear of repeating a past that I was not part in but started in when too young to know anything other than what was because it was what I could see.

How much time must pass before at last my life does grasp a reality I can be free in to be me in and not fear repeating the mistakes of the father I've not nor will ever grieve in?

And yet here I am ...

Outside of the lives of those who love me while I reside inside this vast crevice of pain and uncertainty of who you may say I should be.

Don't be angry at me for the father ... I did not know the all of him yet wanted to grow up to be tall like him because he was that man who'd be beaming at the successes, removing all of the crutches and teaching his son what it takes to be a man that can stand the test of time in life itself.

What a wealth of dreams and ideas in my youthful mind that in time became empty conclusions, distorted illusions and as I got older and bolder and became a soldier to get away from those pains that remain of all I have tried to be in spite of or because of this emptiness inside of me.

What goes through this mind as I wonder what in me others may see while trying to determine how to be the man I desperately want to be, proudly be, for the mother and grandmother that raised me to be the man my father was not to me.

Outside of the lives of those who love me while still I reside inside this vast crevice of pain and uncertainty of what I should be, whereas, I am doing the best I can as the man I am and sometimes ...

That has to be enough.

AGAIN AND AGAIN

How many times have I been here?

Again and again ...

In the same space leaving a trace
Of an identity after these many years ...

23

Still learning to identify with this

But miss the meaning of what it means

To be free inside this place I've gotten myself in ...

Again and again.

My Children, two.

One I don't know, have never seen ...

The other I know and fainted on the hospital floor

As her head entered the world I would abandon her in ...

Three months later.

How many times have I been here?

Again and again.

Where the same routine of ...

Count time, Meal time, Pass movement ...

Take it in!

Yard terminated, Day-room terminated

You're still alive waiting

For the Day I will be terminated

While still trying to live

A life worthy of life itself ...

Where those who know me can say

Something nice ...

That maybe I've brought something

Of value to this world

We live in ...

Trying to change it for the better

That the life lost was not for naught ...

Even as it was a heinous act of execution.

Leaving another's child without ...

As I left mine without.

What about this makes sense?

None of it ...

How much time do I deserve?

All of it ...

How much more can I do?

Some of it.

In the end ...

I wish for None of It ...

Again and Again.

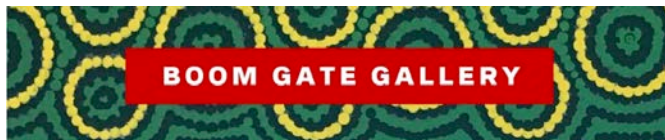
Writing and poetry by:

Jeffery A. Shockley - ES4796

Smart Communications/PA DOC

PO Box 33023, St Petersburg, FL 33733, USA

INTERVIEW WITH



 @boomgategallery

www.boomgategallery.dcj.nsw.gov.au/

In this issue of *Paper Chained*, we interviewed Damian Moss and Elizabeth Day from Boom Gate Gallery.

How would you describe Boom Gate?

Boom Gate Gallery is the only gallery in NSW solely dedicated to the promotion, exhibition and sale of inmate art. The gallery is located outside the security boom gates at Long Bay Correctional Complex, so members of the general public can enter the gallery without entering the gaol. Visitors can view paintings, sculptures, hand-painted clap sticks and didgeridoos, as well as videos showing inmate artists discussing the making and meaning behind their practice.

Why do you think it's important to give incarcerated people a place to share their art?

We create the potential for a vocation for some of the inmates who frequently get out of gaol with a few thousand dollars (enough, say, for a rental deposit, or to help start a new life). Boom Gate Gallery continues to allow inmates to make art independently of education. It is a very successful program, and we're sure that being able to exhibit and sell work during sentences makes a lot of difference to some people.

What is the most challenging thing about running a gallery that sells artwork from prisoners?

We try to maintain a high standard of work so that the public do see us as a good place to visit where they might find a gem to purchase. We generally do have good quality work but can always see how our program might be improved. We are always surprised at the quality of work produced by inmates, particularly considering most of them have never studied art. Right now, we have about five of our regular artists who are about to leave, and we wonder whether we'll be able to continue but we always do find other people who are very gifted, and eager to have an opportunity. We are always looking for exhibiting possibilities beyond the gallery, such as at the Downing Centre.

Is there a way for people currently in prison elsewhere in NSW to have their work displayed there?

Inmates from other Correctional Centres can have their work displayed on the gallery web-page. The gallery also hosts the annual NAIDOC competition and Custodian Portrait Prize. Entrants for these exhibitions come from all NSW Correctional Centres.

What kind of artworks do you stock? Can you tell us about any unusual things you currently have?

The gallery's most popular artworks are paintings, and approximately 70% of the paintings are from Indigenous inmates. All Indigenous art in the gallery is made by inmates registered as Indigenous by Corrective Services.

Currently, in the gallery we have a series of small carvings made from soap. Over the years we have marveled at the resourcefulness of inmates, the way they continue to be productive regardless of the lack of materials and opportunities. The series of soap carvings were by a Pacific Islander inmate, each one carved out of gaol-issue soap using a plastic knife and fork. Each piece depicts a Maori Tiki face or sea creatures, such as turtles.

Can you tell us about any projects Boom Gate has worked on?

We were part of the University of New South Wales' The Big Anxiety Festival a couple of years ago. This research project focused on promoting positive attitudes to people with mental health issues. Art can certainly assist with mental health during sentences, giving inmates an opportunity to feel creatively engaged with the world, amongst other benefits. There is increasing evidence that art is effective in improving communication and socialising skills. We are keen to continue being part of mental health research. Inmate artists were asked to write about how art-making impacted their mental health.

The outcome was really extremely positive. Art actually saves lives. It is a suicide preventer in prisons and does really bring together people who are otherwise quite trapped in their own worlds. Officers sometimes remark on how it assists with management. We would like to expand our operation. Many gaols do not have art at all.

How are the sale prices of artworks determined?

Prices are arrived at through collaboration between the artist and gallery staff. 75% of the sale price goes back to the inmate, which they use to buy more art materials or send home to their family.

How can people purchase art from the gallery?

Members of the general public can purchase in-person in the gallery, or via our website and Instagram page.

BOOM GATE GALLERY

ART FOR SALE



Barramundi Dreaming
 By Graheme
 \$600
 90 cm x 120 cm, Acrylic on canvas, 2021



Guitar (Kangaroo)
 By Allan
 \$750
 100 cm x 40 cm, Acrylic on wood, 2021



Two Geckos
 By Conway
 \$120
 50 cm x 40 cm, Acrylic on canvas, 2021



Fish Life
 By Tiny
 \$1000
 90 cm x 120 cm, Acrylic on canvas, 2021

I KNEW A BLOKE

His name was Topsy and he had a unique method of getting his booze around the Melbourne pubs a few years ago. He drank prodigiously. But he never paid.

Topsy would toddle into a bar and look around for a likely group of drinkers. After making what always turned out to be an infallible judgement he would go straight up and announce his ability to drink a full pot of beer - standing on his head.

This never failed to arouse the sceptics. Someone would call "Give us a pot, love" to the barmaid and before she could pour it Topsy would be somersaulted into a position of action; one hand would waggle in a way both impatient and thirsty, and Topsy's little legs would be sticking up straight as straws. Then a small silence ... as they waited to see him fail.

They'd have waited a long time for that. But I've more than once heard the cheers as little Topsy made the beer run upside-down, slurping rather crudely but nevertheless managing to spill not one drop. "Gravity be damned!" said a bloke standing next to me one day, as he ordered another pot with which to test his own eyes. And the little fellow waited for more.

The sight-testing always continued until everyone was

convinced that Topsy was a man among men. No one any more would doubt that he could drink a pot while standing straight up on his head. Then interest would start to abate, until the little bloke would mention that the trick tho' slightly harder, was possible to do with two pots at the same time - "Give us more beer, love!" they'd call ... and Topsy was away again.

It never lasted long, of course. About an hour of upside-down drinking always resulted in Topsy being unable to stand on his two feet - much less his poor old head, which was worn quite thin on top. Then he would wander off to snooze in a corner, smiling.

He's dead now, is that upside-down character. And I guess such idle people don't go to heaven. So when I go myself down to meet Old Nick it may be that the first thing I see will be a little devil named Topsy drinking his brimstone with a leg in the air!

*Uncredited story, originally printed in
Contact, Parramatta Gaol Resurgents Official Magazine,
August 1970.*

Reprinted with permission as given in the original publication.



Comic by John E. Sacks, creator, writer, and illustrator of 'Diary of an Incarcerated Cartoonist.'

 @john_e_sacks

A HISTORY OF AUSTRALIAN PRISON NEWSLETTERS

BY DAMIEN LINNANE

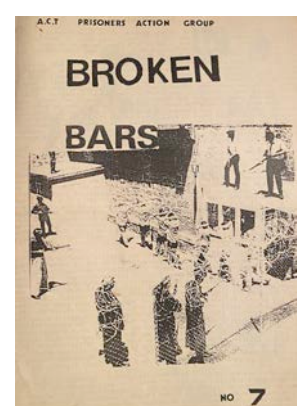
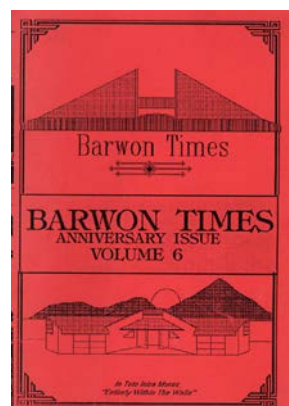
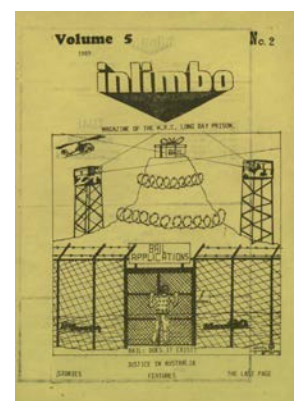
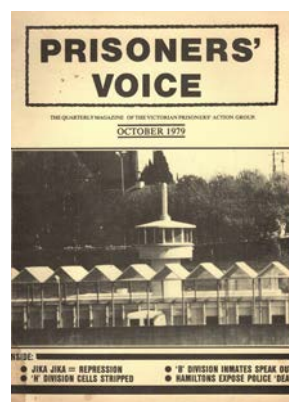
It was March 2016. I'd just finished writing my first short story in prison, *Contact Front*, and I had already started teaching myself to draw.

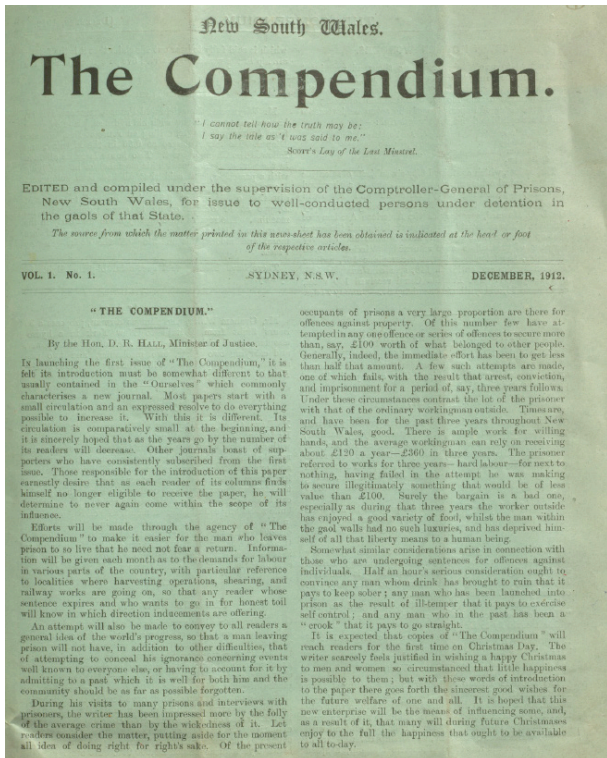
I'd been in prison for a few months by this stage, and if there was a prison newsletter that I could send my creations to, I hadn't come across it. I asked around, and all I got was a succession of blank faces and shrugs. One guy responded to my question by looking at me as if I'd asked him if he knew a way I could get a pizza delivered to my cell. Frustrated, I resigned myself to keeping my art and writing in a box under my bed.

A few months later, there was a stack of papers at the officer's window. It was Volume 7 of *Just Us*, a newspaper for people in prison to help them make informed decisions about elections. *Just Us* only goes out before elections, but there was an ad on the back-page for *Inside Out*, a new newsletter for inmates. I sent my contributions in, though their first issue didn't come out until after my release.

By chance, a friend on the outside had alerted me to the magazine, which had indeed printed two of my artworks, though not my short story as it didn't print fiction. I kept up to date with the magazine though, and in Issue 4 there was a call-out for submissions for a new prison newsletter, to be called *Paper Chained*, that focused on prison writing. I found that old short story I had written in prison, and sent it in. Even though I'd been out for over a year, I was still immensely proud to see something I'd created in prison published in their first issue in 2017.

To the best of my knowledge, *Just Us*, *Inside Out* and *Paper Chained* are the only Australian newsletters specifically aimed at people in prison. I kept in touch with them all, and as many of you will know, I was given the opportunity to take over as editor of *Paper Chained* in mid-2021. Only recently, however, have I decided to try and find out the history of prison newsletters in this country. What I've uncovered has completely blown me away, and I feel like I've only just scratched the surface. So without further delay, let me share some of what I've found.





THE COMPENDIUM

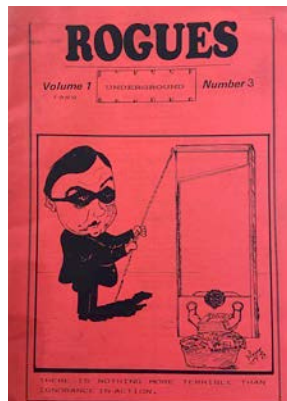
The history of Australian prison newsletters begins with *The Compendium*. The debut issue was launched in December 1912, and was deliberately printed on green paper so that it could not be confused with regular newspapers, which were contraband in prison at the time.

According to the front page, it was 'Edited and compiled under the supervision of the Comptroller-General of Prisons, New South Wales, for issue to well-conducted persons under detention in gaols of that state'.

The Compendium consisted mostly of selected news items relating to current events clipped from mainstream papers, though coverage of politics was at least initially forbidden. It also printed mainstream poetry. Originally 14-pages long and printed at the Government Printing Office, by 1940, it had grown to 24-pages and was hand-set, printed and published monthly by inmates at Goulburn Reformatory.

The Compendium was published until at least 1945. The newsletter may have become redundant shortly thereafter, as then Justice Minister Downing allowed newspapers into prisons in January that year, letting inmates read the latest news about World War II.

Since *The Compendium*, I've found at least 20 other Australian prison newsletters before the end of the 20th century. In this issue of *Paper Chained*, we'll cover one more of them, *InPrint*.



INPRINT

InPrint was a NSW prison newspaper created in 1977 by the psychologist John Gibbons, then director of programs at Corrective Services NSW. It followed recommendations made by the 1976 Nagle Royal Commission into New South Wales Prisons that inmates be given better access to literature, and featured submissions from inmates, including opinion pieces, letters and poetry. The magazine was funded by Corrective Services NSW and printed by inmates at Long Bay using a printing press, which further encouraged submissions of writing and art. An outside editor was hired to come into the prison to produce it.

InPrint found itself in the unique position of being paid by Corrective Services to produce a magazine that presented the rights and points of view of incarcerated people, including criticism of the department. Initially, many prisoners were sceptical. After a year of publication, however, the department's legal officer agreed to a publication statement saying that material would only be censored for issues of libel and defamation, and the newspaper eventually received hundreds of contributions from inmates. Several continued to contribute after their release, and some went on to obtain grants for their own creative writing, as well as employment in journalism.



Despite being funded by Corrective Services, the newspaper was still banned in some prisons, and while it did receive some contributions from correctional officers, many others expressed hostility towards it. I spoke to Irina Dunn, the second and final editor of the newspaper, about its production and demise.

"Content became increasingly critical of government, including my decision to print all the recommendations of the Nagle Royal Commission without asking for permission," she told me, "which was a pretty radical act at the time."

After Ray Denning's infamous escape from Grafton prison in 1980, Dunn was told not to publish an editorial she had written on the topic, though did so anyway after she threatened to resign. A series of unrelated incidents were used to remove Dunn from her position as editor and she was instead placed on a research project. Despite being assured the magazine would continue, its October 1980 issue was its last. Dunn was not replaced, and the newspaper ceased to be produced.

"I think the department saw my departure as an excuse to finally shut the newspaper and its criticism's of them down," said Dunn.

Nevertheless, a standalone issue of *JailPrint*, a combination of *InPrint* and *Jail News*, an external publication that was banned from NSW prisons, was released in June 1981.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

The following is a list of prison newsletters I have uncovered so far.

Note: there have been two newsletters over the years titled *Just Us*, and three titled *Inside Out*.

- *Neptune* (McLeod Prison, VIC) c. 1960s
- *Inside Out* (NSW) c. 1974
- *Time & Life* (NSW) c. 1977
- *Jail News* (NSW) est. 1978
- *Contact* (Parramatta Gaol) c. 1970s-1981
- *Prisoner's Voice* (VIC) c. 1979
- *Behind Bars* c. 1980
- *Vision Magazine* (Yatala, SA) c. 1981
- *InLimbo* (Long Bay) 1984-1989
- *Loose Ends* (Long Bay) est. 1986
- *Inside Out* (Dhurringile Prison) est. 1986
- *The Magazine* (Parramatta Gaol) est. 1987
- *Just Us* (Beechworth, VIC) 1988-1992
- *Framed* (NSW) est. 1989
- *Broken Bars* (ACT) c. 1980s
- *Rogues* (Bathurst Gaol) c. 1990
- *Barwon Times* (Barwon, VIC) c. 1990
- *The Rattler* (Long Bay) 1993-1996
- *Time Out* (Long Bay) 1994-1997
- *The Plainswoman* (Emu Plains) est. 1996
- *Baywatch* (Long Bay) est. 2000

We'll do stories on other newsletters in upcoming issues. If you know of any other newsletters, have any inside information about any, or any copies, we'd love to hear from you. We are particularly interested in trying to find a copy of *The Sinking Ship*, a publication released in the mid-2000s at Long Bay. – DL



SUDOKU

INSTRUCTIONS

The goal of Sudoku is to fill the numbers 1-9 exactly once in every row, column and each of the puzzle's nine 3x3 grids.

Sudoku is not a math game, rather it is about identifying logical patterns. All puzzles have a unique solution that can be arrived at purely by logic. Guessing answers is likely to make things more difficult. Instead, use the process of elimination to find the answers.

NORMAL DIFFICULTY

	5			6		2	3	
		2	4		9			5
7			2		5	6	9	
				8		1		9
			1		7			
5		8		4				
	4	7	5		3			1
6			8		4	5		
	8	5		2			4	

NORMAL DIFFICULTY

	9	7	2					8
	1		4	8	7		9	
				6	5	1		
				1	2		4	3
2	7						1	9
1	8		3	7				
		8	6	9				
	3		1	5	8		6	
4					3	9	8	

			3		5	1	8	7
			4	1		9		
5	1		8					4
9	6		3	1	4			2
1	4	9	7		8			6
4			2		6			8
		5	4	9				
2	1	3	6		8			

	1	9		8		6		2
2	8		7			3		4
			9			7		
	6	3	4	1				
		7	5		8	9		
				7	9	2	1	
		1			7			
4		2			5		3	9
8		5		4		1	6	

	4	6	5					1
	5	9					4	
2			4			6		
5		4		7		1		9
	1		9		5		2	
9		3		6		4		8
		7			8			4
	9					8	3	
4					7	2	1	

SUDOKU

HARD DIFFICULTY

	6	1			8		7	
7			5	1				
8			4		6	5	3	
2								8
	7						9	
9								4
	8	2	6		7			5
				5	4			2
	5		2			9	6	

VERY HARD DIFFICULTY

3		6	2	5		9		
				3				
					8	7		1
				1		4	6	
5								2
	7	4		9				
4		9	5					
				8				
		5		7	1	2		8

3	1				8			
	2	7		9	1			
							5	
	8	3		5			7	
5			8		9			1
	9			3		5	2	
	5							
			4	2		8	3	
			7				1	4

8				3			1	
					7			
		4		9		2	5	
2						6		9
	1						2	
3		5						8
	9	8		6		3		
				5				
	2			7				4

7	1		3				6	
				2			1	
	4			6	8			7
	7				2	3		
2								4
		6	8				2	
1			7	3			9	
	8			5				
	2				4		7	5

	2			6		5	3	
					5	7		
3				9	4			
		6			2			
4	9			7			2	8
			4			1		
			2	1				3
		8	6					
	7	9		4				6

STUCK IN THE SYSTEM

My name is Luke Duxbury and I'm a female to male transgender prisoner in the UK on an IPP sentence. This is an indeterminate sentence with no release date, although I'm able to sit for parole every 12-24 months to determine whether I'm suitable for my release back into the community.

My first parole hearing was set at two years and I could have been released at that point. Since then, I've had six paroles denied, and eleven-and-a-half years later, I'm still in prison.

My parole in 2020 granted me open conditions which means I can access Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL, a.k.a day leave), but due to health problems and Covid I haven't had the opportunity to make use of any of these temporary releases.

This year, parole recommended that I now be released, despite the lack of ROTLs. However, my parole dossier went to the Ministry of Justice and without allowing me an oral hearing, they chose to deny me my release based on the lack of ROTLs.

After eleven-and-a-half years stuck in the system, this knock-back has had detrimental effects on my mental health.

Everyone was so certain that this would be the one. I told all my family I'd be home for Christmas and I've now had to break the bad news. It's not just me that this all affects. My entire family and my partner are so upset and frustrated. No one can really understand why I wasn't granted parole, and wasn't even given the chance to have my say at an oral hearing.

Prisoners, like me, on this IPP sentence, are the lost and forgotten. No matter what we do to try and show reconciliation, by addressing offending behaviours and mental health issues, it seems none of this has any meaning to the powers that be!

I'm a model prisoner, a peer mentor for the girls in here and someone people can rely upon in any form. All I ask is for the opportunity to put all these skills into practice in the community.

My risk to the public can't be reduced until I'm out there, so I beg for the chance to show that I'm not a danger. I am mentally as stable as possible now that I have accepted my new lifestyle with a disability.

I have good and bad days, but then again, if I were on top of the world all of the time, that would be more worrying for everyone.

Nobody is perfect, but I am perfect for me. I am the best I can be, and surely that counts for something!

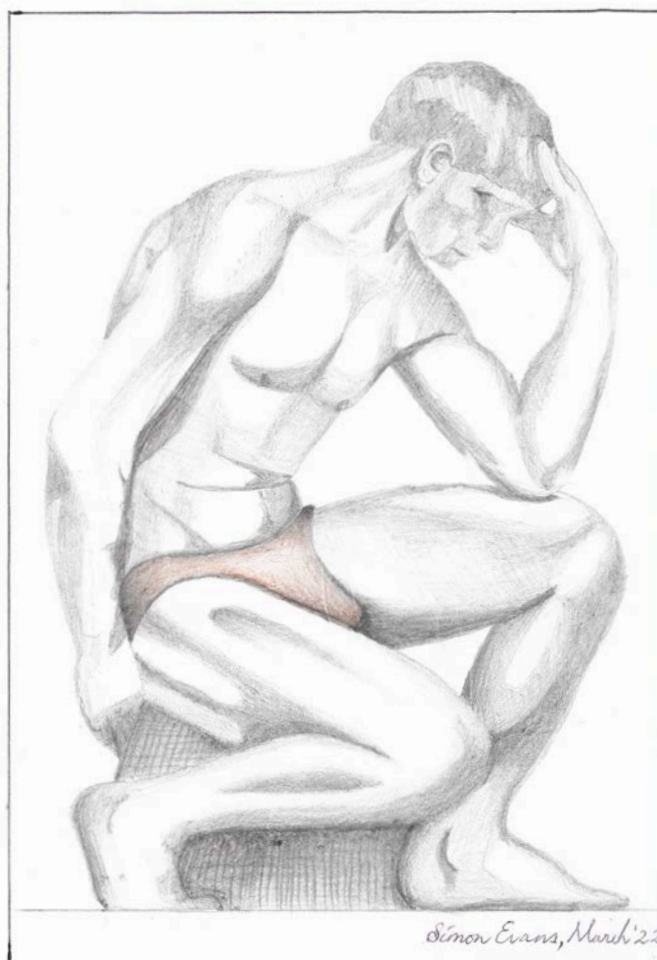
*Luke Duxbury A5386AW R-19
HMP Foston Hall
Foston, Derby DE65 5DN
United Kingdom*

WHAT IS IPP?

Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP), was a form of indeterminate sentence introduced in the United Kingdom in 2003. It was intended to increase the sentences of people who had not committed a crime serious enough to warrant a life sentence, but were regarded as 'too dangerous' for release. In reality, many prisoners who were no longer considered dangerous were stuck in the system, as their parole conditions required them to complete certain courses, which were not offered where they were incarcerated.

In 2007, the High Court ruled that the continued use of IPP was unlawful, and in 2010, a joint report by the prison system concluded that IPP sentences were unsustainable due to overcrowding.

In 2012, new IPP sentences were abolished. However, existing people sentenced under the system remain under its guidelines. There are still over 2,000 people in prison in the UK serving IPP sentences. - DL



Artwork by Simon Evans

IN THE NEXT ISSUE



CONTINUED COVERAGE ON THE HISTORY OF PRISON NEWSLETTERS

In the next issue, we'll continue coverage of other historical prison newsletters in Australia, beginning with *Jail News*.



MORE ON OSCAR WILDE

You've read his poetry in this issue. In the next issue, you can read his letter to the editor of the *Daily Chronicle* regarding conditions in prison.



INTERVIEW WITH LIZZIE KOMMES

Lizzie Kommes, former prisoner and star of the TV show *Love After Lockup*, gives us an exclusive interview.

ART, POETRY, AND MORE PUZZLES

And, of course, we'll have more artwork, poetry, and other forms of prison writing from across Australia and the world. We'll also have more Sudoku and other puzzles in our next issue.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN THE NEXT ISSUE?

IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS ON WHAT YOU'D LIKE TO SEE IN PAPER CHAINED, PLEASE REACH OUT AND LET US KNOW!

Post suggestions to:
Paper Chained
PO Box 2073
Dangar NSW 2309
Australia

