



Creative Wordshops
 Dorian Haarhoff
 082 873 6802
 dorianhaa@gmail.com
 www.dorianhaarhoff.com
 storyteller facilitator speaker writing-coach poet

Writing Letter

June 2024

re-story, re-create, re-
 imagine you

for this letter, a weekly story and
 ongoing opportunities -
dorianhaarhoffblog.co.za

Dear writer, storyteller, reader, lover of words, images, silences...

Louis van Loon

This month I share a praise poem for Louis van Loon, a *mench* who inspired, encouraged and befriended me. The poem included in his memorial service brochure, perhaps explains his influence on many. Here he is in his own voice:

"My understanding of Buddhism and my personal practice undiminished in their intensity. And I can see there is great meaning in non-doing and undoing where I can find refuge in watching life unfold all around me with deep gratitude." Many of such insights can be found in his letters and in the cookbooks coming out of the Buddhist Retreat Centre Ixopo:

Man in a Mist Swirl

(for Louis van Loon -1935-2024)

some 366 full moons ago
 I metta mensch who stepped (Pali for loving kindness, goodwill, amity)
 blind into a mist, all seeing,
 to buy land midst hills lovely
 beyond their singing and setting.
 your mind clear as a gong,
 a tingsha chime, a blue swallow,
 imagined then created such a space.

stories, lining each fold in your robe,
 told of monks who gathered rags
 off corpses, sewn and saffron dyed.
 we sat in ritual, silent alongside them.
 beneath the monkey-swung trees
 you spoke of a chatter-mind monk,
 sent to fetch a brimful bowl of water
 and tend it till waves subsided.



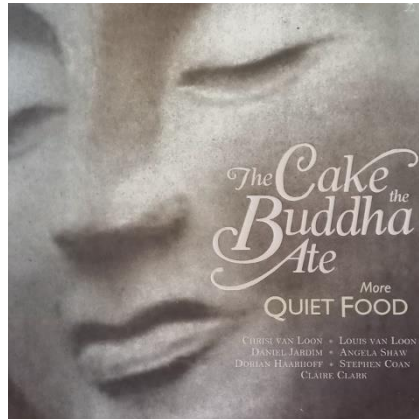
light of frame, large of heart,
you inscribed an oxide signature
on the raku fired pots, then
sent kites dip-diving through the air.
your arms stretched out
to a community, current in the valley
and to ancient sages,
as in the ten ox-herding plates
hosting the 12th century *dharma*,
adorning your feng shui abode.

when asked if a resident
guru graced this place,
your constant rejoinder?
Ah Yes, the weather.
from you I learnt words
beneath the Bodhi Tree
a - z resonant in simplicity.
as you spun the Dharma Wheel
anatman bardo mudita zazen
whirled off your tongue.

your rondavel heart,
lined with thatched volumes,
still speaks to us.
in a 'last words' book
I read of a dying mystic,
when brought his favourite
layered 'last wish' cake.
novices leaned in to listen
to wise whispered words
that recall our *Cake the Buddha Ate*
- my, but this cake is delicious.

your intention presence poise,
nowhere everywhere,
rakes the zen garden,
barefoots the labyrinth,
circles the Stupa and the dam.

at my ever first '94 retreat,
where you invited me to BRC teach,
emerged the first of many poems,*
offered here once more to you



John Roome sketch of Zen garden



in your double helix faithfulness
as you dearest man step from our midst,
back awhile into the metta mist.

April 2024

This is the poem alluded to:

Men in Meditation*

the winter bell sounds
calling us from dreams
of couplings and celibacy
to a temple meditation.
our crafts drift through fog
to this walled port
where a turmeric light
set at deck level
spices a white wall.

the last stars are dying
as we lock our bones
in the lotus cross
or kneel as if in chapel prayer.
we rest like a menology of saints
on an eastern calendar.

like ancient mariners
navigating ocean poles,
we have fathomed
the slime of the deep.
now mendicants all,
we live these three days
in the alms of brotherhood.

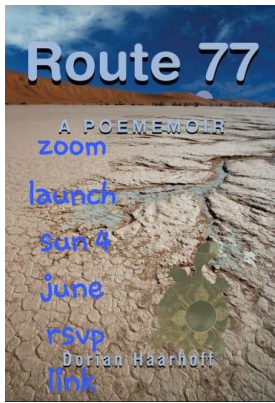
on a blackmat anchor
saffron sailed,
the mast of my body
rides amid a male fleet.
we rise as the sun gongs
across the ticking sea.

(Aquifers and Dust, 1994)

Louis lived the Dali Lama's dictum 'my religion is kindness'

Metta Dorian

PS Thank you for those who subscribe to the monthly letter (R240 per annum) I cherish your support. The letter remains open to all.



Igno van Niekerk and Tina Konstant (story mates) kindly recorded the zoom launch. Here tis.

https://mega.nz/file/rg9xhDJa#TTfWT8w-HttuLtfFbUGH_in-8_LXl8fIBtzE3dDaJil

000

Writing Retreat Radar Winter 2024

detailed flyers on request

1. Magic Carpet Writers (Somerset West)
last Wed of the month writeaway
a fun-loving supportive thinking/being group of aspirant writers.

2 Pringle Bay 1 June

A flyer for an event titled 'from public squeaking to public speaking'. The text includes: 'Speak from the heart and bring your message across', 'Saturday - 1 June 2024 10:00 - 16:00', 'Selfology 134 Albatross Road Pringle Bay', 'Investment R780 12 places left', and 'Reserve Your Spot Dorian Haarhoff C 082 873 6802'. There is also a graphic with the text 'BREATHE IN BREATHE OUT' and colorful mandala patterns.

3. Pringle Bay 2 June

4. Somerset West 21 June

A flyer for 'Ireland Revisited' featuring a leprechaun illustration. The text includes: 'Ireland Revisited Sunday 2nd June 6pm', 'JOIN DORIAN AND JOHN'S MISGUIDED TOUR OF THE EMERALD ISLE THROUGH SONG, POEM, STORY, MYTH & MIRTH', 'Limited space available so book your spot now to avoid disappointment.', 'Prepaid cover charge of R100 secures your place.', 'A complimentary glass of Old Brown Sherry on arrival.', 'Hearty Irish beef stew & a complimentary dram of Jameson whiskey R110', 'Hearty Irish vegetable stew & a complimentary dram of Jameson whiskey R80', and 'Irish coffee - coffee & a tot of Jameson whiskey topped with cream R60'. Contact information for The Pringle is also provided.

A flyer for 'LOURENSFORD ANNO 1700 Story Evening with Dorian Haarhoff'. The text includes: 'Celebrate the winter solstice. Savour Poetry and wine before the blazing hearthy.', 'WHERE: Lourensford Tasting Room', 'DATE: 21 June 2024', 'TIME: 18:00', 'PRICE: R200pp', 'Tickets can be purchased online through the link below', 'Includes a bottle of River Garden wine of your choice', and a photo of Dorian Haarhoff with his bio: 'Dorian Haarhoff Poet, story-teller, mentor and speaker with 25 years of experience. He believes in the power of story to create new realities. A former Professor of English (Namibia), his workshops are based on his workbook 'The Writer's Voice'. Lucky draw from Dorian's ZenPenYen poetry collection.'

<https://lourensford.activitar.com/services/17145?adults=1&children=1&date=2024-06-21>

5 BRC Ixopo

Fri 13 - Sun 15 Sep Thoughts, Words, Breath And Blood - A Writing Retreat

Sun 15 - Tue 17 Sep Write Away At The BRC

6. ZenPen Retreat (Groot Marico)

20-25 Oct 2024 **Writing, Being & Meditation**

<https://tararokpacentre.co.za/event/zenpen-writing-being-and-meditation/>

014 503 8901

7. Mentoring: ongoing one-on-one attention

You help me to sound like myself (numerous clients)

Like a pair of sandals we walk this road together. Taking in the view. Mentoring involves finding out where you want to go with your writing/story telling/work/life and encouraging you get to there

000