

A JOURNAL OF EXPRESSION FROM BEHIND BARS

PAPER CHAINED



CRC community
restorative
centre

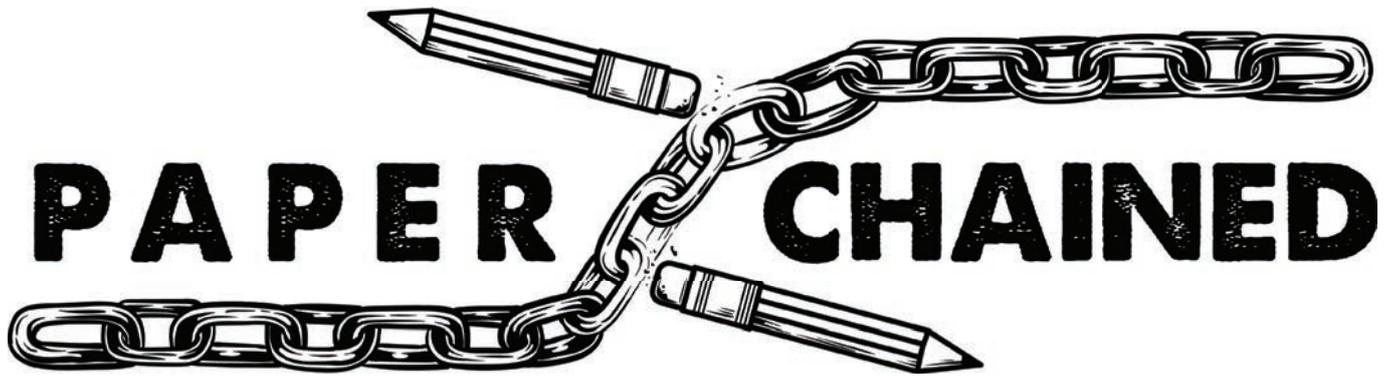
ATFJ

ISSUE 21 / MAR 2026

Posted free to incarcerated people


VIGILANTE
STUDIOS

 Curtin University



PAPER CHAINED



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Cover art by Mohannad Al Azzeh
Inside cover art by Damien Linnane

Paper Chained is printed and produced on the stolen lands of the Awabakal people. We acknowledge the rightful owners of these lands; sovereignty was never ceded.



In Sydney in 1983, 161 women were arrested for “causing alarm and affront” for holding their own march before the official march to commemorate Anzac Day. The peaceful protest was attempting to bring attention to the largely undiscussed issue of rape and sexual violence against women during wars. The women chose Anzac Day because it had “become a national day, a symbol of Australian nationalism, but which in reality only commemorates the experiences of men in war.”

Several hundred women protested under a banner that read “We Mourn All Women Raped in All Wars”, and silently marched down George Street in Sydney, where they were confronted by a strong police presence. Prosecutors fought to have the women convicted, though all charges were dropped after they failed to prove in court that the police had been “alarmed and affronted” by the silent, peaceful protest.

WHAT'S ON THE INSIDE

WARNING: CONTAINS EXPLICIT LANGUAGE

Paper Chained is a free, not-for-profit quarterly journal for incarcerated people, funded primarily by the Community Restorative Centre. This issue is also made possible with the help of Curtin University and About Time For Justice.

If you would like to support *Paper Chained* through sponsorship, please contact us. Tax-deductible donations for *Paper Chained* can be made via the Community Restorative Centre.

If you are currently in prison, have experienced time in prison, or have a loved one in prison, we welcome your contributions to this journal. Contributions from those 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 submissions do not exceed 1,500 words. Please advise us if you would like submitted art returned.

Please specify if you would like your contributions to be anonymous. Due to our agreements with Corrections in Victoria, NSW and New Zealand, people incarcerated there may only be credited by their first name, initials, or a pseudonym.

If you are currently in prison and would like to receive a posted copy of the journal, please see the details to the right. Those 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 in the journal. *Paper Chained* reserves the right to edit contributions for grammar, length, clarity, and to remove any stigmatising language. Please advise us if you are not open to your contribution being edited.

Copyright for art and writing is retained by the contributor. Please advise *Paper Chained* if submitted contributions have previously been published elsewhere.

Due to limited printing space and other logistical concerns, accepted contributions may not necessarily appear in the next issue of *Paper Chained*, and may be held on file for future issues.

We will not publish any contributions that are perceived to contain forms of oppressive language such as racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, nationalism, xenophobia, or ableism. We also do not publish evangelism, or any material that encourages violence or violates the privacy of others.

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SUBSCRIPTION AND SUBMISSION DETAILS

South Australia: Corrections in SA will not allow individual subscribers. Copies will instead be posted to the prison GM. Each GM will decide where copies are made available. Submissions from SA prisons must be approved by the Chief Executive prior to sending them to us.

Northern Territory: We cannot post copies to NT prisoners due to Correction's ban on anyone receiving mail exceeding five pages. Please request a copy from the library or a PSO.

New South Wales: *Paper Chained* is free digitally on the prison tablets in the 'L&D' section. Please do not subscribe for posted copies unless you do not have access to a tablet.

New Zealand: Contributions must be submitted for approval to education or the prison librarian, who will then send them to us. Please request the magazine from your library.

United States: *Paper Chained* is free digitally on the Edovo Learning Platform, available in most prisons. We are unable to post anyone hard copies due to budget limitations.

If you can access *Paper Chained* via your prison library, please continue to do so, or request it be made available in your library. Otherwise, incarcerated people in Australia outside SA and NT can subscribe by the address below. **Please let us know your release date (or if you don't have one) when subscribing.** Send submissions to:

Paper Chained
PO Box 2073, Dangar NSW 2309, Australia



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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 family-owned and operated organisation specialising in assisting survivors of historical institutional child abuse and stolen generation members in seeking justice, healing and possible compensation.

Our passion is helping survivors 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 the past. Our experienced team, many of 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. They are trauma-informed and culturally trained to deal with the most complex stories.

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 the fears 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 has the skills to explain what is happening with your matter in simple terms, is available to answer any questions, and works flexibly with each survivor to achieve the best outcome for their individual circumstances.

Write to us for more information or call for an obligation-free chat.



About Time For Justice
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QLD: 07 4911 3237
NT: 08 7918 0817
SA: 08 7079 8356

AboutTimeForJustice.com
@AboutTimeForJustice

About Time For Justice is one of many organisations offering no-win-no-fee services for victims of institutional child abuse. Other similar organisations can be found on the National Redress Scheme website. A prison support officer may be able to print you a list of organisations operating in your state by visiting <https://www.nationalredress.gov.au/institutions/joined-scheme>

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

BY DAMIEN LINNANE

I'm very pleased to share with you some photos from *Paper Chained's* third art exhibition, which was dedicated entirely to the works of Mohannad Al Azzeh, who we interviewed back in Issue 16. As you may recall, Mohannad was imprisoned at Ofer Prison, an Israeli-controlled prison in the West Bank, after he was first arrested for being a member of a peaceful student group at his university where he was studying fine arts, and was imprisoned a second time for withholding information about other members of the group. During his sentence, Mohannad turned to art, even though this is not allowed for Palestinians in Israeli prisons. Most of his artwork was found by soldiers and destroyed, though a few small pieces were able to be smuggled out. Mohannad then turned to art therapy after his release as a way to address the PTSD he suffered from imprisonment.



Three of Mohannad's paintings for the exhibition.

We were very proud to show Mohannad's artworks made in prison, his art therapy drawings, and a series of nine original paintings made specifically for the exhibition, which was held at The Creator Incubator, an art gallery in Newcastle, NSW, in November 2025. The launch party was a great success. It was opened by Senator David Shoebridge, and featured a live performance by ARIA-Award winning rapper Dobby.



Newcastle Councillor Siobhan Isherwood, Senator David Shoebridge, Acting Lord Mayor of Newcastle Charlotte McCabe and Paper Chained editor Damien Linnane.



Dobby performing live at the event.

Special thanks to the Newcastle group Conversations for Palestine for organising the launch event, and to one of our regular contributors, Sheikh Khalil at Brisbane Correctional Centre, who gave me the idea to interview a former Palestinian prisoner, which acted as the catalyst for the show.

If you missed the exhibition on display in Newcastle in November 2025, you'll still have opportunities to see some of the art in the future. A small collection of the pieces originally on display have been added to the *Paper Chained International* (PCI) permanent collection. Funding permitting, we still intend to tour our PCI exhibition once a year to a different city. This year's exhibition was also held at The Creator Incubator from February 12-22, however, there isn't enough time in our printing and publishing process to report on that exhibition until the next issue. But you'll be able to read about it then, and we'll give you plenty of notice for where the 2027 exhibition will be held. And on that note, if you know someone in Australia with a gallery space who would be willing to display the artworks in the future, please get in touch. So far, we've toured the exhibition to Sydney, Brisbane, and now Newcastle, but we are looking to take the exhibition somewhere entirely new next year. Our limited budget does make things a bit tricky, but hopefully we can make something work. Most artworks are for sale and galleries are welcome to take commissions, as is customary, though our budget doesn't allow us to rent a space. So if you know someone who might be able to help, or if you'd just like to send us your own artwork for our next show, please get in touch, and maybe we'll be exhibiting your artwork next year.

P.S. *Paper Chained* received 383 letters from prisoners in 2025, a new record! If you have art or writing to share, post it to us!

ART AND WRITING

THE BEATING HEART

Uluru the beating heart
Of this our sacred land
Waratah and wattle show
Colours of sun and sand
Keep the fires burning long
And watch the smoke arise
To carry the images upward
To the clouds that roam the skies
See the footprints on the ground
Of the people who've gone before
Carrying the traditions with them
Of the legends and the lore
Gather around the campfire
Let the flames burn bright and bold
As the elders impart the wisdom
Through the stories we are told.

By DeWitt B

OLD SCHOOL

Times have changed from when I was young.
The old judge and jury was your fist or your gun.
It was nothing like it is today.
They'll dob in their mate, with a 13A.
Come into some coin and now they're a dealer!
Ya ride shotgun with your girl so ya mates don't steal-her!
To prove you're not lying, you just say "word"
And now when you're sentenced, you just do a third!
But I've lived my life like each day was my last!
And I've learnt from some real men I've met in the past!
I won't spin a yarn off another man's glory!
My life's pretty wild, but it's my fuck'n story!
I'll die with my honour, I ain't nobody's fool!
My name is "Derk" and I'm "old school"!

*By Jason Derksen A98627
Lotus Glen C.C.
PMB 1, Mareeba, QLD, 4880*

Every day is another day with you on my fucking mind
Pathetic, hopeless, defenceless, tragic
Why do I torture myself
How come you run through the streets of my mind
As you literally run the streets outside
Harrowing horror movie plays across the silver screens
Thrilling love scenes from past times it seems
Love you

Untitled poem by N Drayton



Portrait of Izzy, Paper Chained's mascot, by Ashley McGoldrick, Queensland.

ICE

Hi my name is ICE
Why does everyone fucking love me?
All I do is destroy homes, tear families apart,
Take your children and thats just the start
I'm more costly than diamonds and gold
I'm the Devil who will take your soul
The sorrow I bring is a sight to behold
If you're looking for me remember I'm easily found,
I live all around you, in school and in town
I live with the rich, and I live with the poor
I live down the street, and maybe next door
My power is awesome, try me you'll see
But if you do you may never break free
Just try me once and I might let you go
But try me twice and I'll own your soul
When I possess you you'll steal and you'll lie
You'll do what you have to do just to get high

So my brothers and sisters, think again cos for me
I was never free, but you can be.

By Troy

CACTUS INSURRECTION

I've got a cactus garden
up here in my cell
I leave it in the sunlight
That shines in through my grille
They say that it's a window
But it's only 'bout 5 mil
My lil' cactus garden
Gives us girls a thrill
Sensory deprivation
Neural path starvation
All these things are censored
In my little cell sir
But I have got a secret
A tiny cactus garden
I plant a seedling, let it grow
Crazy that the screws don't know
'Cos all the sensory deprivation
On the regular viewing station
Nothing here to see
Move along now please -
I give a little water
Not too much just moisture
The string will thrive
The weak shall beg
You're hiding something
Don't pull my leg
What do you call this here
No picking flowers
No plants neither
This is contraband
You'll be locked down
They took my cactus garden
They took it all away
But it's okay, the jokes on them
I grabbed a stem
Started again
It only needs a little moisture
Lil' sunlight on its leaves
A wet tissue
Just to start
Don't worry bro
Another one will grow
My little cactus garden
To remind me of my dreams
Of further pastures green
Of Peru and Lucatin maybe on to Belize

By LTZ, Western Australia

HOLDING ON

As the weeks turn into months
And the months turn into years
My dreams fade away and are replaced with tears
Just yesterday I was at the very top of my shame
Now I am on the verge of going insane
I used to have a woman a child and a ride
But nothing belongs to you when you're on the inside

The misery of incarceration is a lot to accept
It's like the penitentiary is the brother of death
Life will continue to go on with or without you
When you ask "Why you ain't write"
they say "I was just about to"
I guess everybody has wants and everyone has needs
And in order to grow flowers
You gotta water the seeds
Freedom is really something that money can't buy
And the principles of life
Can never be compromised
I'd rather die on death row
Before I take the stand
Or spend the rest of my days
Smuggling contraband
Reality bites
Like a cold winters night
But at the end of every tunnel
There is always a little bit of light

The struggle never stops
Keep holding on

*By Kevin Jackson, DCDC#293-078
1901 D Street SE, Washington, DC 20003, USA*

DEATH BY INCARCERATION

I finally found the road to hell
trapped in the shadow of death.
The capacity for joy is overlooked
by the chains of injustice.
My soul wears the armor
that tears down walls of oppression.
I've seen many men tortured,
murdered, poisoned, and socially deficient.
With their guts cut open
and buried alive.
All you can smell is death!

By 'Knowledge S', Maryland USA



Art by Sky Nelson-Adams, Queensland



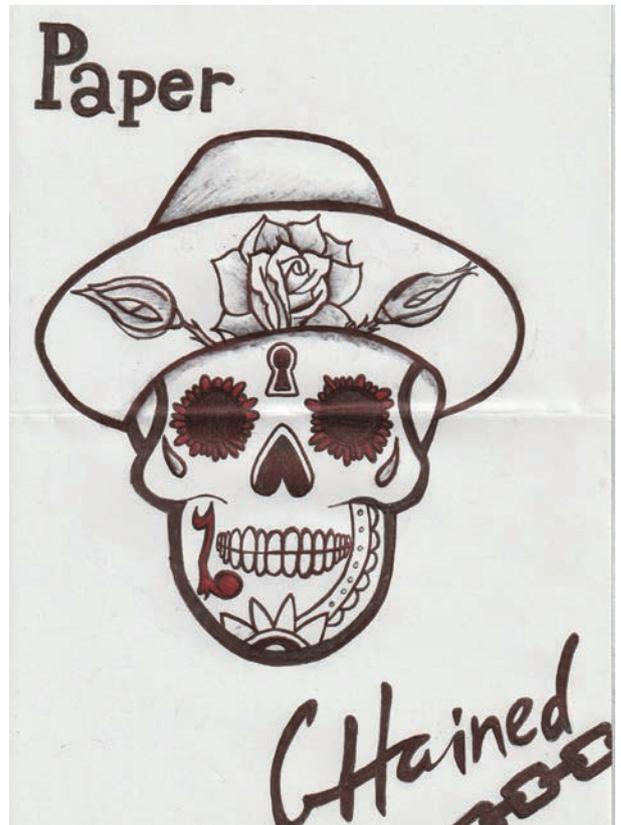
Art by Joel Minor E31433
Woodford Correctional Centre
Private Mail Bag 1, Woodford, QLD 4514



Art by Franksy, New Zealand



Art by James, NSW



Art by Lewis Comb
Woodford Correctional Centre, QLD

TRAPPED

Trapped inside this world, inside these walls, inside yourself,
Dreams now crushed inside, on came the strange sickness you befell.
All alone for years on end with nothing else inside your sight,
Your mindset slowly withered as likewise so did your might.
Your hopes now gone so to your dreams upon this emptiness it crush,
Trying to fight yourself slowly your mind becoming slush.
Wanting more than can be gained you now abolish any future.
Wishing does not help you so now envision your deliverer.
Upon your soul now is a stain that is dark and can't be cleansed,
Only if you've been here could you ever comprehend!
You can never quench your thirst for life yet reality might dissipate,
To your antagonist is the expectation you will be subordinate.
All this pressure meant to wedge you into a dark abyss,
Never meant to be yourself, a punishment if you exist.
Applied pressure to your presence means the pain is never ending,
All the tools at their disposal leaves you endlessly bending
This is how we are, all one, no individuality,
Dull and dismal, loneliness is now our permanent reality.
These walls are caving in on me causing claustrophobia,
Looking to the sky to plead, please bring forth my messiah.
There is no end in sight this pressure in my head infinite,
Abounding emptiness to illusions I affiliate.
Now I am in my own dimension with no hope of breaking free,
Somehow myself inside me has become a refuge.
So life goes forth like this now, and there is no end upcoming,
My body, mind and soul are in a constant state of numbing
So if you go look for me, you will not find me now I fear?
I cannot actually go anywhere, yet I'm not actually here!

By Bukks, Victoria

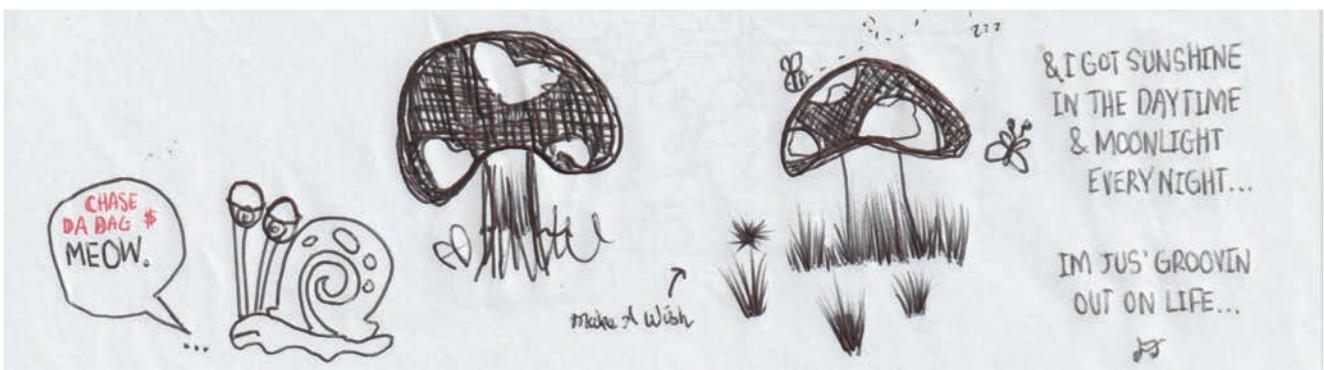
INEVITABLE, PART 1

You'll never truly know how deep my love runs for you.
Your love haunts my very existence: paralysing me ...
Your beauty I crave and I ache for your warmth meeting mine.
With you there's no gravity
It's war with you.
But our love is taboo.
- Love Koo xxx

Poem above and art below by 'Yours Truly'



Art by Mitch Bennet C62203
Lotus Glen C.C.
PMB 1, Mareeba, QLD, 4880





Art by Jasmine Punton
Bandyup Women's Prison
PO Box 101, Guildford WA 6935



Art by Sheikh Jaxan Khalil Assad O'Reilly, E14512
Brisbane C. C.
Locked Bag 13101, Archerfield, QLD 4108

We may be far apart
But you're always in my heart
We should be together
Will be soon and then forever
I miss you so much
It's you I just want to touch
I love you to infinity, together
Forever just you and me.

Untitled poem by Julie Cameron
Townsville Women's C. C.
PO Box 5574, Townsville, QLD 4811

BE LIKE YOU

Day after day locked in my cell
This isn't jail, it's a mental fucking hell
This system we have is corrupt and broken
The public believes all the lies that get spoken
We're employed, made healthy, and well-educated
They say where we are put gets us rehabilitated
The truth of the matter is the opposite of what's told
Then enough becomes enough and some of us get bold
Pens put to paper and letters written and sent
The powers that be get butt hurt and bent
As an inmate in prison we have no right to a voice
If we complain about how things are,
it's said we had a choice
Yeah, decisions were made,
and actions got put into effect
Doesn't mean now as an inmate,
that we don't deserve respect
Called only by last names and treated like shit
Then you guards get all pissy when you get hit
We get that you're guards, you got a job to do
Aren't we meant to be inspired, to become like you?
As an example, for most it has to be said
To become what you are I'd rather be dead
Liars, thieves and power-trippin' scum
I'm talkin bout guards not us fuckin cons
You're paid to play a part in our rehabilitation
Not lie to and abuse for your personal gratification
Until things in prisons are finally changed
Those of us in here only get more deranged
That's not what prison time was designed to do
When I get out its expected I be like you
As guards your job isn't just turnin' a key
You're meant to be an example of what we're meant to be

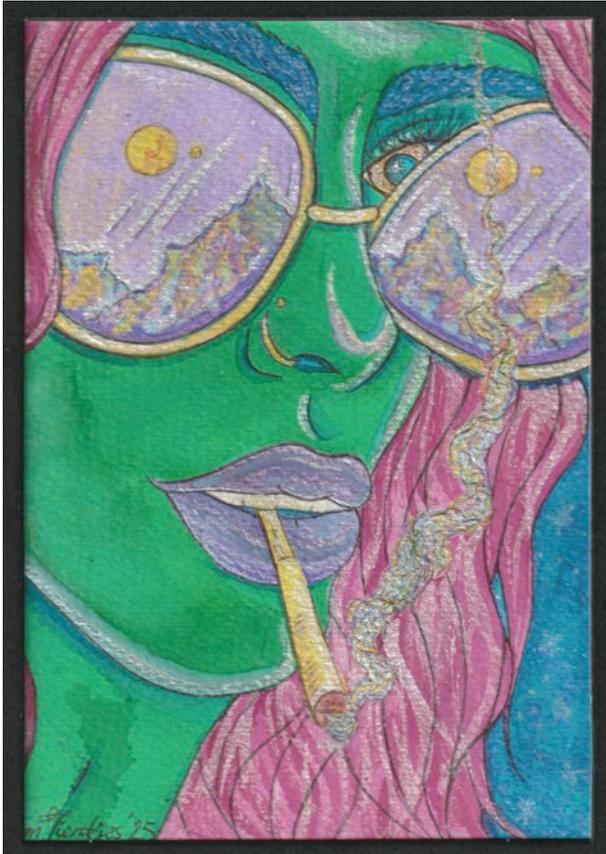
By Jason Ryan 595683
Darwin Correctional Centre
PO Box 1066, Howard Springs, NT 0835



By Dave. Davao City Jail, the Philippines
See more of Dave's art on Instagram @ibaodabo

IN TOO DEEP

It starts as a day, then turns into a week.
The months fly by, future years are looking bleak.
Everyone is the same, when low down on the streets.
Playing games, lost crowns,
they sold them for an ounce of speed.
Hiding from the pain that Mum and Dad put onto me.
Same shit, different face, they take no responsibility.
You saw, you came, but couldn't conquer anything.
New wars, more blame, got yourself in too deep.



Poetry and art by Storm Tientjes

A BITTERSWEET MEMORY

Melodic birds in spring
Breath taking azure skies
Romance this ocean brings
As she gazed into my eyes.
Inferno passion and desire
Our chemistry like no other.
Spellbound my heart's on fire
Addicted to my lover.
She swore I was her only
Deceiving bleeding lie.
In denial as she's my remedy
Six months of lust went by.
I thought she was my world

As I gave my heart to hers.
Hoping she'd be the girl
I'll hold and love forever.
But burning passions falls apart
Like decay I felt us die.
Fate then decided I must depart
Without a chance to say goodbye.
Dear Jane I wrote to everyday
Was she worth my pain and tears?
It was God who sent me on my way
To seek truth and face my fears.
29/08/25

Six months on in spring again
Hope is where new flowers bloom.
New doors open after the rain
The sun rises after the moon.
No existing anniversary
The winds left its sails and time to go
Accept our fate it's destiny
My yearning soul had always known.
'Cause distance, time + lies can't sway
Her heart if it were mine
Albeit anywhere is far away
True love would not subside.
Awakened from nostalgia
I'm filled with sense + clarity
A mélange of melancholia
In a bittersweet memory



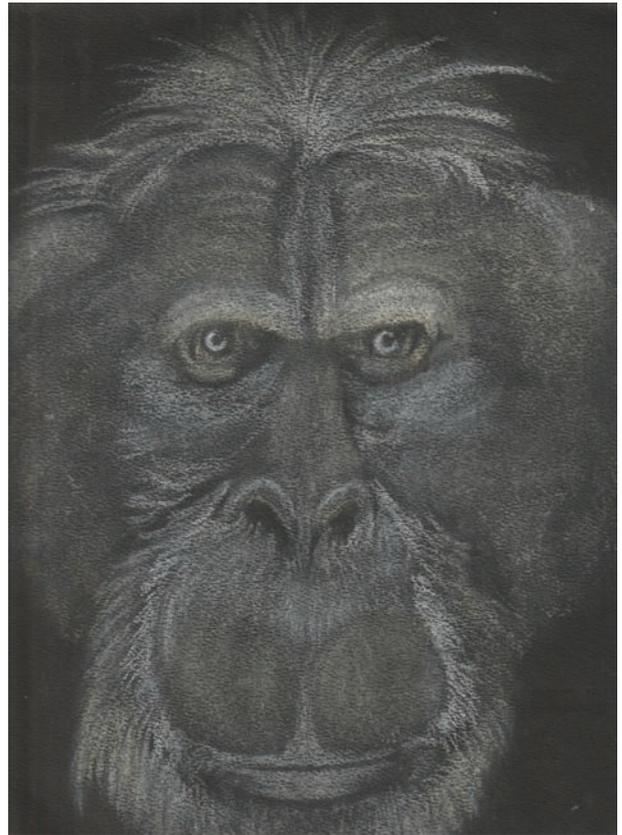
Poetry and art by Monica, NSW

I VERB

I felt shock when finding out about you.
I feel shame for not manning up.
I feel ashamed for leaving before you're born.
I felt pain for abandoning you.
I feel sadness for not being there for you.
I feel heartache for not being there
when you needed me most.
I felt anger for not being able to help you.
I feel happiness for finding out you wanted to meet.
I felt love from the bond between us.
I feel joy for knowing you are here now.
I feel pride for seeing who you've become.
I feel comfort when you're around.
I feel a sense of fullness
knowing the circle is complete.
I feel a sense of achievement for having a son.
I feel a sense of belonging since you've forgiven me.
I feel a sense of family since you've called me Dad.
I feel a sense of loss when you're not around.
I feel a sense of wisdom from our conversations.
I feel a sense of closeness
from handing down our ancestry.

But above all, I feel you in my heart.

By Ken, New Zealand



*By Maurice Chambers, NL5584
SCI Coal Township, PO Box 330238
St Petersburg, Florida 33733, USA*



Art by Adam, New Zealand

2020 VISION

Sound heart, right thoughts to fulfill my mission;
Combat distortion and illusion to maintain Maa-t Vision.
Left-eye, Right brain;
Right-eye, Left brain;
Ancient wisdom resist psychological chains.
Freeing up my forethought and foresight;
Allow me to expand or constrict a future that's bright.
Red-eye, blue-eye; that's not Kiwe nor Damu;
That's the multiple visions of Heru.
The double-headed falcon
Detroit Red and Malcolm.
Master Self; Think Different.
A bird in the hand don't mean you
head straight for the kitchen:
That bird has our eyes, and we have its vision
See it? Formulate a plan.
Hustle, grind or calculated moves to achieve it.
Vision is sight;
From the dark matter of your thoughts bring it to life.
The particles and Divine Natural Attributes
are coded within you;
You must be able to comprehend it to see it through.
Short and long-term goals
is the truth of how all things unfold.

By Ojore McKinnon, Death row, California



Art by Tay, New Zealand

THE PRISON INSIDE

Head full of suffering,
 Wanting to attack the cerebral cortex -
 Scissors,
 Cutting out these images,
 that keep appearing
 Multiplying, mutilating within
 No longer I yearn for life
 Tick Tock
 Incessant clock,
 Repetitively, repeating, repressed,
 Thoughts incubate
 Gestate, incinerate,
 Pictures,
 Incessant TV,
 Rotate, white walls, bars
 Memories spread like a plague,
 Constant reminder
 Heart broken - Murder,
 Its left its scars,
 failing functions,
 Macabre feelings rise and fall,
 Skull - Intense,
 Tears upon my pillow,
 Weeping, wounded, weak,
 This is my prison inside prison.



Art by 'RFGY'



Poetry and art by Melony Atwood
 Bandyup Women's Prison
 PO Box 100, Guildford WA, 6935

DELETE

Chorus

I don't even know why I'm here anymore
But I've changed and I wanna be free
In the dark all alone as my knees hit the floor
Why can't you let me be
Through the pain and the drugs I can hear you call
But you're blind and you can't see
That the man I was got left at the door
But the memories won't delete
No the memories won't delete

Verse 1

I came from a life where the family's light was all that I could see
Then the landscape changed I got kicked to the gutters so I lived my life for the street
You can say I had it good you can say what you want you'll never know what I've seen
I was loved as a boy no denying that it's a shame that you lied to me
I was used as a pawn in a game of chess too young to know the rules
Now I'm all alone in a prison cell and the youngsters call me old school
If I had my time again yeah I wouldn't change much but the pain I brought to the world
Never knew I'd be your source of pain never thought I'd hurt my girl
Done a lot of shit to the people I love and I can't take back a single thing
All I can do for now is write these words sit back in my cell and sing

Repeat chorus x 1

Verse 2

Alone with my thoughts when the demons come to remind me I'm a piece of shit
But I'll fight tooth and nail for a better outcome knock 'em out the box with a king hit
No excuse for my actions no reason to use but the drugs yeah they fucked me up
Now I hope for the best as I reset my mind and open my heart to love
The truth be told I fell in love with the streets fought hard to earn my stripes
Now I see my faults yeah I see my wrongs and I know I'm gonna have a better life
When the chips were down you could count me in but now that ain't the case
With the love of a woman and my family's trust I'll run at a whole new pace
But the pain is real and it's never gonna leave so I gotta work hard and prepare
Cause when it's all said and done and I'm at those gates I ain't gonna be scared

Repeat chorus x 1

Verse 3

So if you see me now and you wanna throw hate then go ahead and throw it my way
I've lived a full life and I've seen so much and the bad times helped me change
I'm sorry to all that have felt my wrath I await my just deserts
In the meantime I will try my best to leave a better mark on Earth
One day at a time 12 steps to take but this is just the start
Hold my granddaughter close hold her to my chest let her know poppy never be far
Time passes by one hour at a time and it's weird when it just slows down
Slow motion as I move to the throne with my wife and give my queen her crown
Look my family in the eye as I speak the truth let you all know that I've made change
No more running away no more running amuck no more running round off my face

Repeat chorus x 2

A song I wrote when I finally understood that I couldn't just delete my past pain with drugs and violence and I needed to face it all.

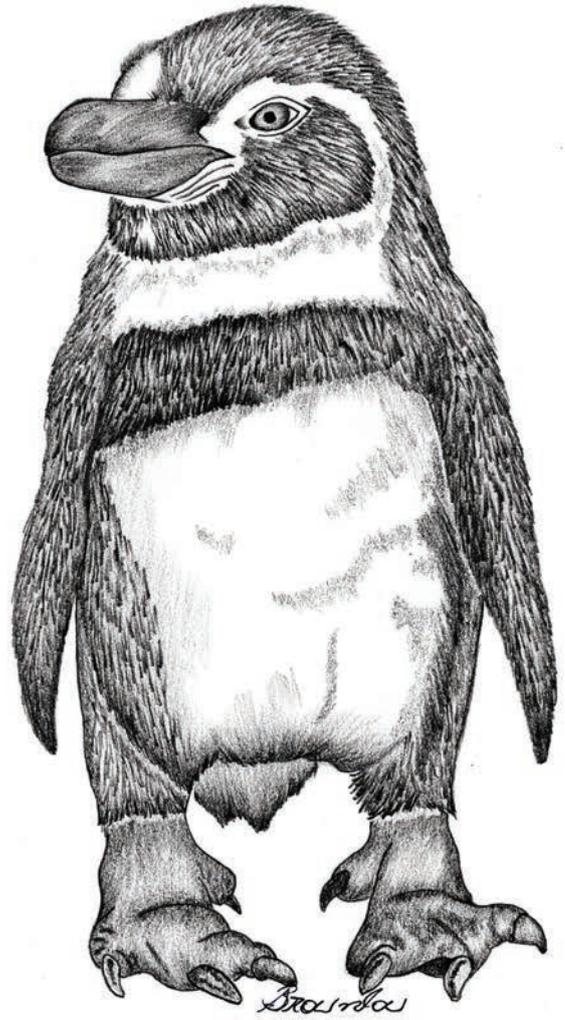
*By Joel Reid-Roe #218534
Darwin Correctional Centre
PO Box 1066, Howard Springs, NT 0835*



Art by Scott D



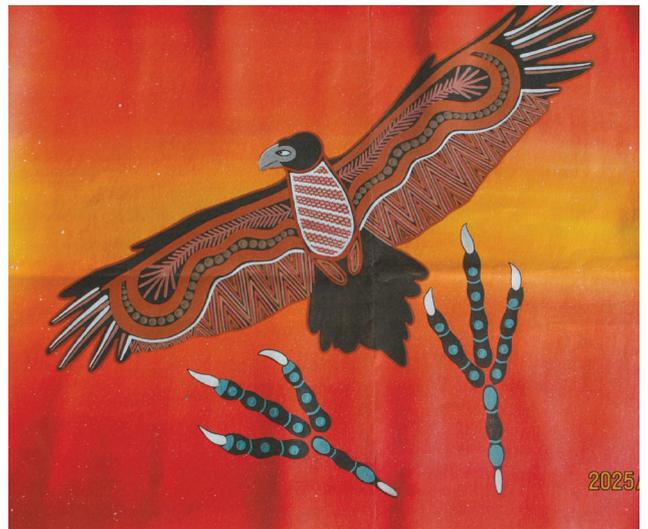
Art by 'Oink', New Zealand



Art by Samantha Brownlow, Queensland



Art by Nigel G



Art by Zac, Victoria



Art by 'Motion', NSW



Art by Om Ali, Queensland



Art by Robert McCullough P78220
CTF, PO Box 705, Soledad, California, 93960, USA



Art by Stacy, New Zealand



Art by 'The Mysterious Artist D', Yokohama Prison, Japan



Art by Chris, New Zealand



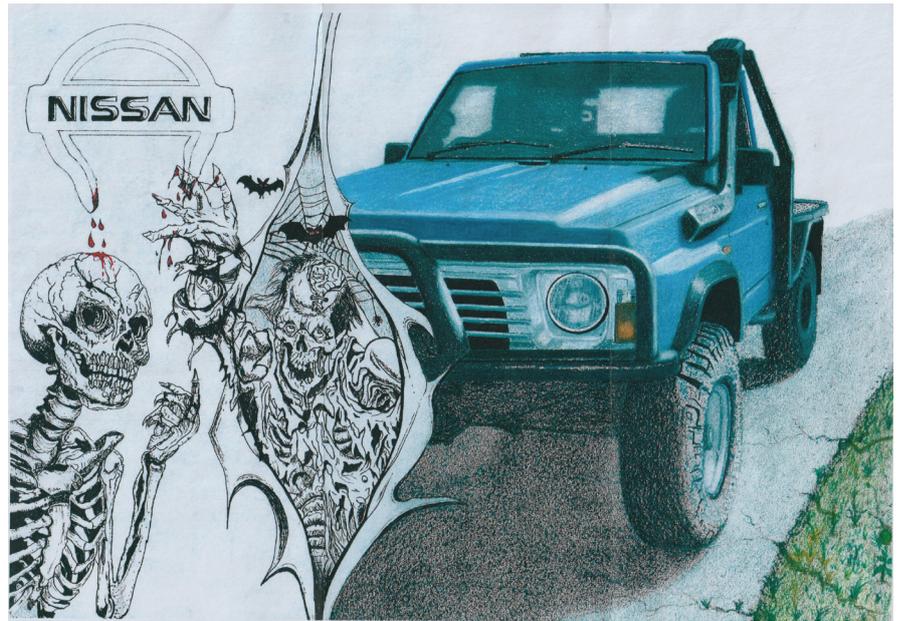
Art by Steven Labelle, BG3974,
CTF. PO Box 705, Soledad, California, 93960, USA



Art by James Mutugi, Kenya

HUMAN BEING

As I come back to jail
I walk through that familiar door
I promised my mum and kids
I wouldn't break the law
Now here I am sitting
In a cell like before
4 x 4 cement walls
Bed bunks and all
It's my birthday
I'm 35 today
Once released
I will not be lead astray
I have done just over
12 years since turning eighteen
I'm sober and off the drugs
I will leave jail clean
This is my story
This is what I mean
We all make mistakes
After all I'm only a human being



Art by LenPen, Victoria

By Mr Wellington

THE HUMBLE LITTLE TACKLE BOX

For my son

Slipped down the rocks, between the cracks, lies a
humble lil' tackle box
Forgotten between the tides!
The waves crash back and forth damaging my latch

I once was treated almost like a god, whilst I was paired
with reel and rod
I once was needed, now I'm not
Was always carried, now I sit lost
The humble lil' tackle box

The fisherman grows weary-eyed,
then turns a shade paler
As he is looking for his lures,
his spare line, knife and scaler
A tear wells up in his eyes as he sees that it is lost
No fishing for the day without his humble lil'tackle box

A week it passes by, the salt has rusted all the hooks
A new fisherman walks by and just happens such a look
A smile dons his face, as guess what he forgot
He has a pack of hook, his reel and rod
But I will tell you what he has not -
His lures, his spareline, knife and scaler
Nor has he a humble lil' tackle box

By EVO1



Art by Simon, New Zealand



Art by Preston, Brisbane Youth Detention Centre

AMERICAN DREAM

What is this American dream when coming out of prison? Past decisions made we've paid the prices, yet others abhor our existence ever more! What of the challenges through the changes we've made as we've stayed sucker free? To be better today than the yesterdays we did not appreciate, respect, or fully understand who we were meant to be. While suffering through our own trauma-induced fear of loss that continues to cost so much to so many innocent lives.

What is this American dream when coming out of prison? Decisions of denial long after any trial, while the years have amassed glass ceilings in a concrete block of hopelessness we've overcome in astounding degrees of maturity, family reconnection and support to communities we've knowingly contributed to the destruction of. Merely on the hunt and want of that elusive quick hit, needle stick or alcoholic drink, that we now think such irresponsibility is nothing we want, nor desire to repeat. Never again.

What is this American dream when coming out of prison? A renewed creation of the individuals we used to be, once were, out of fear of who we could have been, should have been but for the things inside distorted minds, dysfunctional times, with the parental men who were not there. Repeated cycles of pain, the same historically faced from birth in a society that rejected us even when at times we tried to overcome the damages done by the only one today we dare to blame. Myself.

What is this American dream when coming out of prison? Election of mind behind the time we cried behind these cold closed steel prison doors. For some, once more than we'd like to admit, yet honor for what we have made that's a freer life than we used to go through. Learning what to do in our own determination to be men and women who peer through opened eyes. No longer disguised by the lies we've tried to undermine during times everyone else knew.

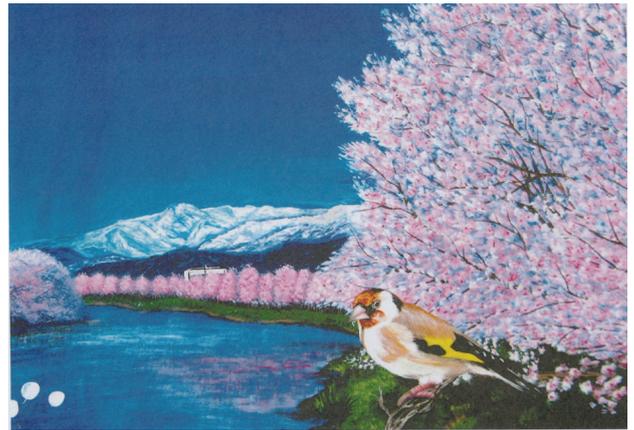
What is this American dream when coming out of prison? Living a hopeful life while in prison.

By Jeffery A. Shockley ES4796
SMART COMMUNICATIONS / PADOC SCI-FAYETTE
Po Box 33028, St Petersburg, FL 33733, USA



Art by Phillip, Victoria

MT FUJI



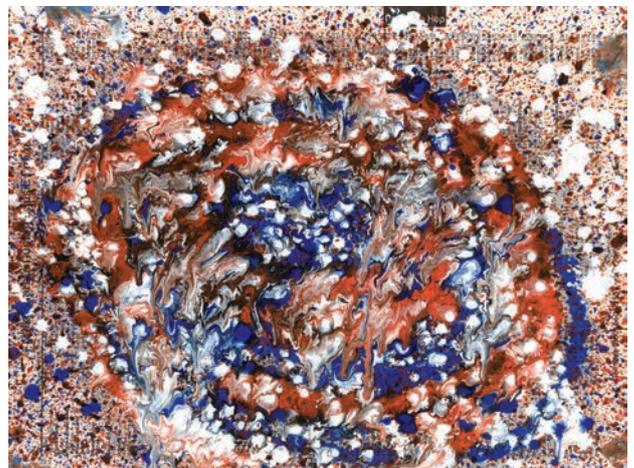
The idea behind this artwork was to show the ecological beauty of our mother Earth in a Japanese landscape. My heart was at peace when I did this. I tried to capture how the natural lake, autumn maple and cherry blossom leaves, sky and birds can co-exist in harmony with one another. The reflection in the lake symbolises the mirror image of our soul, which means that everything we put out there will also reflect in our outside world. In this sense, by putting all these together, a sensible human being can begin to cherish and value the natural features of our ecosystem.

My inspiration for this artwork came from seeing a picture of Mount Fuji in a magazine. I then added the bird and the green grass to the picture to give it more punch.

One of the things I tried in this artwork is to paint nature in its simplest form and beauty. As the artist of this picture, the greatest gift to me is setting my eyes upon this piece whenever I feel the need for inspiration.

This artwork could inspire my future artworks because the more I look at the alluring colours of Mount Fuji, the more I feel the need to paint more landscape paintings.

By Henry, Victoria



Art by Cameron Terhune, AD0786
CTF North, PO Box 705, Soledad, California, 93960, USA

PRISON MURALS: AN INTERVIEW WITH ARTIST TONY MINAHAN

In this issue of Paper Chained, Editor Damien Linnane interviews artist Tony Minahan, the artist behind the creation and restoration of murals at Long Bay Correctional Centre, and also the creator of murals at Glen Innes Correctional Centre. The following interview was conducted via mail. Special thanks to CSNSW for providing the photographs of the murals.

How long have you been an artist?

I think I was born an artist, but it wasn't until incarceration that I have been what people call an 'artist', surviving and thriving solely upon my practice of art.

I was a recreational practitioner of art before prison. But before I continue, let's get this straight. I'm not in PRISON, I'm in art school, although some do call it prison :) Ha! So while I was an occasional hobbyist with art, it wasn't until my gaol/art school time that I was able to become critical of my work and really develop what I know now.

Can you tell me about the murals at Long Bay?

I got to a stage in my art studies where I was producing many canvases of varying sizes. In documentaries on TV, I noticed the canvases in Europe and they were massive, so much so that when a real person stood beside them the people painted on the canvases became life-size, so I thought that should be my next lesson. I've got to learn how to produce large-scale imagery. So looking back to how the old masters learnt, they often reproduced other famous artist's works during their apprenticeships. I therefore adopted their techniques, using famous works and enlarging them, all drawn and measured by hand. I used Sidney Nolan's Ned Kelly series, as I thought the whole criminal idea seemed apt for where we were. Then came Van Gogh's "Starry Night" for the challenge of a different technique. Then my favourite Aussie bush artist, Frederick McCubbin, in another different style.

With all these three artists, I used two of their works and had to combine them into one image to suit the scale of the wall I had to work on. The Van Gogh was fun as I had to create the second half of the image which I turned into the Sydney Harbour scene in his style. I really do enjoy my art school challenges at times. There was also an adaption of the Japanese painting of the Great Wave that I put running down three flights of stairs to finish in an underwater scene on the ground floor. Of course, while painting all these great ideas came to me and some were given, to put all these weird and wonderful things characters in the waves

and all around. There is so much in those three flights: too much detail to describe. And there was of course a solid nine months restoring the famous Sydney Harbour Kings Cross piece. I've since been transferred to Glen Innes and I'm making murals here now.



The Van Gogh Starry Night mural, with the Opera house and Centrepoint Tower on the right.



Part of the Japanese Great Wave mural.



The famous King's Cross mural.

Was it strange touching up another artist's work?

It was strange at first, you've got to put the ego aside and you look at it as just another job. But as you get into it, you want to do the original artist an honour by redoing their work as well as you can. As both the original artists of the King's Cross mural had passed away, I couldn't help but think or feel that they were watching over me. It was really easy to improve upon the few compositional flaws that we all get with the initial laying down of an image. For me, that stage was done by those guys so I could assess the image and see what needed correcting. Of course, there were the screws on my back: "Don't change a thing or add anything," was the constant harp. But hey, for this purpose I'm now not in art school, I'm in gaol and I'm a crim, so "Fuck you": I'm not dropping the quality of my work. I had to leave my touch on the piece while still keeping the authentic feel and style. At the end of the day everybody was happy and if a certain officer is reading, yes, that is a convict's uniform on the bear breaking out! (We told him it wasn't, that it was pyjamas!)

What impact do you think murals have in custody?

Being in custody is never going to be a pleasant or happy experience for any mentally sane person. From my own experience, it is so depressing when all you see for months on end is brick walls and wire. It sets people into depression. Maybe it was designed to do that back in the dark ages when they wanted you to have no distractions and force you to look at your actions. The crazy thing is we all do that in the dark hours of night. I know, I've witnessed it firsthand with many people. The break my artwork gives people when you see them light up and even laugh gives people's mental health a deadly needed rest and a touch of reprieve. Murals will never be a cure-all, but in a system where we should be facing and assessing the consequences of our actions, they can have a much-needed mental rest if only for a short time. In short: Murals = positive mental health. 99.9% of inmates love my work and the transformation it brings to their environment. Of course, art being art, there will always be one or two who bring their unprofessional critique. But I have never ever had someone say, "Oh that's shit".

What other mediums do you work with?

I draw and draw everyday. A day never passes when I don't at least scribble something. It is the quintessential basic skill every artist has to possess. It's also the cheapest way to practice, and once you reach a level of proficiency you can support yourself in gaol very comfortably. Besides that, I paint for my own pleasure, usually onto canvases. I have occasionally built little dioramas out of whatever is lying around. I make little men out of dinner tray skeletons covered in bread and wood glue, then paint them. Now that I'm at Glen Innes, I've been getting into making rock stacks. Balancing as many rocks as I could on top of each other and then putting two white dots on top for eyes. I called them 'stoners' and they were all a part of a rock band. Of course, like all bands they broke up.

Tell me about having your work displayed at Long Bay's Boom Gate Gallery.

My time with the Boom Gate Gallery really brought my work up to the next level. When I first started with them, I was doing the generic cute animals, pretty landscapes, etc. At that time, I was using my practice as a form of escapism. It wasn't long before they asked me to paint my gaol story. It was then that I entered my next level of art school. At the time, I'd come from Goulburn where I spent over five years studying how to draw the human form and now the time came for me to apply that practice.

It is hard having your work displayed and sold through a gaol gallery as they never tell you who's buying your work and they don't pass on any public feedback. I was lucky that there were a couple of friendly officers who'd give you a quick sneak peek on the internet at their website and I got a small chance to read a little public feedback, which was amazing and inspiring. I guess the best feedback we receive is when our work sells. Selling my work through the gallery has helped me so much. I have met so many visiting people in the gaol who would see me painting my murals and the officers would introduce me, explaining that my work was in the gallery. When they realised I was the gaol scene painter they'd all say "Yeah, we know your work, we're fans!" It has helped me to get my name out there. There's also the financial angle. After over ten years in goal, I have nothing left to get out to and the sale of my art has given me the chance to start again and have a go at making an honest living. Over my time in gaol, I've sold seventy eight paintings through the gallery and to all those customers I say a heartfelt thank you.

My future business name will be Artymus Art. Art is my redemption. Over this time, I've learnt that I do have an addictive nature - there's nothing I can do about this but to work with it. So my time in gaol, I've used art to beat my drug addiction and to turn it into something healthy, so now I have an art addiction. But I believe that is a good thing as now I can affect humanity in a positive way, which is great for them but also beneficial for me. Art is my life and it is who I am. Without it, I'm not going there because that won't happen.



Tony's historical escort mural at Glen Innes C.C.

What are the challenges of being an artist in prison?

One has to remember what environment we are in. This world is hypersensitive, extremely politically correct, insular and super vigilant. The screws and staff are on the lookout for anything that can put negative light upon the system. I've had quite a few works rejected because they told the truth of how I feel and how we're treated. But to the employees it could cast a negative light upon their system. I was once 'case noted' for making art about a very real but taboo subject within the system. They let you tell part of your story, but not the complete truth. It's really hard to deal with the censorship we experience here. There's another world to deal with regarding murals. I innocently painted a 3-D bus seat on a wall and a life sized inmate sitting on the seat. I was then asked by an officer to do a life size version of him standing at the side of the bench. That lasted two weeks until night security complained that they kept panicking that they thought people were out in the open during the night. So they had to be painted over. I took it as a compliment. After this, I was marched to a meeting with the Manager of Security and they laid down the law: no life-size renderings of people and no painting officers.

Now let's talk about access to materials. It's hard to get a quality pencil sharpener. You buy at least four in hope that at one works well. Quality erasers? Yeah, dream on. Get to know SAPO's or any staff you can and beg and plead. Eventually what you need will find its way to you, but it can be like finding water in the desert. The challenges for artists in custody are many, but if you're born to create nothing can stop you. Pencils, pens, and paper are cheap. Other crims understand our dilemma and often come to help. My latest hassle at Glen Innes was running out of some colours of paint. When the Governor was on holidays, I took my order over to the admin and was later informed that if I asked for paint again I would be locked away in isolation. When the Governor came back, he apologised and said he would get the paint himself. It just shows there is always a challenge.

I would so love to play with oil paints. I've won the Corrective Services Artist of the Year and the Indigenous Artist of the Year awards. I've painted over 500 square meters of Government infrastructure, and I still can't get to experience the joys of oil paint. How about an easel or a little fold up seat so I can do open air painting. I do open-air painting, but I have to do it with multiple trips to carry chairs, tables, or whatever I can find to do the job.

Can you tell me about the murals at Glen Innes?

The first mural I did at Glenn Innes was the old escort scene we put on the front of the reception building. After discussions with the Governor, we agreed to pay homage to the historical elements of the gaol. We went through the gaol's old photo albums and I picked what I liked. I then went back to the pod, placed all the images in front of me and let the magic happen. There's also a tribute

to the nurse I did in the clinic, I tried to use perspective principles to make it look like another room in hopes that one day maybe someone will walk into the wall. Ha Ha.

I haven't changed my approach to the murals I made at Long Bay. I still charcoal on the sketch and use the same type of paint. What I've found is different is the workplace safety techniques. At Glen Innes, they are very strict and by the book, compared to Long Bay, where I painted three metres in the air standing on twelve plastic food pallets with a slippery plastic chair on top. It was so sketchy as it wobbled and slipped and occasionally broke. I did ask for a ladder, to which they only laughed and said, 'Yeah right, we'll give you a ladder.' Here at Glen, they put up scaffolding for me to paint. They are so supportive they even put me through all the courses so when I leave here I'll have my scaffolding ticket, my working at heights ticket, and I'm able to complete a business course as well. I've told them I'd like to do this as a career and they are putting everything in place to make that happen. At Long Bay that never would have happened.



The dream is to continue painting murals after my release. Fortunately, with my time here I've built up quite an extensive portfolio, so my plans upon release is to hopefully work for someone while I navigate the parole hurdles.

What's your advice for creating art?

I've seen people make art with coffee because they don't have any paint. Don't let your current circumstance define your ability. Instead, let it inspire you to heights you can only imagine. You may have heard the idiom - great art is born of great pain - you have to bleed for your art - those sayings are absolutely born of truth. This is your time, to learn to fly. On

the outside, I used drugs with the excuse that it would inspire. Now I've been locked up over ten years and I'm so clear headed, with so much natural inspiration from my time and I can't express how crazily prolific my rate of work is. In here, you have the time to learn and develop your own style, paid for by the Government! The best place to start that is a must for every artist, is drawing. It's cheap. And don't stress too much about quality to start with, as people see that you're serious with what you're doing, they'll help, which it is a weird thing to witness in gaol. Art is self-sustaining. Once you reach a certain level, it's like God smiles upon you and opens the heavens. For techniques and tips, look in your library in the education section. For references, use old newspapers. Life drawing is one of my favourite forms of art but it's challenging. Use the inmates in the yards to practice. Just don't be too hard on yourself. Enjoy the challenge and watch the miracle that is time flying. That is what I hear the most: "I just get lost in myself when I draw and I lose track of time." Anyway, that's the best place to start, but the most important above all other tools is the mind. Stay positive. You don't have to be classically trained or have gone to art school. I didn't. If you've just got to create, you just have to. Good luck and may the art be with you.

THE DEAD DROP

BY T. KINGDON

John Munro strode through Central Park New York, where he visited regularly on business for the CIA. This was an ideal location for his "dead letter" drops for his KGB handler and always worked perfectly. He sat on a public seat that overlooked the small lake which contained several small hired rowing boats. He could hear the occupants laughing and talking while enjoying being close to nature, of which New York offered very little. With his right hand, he took from his coat pocket a small piece of adhesive tape and covertly stuck it to the underside of the middle wooden slat. Once he was sure it was securely in place, he stood up and proceeded to the tea house for a refreshment.

As he strolled along towards the tea house it was all too easy, he thought. It was not about the money anymore, though the Russians paid handsomely: \$15,000 for each drop with an incentive of double if he uncovered a spy operating against the Soviet regime. He was happy as he was leaving them a name of a CIA operative working in Czechoslovakia and would command a \$30,000 payday. He smiled to himself and thought smugly that the people he worked with were fools. He believed he was a wasted talent and that he should be running the CIA but had been overlooked by President Reagan. He knew when he picked up his weekly dry-cleaning in the following week his suit jacket would contain an envelope with \$30,000 in cash. He was so inundated with cash that he had started hiding it in various places in his home garage, in old toolboxes, taping envelopes to the underside of his work bench. He knew he had to come up with a better way of concealing his ill-gotten wealth.

Not long after Munro made his drop on the wooden seat, Boris Geller, a short, slightly overweight man with thick black wavy hair and strong Slavic facial features sat on the same seat. He was ostensibly a mid-level trade attaché, though in reality he was a KGB operative. He carefully removed the small square of adhesive tape, knowing nothing of its contents. His job was merely a pick-up boy, who would deliver it to Vassily Khokhlov, KGB Head of Station in the USA.

The KGB Head of Station in the USA was a prized and powerful position to hold; a post that, if done well, would catapult him to the very top echelon of the organization. Vassily Khokhlov gazed from his Manhattan apartment window looking out at the Brooklyn Bridge. He was tall with a dark complexion. The almost permanent facial scowl presented him as very menacing, his long nose and dark eyes made him a chilling figure for those who came into contact with him for the first time. He embodied all that was very dark about the KGB, ruthless, pitiless, ambitious, and seemed totally devoid of any necessary human emotion. He was pondering what more he could extract from Munro before the inevitable would occur; being unmasked,

disgraced, and punished in the severest of fashions. He knew that the enormously rich resource that Munro was, one of the best the KGB had ever had, could not survive long because of that very fact. He knew he had to squeeze Munro dry in the shortest amount of time, and despite the promise to Munro he would be extracted to the Soviet Union when, and if he fell under suspicion, he resolved to leave him high and dry, and to his own fate.

A knock on the door suddenly interrupted Khokhlov deep in thought.

'Who is it?' he grunted.
'It is comrade Geller, Colonel.'
'Enter, Geller,' came a stern reply.

Geller cautiously entered the room. There was an expression of disgust on Khokhlov's face. Immediately, he knew he was in trouble. Khokhlov smashed his fist on the desk as Geller entered, who winced in terror before his boss.

'How many times have I told you not to call me Colonel, you fool? If you do that one more time Geller you will find yourself in a Gulag in Siberia, do you understand?'

'Yes, Comrade Khokhlov, I am sorry, sir,' he bleated in a terrified voice.

'Well, Geller, did you collect the item from the drop point?' asked Khokhlov impatiently.

'Yes, comrade sir,' replied Geller hastily, holding out to him the small adhesive square; his hand trembling noticeably.



He took it quickly and dismissed the terrified Geller, who escaped the room with great relief.

Waiting til Geller closed the door behind him, Khokhlov walked to his desk, and opening the draw, pulled a small light box out and placed it on top. He fed the small adhesive square through a side slant and switched the light on revealing random perforated squares. He then removed from the draw and took out a one-time pad and fed the sheet into the side of the box so that letters appeared through the squares. He wrote down the letters in one sequence and then studied the line carefully until he could see two distinct words; a first name and a second name, the name of a CIA operative whose life was in great danger now that it was in the hands of the KGB.

One Week Later

Munro hesitated outside the dry cleaners, quickly checking his surroundings. He adjusted his tie nervously, but the thought of the \$30,000 pay day fortified him. This was always the most vulnerable moment in perpetrating his treachery. He enjoyed the surge of adrenaline flowing through his body; it was like a drug he could not get enough of. The thrill seemed to become more important than the money, and he smiled smugly as everything seemed clear and normal. Munro entered the dry-cleaning shop. He was greeted by Mr. Ji Jin, the diminutive Chinese owner of the business.

'Good morning Mr. Munro.'

'Good morning Mr. Jin' Munro said, eyeing the ageing man.

Munro wondered if Jin was a KGB operative or merely being used. Jin took the suit carry bag from the long coat rack that ran the length of the small shop to the rear of the counter. Munro quickly unzipped the bag to check it was indeed his tailored suits within. Satisfied with the contents he passed across a \$20 note that included a generous tip.

'Thank you, Mr. Munro enjoy the rest of your day!' Munro merely grunted in reply.

This was the same routine, with no idle chit-chat, just do the business and get out. Munro exited the shop, nervously scanning the street in both directions. Satisfied that everything appeared normal, he quickly got into his car and drove off.

Having driven home, he quickly parked his car in the garage, checking his surroundings and closing the garage doors. Laying the suit bag across the solid wooden work bench, which was unusually clear, he unzipped the bag, removed the first suit, and retrieved an envelope that had been placed inside. He opened the envelope eagerly and quickly fanned through the crisp hundred-dollar bills. There was no need to count it: \$30,000 would be there. Being on a salary of \$120,000 per annum, each drop was equivalent



to three month's work, and tax free. His spying had been going on for years and he was becoming careless, always wearing the best Italian suits and shoes, driving the most luxurious cars. He was running out of room hiding his blood money. He figured he must have around \$400,000 around the garage. He removed a box from under the bench that was filled with old rags and pulled out from behind it an old metal tool box placing it on the bench. Opening the box, he grabbed several bundles of cash and then placed them in a line across the bench, grinning at his ever-expanding fortune.

Suddenly, there was an explosion and the garage door simply disappeared, Munro froze, terrified.

'Freeze, FBI! Put your hands up where we can see them!'

Munro stood frozen, failing to respond to the order. Two gunshots reverberated like a clap of thunder inside the garage. Munro felt the two bullets go deep into his chest as he collapsed to the floor.

The FBI man stood over Munro's lifeless body.

'Tracherous bastard; that was your last dead drop,' said the FBI man, not concealing his contempt.

Story by T. Kingdon

SMILEY

BY 'BORIS KERR'

It was autumn of 1971 and I was in the city of Vung Tau in what was then South Vietnam. I was serving with the Australian Army, 2nd field hospital, 2nd field ambulance, initially as a medic.

Vung Tau was once named Cape St Jacques, when it was part of French Indochina. The city is a beach resort and was sometimes referred to as the 'French Riviera' of southeast Asia. The town supported many restaurants and nightclubs and was quite a cheery place. The people were friendly. At that time the area was the R&R (Rest & Recreation) area for the armed forces and was often populated by some very drunk American, Aussie, and Kiwi troops. They were all treated very well by the locals. They spent a lot of money.

The Yanks were what I called 'the cheapest bunch of drunks in the world'. Possibly not true, but they could buy 40oz bottle of bourbon, whiskey, gin – you name it – for about \$2.50 US, through their P.X., which held no tax or duty added. It was good to make a friend of a Yank – they could get you anything. I don't know how they got away with it, but they really loved our slouch hats and would pay huge prices for them or trade. I got an automatic pistol for one of mine (of course I had accidentally lost it when it blew at the beach, it was soon replaced – although I was fined \$10 for it).

What I found out about Vung Tau was quite a shock to me. It appeared the Vietcong (Charlie) owned many of the businesses and used the money they made to fund their war. Here, however, no-one made waves. The person who served you in the box could well be the enemy, but while they were making money, there was peace.

Crazy fact – at North Beach – the posher end – there were flags on the beach and we were told to swim between them. I presumed these were lifeguard patrolled areas, but when I asked, I was told "No. This is Charlie's R&R beach – They swim on 'that' side of the flag."

And it was then that I realised that war 'is' crazy. A flag makes peace. When I finally was posted home I stole the flag and it hung it on my bedroom wall. I'll jump forward a bit. My last posting in Vung Tau was as a Provo – a Military Policeman. It was an interesting position but there was a lot of corruption and looking the other way, particularly when it involved inter unit/country conflicts. The Yanks got into a lot of trouble but we Aussies could drink them under the table. Trouble was that most of the Yanks didn't want to

be there and took it out on drinks and drugs. They lacked a lot of discipline and often disliked their officers. We treated lots of self-inflicted wounds on soldiers giving themselves the purple heart and a ticket home.

There was dope everywhere – fortunately I never availed myself – cheap booze was sufficient. There was a gap in the perimeter wire where you could sneak out at night. I did so many times and was caught only once, when I tripped and put myself in hospital with a broken nose. I got seven days heavy duties.

When we were doing our training when we first arrived, we were told to be aware of the locals, particularly the children. We were told that the kids would get close to you, put a grenade in your pocket, pull the pin and run off. Therefore, we were told that if they came close to stop them and if they don't, to kick them away. I'd be damned if I would ever do that and so I 'took the risk'. In fact, I disposed of heaps of chocolates.

Back to field hospital: My job was going by helicopter to act as what I guess you'd call 'first response' now. Load casualties onto the chopper and bring them back to field base. It could be a busy and harrowing time. When I was training, I was not keen on the sight of blood, but when I almost fainted once my commanding officer literally booted me in the bum. 'You're no bloody use to me like that. Wake your ideas, man. You can't help F.A., if you can't perform' – and I've been OK since.

It wasn't a dark and stormy night, as most scary stories start. It was a hot muggy morning and it had just stopped raining for what seemed like days. I loaded my kit onto the chopper and our motley crew took off. This was no ordinary flight. A Canadian doctor, American nurse, three escort Yanks and I were on a sort of mercy mission. We had volunteered, forgoing a day on the booze, to help vaccinate a small village to the North of Smallpox, and to provide things like anti-malaria pills. It was at the foot of the hills, out from Phan Thiet to the north. This was only my second such trip, inspired by the 'flag on the beach'.

As we were approaching, there was smoke towards the hills and the distant 'pop up' of sporadic gunfire. Not too unusual in these parts. We carried on as usual. The locals were shy and a little wary of us, but our interpreter put them at ease and we soon settled down to a slow trickle of patients.



After probably an hour, there was movement in the village. Murmuring and restlessness. People were leaving and heading away from where we were gathered. Something was up. Apparently, the Vietnamese had raided a village to the north and were rounding up Vietcong sympathisers. They were very cruel, the South Vietnamese soldiers, and treated sympathisers brutally, with torture and even sometimes execution. We decided we would pack up and leave and come back another day.

From the edge of a wooded area beyond where we had landed, a young girl, we thought about nine or ten, came running, dragging a younger boy behind. She ran towards one of the huts and went inside. Three Vietnamese soldiers came running out of the trees after them. We stopped what we were doing, stunned. One soldier ran into the hut, dragged them both, one clinging to the other, out of the building and flung them to the ground. I don't know what he was saying but he sure wasn't happy.

The three Yanks ran up to the soldier and pushed him away. With that, the other two Vietnamese soldiers began shouting aggressively. We picked up, through the interpreter, that the boy was supposedly a courier, who took messages and helped smuggle goods in for the Vietcong. He would be treated as a 'sympathiser', the same as an adult. The young girl was, on closer inspection, badly burned. Her clothes were burnt and sticking to her and I am sure she was in a lot of pain. I found out why later. She made for an American, grabbed him by the leg and began what I imagine was begging; in a most heartbreaking manner. The Yank said, "Don't worry, darling. You'll be OK. He ain't going nowhere!"

Pushing, shoving, yelling, threatening – it all became very heated. The doc took the girl, picked her up and headed for the chopper. The Yank soldiers went to get the wounded and hurt boy, and then my life changed.

One of the Vietnamese pulled out a pistol and shot the boy in the head. He then advanced toward the chopper yelling and screaming. 'We' broke the law and 'We' stopped them: but I never held the gun – and until today I have not spoken of this.

The girl we called 'Smiley'. She was taken back to base hospital and treated for her burns, the result of escaping from her burning house, which had been set on fire with both of them in it. I treated another man like this. We had come across him dazed, walking down a road. He had burns to his chest with vertical lines about one centimetre apart, running to his waist. There was charcoal and burnt cane running down and sticking to his skin. The soldiers had taken him from his home and told him they were going to burn down his house as his small village was under investigation or whatever they called it. He had begged to keep his caged bird. The soldiers gave him his bird, then

they poured petrol on it and set it on fire. They forced the man to keep hold of the cage. And this was how war was.

Smiley was smuggled out of Vietnam, on a military plane to Singapore. She was flown back into Saigon and was given refugee status. I think it was all a bit illegal but Smiley ended up going to Canada, where she was adopted. She's still there now as far as I know.

You see – I was told going to help the villagers was a waste of time, that we couldn't do anything. But I did, and I did make a bit of a difference, even if it was for one small girl. When I returned, I was discharged in Australia and came back to New Zealand and my parents.

I took up the protests against the war in Vietnam. But I did not despise the soldiers who served there, I respected them. When the Springbok tour was going ahead in the 80s I protested, because I felt strongly about it.

The war finished. The Springbok tour finished and we affected the end of the apartheid.

There is more to this story. There are things I cannot describe and that I wish I could forget.

This writing is not a waste of time for me. It is something I must do before I die.

THE SMILE

One flag
One flag on the beach
That divided
War and peace

A hat
For a gun
Cheap booze
Cheap fun, but

The flames
That smoke
That smell
The heat and sweat
The sounds of
hopelessness
and choppers coming in
And stretchers
More stretchers and
That sound,
That 'Mum, mum, mum!'

One flag on a beach
One man with a bird
and a scar on his chest.

One flag on a beach
One face, one girl.
One smile at last
That may never have been
seen, but for
One law broken

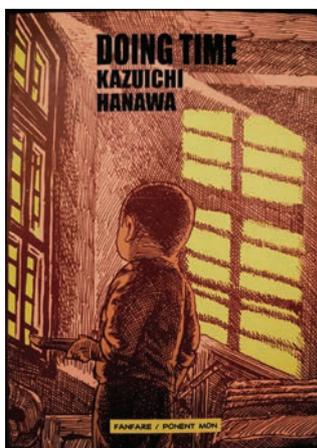
One flag, one flag
One flag on a wall
To remind me
To ask myself
'What for?'

Writing and poetry by 'Boris Kerr', New Zealand

BOOK REVIEWS

BY JOSEPHINE BULL, CRIMINOLOGY STUDENT

Doing Time by Kazuichi Hanawa (2000) is a quietly satirical autobiographical Manga that offers a detailed glimpse into daily life in a Japanese prison. Hanawa was an avid gun collector sentenced to three years in Hidaka prison for possessing an illegal firearm. Each chapter features humorously exaggerated fine sketches exploring different aspects of his experiences while incarcerated.



It was an easy, quirky and slightly dark read, perfect for readers who enjoy visual storytelling. Hanawa provides detailed maps and diagrams of clothing, food menus, and room layouts, giving us a true bird's-eye view of prison life. Each sketch was recreated from memory after his release, as drawing and writing about life in prison was forbidden.

Despite the monotony of his daily life, Hanawa's understated narration and detailed comic strips immerse the reader in his routine. The drawings add complexity to the narrative and are such a unique way to recount his time in Hidaka. It's unlike anything else I've read in the criminology genre.

It was a surprisingly light-hearted read for the sophisticated social and political themes illustrated throughout its non-linear structure. Hanawa addresses paternalistic authority, restriction, justice, socioeconomic status and social isolation through reflective satirical commentary. He appears to be mostly amused by his surroundings.

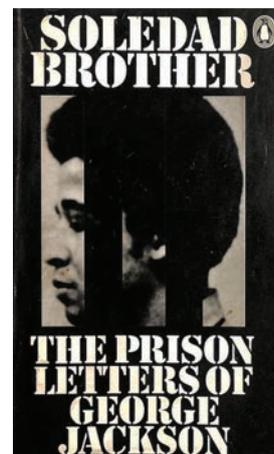
Rather than a tone of remorse, Hanawa critiques the justice system's shortcomings and casually questions if prison is an adequate deterrent for crime. He often recounts the comfort and ease of prison, particularly the food. He reveals insight into why some men find themselves institutionalised for life: "Here you are free from things".

Hanawa appears emotionally detached compared to the other inmates, noting he even prefers solitary confinement. Throughout his interactions, many men express feelings of guilt over separation from their families and loneliness, while Hanawa doesn't seem to relate to this sentiment.

I'd recommend this book to anyone interested in a detailed perspective on life behind bars in Japan. The narrative is engaging and explores different facets of the justice system and Hanawa's psyche. It is light and comical, with beautiful drawings to immerse you into his word.

Great read. It's entertaining and insightful.

Soledad Brother by George Jackson (1970) is a powerful collection of personal letters written by George Jackson during his imprisonment in Soledad and San Quentin State Prisons from 1960 to 1970. Originally published in 1970, shortly after his brother Jonathan Jackson was killed in a police shootout during a courthouse protest, the book is dedicated to Jonathan. *Soledad Brother* became a symbol for racial injustice in America and is now considered a classic in Black literature and political philosophy.



George was arrested at eighteen, accused of attempted armed robbery of \$75 from a Los Angeles petrol station. Despite evidence of his innocence, he pled guilty under legal advice and received an indeterminate sentence of one year to life. In 1964, while still serving time for his original charge, George was falsely accused of murdering a white guard alongside two other African American inmates, Fleeta Drumgo and John Clutchett. The media dubbed them the Soledad Brothers.

George spent nearly ten years in prison, over seven of those in solitary confinement. His letters, often to his parents, express pain, resilience, and radical political ideas. Through poetic language, he critiques systemic racism, economic injustice, capitalism, state violence, and political corruption. Many of the issues he raises remain relevant today.

His radical ideas call for a global movement of empowerment and self-determination for black people. He challenges the oppressive nature of white government and wants to see a world free from systemic control. His writing blends academic theory, historical analysis, and personal experience, offering a compelling social commentary on institutional power and politics.

It is a must-read for anyone interested in America's history of over-incarceration and overt racism, as well as those intrigued by political resistance, socialism and anti-institutionalism. It is a reminder that we are still oppressing and enslaving people, just in a different way. Jackson writes, "Capture, imprisonment is the closest to being dead one can experience in this life."

This book challenges societal norms through a poetic and philosophical approach, offering fresh insight into human rights, criminology, and institutionalised racism. It left me feeling passionate, questioning our systems and their broader impact.

FILM REVIEWS

Touch (2024) is an affectionate story of love without boundaries. The film follows Kristofer's journey across Europe and Asia to reconnect with the love that transformed his life. Set against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, the movie begins by introducing the audience to an aged Kristofer, living in Iceland and battling a degenerative disease. Given a prognosis of his



soon and inevitable decline of ill health, Kristofer sets off to London and then Japan to reunite with Miko, the woman who had captured his heart.

The movie is presented in English, Icelandic, and Japanese. The story unfolds in two main time periods, the 1970s and 2020. The earlier time period illustrates Kristofer's entry and time working in a Japanese restaurant, the blossoming of an inter-racial love affair in post-World War II Britain, and the struggles and tensions faced by survivors of the Hiroshima bombing. Geopolitics isn't a major feature of this film. Rather, international relations provide the subtle framing through which to understand the motives and decisions of the story's primary characters. In contrast, the Covid era period depicts a physically and mentally frail Kristofer trying to meet Miko while straining ties with his daughter in Iceland.

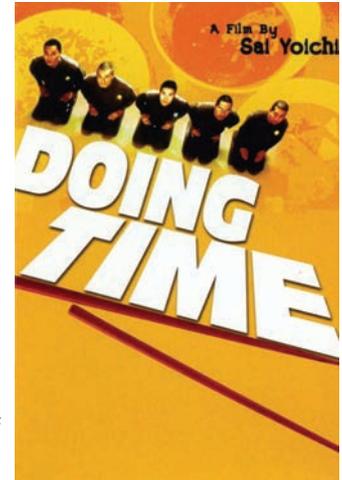
Touch skilfully employs music and character dialogue to vividly tell this love story. Songs selected throughout the movie transport the viewer to the emotional state of the protagonists and elucidate the anti-war and free love cultural vibes of the 1970s. Kristofer's time spent learning Japanese language and culture is delivered with warmth. Despite a running time of 1hr 50mins, the story unfolds at a reasonable pace with each scene contributing to the overall arc and development of its character. The movie does a wonderful job of attaching the viewer to the heart of the story, which is the story of the heart.

Touch is a sweet powerful film of love across space and time.

Rating: 3.5 jailbirds out of 5.

By Vincent, Long Bay Correctional Centre

Doing Time (2002), directed by Yoichu Sai, is a film adaptation of Kazuichi Hanawa's Manga, following his experience in a low-security Japanese prison. This understated drama-comedy, spoken in Japanese with English subtitles, blends dry humour with subtle melancholic undertones, exploring themes of authority, control, and personal responsibility.



The film captures the themes of Hanawa's original manga narrative beautifully. The visuals add depth to the plot and its characters, revealing details I hadn't picked up in the book, like Hanawa being much older than I pictured. Despite the sombre undertone, the film remains light-hearted, often poking fun at the absurdity of prison life. The film opens with a playful war reenactment, where Hanawa is seen showing off his restored model gun, which later leads to his arrest. It then quickly shifts into the dull greyscale world inside prison, where people and the walls seem to blend into one. The muted colour palette and minimal music reinforce the plot's themes of monotony, lack of control and loss of individuality.

Tsutomu Yamazaki delivers a memorable performance as Hanawa, a distant observer quietly analysing the routines and personalities around him. Hanawa remains emotionally distant, even in conversations about murder or violence, highlighting how normal these topics are in prison. Rather than dramatic twists, the film offers a slow, reflective account of Hanawa's time inside, with his internal monologue critiquing fellow inmates and the rigid prison microculture. The narrative captures the boredom and small pleasures within incarceration, gently connecting them to childhood nostalgia.

The film has an authentic feel and Hanawa's narration was relatable, giving glimpses into his inner world. The dark themes are softened by subtle satirical humour, making them easy to absorb. I'd recommend it to anyone interested in realistic portrayals of Japanese prison.

Rating: 4 out of 5 stars.

By Josephine Bull, Criminology student

A HISTORY OF PRISON NEWSLETTERS

BY DAMIEN LINNANE



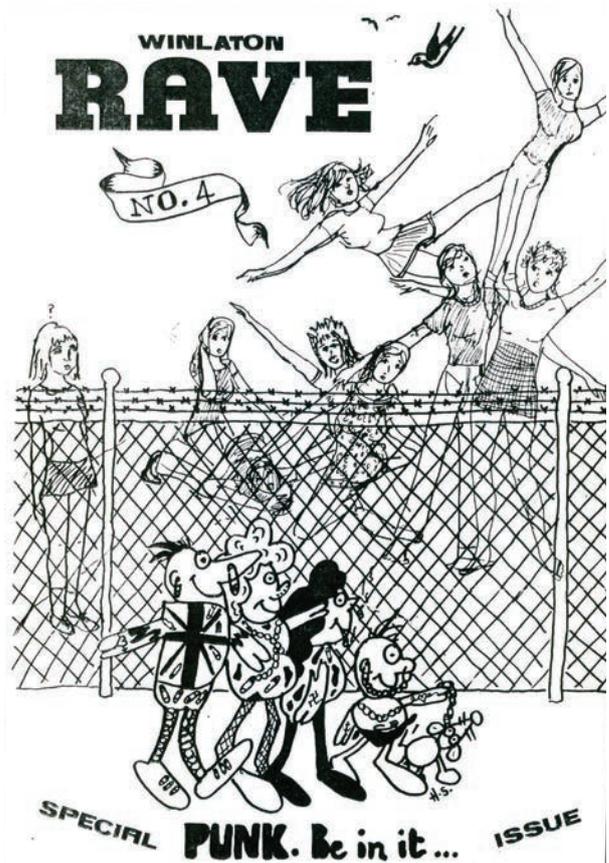
At this stage, my ongoing research into prison newsletters and magazines in Australia has found over 100 unique publications. Only two of these publications, however, have been produced at juvenile detention centres.

Searching for records has been complicated by the nature of historical institutions for children in Australia. Many twentieth-century institutions housed both orphans and wards of the state alongside those sentenced for criminal offences. Usually, no efforts were made to separate these two distinct groups of children. BoysTown in Beaudesert, Queensland, a Catholic-run institution that operated from 1961 until 2001, housed both destitute children and those referred to them by courts, and were later found to have enacted horrific sexual and physical abuse against boys in their care. *Boys Town Calling*, the institute's newspaper, ran with varying frequency between 1961 and 1995. The newspaper was really just a mouthpiece for the authorities, a promotional publication aimed at milking more money from the institution's financial supporters. From the second volume the newspaper was supplemented by very short articles by the boys at the institution. Typically, these were about day-to-day life, including sports, excursions, and livestock care. Photos of boys were frequently published, and some boys are recognisable as those who have come forward as adults to speak of abuse at the institution. What is clear, however, is that the boys had no control over the editorial and publication process of the newspaper, nor were they the target audience.

Conversely, the only other youth publication found, *Rave*, was also one of the most authentic and uncensored. Within its pages, incarcerated girls were given a voice and considerable freedom in writing at a level not often enjoyed even by adult publications. *Rave* was the publication of Winlaton Youth Training Centre in Victoria. The juvenile detention centre opened in 1956 and housed girls aged 12 to 21. It was designed to hold 95 residents comfortably but at times experienced overcrowding. Only about 10% of the girls at Winlaton were criminally convicted. Most were either wards of the state or sent there for 'being exposed to moral danger', a catch-all term used almost exclusively to incarcerate adolescent girls who were either engaged or suspected to be 'at risk' of sexual activity. This included girls being incarcerated for their own 'protection' after reporting that they were raped by family members.

Rave was created by Laryssa Zynevych in 1976 and would continue to be produced by incarcerated girls, usually with oversight from a staff member as editor. It ran until 1992, shortly before Winlaton's closure the following year. Around 63 issues were made. People in the community could subscribe to *Rave* for a modest fee to cover printing, and it was posted free to other juvenile detention centres as well as adult prisons.

As is noted by the Victorian Government's website on Winlaton, *Rave* magazine presented "the thoughts and feelings of the trainees in a way that the other institutional records do not." In 1985, *The Age* noted that *Rave* increased literary skills and provided "a therapeutic outlet for frustrations." Girls were given remarkable freedom to write about their lives. Personal narratives would often feature stories including physical and sexual abuse at home, and previous experience with drug use and sex work. Sex in general was a frequent topic, and the magazine often surveyed girls or printed their commentary on topics such as pregnancy, rape, abortion and relationships, some of which featured considerable age disparity with their male partners.



Volume 2 Issue 4 of *Rave*, released in 1978.

As opposed to magazines at adult mens prisons, which often featured complaints from prisoners about being too censored, *Rave* once conversely featured a complaint from staff that girls were allowed to include too much 'negative' material. The same issue also featured incarcerated girl Zita Silvey interviewing Winlaton Superintendent Dr Eileen Slack. Slack mentioned she read *Rave* but chose not to interfere with it. Girls were quick to respond to people who did appear to want to interfere with their magazine.

It really pisses me off when people go off about our "Rave". It's the girl's magazine, we have fun making it and it gives us something to do. So if the staff or anyone else don't like our "Rave" then DON'T READ IT!!!!'
Commentary from 'Woody' in Issue 19 of *Rave* in 1983.

Girls aired many grievances in *Rave*, including through a dedicated 'Rage Page' featured in most issues. Complaints were often focused on the loss of freedom, too few cigarettes, or simply consisted of literary gold in the form of statements such as: "I hate this fucken hole!" Mail censorship was a frequent complaint: "Most of the girls haven't committed any crime and we have a right to privacy," opined one inmate. Detailed coverage was given to girls being pressured to take Depo-Provera contraceptive injections prior to being allowed out on weekend release. Frequent commentary was also given to compulsory participation in 'triad therapy,' a form of group therapy where participants were forced to accept responsibility for any subject they brought up, including for being a victim of sexual assault.

Read in the wake of the 2017 *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse*, some of the complaints in *Rave* are particularly harrowing. An issue in 1980 made several criticisms of male staff, with one girl stating: "a few of them are pervs. I don't reckon they should be allowed to walk down the passage in the morning when we are getting changed." An issue from the magazine's final year, 1992, also featured a complaint about male staff entering girls' rooms without warning.

The Royal Commission heard many substantiated complaints from girls of Winlaton being sexually assaulted. Overcrowding at the institution was found to have hindered adequate supervision to protect girls from abuse. The Department of Youth Services had no formal policy for reporting sexual abuse at the time, and Winlaton internal policy forbid notifying police about sexual assault allegations until 1987. One girl who reported sexual abuse from her father said staff made her feel as if she were to blame and forced her into triad therapy. The Commission found that triad therapy was inappropriate for sexual abuse, as it required children to take responsibility for all issues raised, and was conducted in a group environment by people not trained to respond to such issues.

Dr Slack, who instigated triad therapy, appeared at the Royal Commission and accepted the criticism of the program. The Commission also criticised that Winlaton's response to one girl's fear her father would sexually assault her on day release was only to give her the Depo-Provera injection so she would not become pregnant from the abuse. It was found that Depo-Provera was also prescribed with unclear consent at a time when its usage was supposed to be restricted for research purposes. Dr Slack had raised her own concerns about the drug at the time but was overridden by medical staff and did not have the authority to stop its use. The Commission also accepted that girls were subjected to unexplained internal examinations from medical staff and that this would have been experienced as sexual assault.

Winlaton is likely viewed as an institution of abuse by many of its former victims. *Rave*, however, appears to have been a beacon of hope in an otherwise often bleak environment. Laryssa Zynevych, the creator of *Rave*, returned to Winlaton in 1986 as a volunteer. She wrote for the magazine again that year, stating:

With so much time to spare ... it was difficult to think of things to do to keep us occupied and out of trouble, but one afternoon I had an idea that we could produce a Winlaton magazine and so began the Winlaton Rave ... I didn't have much encouragement in my new venture. When people within the compound saw me coming toward them with trusty biro and writing pad in hand, they'd head off in the opposite direction. After a while however, it became evident that some good things were coming out of it, i.e. staff and girls alike were able to submit articles anonymously and express their opinions ... It was a really good means of communication and I was thrilled to learn that it's still going stronger than ever and now ... Personally it feels good to know I left behind something other than bad memories and my initials carved in the odd wardrobe and bedroom doors.

Forty-one issues of *Rave* are held by the Public Records Office of Victoria. Using the generous funding of *Paper Chained's* associate editor Dr. Jediah Evans, I paid for these magazines to be digitised as part of my ongoing research into prison publications. After the records were digitised for me, the Public Records Office thankfully chose to make many of the newly digitised files available for free online. So thanks to *Paper Chained*, people outside custody can now read many of the issues at: <https://prov.vic.gov.au/archive/VPRS18019/records>

If you're a former Winlaton girl, or know anything about *Rave*, including where we might find some of the various missing issues, please get in touch with *Paper Chained*. And as always, if you know anything about any other prison publications, or if your prison has one now, please write and tell us about it and send us a copy if that is allowed. We'd love to hear from you.

ZITA'S PAGE

Selected *Rave* contributions from Zita Carol Silvey.

To Nancy

I dedicate these lines to you
for all you've said and done
When my skies were dull and grey,
you helped me find the sun,
A cheerful laugh and friendly smile,
work wonders in a day
When I was feeling down and out,
And nothing would go right,
A heavy load you shared with me,
would then seem twice as light,
You always found the time for us,
And had an ear to lend,
And so these works are just to say,
I'm proud that you're my friend.

Love ya mate. Zita

Originally published in *Rave Issue 19, December 1983*

ZITA
+
NANCY
B.M.H.E.



What I Was Doing When I Was Out

Well, when I left Winlaton ... I was really scared of how I was going to cope on the outside. I got to my private board [at Windsor Hostel for girls] ... there were a lot of guys hanging around and I was given drugs. At first I thought it was great, drugs for free and allowed to do what I want, but after a while I was getting sick of it and I was embarrassed taking friends home ... after a while Windsor and I decided that it wasn't good for me to stay there. So while I was looking for somewhere to stay I was staying with my mum for three nights - that was OK. Then they put me in this emergency accommodation and I hated it. It was a hole. So I knicked off from there and went to St. Kilda. At first I was looking after myself down there but then I started getting into drugs and all that stuff. Then I realized that it wasn't helping me so I rang my social worker and asked if there was a place for me to go but there wasn't. So I was staying at a place till Windsor found me board. I was going into Windsor every morning to look for a job but then I was getting sick of not getting a job and not being settled so I said stuff everybody and I'll just do what I want so I was taking drugs and that and then the police caught up with me and put me in here [Winlaton]. Now I am getting released into board, a good one I hope and to have a job in a cake shop and I'm going to try again.

Originally published in *Rave Issue 21, May 1984*



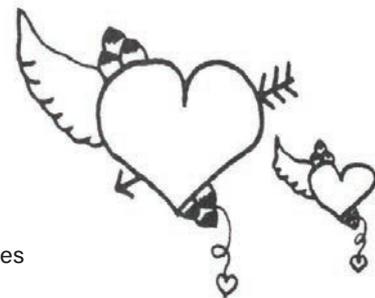
④ H I Z *
* Z I T A *

To Margot

Our memories are thrown
In the tunnels of time
A careless assortment
Without reason or rhyme
But it's funny how sad times
Get buried somewhere
While ones worth remembering
Will always be there
And past loves aren't lost
Although they may go
When the hurting is gone
Inside you will know
That if you remember
And can't help but smile
Then what you were sharing
Was more than worth-while
And your tears can't be wasted
Don't care how much you cry
For your tears hold your memories
And memories don't lie
I've had memories to bury
And loves wrong and right
But my tears are my prisoners
Always freed by the night.

Love you mate. Zita

Originally published in *Rave Open Day Edition, Sep 1984*



★ MARGOT
+ ZITA
B.M.H.E. ★



If I Had a Choice Where Would I live?

If I had a choice where to live I would stay here in Winnie without a bother. But I can't live here forever so I would live with my grandmother in St. Kilda but all the Government paid big heads (Windsor) won't let me go because of the area. Well I think it's stupid cause I could live up whoop somewhere and still get down St. Kilda if I want (which I don't want to do anymore). But of course Windsor don't believe it. Well I tell ya I'll prove them dogs wrong when I eventually live with my grandmother which I'm going to do if they like it or not it will work out.

Originally published in *Rave Issue 22, December 1984*

Rage Page

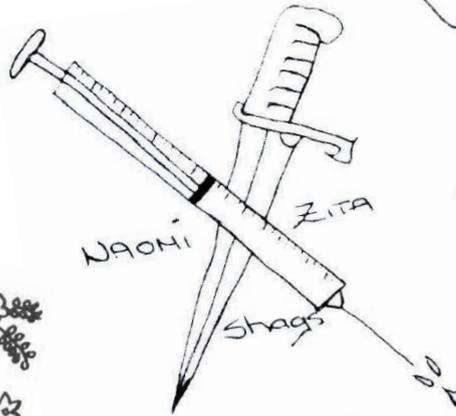
I'm angry about the staff saying I can't write to a friend of mine in Pentridge. I'm not even allowed to receive mail off her. I'm so pissed off, and their excuse is she's a bad influence on me. She's my friend and it should be up to me who my friends are. God, Winlaton can't run my life you know. So, Lorelle if you are reading this, I still love ya and I'm thinking of ya always. Zita.

Originally published in *Rave Issue 25*

ZITA
WOOL
HEVA.

ZITA

Sixteen too young to die
 Too young to reach the end.
 The world is your oyster at sixteen,
 And every girl is your friend.
 At sixteen, death is no threat,
 It seems so far away,
 Life is abundant, enjoyments key,
 You live from day to day.
 It's far too young to lose your youth,
 The feeling of another needle,
 It always happens to someone else,
 And who knows who they are
 Well someone else who's my good friend
 She (Zita) was only sixteen.
 She lived and loved like you and I
 But we could not foresee
 That Zita would become statistic
 Another number on the page,
 A couple of lines on page seventeen,
 Of the Sun and the Herald.
 She meant so much more to all her friends
 Than we probably ever knew.
 But now she's gone,
 We don't have to change
 To prove that this was true
 Please spare a thought
 For all the Zita's of this world
 Innocent victims of man
 Though you may think
 It won't happen to you
 It might, it could, it can



SMACK
 DONE BY ZITA

To Zita:

You are gone but not forgotten mate. Looking forward to seeing you again one day.

Love Amanda (Ali)

Originally published in Rave Issue 25



Margaret and Wendy

Originally published in Rave Issue 26

For Zita

I sit here and remember
 About all the days gone by
 About the growing love we shared
 The sparkle of your eye
 The way you held me close to you
 With a hug so full of love
 But now your life has ended
 Taken by the one above
 And now I can feel an ache in my heart
 An ache that no-one can save
 And teardrops that now do fall from my eye
 Wet the flowers that now lie on your grave

SHOBI
 +
 RUBY
 +
 ZITA
 +
 SUE
 MADE

Zita Silvey

A good friend, gone but not forgotten
 - All her mates at 'Winnie'

Originally published in The Sun, 20 September 1985

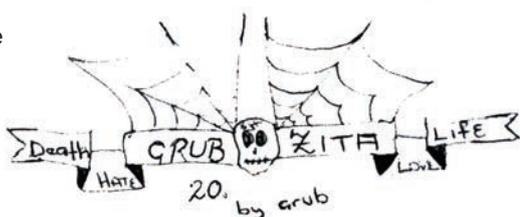
ZITA
 +
 SHOBI
 '85

I miss ya babe

Grub

R.I.P. Zita

7-1-1969
 18-9-1985



R.I.P
 ZITA
 '69 to 85'

Originally published in Rave Issue 25

DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS AND CORRECTIONS

BY JARROD

In prison, time runs slow. The monotony can eat away at you unless you keep yourself busy. I learned fast that to fill up your day was to keep your mind healthy. Typically, you can exercise or play a sport. You can cook up a meal. You can read books that mostly have all the pages. You can also play cards and occasionally chess. Or you can pace back and forth if you don't like any of the above. Most people choose the pacing.

But there was one time I spotted some inmates in a hallway. They had pulled out their chairs from their cells and formed a circle practically blocking the walkway. They had pencils and were busy scribbling on printed sheets of paper. They had dice made at the wood-shop, stealthily snuck back to the cells after work. Every now and again in prison there is a rare item, a relic from the past. A Walkman perhaps. If you're lucky, a guitar. Sometimes something as simple as a vortex football. On this day, it was a Dungeons and Dragons 5th edition Starter Set.

I had played games in the past, but never D&D. It's the most famous fantasy role-playing game in the world. I jumped in and immediately realised the potential of the game. At face value, it's just paper and rolling dice, but there was something here. I also realised that like most things, a game is only as good as the people you play it with.

I started writing game rules and mechanics after lock-in. In the day, I commissioned other inmates (paying them in chocolate blocks and rice crackers) to begin drawing warriors and monsters found in the D&D rulebook or my imagination. I collected bread clips and glued the drawings to them so the figures would stand up. I ordered paddle pop sticks and craft glue, typically used to create shelving, and started making miniature buildings, fences, wells, walls, and forts. By the time I was done, I had created and painted a whole town. It was time to play some games.

I soon moved to a minimum-security prison, met some new people, and started a gaming group. A few inmates who joined in had very limited reading ability, but they were guided by those of us who were more advanced. One of the prison officers was even into D&D and allowed us to have some games sent into the prison. For a while, it was as good as prison could be: the game kept us busy and it was highly social. We played a few hours most days and it was a haven for those who would otherwise be getting themselves into trouble. The guys in the group were also improving their interactive skills, their literacy, and their problem resolution all in one.

Then one day, the positivity stopped. Prison guards stormed into the cells of those in the group. There was a list of names. You were forced to place your forehead and hands against the wall outside your cell while the guards screamed about games as if they were suddenly contraband or drugs. There was no warning or explanation. Cells were stripped and demolished. Artwork and family photos toothpasted to the walls were torn down. Shelves were kicked and beds were flipped. The D&D manuals were thrown into rubbish boxes. The miniatures commissioned with food were torn up. The paddle-pop buildings I created were stomped apart. My cell looked like a hurricane of malice had hit it.

A few months would pass and the explanation was finally given that something distasteful had occurred at another gaol. In a typical knee-jerk reaction, our group had to suffer the consequences. Without the games to hold the inmates together, the game group split up. Some went back to exercise. Some got themselves back into trouble with violence and drugs. Some simply paced back and forth.

What had survived the rabid confiscation of the game materials were returned to family members. Most of it was wrecked, dumped forever to the garbage heap. But some of it survived as a reminder of a time when a bit of creativity in a dark place went a long way.



Some of the original props collected by Jarrod's wife, after she was informed by Corrections that: *"In accordance with the Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures, Section 4.6, Confiscated and unclaimed property ... all similar 'gaol made' gaming paraphernalia will be destroyed, as will any of the games that are not collected in a timely manner."* The pieces are now part of the Paper Chained International art exhibition's collection.

THE SILENCE OF THE COWS

BY ASHLEY

My ancient alarm clock rang out around my small bedroom like a bull elephant with a broken leg. It was still dark outside. I quickly turned the alarm off and reluctantly rolled out of my warm bed. After placing both of my feet on the floor, I cursed the cold mornings that blighted my existence. I quickly emptied my full bladder, then dressed in my old work clothes and heavy boots. A large beaker of strong black coffee and two pieces of thick toast with strawberry jam would have to sustain me for the next few hours.

The icy morning air hit me like a ghost's kiss as soon as I stepped out of the house. My boots crushed the frost glazed grass as I walked towards the nearest paddock. The sky was growing lighter, with the promise of another long day's labour ahead of me. To the east, light orange and pink tendrils were beginning to snake their way across the coming dawn.

An old wooden gate swung open at my light touch. And there, standing like the stone heads on Easter Island stood my silent cows. They had gathered to perform one of nature's rituals; for they were all milking cows. And if they were not milked twice a day, they would stand crying like wounded lions.

The small herd was partly obscured by a low misty cloud; their own warm breaths were natural smoke machines on cold mornings like these.

The single bull in the next paddock surveyed his extensive harem. He raised his large head and snorted several times with satisfaction, because his services would be needed again soon. The cows slowly made their way into the milking yard, and waited, as they did every day. However, there were always several cows who challenged the natural order of things by hiding in the oddest of places. Despite having to be milked, they must have considered their lot above their fellows. I shook my head and began walking across the fields to find the holdouts, because if they were not milked today, they would turn into moaning youngsters. A full, aching udder was something they were not normally used to.

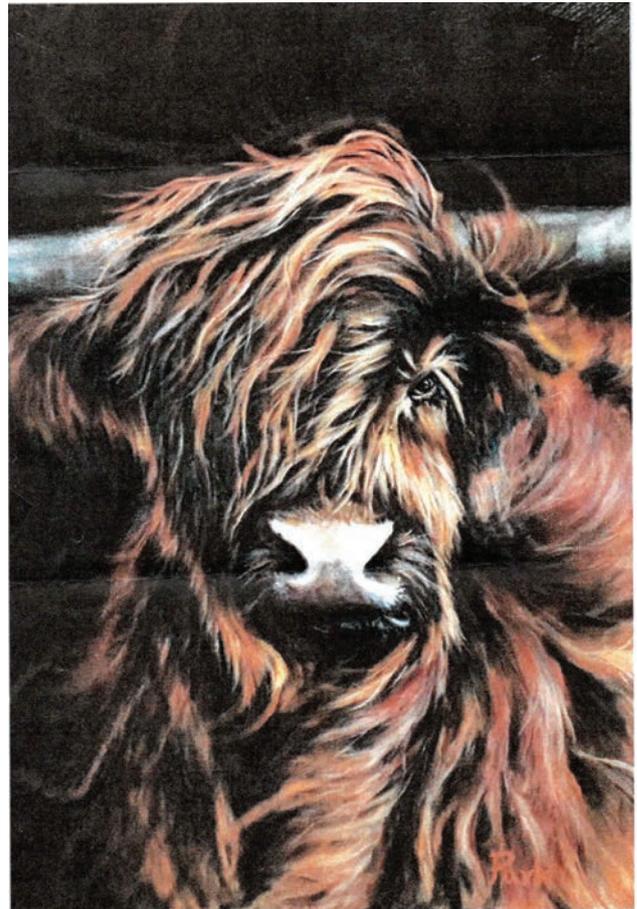
As I walked, I pondered on the fate of my cows. A pang of sadness struck me. I had reared these animals from calves to adulthood, so they could in turn produce calves of their own, thereby producing milk for me to earn my daily bread. However, once they attained an age when they could no longer produce calves of their own, they would have to be sold. A date with a meat works was their only possible future because I was running a business to make milk, and because in nature there are no retirement homes for old animals. It was simple economics.

In a way, farming was a ritual too. Each facet of farm life, the tasks I had to perform, were all rigidly set out in my head before it left the pillow in the morning.

I found the members of my wayward herd in one of their favourite hiding places. They were standing silently, like stone memorials. But a few slowly turned to face me. It was light enough now for me to make out their big brown eyes. I nodded to myself, because I thought that these few older cows might just have an inkling of what the future held for them. They had seen their sisters leave, never to return.

I shook off my melancholy thoughts, got behind the cows and clapped my hands together several times. They reluctantly began moving, patiently trudging slowly towards their eventual fate.

By Ashley, Victoria



'Scott Cow' by T. Park, NSW

HOW TO KEEP YOUR SPIRIT ALIVE DURING THE LONG HAUL

Prison will make you wiser in the sense that you will learn how to navigate the system; what to expect and what not to expect from the system. Here you will feel like you have lost everything, including the will to survive. Basically, you lose every single right. You have no choice in the food you eat, the clothes you wear, the time you would like to see your family, or even the basic human rights you deserve. If you are not wise or mentally strong the system will take your soul. You will no longer have the will to live. You will vanish into a system who will never shed a tear for you.

You need to be mentally and physically prepared for jail as you will witness and experience life lessons unlike those that any expert could ever equip you for. Upon entering prison, you must detach yourself from the materialistic possessions you once earned and valued, otherwise you will find it difficult to move on and adapt here. One thing prison will surely give you is a sense of gratitude. Upon mentally letting go of all material possessions you were attached to, you will begin to adapt and adjust to a new life in prison. When you are struggling to come to terms with the fact that you are suddenly in prison think about the positives. Although this may be difficult to do in a place full of darkness, there is hope and much inspiration you can draw upon from all walks of life. Let's be real, there are millions upon millions of people around the world who wish they had the troubles you have, and not the troubles they are enduring. Reflect upon and draw inspiration from people who have their freedom only they have nothing but despair, anguish, and suffering, wishing they had what you have in here, even with all your troubles.

We all had issues in life. Most of us had a broken home, a disaster, the inevitable waiting to happen. Life in our community wasn't perfect. Our struggles morphed into trouble that led us to where we are today. Now that we are here, the moment has come to turn the system's version of 'time' into one of living a pure life, to improve ourselves, to show people we are capable of changing, and not to be defined by the person we once were. We all hope that we will be released as a new and better person, and not to be confined to a life behind bars, or institutionalised.

Truth be told, no words could be said to mentally and physically prepare you for this world of darkness. However, there are glimmers of light if you know where to search. The gift of self-forgiveness is a pillar for the foundation in creating a positive change within yourself. You must not let a failure in life cause you to grieve forever, or allow the system to take over your mind, or destroy your mental and physical health, or the loving relations you have

with those who are dear and near. Take aim at what you want to achieve. Don't point the finger at others for your failures, and never allow the failures in life to fade away your potential.

Do not allow the system to smother your hopes, dreams, and aspirations, and do not allow the system to make you stare at the floor in darkness, sifting through shards of broken hope and dreams. There is so much to gain in these moments of suffering. If you figure out how to piece that picture back together, you will find a power to be an even greater person. Family support is a cornerstone to your success. Regular communication, including visits from family, will provide you with emotional support, and a sense of connection to the outside world. Having contact with family and loved ones will help you establish a robust family support network. Therefore, you are less likely to re-offend as you will have a stable support system to rely on once you are released into society.

If you believe in God, your faith will be a source of spiritual guidance within you that you can always draw upon. Wherever you lack direction, or you want to seek forgiveness, guidance, or wisdom, turn to God. Faith will be your pillar that will navigate you through life's difficult obstacles, and a guide to making you a better person. Above all, God is forgiving and merciful to all. In addition to being delightful, faith will also guide you to encounter situations in the best of ways to ease the pain within your heart, taking you out of darkness and into the light.

Within these four walls you will find two kinds of social workers. You have the pleasers (just here for the job), and you have the ones with pure, good intentions here to make you a better person, ones who truly care. Avoid the tick-a-box, dot-the-i-and-cross-the-t pleasers who only care about doing the bare minimum, with no real care or good intention. Interactions with these staff are fruitless, and may reinforce feelings of resentment and hopelessness, hindering your efforts to become a better person. Then you have social workers who have a significant and lasting positive impact on you. Positive interactions with social workers who are honest, supportive, fair, and committed to your success will inspire you to change, and engage with rehabilitative activities, giving you a sense of hope which give you a new form of appreciation. They will equip you with positive communication skills, conflict resolution, and foster a positive environment that will support you in life. Be grateful to these wonderful people who care and sacrifice so much to make you a better human being. The same applies to prison guards.

Some prison officers will have a significant and lasting impact on you, both positively and negatively. Choose wisely which prison officer to deal with, and who to avoid. You will find some officers are supportive, fair, and committed to making a difference, whilst others can be rude, abusive, unfair, neglectful, and have a sense of authority over you. It is essential for you to avoid these prison officers as they will exacerbate feelings of resentment and hopelessness, which may cause you to decline in your progression. Remember, the majority of prison officers are not here to foster a positive environment for you, so you must create your own which supports you both mentally and physically.

Never conform to the routine. Conform to prison life and it's all over! You will disconnect from the world that you will one day reunite with, alone and separated for you have allowed yourself to become a product of your environment. Prison will desensitise you if you are not careful or wise. Find an outlet or hobby that will stimulate your mind with positive activities. Find a window, or connection to another place where you can express and share a greater cause, as this will give you a sense of purpose. It's valuable and uplifting to yourself and others. Though we can never change our past and the ongoing effects we have caused onto others, we can choose to make a difference, one beneficial to ourselves and others. Be open and aware of your reality so you can make a difference to your future. Never give up and keep your head held high. The failures in your life have become a part of your journey on the way to becoming an incredible person.

Never allow your inner negative voice to become reliable, or allow it to warp your thoughts. It's crucial to recognise this self-destructive feeling as it will lead you down a path of destruction. Your ego-driven attitude will be your downfall in here. Substitute this defect with one of humility, joy, and kindness so that you can prosper, and before you know it, you will have the emotional maturity to deal with life lessons, including hardships, in a constructive and positive manner.

Adhere to your common sense: do what is right, focus on your personality and principles in here, not on other people's characters. The unbearable problems you face and can't resolve on your own can be made bearable by talking to loved ones, a friend, a psychologist, a SAPO, a chaplain, or caring person. Expression is what can take you out of depression. Your interactions with prison staff, including inmates are integral to making your time either easier or harder for yourself. Avoid prison politics, slander, back biting, drugs, and other negative activities that will impact your progress, yourself, your family, friends, and future. Walk your own path. The world you knew will no longer be available to you until the day of your release arrives. This is your chance to repair and restore your life. The way you choose to do your time is up to you. It

does not have to be all doom and gloom. And you do not need to live in fear or sadness. Irrespective of why you're in prison, you must focus on your wellbeing. You will get through it. Know you will get out a better person to live a better life. Have hope, take advantage of this opportunity to make the best of your time. Think about the person you could become with all the life experience you will gain in here. Yes, there will be many struggles and failures but always know that you are not alone in this journey. Think about the precious time you have in here. Do not allow the system to institutionalise your heart and mind, otherwise it will take your soul. Reject the system's negative reality and substitute it with a positive one.

So what do we do now? Do we sit and do nothing and slowly let the system fade us away, or do we find a way to become an inspiration for others, and be something? No matter what the situation, you can find hope and opportunities. Think about the difference you can make. Never doubt yourself. Imagine what benefit you could be to others. Your progression can leap beyond these walls and inspire many. Always remember: *Progression at its finest in a place with no kindness, I kill them with success because that is timeless.*

Your sincerely, wishing you all the success.

By B, NSW

THE CELL

Come in and take a seat
At long last we get to meet
I know you're here for committing a crime
So let's you and I do some time
I've got something I'd like to say
I will see you change from day to day
The thoughts you will have
The things you will feel
I will be there for your every meal
You will feel some sadness
And you will feel alone at night
You will say "I wish that I was home tonight"
Make the best of the time you've got
And let's hope that it's not a lot
One day you will part "yes" you and me
That's the day they set you free
I'm sure you want to know my name
It wasn't changed it is still the same
We are both together in this man-made hell
Glad to meet you, I am your "prison cell"

Poem by Ross, Victoria

Lost your ID?

Many people lose their identification when they have been in custody. It can be difficult to replace when you get out as you often need some form of ID to get other types of ID. If you have any opportunity to sort out any ID before you are released, you may find this easier than after release, especially with Medicare.

It is really important to keep hold of your Release Certificate. We understand that you may not want people to know you have just been released and showing people the certificate can be distressing, particularly when many services and organisations do not recognise it as official ID. But sometimes this is an important starting point. Never forget that you are much more than simply someone who has been in prison – you are a person, like everyone else, who needs and deserves help.

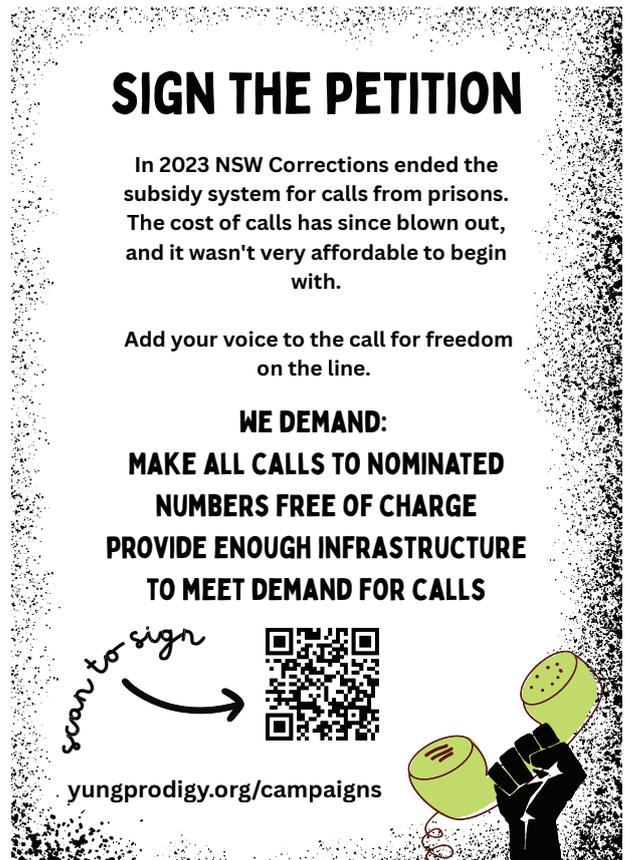
After I am released?

If you were born in NSW call Service NSW on 13 77 88. You will be able to speak to NSW Births, Deaths and Marriages or your closest Service NSW office. If you were born in another Australian State or Territory, you will need to call Births, Deaths and Marriages there. If you were born overseas, you will need to contact that country's consulate. You can call CRC on (02) 9288 8700 and we will help you work out what number to call.

If you are asked to go into Births, Deaths and Marriages or Services NSW, take your Release Certificate. The Births, Deaths and Marriages Research Team can help you to get a copy of your birth certificate. If you are receiving Centrelink payments, you should be able to get a replacement Pensioner Concession Card. To get a replacement Medicare card you need to contact Medicare general enquiries on 13 20 11 or visit a Medicare service centre with other forms of ID. If you have any other forms of ID at all, keep them safe as they may be useful. Examples include a citizenship certificate, bank card, TAFE ID card, home utilities bill from the past three months, and any work-related licences.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People and ID

If you are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and you don't have enough identification for a payment, you can sign a Confirmation of Identity form with Centrelink. You might need to ask for this, because it isn't always something that Centrelink staff will offer. Signing this form allows up to 12 weeks to obtain the ID needed for Centrelink without payments being suspended.



SIGN THE PETITION

In 2023 NSW Corrections ended the subsidy system for calls from prisons. The cost of calls has since blown out, and it wasn't very affordable to begin with.

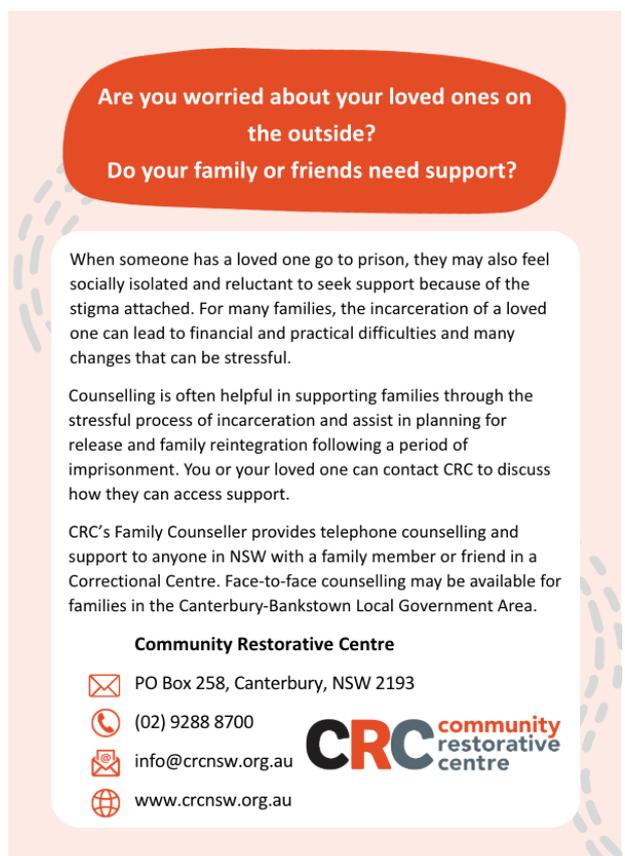
Add your voice to the call for freedom on the line.

WE DEMAND:
MAKE ALL CALLS TO NOMINATED NUMBERS FREE OF CHARGE
PROVIDE ENOUGH INFRASTRUCTURE TO MEET DEMAND FOR CALLS

scan to sign → 

yungprodigy.org/campaigns

Those of you in custody can encourage your friends and family on the outside to sign the online petition.



Are you worried about your loved ones on the outside?

Do your family or friends need support?

When someone has a loved one go to prison, they may also feel socially isolated and reluctant to seek support because of the stigma attached. For many families, the incarceration of a loved one can lead to financial and practical difficulties and many changes that can be stressful.

Counselling is often helpful in supporting families through the stressful process of incarceration and assist in planning for release and family reintegration following a period of imprisonment. You or your loved one can contact CRC to discuss how they can access support.

CRC's Family Counsellor provides telephone counselling and support to anyone in NSW with a family member or friend in a Correctional Centre. Face-to-face counselling may be available for families in the Canterbury-Bankstown Local Government Area.

Community Restorative Centre

-  PO Box 258, Canterbury, NSW 2193
-  (02) 9288 8700
-  info@crcnsw.org.au
-  www.crcnsw.org.au



IN THE NEXT ISSUE

ISSUE 22 DUE FOR RELEASE IN JUNE 2026



PAPER CHAINED INTERNATIONAL

Read all about the third annual Paper Chained International art exhibition, which featured over 150 artworks from prisoners in 12 countries.



GREENBUSH

We also visit Greenbush, an annual art exhibition displaying sculptures welded out of recycled metal by prisoners in Alice Springs



JOSEPH LYCETT

Read the story of Joseph Lycett, a former convict turned renowned painter and artist.

SHOUT-OUTS

Big shout out to the girls at Dillwynia. Thanks for ya birthday wishes Totally greatful. Also shout out 2 Sandy .B & Becks .C you have made my jail easier. Hope all is well Keep on , keeping on.
 ♡ Joshua Willett
 #Keep smiling... 😊

Shout out to my future Husband ♡
 Ethan Weber @TMCC
 Sending hots of love your way my baby!
 Chin up my Rana, im thinking of you ♡
 I love you my Beeso forever & Always.
 have hayalty & Respect ♡
 your future wife! ✨

Also a shoutout 2 my wifey Shanley .K i love & miss you baby they can't hold us forever i'll see you again in one day Happy 12th anniversary my love i love you Always have Always will

I WOULD LIKE TO DO A SHOUT OUT TO MY WIFE AT TOWNVILLE WOMENS HAPPY BIRTHDAY T.J.I LOVE YOU WITH ALL MY HEART AND SOUL AND I MISS YOU MORE AND MORE EVERY DAY. MY LOVE
 LOVE PEACE RESPECT
 LOVE
 ANDREW TO MY WIFE

