

**Noelle Vial** is a native of Killybegs and founder member of the group. Her first collection of poetry will be published this year by Story Line Press in the USA. She also writes prize-winning fiction, and is noted for her energy and initiative in promoting writing throughout the Northwest. She is married with five children.

WORD OF MOUTH, formed in 1991, is a Belfast-based group of 10 women poets who meet monthly in the Linenhall Library to give close critical attention to each others' work-in-progress. They also aim to promote performance and publishing of poetry throughout Ireland, and in particular to encourage and support women writers.

**Margaret Curran** was 'born and grew up in a totally different Northern Ireland from the present one'. Married 30 years. Published in Ireland, England, USA.

**Pia Gore** has published poetry in Ireland, England and the USA. She is also an artist, and has exhibited in Ireland and England. She currently works as a women's education officer in Belfast.

**Ruth Hooley** has been published widely in journals and anthologies. She is Associate editor of *The Honest Ulsterman* and edited an anthology of Northern Ireland women writers, *The Female Line* in 1985.

**Kate Newmann** lives in Ballycastle. She has worked on poetry in translation and also writes prose. She works at the Institute of Irish Studies, QUB.

**Grainne Tobin** was born in Armagh, lives in Newcastle, works in Lurgan teaching adults returning to education. Has 'properly published one poem and one story - just beginning to develop the brass neck to send out more work'.

**Mary Twomey** lives and teaches (part time) in Downpatrick. She has been writing for about 15 years, 'but only seriously in the past five'. She was first published in *The Female Line*, since in various periodicals. She is married with four children, one mentally handicapped.

**Sally Wheeler** was born in England, has lived in Belfast since 1968. She has been writing off and on since childhood; some poems, mainly short stories, poetry on a regular basis more recently. Also a painter.

**Ann Zell** was born and reared in the USA, has lived in West Belfast since 1980. Began writing seriously about seven years ago. Has been published in a few journals and a couple of anthologies.

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**Sam Burnside**, born in Co Antrim, now lives and works in Derry where he runs the Verbal Arts Centre, a new body established to support and promote all forms of creative and imaginative writing and the traditional craft of storytelling. His poetry has been published and broadcast widely, and he has received various prizes. His publications include *The Cathedral* (1989) and *Walking the Marches* (1991).

**Elaine Gaston** comes from the townland of Carrowreagh, five miles outside Ballycastle and now lives in Belfast where she works in arts administration. She has been published in various journals. Her poetry has also been used in theatre and dance performances. She is a founder member of Word of Mouth.

**Medbh McGuckian** lives in Belfast but spends a lot of time in Ballycastle. Her connections with the area go back to childhood, and are reflected in the titles of her last two volumes of poetry, *On Ballycastle Beach* and *Marconi's Cottage*.

**Lilian Morrow** is from Shropshire and now lives in Ballycastle. She has published two collections: *Wild Oats* (1946) and *The November Land* (1989).

**Joan Newmann** lives in Ballycastle and works as Writer-in-Residence at the Verbal Arts Centre. She has published widely in journals, and has also published a pamphlet of poems with QUB (1965) and another with The University of Ulster (1992). She is a founder member of Word of Mouth.

**Carol Rumens**, poet and novelist, is currently Writer-in-residence at Queens University. She has published seven collections of poetry, the latest being *From Berlin to Heaven* (1989), and has edited two anthologies of women poets. She is also an editor for Bloodaxe Books.

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**Liz Weir** is a professional storyteller who has performed in and led workshops in Ireland, Australia, Canada, Scotland and England. She is widely known in Ireland for her devotion to promoting the art of storytelling.

**Kathleen McPeake** began playing with the world-famous McPeake Family from Belfast at the age of eight. Recently she has been collecting and performing mill songs, making available to audiences a valuable and very interesting reminder from the industrial past of so many women workers.

**Marie McGowan** is a harpist from Ballycastle.

**Brian Moore** is a songwriter and guitarist from Belfast.

**Bernie Stocks** is a fiddler originally from England, now from Belfast.