

Poetry Porch: Poetry

Autumn mulching

By Ruth Arnison

My pocketknife releases the twine, pent up pea straw, and memories.
They're sprawling across the potting shed floor.

I scoop up the summer of '66, Otautau, haymaking on the farm.
It's dusty, hot, and raw. *Good honest work*, my Dad says.

Our Uncle tosses amazing words to the dogs, the men, and the skies.
They're not the harvest thanksgiving words I've heard from Dad's Sunday pulpit.

I practise one of these amazements on my brother. His laughter's crushed
when Dad shouts, *never repeat those words beyond the farm gate*.

Now fifty odd years later, when I nick myself cutting more twine,
those farm words have gate-crashed and coloured the Dunedin air.