

# Poets' Corner 2016 Chapbook

39 Poems by

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Eileen Hugo

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# Cover Photo

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photo by Ben Odgren

*starting from back left, clockwise*

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## **A Reconciling**

*by Melissa Bryan*

Without her continual presence  
As a constant reminder  
Of whom she had become,  
I could begin  
To remember  
Who she was,  
Before  
She wasn't herself  
Anymore.

## Living Death

*by Melissa Bryan*

Life too short.  
Life too long.  
Both tragedies.

Some luck out.  
Long life; quick death.  
Golf shot sets up a birdie.  
Then the culmination  
Of a history of heart trouble.  
Gone.  
Definitive.  
Beyond resuscitation.

Others,  
Not so lucky.  
Lingering,  
Lingering,  
The mind long since  
Having left the body behind.

In my family,  
Two generations  
Of women  
Whose minds  
Wandered off.  
What about mine?

There's no knowing—  
At least  
Not now.  
Only  
When it will already be  
Too late.

All  
I,  
Or anyone else—  
For that matter—  
Can do,  
Is live  
Now,  
While alive.

## Locating Things

*by Melissa Bryan*

Trying, trying to remember,  
Seeking,  
Seeking,  
Trying to find,  
But now at the point  
Of not finding,  
So much as  
Coming across,  
And having to do so  
Again  
And again  
Because there is no longer  
Any remembering.



## **Memory**

*by Melissa Bryan*

It is a tricky thing:  
What we recall,  
And what we don't.  
When we recall,  
And when we don't.  
What we remember when.

Not something  
Straightforward,  
But  
Sporadic,  
Isolated,  
Out of sequence.

Puzzling,  
But there,  
Always there,  
Until sometime—  
For some people—  
It isn't.

**Mental Balancing Act**

*by Melissa Bryan*

Chaos—  
Order out of chaos.

Order—  
As a proxy  
For  
Certainty.

Order—  
A proxy for certainty,  
But not  
A precluder  
Of serendipity.

**In Defense of the Soldier in  
'The Man He Killed' by Thomas Hardy**

*by George Chappell*

You know how stupid war is  
and we've always known it so  
since Homer's time and before  
when warriors hid inside a horse,

or the point Cain slew Abel,  
the first case of sibling rivalry,  
brothers vying for a father's love  
that was about me, not thee.

There's never room for two bucks  
with desire to mount a doe  
only one will do while one  
becomes a mountain of waste.

So your liquor may not be  
the answer, Mister Hardy,  
as an antidote for hate  
but it does well to abate

the passion dwelling inside  
that can turn love into hate,  
peace into warring nations and  
fathers to weave their fate.

## Modern Warriors

*by George Chappell*

We were not young soldiers off to combat  
marching with set jaws and eyes afire but  
middle-aged moms and pops with aches  
from exertion and job skills for war zones.

We took off from local airport runways,  
out of family cars bearing spouses, children.  
We were engineers, nurses, and cooks  
leaving behind houses with mortgages, TVs

and Little League games we could not watch,  
to fight in swirling desert sand,  
heat and roadside bombs,  
the new language of baffles etched

in words spelled backwards from right to left.  
It was a price we paid in a global strife  
that we soon began to understand.

## **Rules of lawyers' etiquette**

*by George Chappell*

I rise when the judge enters the room  
the rules of etiquette require  
and the prisoners are standing in  
because they have no other place to go.

The rules of etiquette require  
mothers to lay down the law  
because they have no other place to go,  
while lawyers sell Christmas trees on Sundays.

Like a mother who lays down the law  
to a team that works together  
lawyers sell Christmas trees on Sundays  
and come to life despite themselves.

To a team that works together,  
that is why gentlemen drink their gin,  
and come to life despite themselves,  
while editors cover up real crimes.

That is why gentlemen drink their gin,  
in the belief that hallowed rules may die,  
while editors cover up real crimes  
that soon will go away,

believing hallowed rules may die,  
in the aftermath of honesty  
that soon will go away,  
if editors continue to cover up.

In the aftermath of honesty,  
when the sun casts long shadows,  
if editors continue to cover up  
there'll be no tree sales on Sundays.

Pantoum

## Sojourner in the Countryside

*by George Chappell*

Driving a back road by the North Branch,  
where not a ripple shows under the sun,  
I slow while a girl crosses patiently  
to her mailbox. She appears to feel safe.

As if to make certain, she turns her head  
while clutching her mail, and looks straight at me  
through my windshield. I look back, my breath stops,  
leaving me feeling helpless and lonely,

a man under the spell of summer sun.  
In my mirror, I see her turn her head  
to her yard, an isolated home  
of house, fence and barn—her haven or jail?

I marvel at the adolescent stalks  
of corn just beginning to tassel  
across the way, down to the river's edge  
where I see three kids swim from a sand bar.

I know that if I had stopped driving  
the car, I would have become fourteen.

## The Turtle

*by George Chappell*

The mama turtle crossed the road,  
hatchings, timidly trailed in tow  
behind, under soft shelled abode  
following myths of going slow.

The above stanza proves my claim  
that one can write a poem about  
anything, even if it's on  
something else, such as aging.

I do know of a road in Vermont  
where each spring turtles lumber  
from the houses to a nearby pond  
to mate and deposit their eggs.

Sure enough, the mama returns  
a few weeks later with her children  
in tow, like the famous ducklings  
at the public park in Boston.

If I go to that road in Vermont  
today in the spring, I will witness  
a similar parade of turtles, but  
a new generation, for the old ones

went the way of turtles in time.



**Fall***by Bill Eberle*

it's one of those bright fall days  
with the leaves half down

I hear them clacking quietly  
above me

watch them fall all around me  
and swirl on the ground as I walk

the sound of these thin dry leaves  
rubbing against each other in the wind  
is essential  
and ancestral

as I walk back home  
from errands at bank  
and town office  
a falling leaf  
rubs across my cheek  
briefly  
a desiccated kiss  
sshh moook sssh

then swirling away

and I contemplate the lives  
of these leafed creatures  
who push out new life each year  
as vital assistants  
for five months

to help capture and convert  
sunlight and carbon dioxide  
mixed with minerals and nutrition  
from below  
into energy for growth  
regeneration  
and survival

only to shut down for half of each year  
pulling their lives if not their sentience  
inside

and standing as  
silent peaceful sentinels  
to the scurry of such different  
hungry lives lived each day half in  
and half out of consciousness  
gathering and engulfing  
other life forms  
for  
growth  
regeneration  
and survival

**forever***by Bill Eberle*

there are some things  
from your childhood  
that remain a part of you forever

my first perception of grass  
being ruffled by a breeze

details like that reappear  
succinctly and completely  
in my dreams and in  
odd moments  
which flood my awareness  
with sensory festivals  
from my past

and remind me  
that I am not just now  
not just here  
but a long fantastic ceremony  
of until now  
and up through  
all that I have ever been  
and all of the unforgettable worlds  
that have brushed me  
and bruised me with seeing  
and hearing and touching  
and feeling  
all bunched together  
in alchemies of  
knowing

to here

**poetry's meter***by Bill Eberle*

I find rhythm in combinations  
in word parts and wholes

the way some words start  
or end their own songs

in the flutter of words tumbling  
along the landscape of my life  
like fall leaves

the music of stray thoughts  
and phrases  
knit together by chance  
by imagination  
and . . . something else

a gift of knowing  
what fits

what sings and dances  
through us

and what doesn't

I don't give myself any credit  
for the truth

I give thanks

**the showing***by Bill Eberle*

oowit ooh wa oahweee  
violinist strokes and swooahs  
floodlights behind her pointing  
straight into my eyes

theater and balcony filling up

tumultuous gobble of a hundred  
voices  
provides a complex base

and the violin cuts right through it  
and me

contemplating the social music  
of humans  
and the severe math

of strings

**transgressions***by Bill Eberle*

to falsely accuse  
works perfectly and creates  
certain destruction

once accused, accused  
is stuck - the idea is planted:  
*possible guilt wins*

how few of us know  
the commandments from here:  
*on the other side*

to be sinned against  
is a serious gift –  
offering  
possible understanding

I'm thankful for life  
and each bad thing that happens  
to me  
connects me  
shows me a group of people  
I never really saw or understood  
before

widens the room in my heart  
and brightens my capacity  
for empathy

the gift of such survivable misfortune  
is priceless

**AMERICA**

*by Trina L. French*

A — Amazing

M — Majestic

E — Excellence

R — Rambunctious

I — Independence

C — Courageous

A — AMERICA

Acrostic

## **Have You Ever Thought Of Change ...**

*by Trina L. French*

Have You Ever Thought Of Change ...

... And the adventure it brings!

... And the song it sings!

... And the excitement it flings!

... And the burning desire it rings!

... And the emotions it strings!

... And the opticals it pings!

Have You Ever Thought Of Change ...

... And thought why!

... And wanted to cry!

... And decided to fly!

... And looked up in the sky!

... And opened an eye!

... And said, "My oh my"!

Have You Ever Thought Of Change ...

... And sat there for awhile!

... And wondered about the mile!

... And picked up the pile!

... And change I'll!

... And walked the Nile!

... And started to smile!



Have You Ever Thought Of Change ...

... And wish you were already there!

... And filled with fear!

... And ended up somewhere!

... And wondered with cheer!

... And conquered with here!

... And change became clear!

Have You Ever Thought Of Change ...

## Houses Along The Way

*by Trina L. French*

Houses everywhere  
A few growing up  
And, a few while grown up  
Not one to despair.

Each place to laugh  
Each place to cry  
Each place to live  
Each place to die.

Wonders in the walls  
Stories to be told  
Hallows in the haul  
Mysteries to unfold.

Lucidness all around  
Grounds to keep  
Country, cities and towns  
places to cherish, places to weep.

Fields of oaks, flowers and trees  
Green grass fresh to show  
Stepping stones, paths, rock gardens  
Vegetables, herbs, and greatness to grow.

Vitality, vigor, entertainment and energy  
That's for certain  
Furniture, decor, dishes, to use  
Window treatments, rods and curtains.

Lightness, darkness  
Moon shines along the way  
Family, feuds, friends, fun and festivals  
Beautification, love and life in each and every day.

Houses and memories along the way,  
Houses and memories along the way.

## **Movement**

*by Trina L. French*

Silhouettes of each other dancing in the light. Laughter in the air. Strolls in the night and stories told all over the place. Thoughts are racing and dancing among many. Wishes are sprinkled everywhere. Positions taking their rounds around the room all the while glances are shared. Romances from all walks of life and dashes splashed with footsteps and whispers among plenty. Miles of smiles, conversations with the best. Touches and feelings exceeds explorations with each other, and with each other's exaltations... movement, isn't it a beautiful thing!

Prose Poem

## Selected Haiku

*by Trina L. French*

### Moving with Life

Checkered block full  
 Checkmate in the making  
 As the game continues in life

### Flying High

Skylarks flying high  
 One's Self in the pattern  
 Airways always open

### Ebbs and Flows

Stubbornness freezes  
 Freedom gives way  
 Life jams up and then breaks lose

### Festival of New Growth

Falling leaves, Autumn  
 New moon, stirring in the Souls  
 Growth, listen, quiet

### Full Intent

Full intent lends to focus  
 Focus leads to realizing  
 Realizing to manifestation

### Toolbox Treasures

The perfect tools  
 Life, hammer, finesse  
 Fit to showcase, take apart, redo

**Does My Sassiness Upset You**

*by Eileen Hugo*

*Does my sassiness upset you?  
Does my style cause you fits?  
Oh Auntie dearest train me  
for putting on the Ritz.*

Don't cross your legs  
sit up straight  
Don't chew gum  
and don't be late

Don't read the writing on  
the bathroom wall  
Don't talk to strangers  
in the shopping mall

Dancing and smoking  
skirts too tight  
you better shape up  
if you know what's right

From a line in the poem  
*Still I Rise* Maya Angelou

**Naiveté**

*by Eileen Hugo*

Where are the  
meetings of surrender  
signatories abashed  
treaties, democracy, victory  
troops coming home to parades  
and dancing in the streets  
Where now is victory  
we are police  
we withdraw troops  
leave behind advisors  
there is no end  
no victory dance

## **The Ageing Skier Last Day On The Slopes**

*by Eileen Hugo*

It wasn't the brisk air for  
the sun shone and warmed me  
My ski outfit was adorable  
with matching furry hat  
The skis were slick and  
fat and light  
And the snow was perfect  
until I was driven to the ground by the pain  
in bright red crippling bondage  
Hard plastic mold forcing my legs forward  
Walking upright was no longer the privilege  
of this homo sapien  
I never will ski again I say  
without a tear

## **To Brave the Blackness**

*by Eileen Hugo*

Bright full moon lets us see the cave  
black wet hole on the bottom of the bluff.  
Water washes in and out on the tide  
the cave gulps rough.

Turmoil at the caves gaping door  
draws us as close as we dare.  
The sand slips out from under our feet  
seaweed flowing hair.

When low tide cycles back out from shore  
approaching the cave with slow cautious stride.  
Inside darker than a cold cloudless night  
scary noises from inside.

Could pirates have hidden booty there?  
or sea monsters or giant squids awaiting a raid.  
We pondered and decided not to go inside  
admittedly afraid.



## De-Frosted

*by Paul McFarland*

I know that I would be quite lost  
Without the poems of Robert Frost.

I really like his rural point of view.  
But recently I've come to find  
That he was in that state of mind  
Just long enough to write a poem or two.

You know, I've found that mending wall  
Is really not much fun at all.

It just puts sores and blisters on my hands.  
Good fences make good neighbors,  
But I don't enjoy those labors,  
So I think I'll leave the old fence as it stands.

And if I'm not mistaken,  
You will find the road not taken  
Is a bypass of the finer things in life.  
The last time I was on that road,  
My car broke down, and I was towed.  
With potholes that old thoroughfare is rife.

And now I want it understood  
That stopping by a snowy wood  
Some winter evening when it's ten below,  
Will prob'ly mean my car is stuck,  
Or some such other rotten luck  
Has caused me some unpleasant grief or woe.

Now in my past researches,  
And while swinging from his birches,  
I sustained a compound fracture of my arm.  
So don't find it surprising  
If you find that I'm not rising  
Bright and early to enjoy his rustic charm.

## Headstones

*by Paul McFarland*

As I leave port some stormy day  
 And point my bow to sea,  
 And as I clear that point of land  
 And quit its quiet lee,

I meet those rollers coming in  
 That break upon the shore  
 And end their lives on rocks and sand  
 With one last mighty roar.

And once I get my sea legs,  
 And I leave the sight of land,  
 And once my course is plotted,  
 And my daily chores are planned,

I lean back in my skipper's chair  
 And listen to that whine  
 The wind makes in the rigging,  
 And the hissing of the brine.

Those eerie sounds are voices  
 Of those long departed souls  
 Whose lives were lost out on the deep  
 Or cast upon the shoals.

As winds increase and storm clouds build  
 On this unsettled day,  
 I feel the spirits of those sailors  
 Who have passed this way.

And those who took their final breaths  
 Out on these Arctic waves,  
 Have whitecaps for their headstones  
 And blue water for their graves.

And as I crest a mighty swell  
 And look out on the bay,  
 I see those white-capped headstones  
 On this morning, cold and gray.

And as the weather worsens,  
 And I think of things divine,  
 I wonder if there's one out there  
 That someday will be mine.

But then a spell comes over me  
 That I don't understand.  
 There's something in this wheelhouse,  
 And it calms my shaking hand.

The phantoms of this ocean  
 Have awakened from their sleep  
 To guide this wayward mariner  
 Across this Arctic deep.

And as I strain to hear their voices  
 Through the screeching gale,  
 And as my boat is tossed about  
 With water rail to rail,

I say a thankful prayer to God  
 For sending me, this day,  
 Those spirits from the briny deep  
 To guide me on my way.

And as I brave the tempest  
 On this windswept day, I feel  
 Their presence here beside me  
 And their hands upon the wheel.

We steer the course I plotted  
 Under dark and leadened sky,  
 And safely make that crossing,  
 Those seafaring ghosts and I.

We stand a constant vigil  
 On this roller coaster ride,  
 And watch the wind and currents  
 And the turning of the tide.

And as we clear the headland  
    That protects my port of call,  
I turn and watch the fading fury  
    Of that mighty squall.

And as these spirits leave me here,  
    I know just where they'll be -  
Beneath those white-capped headstones  
    On this lonely Arctic sea

## My Garden

*by Paul McFarland*

When all the snow is melted, and the frost has left the ground,  
And crocuses are blooming, and the blackflies come around,  
I rush out to the barn and grab my spading fork and hoe,  
And head out to my garden, sleeves rolled up, all set to go.

That week is filled with labor, out there slaving in the sun;  
The air filled with profanity before that job is done.  
And as I gaze upon that garden after all my toil,  
I notice there are green things poking up through fertile soil.

It isn't cukes or turnips, and it isn't Brussels sprouts.  
It is a form of greenery about which I have doubts.  
Now plaintain, chickweed, dandelion, thistle, purslane, too,  
Crabgrass, horsetail, bamboo shoots are all there is in view.

I start to pull the witch grass that has grown up in my peas.  
Before I do a second row, I'm on my hands and knees,  
With fingernails all cracked and broke from digging out those rocks;  
My hair all filled with sweat and dirt where once were golden locks.

I dream at night of cauliflower, of summer squash and corn;  
Asparagus and artichokes are on my mind 'til morn.  
With much anticipation I look forward to the day  
When I can walk those furrowed rows enjoying that display.

But when it's time for harvest after I've put forth my best,  
The only thing I see there is a smorgasbord for pests.  
The beets are filled with beetles, and my 'taters got the blight.  
The neighbor's cow broke through my fence, and frost is due tonight.

The aphids got my peppers and my pumpkins got the rot.  
The beans I picked from seven rows won't even fill a pot.  
The deer, they got my spinach, and the woodchuck got my chard.  
Them critters, they're all living high, right there in my backyard.

I think I know why Adam ate that apple back in Eden.  
He just was too damned tired of all the hoeing and the weedin'.

## The Christmas Gift

*by Paul McFarland*

One Christmas Day some years ago  
Three boys and I tramped through the snow  
Intent on bringing Christmas cheer  
To some secluded soul that year.

So to a nursing home we went,  
A place where lives were almost spent,  
To see if we could find a trace  
Of Christmas spirit in that place.

And as we climbed a set of stairs,  
That led up to that world of theirs,  
Through frosty windowpanes we spied  
A sad old lady there inside.

And as we passed through that front door,  
We wondered what might lay in store.  
What would we find there on display  
This special Christmas holiday?

And as we walked into that room  
It had the feeling of a tomb.  
We saw that lady, old and gray,  
Just sitting there that Christmas Day.

She had a blank and lifeless stare  
And seemed to be without a care,  
All wrapped up in an ancient shawl  
Awaiting there for Death to call.

We hesitated to intrude  
Upon that tranquil solitude,  
But we had made a solemn vow  
To brighten up her day somehow.

So to prevent undue alarm  
I softly touched her on the arm,  
And she then turned that vacant stare  
To contemplate us standing there.

And I could see her muddled mind  
Go back in years and try to find  
Some names she knew in bygone places  
She could put with these strange faces.

She drew me over to her side,  
And in those misty eyes I spied  
A Christmas from some bygone day  
With her and friends in horse drawn sleigh.

As she reached out a withered hand  
And all those many decades spanned  
That stretched between those boys and her,  
I saw old mem'ries start to stir

And each boy took his turn in place  
To be wrapped up in her embrace  
As she recited some old rhyme  
Of Christmas in some other time.

And you could see her joyful tears  
As she recalled her younger years  
When she had children of her own  
Way back before she was alone.

Her boney hands, so thin and frail,  
With desperate grip they told the tale,  
As she then clung to those three boys  
Like some small child with brand new toys.

Those simple lines of Christmas cheer,  
Remembered from some long past year  
Kept falling from her trembling lips  
As back through all those years she slips.

And as I listened to each word,  
Some feeling deep within me stirred,  
For we had there become the cast  
Of some white Christmas, long since past.

And as we left her in that chair,  
All sound asleep, I said a prayer;  
For we received and gave, some say,  
God's greatest gift that Christmas Day.

## The Leonids

*by Paul McFarland*

Each Fall I count the shrinking days  
And watch the moon and note its phase,  
And then I'll check where in the week  
The Leonids are at their peak.

When those November days roll 'round,  
And all my hiking gear is found,  
I find a night both crisp and clear  
And trace the steps I made last year.

And this nocturnal exercise  
Will test my wind and burn my thighs,  
But I will make this starlit trek  
To freeze my toes and kink my neck

And climb this lonesome country hill  
All bundled up against the chill  
To watch the Gods this autumn night  
Fill up the sky with laser light.

It was my granddad who first brought  
Me to this dark secluded spot  
That I might come to recognize  
The wonders of those ebon skies.

And as my mind is then imbued  
With inky midnight solitude,  
I settle down on fresh cut boughs  
And through the heavens start to browse.

Impatiently I strain my eyes  
To see that first streak in the skies  
That foretells what is yet to come  
In Nature's auditorium.

And what keen mind has done the math  
That puts our planet in the path  
Of this well-known celestial shower  
That drenches Earth at this late hour?

For buried in the distant past  
Some fiery comet breathed its last,  
And all that's left for us to see  
Is pyrotechnic space debris.

It's hard believing that it's just  
A little bit of ice and dust  
That I have come to see each year  
Cremated in Earth's atmosphere.

And somewhere they give seminars  
About these brilliant falling stars,  
Whose lives are spent in one brief flash,  
And then reduced to cosmic ash.

And can I gather all the worth  
From my brief life upon this Earth,  
And radiate celestial fire  
Before I burn out and expire?

Now as my mind returns from space  
To this remote and quiet place,  
The show is drawing to a close,  
And Eastern hills are glowing rose.

And I can hardly wait until  
I hike this old familiar hill  
Surrounded by my own grandkids  
Who'll watch with awe these Leonids.

**Awaken**

*by Jim Ostheimer*

Reds and golds painful.  
In the deep shadows death waits.  
Eighteen wheeler there.

Need to survive, now!  
My brakes, instant, margin slim.  
Tourism starts again.



## **Boots on the Ground**

*by Jim Ostheimer*

A new policy  
For our ground troop deployment  
Was just enacted.  
Wild turkeys encircle us.  
They need much combat training.

They move everywhere.  
Like shock troops of the future.  
They carry nothing.  
They live off the land each day.  
Like Sherman in Civil War.

## Sympathetic

*by Jim Ostheimer*

Some millions were involved in storms and many died.  
Modern history-masking snowfalls, unseen in years.  
All streets empty of sounds as food for ears.  
The ocean was high, coinciding with high tide.  
Airlines stranded thousands when aircraft hide  
Cities cope with snow, bad as worst-feared.  
Tabloids take pictures to out-perform their peers,  
Children own Central Park, and claim their divide.  
After some days the storm becomes history.  
People wonder where the snow, removed, goes.  
The connection to El Nino seems like mystery.  
It was cold enough to get a frost-bitten nose.  
The doctor made my cheek blistery.  
Weather news foretold, no snow for red hose.

**Take That!**

*by Jim Ostheimer*

Now, take that Nepal.  
Mad at you too Kathmandu,  
your mountain also.

A second earthquake, to  
show my anger at you.  
For spoiling Everest.

Begin counting dead...  
Clean up my trashed mountain.  
Guide your souls to me.

## Thinking Poetry

*by Jim Ostheimer*

This Christmas finds us alone.  
First time in sixty years.  
However, we will have two busy cell-phones.

We have a week to calm our fears.  
We will expect a call from Rome-  
Must then be ready to be all ears.

Our normally nearest kids are away from home.  
They will fly on Christmas Day.  
Carl and Lasha/dog are here. She may get a new bone.

Football will go because they must play.  
Most fans want the playoffs to come.  
Players are forced, even if hurt. to be gay.

Many who ski are unhappy as they bum.  
The owners want a snowstorm home run.  
We will listen for Bing to hum.

## Ballet

*by Jon Potter*

To Washington I drove  
Up Seventeen from Rockport town  
Where skeins of vibrant colors wove.  
Each tree wore light: an autumn gown.

The road arched up each brilliant hill,  
Then reached a flood of flowing mist  
And crossed within its grey-white spill—  
The world just vanished in a twist.

Still climbing, bursting out the other side,  
The next hill blazed with kindled leaves.  
I dip again; the land stands wide  
And soaked; each shrub there interweaves.

The mist grew dancing funnels there,  
Which rooted in the sodden soil  
And grew up delicate and spare.  
They'd sway and bow, they'd twist, uncoil.

This solemn elegance I'd never seen.  
A silent mist ballet is rare.  
A driver, caught within this scene,  
I sense the music of the air.

I drove along the new-laid tar  
So lost in memory of mist.  
Pure sunlight glittered round the car,  
Beauty my accompanist.

*after Robert Frost*

**Bookcase***by Jon Potter*

Voices folded and tightly bound,  
Shelved hard against each other-  
Silent.

Glances pull memories of voices  
Whispered tales of human growth,  
Gritty spikes of tragedy,  
Blankets of love.

Poets quietly exploding,  
Chanting pictures which grip us hard,  
Stab us with new thoughts.

The quiet voices  
Together make a hushed murmur  
Like the whisper of waves  
Dissolving into a sand-filled beach.

**Blank**

*by Jon Potter*

The rhetoric of broadcast news,  
Which sputters on,  
Holds desolation back a bit:  
A kind of vacant con.

Or Facebook “friends” with cats or kids,  
Who press the “like” a lot,  
And grin to demonstrate themselves  
In case you had forgot.

The phone sits empty, dull and blank.  
A robot, once or twice,  
Will imitate a human there  
Suggesting something nice.

But all the silence grows so flat,  
So large and empty now,  
It’s paving over friendships, bonds,  
Humanity, somehow.

**Fit to be Tied***by Jon Potter*

Summer's loose time-knot  
Slowly pulling together  
Tightening the light  
Binding us inside our homes  
Flipping switches off to on.

With the darkness, cold—  
The dark rope wraps, pulls it down,  
Tugs veils of air here.  
They're soft, insistent, slide in  
Through tiny vents unbuttoned.

Since we know old Time,  
We can endure this darkness:  
Deliberate loosening?  
Unlayer heavy clothing  
Then beach-bask in the untied light.

Tanka



## **Outsides**

*by Jon Potter*

It's outside our core.  
We dress to show a facet  
Of ourselves inside.

Ripped jeans, scuffed boots,  
A faded t-shirt: that's one.  
Social uniform.

A crisp, fitted suit  
With smooth high-glossed leather shoes  
Seizes most respect.

Paint on houses  
Will push responses this way,  
Ignoring what's inside.

## ***About the poets—***

George Chappell  
*Cofounding Member*

George Chappell has been involved in writing for most of his adult life as an English teacher and a journalist. A recent recipient of a Master of Fine Arts degree from Goddard College in Vermont, he also has a Master of Arts degree in Folklore from the University of Pennsylvania and a Bachelor of Arts in History from the University of Maine in Orono, Maine. He is a graduate of Moses Brown School, a Society of Friends high school in Providence, R.I. He lives in Rockland, Maine, where he participates in regional poetry workshops and teaches the creative writing workshop for veterans at Togus Hospital. He is the author of *A Fresh Footpath: My New Life in Poetry*, a collection of poems from his master's thesis at Goddard, and also a second book of poems, *When Souls Walk Away*. He is a widower, formerly married to the late Inger (Larsen) Chappell of Baltimore, Md. He has four sons, eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Jim Ostheimer  
*Cofounding Member*

A Yale graduate, Jim has been a writer for many years; he won the Thoreau Medal for writing as a freshman at the Middlesex School, and won a large number of awards in the Arizona state poetry contest for his free verse. Jim was a pilot in the U.S. Air Force and New Hampshire and Pennsylvania Air National Guards. Jim has been a long-time competitive one-design racing sailor, qualifying for the Olympic Trials in Solings. Jim also played lacrosse for thirteen years, eight years in schools and five in Clubs. He lives in Rockport where he serves on the Planning Board. He and his wife Cornelia have been married for 60 years and have four children and eight grandchildren. He founded the Rockland Poetry Workshop and has published three books: *Blue Yonder*, *Witness*, and *Harbor Lights*, (available through Barnes and Noble and Amazon.com).

## Melissa Bryan

Melissa Bryan has returned to writing poetry after a long hiatus. She has an undergraduate degree in psychology and a master's and doctorate in art history. She taught on the college level for several years in Georgia, South Carolina, and New York, before moving to Maine where she has indulged her love of books and the knowledge they contain by working in a bookstore and various local libraries. Becoming a member of The Poet's Corner has been a wonderful experience.

## Bill Eberle

Bill Eberle was born just after the end of World War II in the fall of 1945. He has a B.A. in English from Hamilton College and has worked at many occupations and avocations including board game design, programming, database design and development, photography, art, sculpting, poetry, book design and free-style dancing. His best known board game is Cosmic Encounter. Bill began writing poetry more often than occasionally in 2003 and has published poetry in the *Goose River Anthology* and the *Rockland Courier-Gazette*. He has also self-published 10 PDF books of poetry available on the published books page at [wcePublishing.com](http://wcePublishing.com). Three books are also available as eBooks at [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com) and [BarnesandNoble.com](http://BarnesandNoble.com). Bill is married to Dagny Ernest and lives and works in Thomaston Maine.

## Trina L. French

Trina is a graduate of Central Washington University, in Ellensburg, WA, and currently lives in Knox County. She has been a Maine resident for nearly fourteen years. Trina began working with short stories and poetry ever since her school years in Midlothian, Texas. She enjoyed writing for her school paper, and also for the local news at Channel 10 in Ellensburg, WA while attending the University. As a member of the Poets' Corner, she brings her enthusiasm and life experience alive through the poetry she creates and shares with the group she calls friends, fun, family, focused.

## Eileen Hugo

Eileen lives in both Stoneham MA and Spruce Head ME. She served as the Poetry Editor for *The Houston Literary Review* and has been published in various small press publications including the anthologies *Southern Breezes* and *The Baby Boomer Birthright*. She has collaborated with 9 other women from Midcoast Maine to produce the anthology titled *A Taste of Ink*. In 2015 Eileen's book *Not Too Far: a journey of words* was published. Eileen attends a workshop at the Farnsworth gallery led by Kathleen Ellis and the Poets Corner at the Rockport Library. At home in Massachusetts she belongs to the Middlesex Writing Group.

## Paul McFarland

Paul McFarland is a Camden native who attended the University of Maine at Orono. He taught high school math in Littleton, New Hampshire for ten years. For the past forty years he has lived in Lincolnville and worked at O'Hara Corporation in Rockland. He has dabbled in poetry, off and on, for most of his life. His favorite poet is Robert Service, and his poems are well rhymed and metered.

## Jon Potter

Jon Potter, who lives in Rockport, has been writing for many years, principally for the theatre, and has published over sixteen plays. He has written two textbooks, one for new English teachers, and one for producers of Commedia dell' Arte comedies, and a novel called *We Will What We Will*. He has also published some poetry, in *Maine Stance and Stanza*, (Julie Bragdon, ed.), the *Goose River Anthology* and the *Rockland Courier-Gazette*. Jon has found the inspiration of working with other poets at The Poets' Corner remarkable, challenging, and enormous fun.

Thank you