

Poets' Corner 2018 Chapbook

Poems by

Lois Anne

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Catherine Dowdell

Bill Eberle

Trina L. French

Eileen Hugo

Chuck Marecic

Paul McFarland

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Dana Wildes

Cover Photo

Rockport Public Library

First Floor Plan

Stephen G. Smith Architects
Camden Maine

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Always*by Lois Anne**for Lynn*

1.

On a suburban Chicago afternoon, late summer
Two young women sitting in the sun
One holds a baby boy lovingly on her lap.

2.

Just outside Buffalo on a warm late summer afternoon
Two women, one with hair almost white,
The other blonde although the roots tell a greyer story.

3.

Two women sitting in the sun
One smokes a cigarette, the other sits upwind
Between them they hold a lifetime.

Marsden Hartley's Maine

after the exhibit at Colby College

by Lois Anne

from Mt Katahdin to Georgetown
to Corea and then the Bagaduce
to an ice harvest on a lonely lake

to the woods and men felling great trees
to the sea in storm and calm
on to a shady brook and then a rocky beach

sitting with your neighbors
standing in the moonlight
sailing Penobscot Bay

and back to a hearth and then another
looking out a window and then another
looking at a great mountain or at a bay

through winter, spring, summer and
colourful autumn I followed you
in your search for home

January Suite

by Lois Anne

Sun sparkling on snow
Crisp clear frigid air
Our squeaky footsteps resound

Full moon low in the sky
Long shadows play across
The frozen landscape

Crisp clear cold calm night
Grey and still the bleak landscape
Thin clouds veil the moon

Sun low in the sky
Casting long shadows at noon
The air smells of snow

Wind howling, piling
Snow higher, swirling whiteout,
And no end in sight

Nor'easter raging
Fiercely cold, snow piling high,
Bombogenesis

Tonight quiet and calm
The thinly veiled moon
Glow softly in the east

Steel skies, swirling cold
Enveloping all in white
We wait for a thaw

Orange and red sky
Vibrant sunset tonight
Warm breath hangs like a cloud

Orion stands tall
This crisp clear winter night
The hunter outshines all

Standing here so small
Yet not insignificant
In the universe

White laces across blue
Contrails drift slowly east
Somewhere clouds gather

The cardinal pair
At the feeder together
Flashing orange beaks

Two cardinals. Four
Turkeys, five chickadees
Peacefully together

Old Age Sidling Up

by George S. Chappell

Giving in to old age sidling up,
I turn to the medical staffs for help,
forgetting about their costly markup.

Sniffle, cough or chest pain, they all pile up
as illness before I can give a yelp,
when old age begins its sidling up.

Coverage requires medical checkup,
for even the tiniest family whelp
gets hit when old age comes sidling up.

Thoughts of old age add force to my hang-up
about limits unfriendly to self-help
and prescription pills for a cover-up.

If I gain a pound or two, I wind up
on a restricted diet eating kelp,
and drinking water from a dixie cup.

I value the kindness from the backup
but not when it's excessively helpful,
when, giving in to age sidling up,
I turn to the medical staffs for help.

Awarded a gold medal at the 2018 VA Maine
Healthcare System Veterans Creative Arts competition.

Taps for Pearl Harbor

by George S. Chappell

(Echoes of From Here to Eternity)

The melancholy air of a bugle wafts
over Schofield Barracks on the island
of Oahu following the surprise
Sunday morning attack by Japanese

planes, killing many at leisure in peace.
Some say the bugler is the ghost of a
soldier who died in the bombarding
while trying to return to his calling.

A career GI, who loved the Army
as much as his bugling, he, typical
of many musicians, had a mouthpiece
he carried on him to be armed to play.

He was one of the fated in that pre-dawn,
damned for their fondness and sense of duty

Busy Water

by George S. Chappell

Busy water flowing across the land,
in all beds you cross
comprehensively,
Yet you never leave the earth spongy.

This dawn with its spectral ray:
boats circling buoys,
a lone fisherman,
gulls cruising low for food,
a beachcomber searching the shore –
all against the horizon.

In your stream traversing path
and seaward flowing way,
down a slope in free-fall,
Water, you keep the tide intact.

Rockland Mystery

by George S. Chappell

Our land would go on forever
merely by holding up the ground
It braced for storms and hurricanes
that amounted to little significance

merely by holding up the ground
the usual clay and rocky soil stood fast
for those belonging to the land.
That amounted to little significance

The usual clay and rocky soil stood fast
that amounted to little significance.
The November wind sent me a chill
as nightfall descended the harbor

arched in a crescent from lighthouse
to city docks surrounding anchored ships
lit up to give the harbor a twinkle:
one depression in the shoreline

left no mistake where the house was
with the woman who slid into the sea
emerging alive and well.
She had braced for storms and hurricanes.

Neighbors stood steadfast as we
gathered to watch the slide, the night
was full of promise for those of us
who thought the land would go on.

We braced for storms and hurricanes
that amounted to little significance
while the usual clay and rocky soil stood fast
as nightfall descended the harbor.

For however cold and bleak the night was,
we braced for storms and hurricanes
to the Rockland harbor land so true
with the promise the land would go on.

You Don't See Me

by Catherine Dowdell

It is dark
Snow squeaks
beneath my boots

I look in
your windows

You look for lost things
vacuum and
cook breakfast

Prayer

by Catherine Dowdell

help me remember
the monster I see
is really the me
I don't want to be

Winter Solstice 2017

by Catherine Dowdell

night

transitory

merely
the hulk of
Earth
between
me and
Sun

My Youth

by Catherine Dowdell

under the sod
the turf
the trees
lie bones

the gentle slope
the small pond
belie
shell holes

verdant
shell holes

small creatures*by Bill Eberle*

small creatures -
the ripples of water and light
in this sometimes stream
the gurgle and rush
and the smooth stillness of sound
where water and light
pool

I hear the rustle of unfallen leaves

while nearby
tall trees with no leaves
worship the sky

my feet walk on
the fallen

with shadows and light
on everything
I am
and on
everything around me
I
leave
nature
ascending
to a warm house
and
quiet memories -
small creatures
ripples of water and light
shadow and light
air and light
in
me

essential architecture*by Bill Eberle*

staring at the desiccated and broken
daddy long legs dangling
in a basement
cobweb

thinking in the shower
and remembering

essential architecture

what is the structure of my heart?
many gossamer chambers
one for each part of my life
all there
in my heart
and brain
t
w
i
s
t
i
n
g
in
my
dream
memories

which have access
to every nook and cranny
of all that I am
all that I have
been

pushing my cells*by Bill Eberle*

pushing my cells downstream
hot water splashing against
my back

brief departure
from this world into another

nothing but my skin as evidence
when I return

CELEBRATING THE HOLIDAYS

by Trina L. French

“Deck The Halls” as they say
To see Paul on his way

“Dashing Through the Snow”
Where the white winters glow

“Oh Holy Night” is where you will find Mary
Along with Miss Sue sipping on some Sherry

“Jingle Bell Rock” is blaring on the radio
And that’s where you will find Trina all in a glow

“Sleigh Ride” ringing in the background
While Catherine is riding the sleigh all the way through town

“Silver Bells” rounding the bend
While Santa yells out, “HO HO HO How does it go Jim?”

“Rudolf The Red Nose Reindeer” jingling with the others
While Bill is dancing with “Dasher, “Oh brothers”!

“Under The Mistletoe” dreaming of kisses
Is where you will find George waiting for his Miss’

“Little Drummer Boy” marches on
In the mean time Meredith is belting out “Joy To The World” the beautiful song

“Oh Come All Ye Faithful” as we gather here
Looking forward to Joergen’s return so we can celebrate with him another year

“Angels We Have Heard On High”
As Lois Anne is looking ever so beautiful while gazing high in the sky

“Away In The Manger” looking upon us
We see Dana in full throttle on one bended knee putting in a good word as
it is a must

“Tis The Season” and “To Be Jolly”
“Deck The Halls” while we all are Folly

“Frosty The Snowman” please come out and play
We are all here to hang out with you all day today
Please work your magic on the holiday bustle
So everyone is having fun while they hustle

“Bring Us Good Tidings” and “Some Christmas Cheer”
Since “It’s The Most Wonderful Time Of Year”

Gotta go and need to get out of here,
One more thing to Maria is ...

“Oh Maria”, please watch over us
And, “Bless Us All”
With Joy, Happiness, and Holiday Cheer

May the beauty of the season
Carry us through
The New Year with reason
And Happy New Year, too

Good Night To All
Happy Holidays and Merry Christmas!
Tis The Season!

Always and Always,
Good Night and See You Next Year!

MEADOWS OF THE MORNING WOODS*by Trina L. French*

Morning woods, bring that to me.
Let's walk to where the river flows
With the divining rod of chivalry.

Cascading through the meadows of deity
Where one's behavior is of a knight, as it shows.
Morning woods, bring that to me

On the backs of stallions gallantly
Of the man's beastly instinct shares with nature knows
With the divining rod of chivalry.

Upon the path they went capturing the woman's purity
Finding ways to impress, cheek to cheek, nose to nose.
Morning woods, bring that to me

While walking along with bravery and, yet, with courtesy.
Knight's armor, woman's scent, Royal clothes
With the divining rod of chivalry.

Capturing the moment, capturing the kiss before victory
Before morning and before the night goes.
Morning woods, bring that to me
With the divining rod of chivalry.

RAIN

by Trina L. French

Rain,
Anything can happen
In the
Middle
Of the storm

All things happen
After the storm

Precursor,
Prevention!!!

Auntie Narretta

by Eileen Hugo

She had chosen an orange dress
not just a dress a ballgown
layers of fluff and shimmer.
A mother of the groom outfit
even matching shoes and purse
were to accompany her.
She had outlined the hymns and readings
that would be part of her services.
She was so proud of her organization skills
she was after all an OR nurse.
Lists were made she looked forward
to entering heaven on a cloud
a tangerine cloud in a fuchsia sunset.

Her son buried her in a grey suit.

Evil Frog

by Eileen Hugo

He looked innocent enough
small, brown and wrinkly body
the size of a silver dollar.

You walk on tip-toes
quiet as a mouse.

He waits.

If you could see his eyes
you would see the glint of evil.

He waits.

You have a clear chance
to see him up close.

He waits.

You slowly bend near,
He leaps
going right past your nose
causing you to fall back on
the very wet ground.

The Girl Who Walked on Water

by Eileen Hugo

The Girl Who Trod on a Loaf A sad fate also awaits Andersen's "Girl Who Trod on a Loaf," who, in order to keep her shoes dry and clean threw bread down for a stepping-stone across a bog. As a punishment for her pride and ingratitude, Inger is sucked down into a hellish life in the swamp, only to be released many years later by the prayers and tears of others, who repent their own ingratitude for God's gifts.

The little girl was spoiled with a pair of Jimmy Choos
Her bent and broke parents gave her the last of their money
They said buy two loaves of bread and keep your head about you

The little girl had to cross an icy stream to reach the dough
Because it hadn't rained, that was easy for their honey
The little girl was spoiled with a pair of Jimmy Choos

She bought the bread from the baker Mister Foo
He warned her to be careful, it was the last of their money
They said buy two loaves of bread and keep your head about you

On the way home, it started to rain and the stream grew
Their child, was selfish and self-centered she was still their honey
The little girl was spoiled with a pair of Jimmy Choos

Then she thought she found a way to go
A way to save the Jimmy Choo honeys
They said buy two loaves of bread and keep your head about you

She strapped her shoes to the dough
splashing through icy water dough all runny
The little girl was spoiled with a pair of Jimmy Choos
They said buy two loaves of bread and keep your head about you

Haiku*by Eileen Hugo*

The cherries blossom
Pink snow drifts across new grass
Spring confetti lingers

Color of tree frogs
Touching ground to mate and spawn
Transform green to grey

New born mosquitos
Buzz around the vernal pools
Thirsting for our blood

Forsythia yellow
Shows off in barely April
Look at my petals

Last Night a Dog Barked

by Chuck Marecic

Last night a dog barked
at the wind through the trees
once again confounding fear
wildness and boredom
like a religious zealot
lost in the labyrinth of justifications
placing hope in the
off chance that rustling leaves or
creaking branches belie something more ominous
than the distant rumble of thunder portends.

Only rain.

Yet, those ears habituated to years of complicit domesticity--
cars grumbling down the dirt driveway,
droning television commercials, a fork scratching a dinner plate, or
a perpetually leaking faucet--
hear the taunt of the wild in every single thing outside
like coyote laughter
and this alone puts them on edge.

A Pantoum for Ebony Jewelwings

by Chuck Marecic

I shall write a poem about ebony jewelwings
fashioned into a simple pantoum
A few small words for the beautiful things
above the shadow and the gloom.

Fashioned into a simple pantoum
bright damselflies flicker in the sun
above the shadow and the gloom
they flit as if they are having fun.

Bright jewelwings flicker in the sun
despite the threat of "fire and fury".
They dance as if they're having fun:
To Life! and not hyperbole.

Against the threat of "fire and fury"
a few small words for beautiful things.
To life and not hyperbole;
I write this poem for ebony jewelwings.

**This World Exists
(or not)
for Two**

by Chuck Marecic

At the window
candlelight meets moonlight,
the truth of illuminated shadow begins
and solemnly reveals nothing.

A ticking clock
guileless as a chirping cricket
eventually loses its way.

Nothing escapes the present.

Night contains the box
the selfish box of hunger
of possibility torn open.

The glad rags of poetry
already threadbare and frayed
fall away to the touch.

What remains is a cosmography
of fingerprints
mapping the terrain of limits
surmounting from one edge to another
the infinite chasm of self
with an exploration that is something
akin to love.

the truth is*by Chuck Marecic*

that your words are an oil spill.
that even as we speak, i am tampering with the brake lines of your heart.
that i'm carrying an armful of broken pieces.
that i have nothing, but it is heavy.
that i no longer give gifts out of respect for emptiness.
that i've seen the ghost of happiness tormented by ugly children with a stick.
that a tossed bone is only as good as the marrow inside.
that tears taste like salt and salt, i am told, is bad for your health.
that i talk to myself and then only to answer questions that you've never thought to ask.
that i am waiting for further instructions.
that i am water off a duck's back.
that i would murder time with a rusty knife if i could.
that there is no hope, only an occasional bend in the road.
that i've heard that listening is a mistake (and a sign of weakness).
that night is the penance for cheating death.
that i hear nothing everywhere.
that there is absolutely no substitute for sunlight.
that i know too much for the too little i have to show for it.
that truth is a butterfly or a bumblebee depending on how badly one wants to sniff the flower.
that everything is vanity; *vanitas vanitatum omnia vanitas*;

yes, every blessed thing.

The Sinking of the Arctic Rose

by Paul McFarland

As the whitecaps roll from the Arctic Pole
Through the straits from the Chukchi Sea,
They whisper of tales of the merciless gales
That have turned many boats to debris.

And one of the boats that didn't survive
In one of those terrible blows
Was a factory trawler with fifteen men,
Whose name was the Arctic Rose.

That trawler's goal was flathead sole
Northwest of the Pribolof Isles,
And the first few tows of the Arctic Rose,
The hard working crew were all smiles.

But one of those nights when the northern lights
Were casting their eerie glow,
The winds and the waves on a storm tossed sea
Had driven the deckhands below.

Then a frigid breeze came out of the North,
And kicked up a freezing spray,
And started to coat that old fishing boat
On rigging and mast and stay

With a layer of ice so thick and so white,
She looked like a sheeted ghost
That was making its way from bay to bay
Up and down the Alaska coast.

And as they pounded that building ice,
The crew knew deep in their soul
That soon that poor ice encrusted boat
Would make her one final roll.

They weren't the first to have such a thirst
For life on those Arctic waves,
And they won't be last to be brutally cast
In the sea to their watery graves.

But I like to think that they're fishing still
Instead of some sunken wreck,
And they're hidden away in some glacier bay
Still trying to clear her deck.

But you never know when your number's up,
And your maker will take you away,
So when you're ashore, show the ones you adore
Your love and affection each day.

And I've got a notion the salt in the ocean
Comes from the widows' tears
That were shed at the ports all 'round the world
Over lonely and countless years.

So stop for a moment and send out a prayer,
As we bring this tale to a close,
To the sweethearts and wives of the fifteen lives
That were lost on the Arctic Rose.

The Wake of Patrick McKee

by Paul McFarland

An Irishman Named Pat McKee,
One night in drunken revelry,
With smell of liquor on his breath
Fell from a barstool to his death.

The undertaker took Pat in,
Embalmed him with his favorite gin,
And to permit his au revoir,
He laid Pat out in Kelly's Bar.

And as the lads filed in that night,
They were a glum and mournful sight,
And you would think they'd been coerced
To travel here to quench their thirst.

So as each sad eyed drinking chum,
While at the bar is overcome,
Between his drinks he interjects
His most profound and last respects.

And then a swaying drunken lout
Holds up a brimming glass of stout
And offers up a heartfelt toast
To their deceased and pickled host.

And as each single drinking cup
Was seen to have its bottom up,
Some rum soaked crony said he'd think
That Pat McKee should have a drink.

They all agreed that they'd invest
Their money in the very best,
So they pulled down his dimpled chin
And poured some Irish whiskey in.

And they could not believe their eyes
When Patrick's corpse began to rise.
It looked around and scratched its head,
And then with shaking voice it said,

"Just pass me, please, a pint of bitters
That I might shake off these jitters.
I need a bracer, for I think
It's been two days since my last drink."

So then it seemed the ice was broken
Once those few words had been spoken,
And that night took new direction
With old Patrick's resurrection.

They knew that Pat came from good stock,
But this performance was a shock.
Though he would only suffer through
A single day of three-day flu,

And never suffered broken bones,
Nor had backaches or kidney stones,
I don't recall it being said
He'd ever come back from the dead.

And there had never been a crowd
Who drank so hard or sang so loud
As those good lads from near and far
Who came that night to Kelly's Bar.

Old Kelly wondered what he'd do
When that nightmarish wake was through,
For they'd be coming in his gate
To bury Pat at half past eight.

But when the morning rolled around,
The lads, all passed out, could be found,
And Patrick was back in his place;
A pleasant smile upon his face.

COMING HOME

by Jim Ostheimer

My husband, my dearest Robert,
how I have missed you
since you went to war.
No one to share my love,
to smile when you smile
or absorb my anger when
the children have run wild.

We have prayed for your return,
wept that you stay safe,
felt the need for you,
realized that a father,
a friend, a lover, must not
be taken from us again.

You may have changed
since we parted and so may we.
Please share with us
your shadows and we will
fill your void with the
brightest and the saddest
of our lives since you departed.

Welcome home a thousand times,
dear Robert, my friend.

SOUNDS AND SHADOWS

by Jim Ostheimer

The shadow of a brown oak leaf fell silently beside me.
The sun hid behind a cloud, which chilled my world.
My morning companion rooster awoke belatedly and the granite enterprise's
trucks began beeping a block away.

A shadow from an antique Owls Head Museum plane
passed over me, its engine making its usual pop, pop noise.
Fall leaves now all brown rustled overhead.
Evergreens whispered as I passed by.

Canada Geese cast shadows and honked goodbye.
Diehard Mallards swished onto the ponds.
Occasional cars returned my morning waves.
A small fish cast its shadow in the shallow pond.

GOODBYE SWEET JOHN

by Jim Ostheimer

Your passing was sad today.
A golden rainbow lit the sky.
After a final fishing foray,
It was your way to say goodbye.

A golden rainbow lit the sky.
We knew you would salute us all.
It was your way to say goodbye.
Too difficult to call!

We knew you would salute us all.
My Living Will is also done
Too difficult to call!
No point lingering when it's not fun.

My Living Will is also done.
Will think of you when the Patriots romp.
No point in lingering when it's not fun.
Denver must get used to take the stomp.

Will think of you when the Patriots romp.
No need to go south for a warmer clime.
Denver must get used to take the stomp.
You can smile and say "Not where I'm."

No need to go south to a warmer clime
After a final fishing foray.
You can smile and say, "Not where I'm."

A SLEEPY HOLLOW EXPERIENCE

by Jim Ostheimer

Thirty thousand feet at night in my F 86 L fighter over Maine.
I was spot-lighted by extraterrestrials.
My canopy glowed blue and red,
and my heart rate tripled in fear.

My air-field, Grenier, in Manchester, NH, was a half hour away.
My aircraft could fly at .95 mach.
Not nearly fast enough to fly away from these pursuing creatures.
People claimed to have been captured.

Sightings of their space-craft were common on Cape Ann,
Massachusetts. After landing I reported my sighting, and
I de-powered to my Fiat 500 for the ride home in
Manchester, Massachusetts.

The Hunt

by Meredith D. Overstreet

Fleet of foot,
the red-ruffed ruffian
fled and fled.

The hounds
bayed and bayed,
and the red-coated men
hallooed and balanced
in their saddles.

Despite the crisp air,
sweat dripped from their brows.
They ducked low branches
ablaze in autumn
stole grins from racing friends
and, just occasionally, allowed
thoughts of sandwiches and tea
(or dram of heather and smoke)
call to question the merits of
such active pursuits.

The men drunk deeply of fall.
Dead leaves swirled
amongst paw and hoof.
Mud splattered red coats
and glued fir.
Chests heaved for the moment.

Rising in their saddles—
black-booted heels down,
black-capped heads up—
blue, green, and brown eyes
scanned and scanned.

“Dash it!
Dash it!”

cursed the green one
casting a look round
internal thoughts already warming
by the club’s ancient hearth.
“It’s thicket to the hill’s heart,
we’ll have to split apart.”

Aloft of chilled stream
and gnarled root,
teams lightheartedly divided.

With some urgency
(for sport’s sake)
they galloped round
tame country blockages
of the stonewall,
blackberry bramble,
and bleating sheep sort.
But as shadows lengthened,
warm pursuit soon settled
into pleasant contentment
amidst the rhythms of custom.

The red-ruffed ruffian
ran and ran
towards a pale day-moon
fat and low
on a blushing horizon.

For the quickest breath
 her bottlebrush tail stiffened
 her eyes shimmered
 and her fantastic ears—
 two soft, stark arrows—
 flattened against her thickening coat.

The rooks spooked at the *blast*
 filling the purple evening
 with a raucous flurry
 of feather and shine
 before fading to black specks
 hopping and quorking in a distant field
 freshly cleared with the harvest.

Green looked at blue on the fiery ground
 crushing oak leaves beneath his
 bright red coat slowly darkening
 chest oozing in the twilight
 while liberated horse headed
 for the clearing
 with the sweetest green grass.

The hounds,
 they bayed and bayed
 far off in the distance
 and the red-ruffed ruffian
 fled
 and
 fled.

Fruits Red in Soft Wheat

by Meredith D. Overstreet

Heavy the trees, fruits red in soft wheat
Boding not black spectre of The Hollow;
No, the bounty of fall blazes fatty and sweet,
Spinning futures of ripening tomorrows.

O, but I ride forth from empty season of war,
Made again foreign terror of dreams,
And beneath crossed banner of King George's corps
And near darkest bridges and streams

I dash wraith reins against thundering silk
Shining deep as stars before dawn,
Hunting peace, of honeyed evenings crisp and pink,
From Charon's haunting song.

Deep, I drink the night's beastly calls
And toast autumn's rustling winds;
As charged to condemn from hell-shod hooves
I reap sons for forefathers' sins.

Too soon wind the vines back round my breast
Suspending my life 'til the morrow.
Seduced by fair bounties for other realm's feasts
I live to wake this hollow.



Frida

by Susan R. Taylor

Red satin ribbons entwine
 crown of glossy black braids
 groan of lonely heart and fractured spine
 imaged into dreams
 pinned with ache of lush blossoms
 pierced by spikey details
 fierce courage of her soul
 laid anguish onto canvas.

A century gone by
 we move along shiny floors
 stand mesmerized
 before stark white walls
 interrupted by her impassioned palette
 her pain-laden brush
 held in that very hand.

Escape

by Susan R. Taylor

we happen upon on one another while walking our dogs in the fields along the river near her house i pick a fistful of wildflowers while her face lights up as she tells of lovely bouquets she used to make inviting me into her yard she shows me the arbor she wove from twigs and reeds for her wedding venue among perennials now obscured by shoulder high weeds wades through them to display five straggly marijuana plants struggling for light not for herself but a lure for friends she recounts how her groom abandoned her two women ago that between his relationships she provides him a bed feeds the fucker the last of her food stamps recalls remarkable feats the mushing of dogs her fashioning of exquisite jewelry that graceful shell of porcelain she and her mother once poured over a giant philodendron leaf the loveliest of birdbaths now lying cracked in the grass vulnerable to another stumble the poetry she'd written her bitch mother threw out while cleaning her house for her father sends her money on the sly betraying his wife her mother the bitch who always shunned and denied her she haltingly recites the poem she wrote at fifteen its melancholy words even then revealed a hopeless young soul says she'd love to read one of my poems and asks me to bring one next time but it lies on the picnic table while her stories stream for two and a half hours without punctuation until i interrupt to say i need to leave and back away nodding as her words follow me and my poem to my car the takers she calls friends walk into her house empty her cupboards and fridge steal her pills leaving her broken body in pain until her next prescription ignore her pleas for a ride to the doctor after thirteen days of fever and three broken appointments but the day the pharmacy delivers her medicine friends' cars stream into her driveway she talks matter of factly about her emphysema offering a pall mall from her third pack of the day admits to diverticulitis and symptoms of crohns while toting her backpack of blue ribbon and ltd a cheap whiskey long term disability she laughs huskily resenting her doctor for counting her pain pills saying he received a call that she supplies local addicts she explains they do make those calls if she denies them and besides they do her dishes work on her house drive her truck to pick up her groceries she can't consider that the caller might have been a desperate wife or daughter terrified of finding her loved one cold on the john like all those others in obituaries who died unexpectedly grew up on the cape vacationing in aruba she and a friend also from a good family were going to write a book called bitches with riches to hags in rags but nothing ever came of it mentions in passing how she once fell into her woodstove palms burned raw laughs at my incredulity and convinces me by saying her then husband did the same but face first one story finished the next pours forth horror with no periods barely a comma having forgotten she held a shotgun not her rifle and intending a warning shot she sprayed some son of a bitch in the face talking nonstop to keep from feeling then delays my departure with next time promises to take me to a festival feed me an egg salad picnic cook me lobsters in her back yard she will not remember these offerings but makes them to ensure my return never noticing i want nothing another day she calls to me from across the fields asking me to take her dogs for a walk she's having too much pain she invites me in but no i'll just take the dogs now she struggles to the bottom porch step and teeters to a squat to continue her litany of sorrows with no break in her words for me to excuse myself so her two labs my buddy and i begin to stroll away when her words fade out of hearing we four sprint across the grass giddy with freedom

Porch Run

by Susan R. Taylor

drowse in rocking cradle
crawl over porch floorboards
pump trike, bump over seams
inhale lilac, apple blossom

sprinkle jacks, bounce ball
slam screen, run for the bus
put poems to words on creaking swing
pick daisies, roses, buttercups

first kiss against screen door
bouquet toss over peeling rail
rock the cradle to still the wail
gather daylilies, Queen Anne's Lace

shuffle slippers, tap the cane
tch-tch at corner spider-silk
rest in rocker, eyes far away
reach for poinsettias from florist

snow lines railings, window sills
lies undisturbed on porch's floor
on chiseled rock in old churchyard
on blue silk tulips, plastic roses

The Quiet Country Life

by Susan R. Taylor

we name that first hare Spot
before we realize they all have one
he sits at our feet, nibbles our toes
we know we are the chosen
before we realize hares have no fear
before we realize infant cries in the night woods
are the desperation of hare
in the grip of coyote or owl

frantic parents hover, scream
to fend off ravenous jays
craving baby robin brains
then wander stunned
'til distracted by twigs
for their next hatchlings' nest
snatched intact
by a greedy raven

fox stalks the coop
steals his way beneath the fence
swift chase to terror-squawk
necks stretched, hens in shock
witness the zigzag up the hill
their limp sister clutched
in his jaws

drama in black white rose
grosbeak beauty
perched at feeder
split-second flash of hawk
talons bared, beak a streak of arrow shot
poof of rose black white
wisps of weightless down
sift, silent, to the empty stage

nestlings, kits, and pups to feed
compel us all to murderous deed

Two if by Sea*by Dana Wildes**for Melinda*

Two red, wooden
lounge chairs placed
atop a rocky outcrop
jutting into the sea.

Placed side by side
along the harbor's side
innocently, quietly,
almost accidentally;
yet in retrospect,
premeditatively.

Chairs together
sharing a view;
one for me and
one for you.

So let us dwell
here for a while,
gazing out to sea.

The waves are rolling in,
in two's and three's and
the next two are taken;
one for you and
one for me.

missiles over Hiroshima's dome...*by Dana Wildes*

august 6th, 1945, this strong bell was rung
not like a chime, but as a harbinger in time

not as a rhyme, but as an all-deafening roar
leaving its listeners muted, mutilated by war

unable to hear, unable to see; seared bodies
suffering a seer's nightmare of man's cruelty

reaping a hot whirlwind so intentionally sewn
destroying everything a man has ever known

this bell yet reverberates hauntingly far below
new projectiles soaring o'er old pacific islands

missiles held aloft by hatreds, arching devilry
delivering us from sanity, exposing our civility

to the reality of a century of coldly killing hope
that we would rise above our irradiated ashes

honoring those spirits we savagely incinerated
while possessed by a mad intent to eviscerate

evils that uninhibited animate our innate souls;
though God-given, we fail to keep them whole

the touch of your spirit*by Dana Wildes*

there is a chapel on the Atlantic coast
on a high point granting the very most
exquisite view of the ocean's breadth
and a vision of a future world in depth

where I lingered long enough with you
to entwine our hearts with the view
and to imbibe the incredibly loving vibe
two souls do in love forever describe

you ask me why I am a forlorn idealist
while I merely think I'm a sad realist
I apologize for my awkward optimism
as you explode my heart's defeatism

you expose me to the glory of your smile
the joy of your inner vibrance beguiles
and then, once again, I can recommence
transcending a lifetime of experience

I feel the touch of your spirit's beauty
it washes over my broken ambiguity
lifting me up above the old oppression
of my failures and my sad depression

you have saved me, not once, but thrice
you have overcome all my inner vices
transforming them into a lilting harmony
sounding a new chord of opportunity

I will live a new peninsular life with you
 jutting gladly into your tempting view
of a future surrounded on all our sides
 by loving warmth that holds and abides

each day my heart will reside in memory
 of the day we combined in matrimony
in our sweet oceanside chapel ceremony
 on our way to our date with eternity

it remains only for me to say “thank you”
 prematurely, as with most things I do
not only for the chance to advance life
 in romance with you, my precious wife

but for the new experience of our view
 across an ocean we travel now as two
into a future depth of loving compassion
 befitting our miraculous redemption

About the poets

George S. 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).

Lois Anne

Lois Anne cannot remember a time when she has not drawn, painted, written or otherwise made things. Lois thinks there's something about the interconnection and continuity of life and poetry and art ... reaching into the past literally and figuratively... the vitality of marks or words on a page ... the richness of textures and language ... the nuances ... the cycles ... growth and losses ... endings and beginnings ... these things that recur again and again in life and in her work.

Catherine Dowdell

Catherine has been itinerant since 2015, but seems to have settled in Rockland. The Poets' Corner was part of that decision.

Bill Eberle

Born in the fall just after the end of World War II, Bill has a B.A. in English from Hamilton College and has worked at many occupations and avocations including board game design, programming, database and application design and development, website design and management, photography, painting, wood sculpting, writing poetry, designing small books and freestyle dancing. His best known board game is Cosmic Encounter®. Bill began writing poetry more often than occasionally in 2003 and has published poetry in *Goose River Anthology* and *The Courier-Gazette*. He has also self-published 10 PDF books of poetry available on the published books page at wcePublishing.com. The first three books are also available as eBooks at Amazon and Barnes & Noble. 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, Washington, and currently lives in Knox County. She has been a Maine resident for nearly seventeen 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, Washington, 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, Massachusetts and Spruce Head, Maine. 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 Art Museum led by Kathleen Ellis and the Poets' Corner at the Rockport Library. At home in Massachusetts she belongs to the Middlesex Writing Group.

Chuck Marecic

Chuck writes in order to make sense and nonsense of the world around him. His poems and photographs have appeared in various literary journals, newspapers, and competitions. Over the years, he has also participated in a handful of local poetry readings. He lives in the wilds of Washington, Maine.

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.

Meredith D. Overstreet

Meredith completed her BA in International Studies at the University of Alaska Anchorage in 2010 and graduated with an ALM in the field of Sustainability and Environmental Management from Harvard University Extension School in 2013. She has been a U.S. Coast Guard Reservist since 2005 and spends her civilian life researching and writing in the science of ecological conservation. Born in North Carolina, Meredith has since lived up and down America's stunning east and west coasts, on Great Lake shores, bordered four Canadian

provinces, and had the privilege to travel and work across all the amazing places in between. She moved to Rockland, Maine, in October of 2016 with her husband Michael and their gregarious black cat, El Bandido, and joined The Poets' Corner that December to explore creative writing, learn the art of poetry, and connect with Midcoast locals.

Susan R. Taylor

Susan Taylor grew up as a third generation Army Brat and lived in Germany, Colombia, Alaska and many states in the eastern U.S. In 1984 she moved with her family to Liberty, Maine, where she felt immediately at home. She is now a retired teacher from the Belfast school district and is currently living in Knox. She is a great-grandmother of four, along with having lived the parenting and grand parenting that title implies. She and her family have an affinity for all things Hispanic, and in addition to speaking and having taught Spanish, her life keeps taking uncanny turns toward people and places Hispanic. She was inspired to write poetry after the death of her mother from Alzheimer's Disease and by her own aging process and resulting growth spurt during her 50's and 60's. She hopes to publish that collection, called *Unpacking for the Trip*. In the meantime, she enjoys active membership in the Poets' Corner and Woodshed poetry groups.

Dana Wildes

Dana Wildes is a retired account executive sales representative who worked in printing and advertising sales roles for both national and regional firms for forty years. While poetry has always been a serious avocation for Dana (he was the editor of his high school newspaper and a founding editor of the Colby Echo literary magazine) his business career left him limited time for creative writing. That is why Dana is so happy to be retired in Rockland, Maine, where he has found many like-minded writers and friends of the arts, all of whom are an inspiration to him. For example, the Rockport Poets' Corner poetry group is a welcoming and interesting collection of poets whose interactions are uplifting and positive, and Dana is proud to be associated with them.

Thank you