

# Poets' Corner

## 2017 Chapbook vol. 1

Poems by

### **vol. 1**

Lois Anne

George S. Chappell

Catherine Dowdell

Bill Eberle

Trina L. French

Eileen Hugo

Ray Janes

Paul McFarland

### **vol. 2**

Joergen Ostensen

Jim Ostheimer

Meredith D. Overstreet

Jon Potter

Susan R. Taylor

Joan Vose

Dana Wildes

# Cover Photo

Poets' Corner  
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photo by Dagney C. Ernest



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See Vol. 2

*for poems by*

Joergen Ostensen, Jim Ostheimer, Meredith D. Overstreet, Jon Potter,  
Susan R. Taylor, Joan Vose, and Dana Wildes

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# Introduction

## Poets' Corner

*by Susan Taylor*

Flocking in from four directions,  
A communion of souls  
Lands 'round the library table,  
Feeds on the beauty of words.

tender philosopher  
paints with loving brushstrokes  
graceful gratitude  
in wistful hues

Master of rhyme  
Cuts a fine form  
On any Shakespearean stage.  
With wit sublime,  
His poem is born.  
He pins it to the page.

war-torn anguish meted out  
in solemn  
measured  
tones  
kindles compassion  
inspires prayer

A misspent youth,  
Then the courage of truth,  
Love lost and found once again.  
Now, the Silver Bear dances  
To poems of romances,  
A full life expressed with his pen.

DIMINUTIVE

STATURE TO STANZA

WORDS WALTZ ON THE PAGE

SPEAKING VOLUMES

Her poetry's fashioned  
With innocent passion.  
Stream of consciousness dashing,  
Her words come a' splashing,  
Caressing or lashing,  
Glowing or flashing!

Having fished Alaskan seas,  
 He then returned to Maine,  
 Took up his family and his friends,  
 His rod and gun, again.

Robert Service bent to whisper,  
 "Why not your pen, as well?"  
 Ballads sailed from his soul to his page  
 Under the poet's spell.

Inspired by love for humankind,  
 The hero in each local,  
 With whimsy, tenderness, and love,  
 And humor, ever vocal.

Saying she'd like to attempt to write,  
 In rich tones she commenced to recite  
 Word palette top choice, vibrant hues in her voice,  
 Rhythm rocked rhyme, impact stopped time.  
 It took only a single poem to know  
 How vast above and deep below  
 Her sea of artistry.

His young parents  
 Refugees from violence  
 Smuggled him northward  
 Hid him under maples, birches, pines  
 Behind mossy stone walls.  
 Now, the young man visits his birthplace  
 Picks his way along broken concrete  
 Pulls from the cracks  
 Compassionate poems of pain, escaped  
 Then home to a night full of stars.

Charming comfort of our own bedrooms,  
 Our own stash of dusty mementos,  
 Our own thoughts  
 That root or flit away,  
 Our delight at light- and shadow-play  
 What we all experience every day  
 Made extraordinary by her pen.

History's lessons  
 From cultures widespread,  
 The human condition,  
 Our glory, our foibles  
 "Echo down through the years."  
 Love, interpreted from Greek  
 All this and more, her poems bespeak.

Words pared  
To essence,  
Lean  
Lines  
Deeply  
Layered,  
A silken braid  
Down  
The length  
Of her back.

Wry dissident tones decry our animal nature.

We turn on each other and snarl

Bear our fangs to claim our territory

But that same devoted pack leader nurtures his grandson

And sensing a tear in my eye

Abruptly interrupts himself to inquire so gently

“What kind of dog was he?”

Duty, honor, country  
Soar with elation,  
Trailing a streak of cloud,  
Yet grounded by love.  
Uncle Sam slipped,  
Issued him a family,  
Wife, friend for life,  
Children and grandkids,  
That transvestite cat.

Delicate lady’s memorable images  
“His piercing amber eye”  
Devotion personified, “Fern fronds in  
sway”  
Loyal in love, “Beside a midnight pool”  
But that clandestine affair,  
So cold, but so sweet.

Librarian appears, key in hand  
To a well-fed flock reluctant to fly.  
A tap of his foot,  
A startle of wings  
‘Til the next Poets’ Corner.



## A Great Thing

by Lois Anne

Alas, my love, you do me wrong,  
To cast me off discourteously.

The beginning of love is to let those we love  
be perfectly themselves,

For I have loved you well and long,  
Delighting in your company.

and not to twist them  
to fit our own image.

Alas, my love, that you should own  
A heart of wanton vanity,

Otherwise we love only the reflection  
of ourselves we find in them.

So must I meditate alone  
Upon your insincerity.

It's on my mind these days,  
in one form or another,  
the answer to almost any question  
*eros ... philia ... storge ... agape ...*

\* Greensleeves is a traditional English folk song and the famous song from the Tudor era.

\*\* The beginning of love is to let those we love be perfectly themselves, and not to twist them to fit our own image. Otherwise we love only the reflection of ourselves we find in them. Thomas Merton

\*\*\* *We can do no great things, only small things with great love.* Mother Teresa

## Where Is Now

*by Lois Anne*

One could say the present does not exist;  
There is only past and future.

Gazing out to sea  
You say there is a horizon line.

There is sky, there is water,  
There is no line.

We stand on the thin edges  
Of constantly shifting time.

**winter haiku***by Lois Anne*

lightly snow falls dusts  
pine fir hackmatack fine white  
gelid feathers fluff

branches bent bare bro-  
ken arches stark grey naked  
limbs against the sky

white turns to water  
grey to blue, the brightness blinds  
squirrels and wrens sing

sparkling like jewels  
under the warm winter sun  
ice dripping away

the reprieve was good  
but today buried again  
more white upon white

woodpecker feeding  
suet rich, cardinals jays  
others wait their turn

snow falls, stays, then goes  
yet for now piled higher  
and higher, it stays

how many shades of  
white are there? how many tints?  
too many to count

hidden birds even-  
ing songs, halcyon, brumal,  
like songs of comfort

## A Fallen Elm Tree

*by George S. Chappell*

We were a chance meeting  
of four teen-age boys  
astride a fallen elm tree trunk  
on the back path to our

Providence, Rhode Island, school.  
It was as if a logger had come by  
with saw and axe to clear that land  
again after the teaching beginning.

We didn't have to be there,  
for the opening had been postponed  
after Hurricane Carol hit in the fall  
of nineteen hundred and fifty-four.

But like proprietors we had come  
through emergency barricades to witness  
the wreckage, not to rejoice in the delay.  
Perched on the trunk like gulls

We talked and smoked –  
Forbidden activities  
when we were in session –  
as if we owned the place.

In a sense, we did own it, for this was  
our school, and it had survived  
the storm that had flooded so much  
of downtown Providence.

Something compelled us to go there,

and we felt we had a right to be there.  
The storm, not the first in the city  
by any means, was almost a way of life

that we were proud to have endured.  
National Guardsmen had sandbagged  
store fronts to hold back the river,  
and measured the flood's height

for all posterity, along with markings  
of previous hurricanes.

We knew our tree would have to be removed  
but for the moment

the land became as dear to us as no other.

**A Special Place**  
Aunt Eliza's Spool Bin

*by George S. Chappell*

It was in an old Maine house with a barn  
in the town where my mother grew up.  
My little brother and I would revel

in the aroma of wooden spools  
where our great aunt kept her kindling  
for her wood-burning stove.

As soon as we arrived for a visit  
She greeted us with a devilish grin  
and asked if we wanted to go and play with the spools.

We darted through the kitchen right for the barn  
knowing full well where the tinder was kept  
in a loose pile of varying sizes and shapes.

The clean sensation of fresh pine filled  
the nostrils of two city boys not used  
to the ambiance of nature inside a home.

As we spread the spools out on the barn floor,  
we argued over which ones we would take.  
It didn't matter, for they all had a home in the bin.

Many years later, when I had the chance,  
I bought an old Maine house with a barn,  
and imagined I could sniff the fragrance of pine.

## Bearing Witness

by George S. Chappell

The day My Lady died,

all her female relatives gathered round to bear witness.

We men were there in case we could fix it, but we knew deep inside there was nothing we could fix.

She had had a restless day, not knowing how to relax – there would be time for that –

Some nurtured her with fresh dressing, while others gave her sips of cool water. She seemed abstracted, as if we weren't there and she had other business.

She could be that way when she was tending to business.

On days she had bills to pay, she would announce,

*Today I'm going to be at my desk.*

I hope that desk has since found its way to the Smithsonian.

At 5 p.m., I decided to get lunch, kissed her goodbye, and drove to a nearby pizza shop we used to frequent.

The place was empty so I sat at our table and told the waitress

that the tall, beautiful, white-haired lady who was usually with me lay in the hospital dying.

The waitress mumbled something about being sorry and just gave me a knowing look.

When it was time to leave, I stood and asked for the check, which she dismissed with a toss of her hand.

At the hospital I learned My Lady had died in her sleep. Someone had crossed her arms on her chest.

I took her in my arms and cried into her shoulder and neck and called out her name twice.

## **From the Mortgage Bin**

(A Sonnet to My Bank)

*by George S. Chappell*

I shall not sell for the others to gain  
gilded talons of a shrinking market,  
or put up with things so more can beget  
as entrepreneurs forge a tinsel chain.

Nor keep on a permanent watch to feign  
sentries holding a desire to abet  
the unsuccessful to add to their debt  
while waxing monetarily profane.

A loan industry that offers to help  
enhances profits at consumers' yelp  
and homes that cannot meet the building codes  
stand unoccupied on abandoned roads,

and waste the resources for all the greed  
that bankrupts an earth in its time of need.

**Blizzard***by Catherine Dowdell*

Prunes the pines

Green branches  
protrude  
from the drifts

**Incendiary Clothes***by Catherine Dowdell*

I wear  
incendiary clothes

not deliberately but  
even so

I must take care  
around candles

pilot lights  
and gas stoves

**Metronome***by Catherine Dowdell*

Time bomb  
sings its song

Tick tick  
not too quick

A wry  
lullaby

For us  
to discuss

We talk  
round the clock

Tick tick  
bang

**Traverse***by Catherine Dowdell*

there was a moment  
a gap  
between the horizon  
and the clouds  
where the eastern  
sun shone  
blinding bright orange

**some dreams***by Bill Eberle*

some dreams are heavy  
with experience  
and presence  
like summer fog

with tendrils drifting into areas  
which cannot be seen  
or reached

places in your memory  
that are you but not you

places you can only recapture  
by lying unconscious  
and helpless  
so that your mind  
is released

sifts through time  
and lands

in other worlds

into crackling realities  
into god like ant like struggles  
critical necessities  
and always shifting

sometimes emerging  
to wondrous lightness  
incandescent awareness  
and flying journeys

magical dreams

**approaching***by Bill Eberle*

the sounds of late summer  
when the bugs sing

a constant twitter  
like the flutter  
of small leaves  
of elm and birch  
in an unending breeze

a steady waver in us  
a landscape of sound  
our ears walk on  
as our season of heat and light  
approaches the realities  
which move us towards  
silence

mystifies our vision  
with the colors of change

from green to rainbow  
to brown

a steady waver  
we remember  
the last mating season  
of our insect selves

before our fall  
before our deepening  
and darkening

our descent  
through yellow and orange  
and red  
to dust

and deeper  
into silent times  
which drop us  
into winter  
into gray  
into white

into our solitude

our wonders of loss  
and purity

**each one***by Bill Eberle*

there are men and women  
who die simply

accepting the indignities  
of the end

with silence  
and even a smile

and those  
who ignore death  
and refuse to die

and then do

**water***by Bill Eberle*

there is so much water  
surrounding us  
wrapping us  
sloshing  
and kissing  
our ankles

water  
in our teeth

just us  
coughing  
ragged  
things

and water

lapping lapping  
like an animal with a cold tongue  
who wants to eat us

the cold makes my body  
feel like a wet sheet  
hung out to dry in winter  
before sleet and drizzle  
begins to fall

the wind ripples through me  
and makes me forget  
I want to live

want to live to grow up  
to be like my beautiful sister  
who died before we set out  
in this leaky boat

who escaped

from the soldiers  
then broken by nightmares  
which my mother would not talk to me about  
died

the water is grey  
and hates us

there is no one  
no boat near us  
or on the horizon

we  
and the water  
are alone  
too wet  
and cold  
to be  
hungry  
or  
dream  
of clear water  
for our salty throats

some of us  
moan  
in tune with the wind

and all  
of us  
are  
dying

*a sinking boat in the Mediterranean*

**ALL DAY***by Trina L. French*

Reds, greens, and blue hues silhouette the images of summer.

Tall ships gently swaying in the ripples of the waves.

Soft whispers of the air singing their song of the seas.

The gallant of the race against time and money.

Quiet echoes from the morning's sunrise of serendipitous opportunities.

Where the day will take you through the bows of life.

Each one sitting contemplating their next move ... live, life, money, time ...

Moment in place, forever.

**CINCO DE MAYO***by Trina L. French*

Cucaracha

Arriba

Let's Celebrate!

El Sorro

Tango

Salsa and Sassy

Mexican Beauties

Sombreros

Dancers everywhere

Family Friends

Fiesta

Fun Times

Enchiladas

Tacos

Tamales

Margaritas with lime

Tequila with you

Green, white, and red

Flying high in the sky

Bulls and cocks

Fight to their death

Vigor and Form

Proud and Community

Bold and Beautiful

Beast and Filthy

Cobble roads stones lead the way

Travel and leisure

The undertones of Mexico  
Dripping in sweat  
The hollowing voices whispering in the winds  
Chills linger in the air  
History, in the making, Mexico, rich redo

## DRUMMING

*by Trina L. French*

BOOM BOOM boom boom  
BOOM BOOM boom boom

The drumming of the cultures deep in the depths of their souls  
One beat at a time pounding the rendition of the rhythm  
Melodies of heart, strength, soul, mind, family, spirit  
Make their presence in particular pattern forms

BOOM BOOM boom boom  
BOOM BOOM boom boom

Musical arrangements repeating itself in each vibration  
Thundering into its own crescendo  
With the beats racing to the top  
Pounding and pounding and pounding of the heartbeat, the soul  
Ever so loud ever so matter of fact  
Where each stroke counts each pounding of the drum  
As the body becomes one with the rhythm, the beat, the pounding

BOOM BOOM BOOM BOOM  
BOOM BOOM BOOM BOOM  
BOOM BOOM BOOM BOOM  
BOOM.. BOOM.. BOOM.. BOOM..  
BOOM...

Hold that position hold that moment hold that feeling  
Hold that pounding hold that beat hold that emotion  
Hold it, hold it, hold it...  
Now exhale, slow, slowly, breathe

## JANUARY'S THAW

*by Trina L. French*

January's thaw  
Creating its own image  
Throughout the day's scene

Reminiscing about snow  
How it glitters with a glow.

December just passed  
What a whirlwind it went so fast  
Hustle and bustle.

Go here go there, stop, reflect  
What a year and weather too.

Moving forward next  
Come on February now  
Hearts aglow love's treat

Four inches, one foot, three feet  
Let it snow, keep snowing now.

Next on the list, March  
St. Patty's Day lucky charms  
Rainbows, pot of gold

Colors of riches delights  
Greens, golds, yellows, blacks, and whites.

Spring forward to  
April showers May flowers  
Easter, Mother's Day

Temps rising longer days now

Monday, Memorial Day.

June now upon us  
July's celebrations sparks  
August boating days

September colors  
Apple crisps, October howls.

November, give thanks  
December celebrate all  
New Year's moon reflect

Year of fun you through it all  
Back to January's thaw.

### **Restless Thoughts**

*by Eileen Hugo*

My thoughts gust-off like dandelion fluff  
restless winds control their path  
gravity pulls them down at last  
to ground, to grow anew and yet flight  
is just another puff away.

Then there are those discontented thoughts  
that die on concrete debris, in gutters  
on white houses or in sandboxes  
where kitties play. They never go away.

**Shadow***by Eileen Hugo*

Shadows follow except in the dark  
shades of light need excite their edges.  
When gone from sight,  
shadows at night slip along alone.

**Lines to the Suitcase Under the Bed***by Eileen Hugo*

You hold them safe in your blue  
silk lining. Treasures and memories  
that softly invade the room like an ocean mist.  
Two long stemmed roses long dead  
their redness dark as the color of old blood,  
Dad's Carnegie Medal in its slightly broken  
green velvet lined box , mom's flapper  
beads, Tommy's baby bracelet,  
a forlorn pink ribbon wrapping  
broken pink sweetheart roses,  
a first corsage came with a first kiss.  
In a folded square of tissue  
a piece of my broken front tooth.  
Memories of that fall, of  
scarred knees and a broken heart,  
oh so many broken hearts,  
of first kiss and time lost in loneliness.  
Missing Mom and Dad, their red roses  
smell of dust and old leather.  
Your tiny brass lock  
with the key attached  
put away inside.

## Perception

*by Eileen Hugo*

The way you move  
your step careful,  
demeanor calm,  
centered, thoughtful.  
Your face composed  
hair gray skin tan.  
You smell like pine  
and ocean breeze.  
I am drawn by your  
strength and want  
to follow you.

**Ode to Coffee***by Ray Janes*

Fairy tales can be true, to that I subscribe  
    Every morning my potion (from beans) I imbibe  
The faith that moves mountains can hardly compare  
    To the smell of that potion filling the air  
    That smell in the morning assuring new life  
    No matter the problems with which it is rife!

**Untitled***by Ray Janes*

Sandstone and limestone  
Wrinkles from ages past  
Speak of seas forgotten

Flock of clover hundreds  
One unique among the rest  
Four leaves standing proud

Lightning flashes at night  
Thor's hammer resounds  
Coolness descends

A woman's eyes flash  
Windows into her soul  
What mysteries hide there?

**Apocalypse***by Ray Janes*

Forever the sun rises

Forever we humans watch

At least for the human forever

Will we save the world?

Not likely

Will we humans be saved?

Open to question

We cannot affect the outcome

We are an invasive species

Perhaps the world will shuck us off as irrelevant

The human adventure is an experiment; no more

The world will go on !

## **Virtual Reality**

*by Ray Janes*

The magician smiles smugly and takes center stage

    The invisible veil descends—translucent illusive warp and woof of reality

    Illusion rules

    Showman displays his magic

The magician smiles smugly

    Obfuscation—polite name for lies

    Facts twisted out of shape like pretzels

    Lies oft repeated become truth

The magician smiles smugly

    Truth is the loser

    Reality show becomes truth virtual universe  
becomes reality

The magician smiles smugly

Hot symbols provoke the mob's delirious self approval—a cross a flag a swastika

    The mob cheers in relief no chance for dissent

The magician smiles smugly

## A Day With “Tiny” Holtham

*by Paul McFarland*

Now, Wilbur “Tiny” Holtham was that rugged woodsman’s name.  
A man both kind and gentle but with most prodigious frame.  
He measured up at six foot eight and weighed three hundred pounds.  
He lived just north of Searsport, Maine with half a dozen hounds.

From time to time from these Maine woods there’d come some epic tale:  
A feat of strength beyond belief of legendary scale.  
But all the stories you might hear of brute strength and endurance,  
In Tiny’s world these things were just an everyday occurrence.

On winter morns he’d feed his dogs and do his inside chores  
Before he put his woolens on and headed out of doors.  
It mattered not the weather; it could be both cold and raw,  
Or it might be the blessing of a January thaw.

He’d look at his thermometer through frosty windowpane,  
And glance up at the old barn roof to check his weather vane.  
He’d then dig in his closet for the proper clothes to wear  
Before he left to venture out into that winter air.

Now if by chance there’d been a fall of snow the night before  
That covered up the local woods with half a foot or more,  
He’d make sure that the path out to the barn was shoveled clear,  
And then he’d strap his snowshoes on and double check his gear.

Then with his ax and split ash pack out through the woods he’d tramp.  
His way was lit by moonlight or his rusty coal oil lamp.  
And when he found his chopping, and that three mile hike was done,  
He’d start his daily routine in the first rays of the sun.

By lunch he’d cut two cord of wood – all maple, oak, and beech,  
And limbed a thousand feet of logs – prime spruce or hemlock each.  
Then when the sun was highest, on an old five gallon seat,  
He’d sit beneath his lean-to for a break and bite to eat.

His lunch was light but hearty 'cause he had more work to do.  
He'd have a big meal later when his working day was through.  
He'd packed a quart of home baked beans with pork sliced thin and lean.  
He warmed them on a makeshift stove that ran on kerosene.

But 'ere he took a single bite, he bowed his head in prayer,  
And offered up a blessing in that frosty winter air.  
He thanked the Lord for family and the food that was before him;  
For happiness, continued health, and world peace he'd implore Him.

With noontime meal devoured and his morning's work reviewed,  
Old Tiny would resume his toil with energy renewed.  
Down in that frozen forest you could hear 'til early spring  
The crash of falling timber and old Tiny's sharp ax ring,

With chips as big as pie plates flying from a big white pine  
That gave its life for someone's house or mast so straight and fine.  
And then he'd finish up that chilly day without a rest  
Until the fading light was but a glimmer in the West.

And when that day was over, and the sun had finally set,  
And Tiny was quite satisfied his quota had been met,  
He'd tally up the cord wood, and the logs he then would scale,  
And then he'd round his gear up and prepare to hit the trail.

Before he left, he thanked the Lord for giving him this day,  
And prayed his family had been safe while he had been away.  
And then he'd grab his ax and pack and homeward he would tramp.  
His way lit up by moonlight or his rusty coal oil lamp.

## GRACE GLOVER

*by Paul McFarland*

A lady that I know so well  
Lives out on yonder hill.  
I met her many years ago,  
And she is special, still.

Her name is Grace; she was a nurse  
In some far foreign land,  
Where politicians stayed at home,  
And men fought, hand to hand.

Grace helped those men who'd fallen  
In the battles that had raged.  
She'd sing the songs of days gone by  
As, outside, war was waged.

A fair haired boy from Boston town,  
And just before he goes,  
He asks if Grace would sing to him  
"My Wild Irish Rose."

And as she sweetly sings to him,  
His labored breathing slows,  
And then he quits that bitter war  
To join his friends and foes.

A brave man from the Allagash  
Was fevered and in pain,  
But when she sang, she gently calmed  
That country boy from Maine.

That volunteer from Tennessee,  
Before he breathed his last,  
Grace sang him home to distant hills  
And loved ones from his past.

Now when some song from days gone by  
Comes on the radio,  
Grace sheds a tear as she recalls  
Those days so long ago.

Those songs that come from out the past;  
Each has its haunting face.  
Familiar notes will take her  
To another time and place.

And if Grace takes a lover,  
When she holds him in her arms,  
No matter how that man responds  
To all her natural charms,

That tender touch and warm embrace  
Remind her of the past,  
When she held lads close to her breast  
As they all breathed their last.

She only sees a soldier there,  
Out in the mud and rain.  
His life blood spilling on the ground,  
And only feels his pain.

And I am one of many men  
Who from the battlefield  
Returned to friends and family  
With my wounds and scars all healed.

And as I hold those withered hands  
And look into those eyes,  
The past comes rushing back to me,  
And I still realize

That those same hands once cradled me,  
And I heard, sweet and low,

A sweet refrain to ease my pain  
Back many years ago.

And so I stop for coffee  
To ward off the winter chill,  
And sit there with that angel  
At her house on yonder hill.

## The Owl And The Fox

*by Paul McFarland*

When I was a lad, I would ask my dad  
As I climbed up on his knee,  
“Will you please read ‘The Owl And The Fox’  
Just one more time for me?”

He’d put his hand on my curly head  
And a finger on my nose,  
And then he’d say, with a wink and a nod,  
“Son, this is how it goes.”

And then he’d begin in his really deep voice,  
And the words were a wonder to hear.  
Then my eyes would close and the owl and the fox  
In my mind would then reappear.

Hundreds of times I’ve heard that poem  
As I sat on my father’s knee,  
And I’d give the world if he could read  
That poem once more for me.

But Dad’s passed on to the other side;  
No more on his knee will I climb.  
But he left me his book of “Best Loved Poems”  
And the love of reciting a rhyme.

And now I hold in my arms tonight  
A child with golden locks,  
And he’ll fall asleep as I read to him  
The poem of “The Owl And The Fox.”

## THE PASSING OF GIDEON YOUNG

*by Paul McFarland*

I got a call one autumn day  
From cousin Silas Dean.  
He said two days had passed since  
Uncle Gideon last was seen.

He'd gone out chasing whitetails  
On a brisk November day,  
And where he went and for how long,  
No one could seem to say.

Now Silas knew that I had followed  
Uncle Gid around  
On many hunts, So I would know  
His favorite stomping ground.

He said he'd call the kinfolk,  
And some friends here round about,  
And then we'd get together,  
And we'd search old Gideon out.

I told him, "Hold up just a bit,  
And give me half a day.  
I think I know just where he is.  
I'll leave without delay."

Now just last week, old Gid and I  
Were on a big buck's trail  
That led us through a cedar swamp,  
An alder brake and swale.

I bagged that eight point buck that day  
And tagged out for the year,  
And that's why Gid was all alone,  
Just him out hunting deer.

I grabbed my duds and headed out  
To check his favorite spot,

While thinking that he might be hurt,  
Or maybe even shot.

And as I traipsed out through the woods,  
I thought of that first year  
That Gid had taken me in tow  
In search of whitetail deer.

He taught me of the woodlands  
And of his philosophy,  
And soon I had a different view  
Of what life ought to be.

I found Gid sitting by a tree;  
His rifle by his side.  
That thirty-two with open sights  
In which he took great pride.

The frost was on his moustache,  
And his eyelids, they were closed,  
And I could tell that he was  
More than mildly indisposed.

But I could find no evidence  
Of wound by gun or knife.  
It seemed that what had got him  
Was an overdose of life.

Protruding from his pocket  
Was the corner of a note,  
And in it were the final words  
That Uncle Gideon wrote.

He said, "I hope who finds me here  
Will come to understand  
That I spent all my boyhood years  
On this fine piece of land."

"This tree where I am sitting,  
I would climb long years ago.

It held me in its branches  
Safe from adults down below."

"Now on that yonder cellar hole,  
My old house used to be.  
And there is something over there  
I'd like for you to see."

I walked across what must have been  
At one time his front yard,  
And what I saw down in that crevice  
Made me swallow hard.

For stacked in that old cellar  
Was about two cord of wood,  
And how old Gid had stacked it there,  
I clearly understood

That it was not in usual rows  
Of four by four by eight,  
But stacked to form a funeral bier  
All set to conflagrate.

And as the oak leaves rustled  
In the trees that frosty day,  
I then continued reading  
Uncle Gid's communiqué.

He said, "I know my last request  
Might set you ill at ease,  
So don't feel obligated,  
And back out now if you please,"

"But if you're kith or kin of mine,  
That yonder funeral bier,  
Should come as no surprise to you.  
I've always made it clear"

"That when my time comes, I'll not have  
My mortal flesh and bone

All dressed up in a suit and tie  
Beneath some granite stone."

With shaking hands I pried that rifle  
From his icy grip,  
And like a bag of grain, I heisted  
Gid up on my hip.

He wasn't very heavy,  
And it was no time at all,  
That I had Gid transported  
Down inside that cellar wall.

Now rigor mortis had set in,  
And with much trepidation  
I prepped the stiffened carcass  
Of old Gid for his cremation.

And as I lit the tinder  
For the hungry fire that day,  
I read the final words  
That Uncle Gideon had to say.

He wrote, "Now you don't have to stay,  
And don't feel that you should,  
But just make sure, before you go,  
The fire's going good."

## *About the poets in this volume—*

### 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.

### 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.

### 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

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 *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 Dagney 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 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, 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.

### Ray Janes

Ray was born in Maryland, moved to Maine in 1968, and has lived here mostly since. Ray built and restored boats and most recently worked for Rockport Marine for 17 years building and restoring wood boats. Ray had four children, one of whom died at 35 years. Ray's son now lives in Singapore and is married with two small children and his two daughters live here in 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.

Thank you