

STANZA

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MAINE POETS SOCIETY

VOLUME 22, NUMBER 3

JULY 2014

NEWS OF OUR NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be Saturday, September 20, 2014, Rockland Library, 80 Union Street, Rockland.

Directions: Note parking entrance is on White Street.

From the North (Augusta): Take ME-17 E/Eastern Ave for 40.3 miles. Turn right onto Birch St/U.S. 1A.

Continue to Beech Street then turn left. Take the 2nd right onto White Street.

From the South (Portland): Take U.S. 1 N, it's about 50 miles to Rockland. Turn left onto Broadway/U.S. 1A.

Take the 3rd right onto Limerock Street and then the 2nd left onto White Street.

From the East (Bangor): Take U.S. 1A W/Bangor Road. Continue onto ME-3 W/U.S. 1 S/E Main St.

Continue to follow U.S. 1 S for 29 miles. Turn left onto Main Street in Camden.

Continue onto U.S. 1 S/Elm Street. Turn right onto Rankin Street. Take a slight left onto Union Street.

Turn right onto Beech Street. Take the 1st left onto White Street.

Agenda for Meeting

9:30	Registration and coffee	1:00	<u>Form Contest:</u>
10:00	Business Meeting		Common / Ballad Meter
10:30	<u>Subject Contest:</u> Walls	1:50	Guest judge: Rachel Contreni Flynn
	Member judge: James Breslin		Guest judge reads own work
11:20	Member judge reads own work	2:30	Announcements and closing
12:00	Lunch and Silent Auction	2:45	Reading in the Round

Contest Submissions

(Submission to a contest constitutes permission to publish.)

- Send to Jennifer Doughty
278 Flaggy Meadow Rd.
Gorham, ME 04038
- **DEADLINE:** August 20, 2014
- 1 poem per contest (no fee)
- 2 copies of each poem (ONE of each identified)
- Envelope: Letter-size (long, #10) marked "CONTEST"
- INCLUDE SASE!!

AM Poem—SUBJECT: Judge, James Breslin

"Walls," figurative and/or literal (any form, limit 24 lines). Think of Robert Frost's "Mending Wall," Tennyson's "Flower in the crannied wall," Shakespeare's "Wall" character of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the Great Wall of China, Berlin Wall, and so many others. Have fun!

PM Poem—FORM: Judge, Rachel Contreni Flynn

Common (or Ballad) Meter (24-line limit). Quatrains, with the first and third lines in tetrameter and the second and fourth lines in trimeter (generally iambic), rhyming *abab* for common meter—or, alternatively, rhyming only the second and fourth lines (ballad meter). These closely-related forms are two of the oldest and most beloved in the history of poetry. See Emily Dickinson's work for many examples. "America the Beautiful" and "Amazing Grace" were both written in common meter, a favorite choice for hymns.

ABOUT THE JUDGES

Member Judge James P. Breslin was born in 1943. He is married and had one son, who died in 2008 from a seizure. James wrote poetry from childhood, but after a few adolescent attempts to get published in *The New Yorker* and in *Poetry*, he gave up efforts to get published until recently. He has published in *The Moth*, a Journal out of Belfast, Ireland, *the Aurorean*, *The Lyric*, and *Off the Coast* and has a book of poems recently published by North Country Press. Many of his poems are dark, but he sees poetry as redemptive. His favorite poets are T.S. Eliot, the balladic William Blake, and Emily Dickinson. James believes poetry should be challenging, but should not be hopelessly obscure.

Guest Judge Rachel Contreni Flynn was born in Paris, raised in a small town in Indiana, and now lives with her family in an 1850s farmhouse in rural Maine. Her publications include: *Tongue* (Red Hen Press, 2010), which won the Benjamin Saltman Award; a chapbook, *Haywire* (Bright Hill Press, 2009); and *Ice, Mouth, Song* (Tupelo Press, 2005), which won the Dorset Prize. She has been nominated for Pushcart Prizes, received two literature grants from the Illinois Arts Council, and a Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. Rachel received her MFA from Warren Wilson College, currently teaches poetry at Colby, and serves on the editorial board of the Beloit Poetry Journal. She was Gorham's Artist in Residence 2012-2013.

SPRING 2014 CONTEST WINNERS

AM Contest—Subject: Mirrors; Judge: Sally Rowe Joy

First Prize—James Breslin

The Queen Inquires Again of Her Magic Mirror

The Mirror hated her – this vain and venial Queen as
 with wide green anxious eyes she stood before him.
 “Tell me, once again, my glossy Churl, if I’m still...”
 “...the fairest in this piddling land of yours?”
 It delighted him to see her vicious breast heaving
 like a chipmunk’s in the talons of a Tom.
 And so he took his time to speak. “Why my
 Dear, so sadly insecure that every morning you require
 me, a fragile silvered glass, to reassure you.
 Beauty’s after-all no more than just a brittle
 skim of ice upon a forest brook. It’s the sweetness
 in the water that matters to a traveler.”
 “Don’t toy with me,” she spat. “Don’t toy with me.
 I’d smash you in a second Fiend...” “And yet you won’t.
 I tell the truth that those who grovel won’t.
 So please! Do not deprive me of the
 luscious little treats I get when taunting you.”
 “Enough of all your nasty banter, Glass. Now tell me.”
 As from a rippling pool a face appeared... It was not hers.
 Tears of rage collected in the corners of her eyes
 like savage drops of rain upon a battered leaf.
 She flung herself upon her couch and sobbed.
 The mirror shook with laughter on the wall.

Second Prize—Lisa DesRochers

reflection

a girl of five sees her twin in grandma's bathroom
 peering across the toothpaste-speckled sink
 is her best friend her confidante

both are blondes both have birthmarks on their back and both
 love nothing more than freshly picked raspberries kissed with morning dew

her friend giggles as she hops from leaf to flower
 a magical power of movement
 she hangs upside-down making faces in the glistening droplets
 rounder than the big blue sky

she wished her eyes were that color

and so did her friend in the water

she wished they could play with her dollhouse together

and so did her friend on the dresser

she wished they wouldn't talk at the same time

and so did her friend on the wall

she wished she understood this charm

and so did her friend in the jewelry box

she wished she could set her friend free

but that little girl fought back

fist-to-fist

glass from all angles

they'll only be together in reflection

Reminder: Please invite someone who is not a member now to come to our next meeting!
 We are looking to grow as a Society!

Third Prize—Rebecca Irene

Echo

I was born an Oread: beautiful mountain nymph storyteller to many wives	nymph, wives.
How the women listened while their husbands ravished	listened ravished.
Until Juno punished me, took away my voice Cursed to only repeat	voice. repeat.
Infinite tragedy trapped inside this aching head web of thoughts never equal to spoken strands	head; strands.
Like an answered prayer, I glimpsed perfection understood the power such beauty might hold	perfection, hold.
Narcissus' embrace would have freed my suffering Come! Love your words forever on my tender tongue	suffering. tongue.
Instead, his trembling lips drank illusion How his hands stroked rippling limbs	illusion. limbs.
I watched his own reflection consume (Repeated such sounds of rapture	consume. rapture.)
To him, I was mere shade compared to his own sparkling mirror	shade mirror.
Yet, my love returns to me each Spring with blooms still bending towards water	Spring, water;
flowering fiery centers cradled by white A single stem renders tender hearts stricken	white. stricken—
Watch them weeping fallen on bended knees	weeping, knees

Reminder

Part of your annual enrollment fee in the Maine Poets Society (MPS) also pays for your enrollment in the National Federation of State Poetry Societies (NFSPS). This results in your being eligible to participate in many contests during the course of the year. We encourage you to visit their website: www.nfsp.com. Clicking on "Strophes Online" on the left-hand side of the home page will give you access to the most recent issue of their newsletter.

First Honorable Mention—Marta Finch**A Mirror for Medusa**

In her sculpture garden, she wandered alone,
 Lamenting the many fine men turned to stone
 Who might have been her lovers in younger days.
 Though warned of the fate to all who met her gaze,
 Each one in turn had come to do her ill;
 Yet she could stand in admiration, still—
 This granite one with glinting, garnet-eye;
 That youth in marble, looking almost shy.
 Inside she felt the same, not old. She thought
 Of bold Poseidon, and how they'd both been caught.
 She missed the tiny curls before her ears
 And hadn't seen a mirror now for years.
 At first she'd sought her garden-pool's reflection
 But all the snakes, sensing her direction
 Hissed and vied to see who would drink first—
 Rippling the smooth surface in their thirst.
 Here was a man approaching—in the gods' favor,
 She knew from Hermes' sandals. He'd come to save her!
 And look at his lovely, polished shield! She raced
 To greet him, realizing, too late, he faced
 Away. Then she saw the blade, but a glance
 In the polished shield had revealed her circumstance:
 Despite her serpents, writhing, myriad,
 She was still mortal. She'd never been so glad.

Second Honorable Mention—**Elizabeth Berkenbile****Psyche's Mirror**

She slips
 from sleepy reverie
 into the starry pool
 where dreams converge like fishes
 gliding into view:

a donkey gives advice,
 birds flap wings of flame,
 priests turn into acrobats,
 temples crumble
 in the rain.

Adrift in Psyche's mirror,
 where metaphor is queen,
 the hidden messengers
 of sleep reveal
 themselves in dreams;

until, emerging
 from the deep, each vision
 starts to fade—a cordial
 of nepenthe, sipped
 before she's full awake.

Third Honorable Mention—Bill Frayer**Cold Reflection**

"Bewilderment increases in the presence of mirrors." Tarjei Vesaas

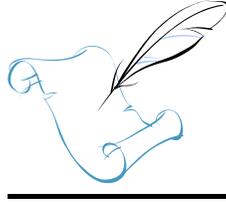
The child arrived amid mirrors and smoke.
 She walked into the room
 and did not know who she was
 and what she could trust.
 The objects reflected light
 and the people reflected their own wants.

She walked into the cathedral
 and she thought she saw God.

She walked into the classroom
 and thought she was wise.

She walked into the arms of a man
 and thought she was beloved.

Yet she stood in front of a mirror
 and thought she was ugly.



PM Contest—Sonnet; Judge: Marita O'Neill

First Prize—Sally Woolf-Wade

Northhaven Autumn

At last the rustivating folks have gone.
The tennis nets are stored away somewhere.
No mowers hum along the sweeping lawns,
no sails drift down the empty Thoroughfare.

But lobster boats appear at morning light.
Old trucks emerge -- no plates and worn-out treads.
Men check all doors and windows, sealed up tight.
No gardeners tend the faded flower beds.

The daily pace of living gradually slowed,
it's back to quilts and needles, hammers, nails,
to greeting friends on walks along the road,
to kitchen coffee laced with inside tales.

The tools and toys of summer stored on shelves,
the island families now have lives, themselves.

Third Prize—Carol Bachofner

A Simple Rhyme

It's of no use forcing a rhyme,
your fingers gripping pencil lead.
Say you'll lounge long upon your bed
while sonnet music bides its time,
unfolds at long last in your head.
Say you'll wait until it is sure,
a simple doppelganger, pure
twin sounds that flow to the ends ebb
slowly like the tide to the strand,
near the same sound but uncontrived.
What verse, with stiffened rhyme survives?
None! Soothe your ear, relax your hand.
Don't think therefore of full, but slant
rhymes. This for sure is what you want.

Second Prize—Rebecca Irene

War Dove

Wave overcame your wing as you flew low.
It was your war on self, your rage from want,
the ache of old, sad bones—such weight to tow.
And so you sank, relieved and nonchalant,
allowed blue's greed to pluck your sprig of peace,
allowed salt's thirst to drink your white of down.
You cooed, 'Here's death! At last, all pain will cease;
all tears will dry. I'll sing and wear a crown.'
'Curse Noah,' you heard deep mermen proclaim.
'His dove desired to taste eternal wind.
She now shall feast on war, dark death, and flame;
arrow for olive—preach the world has sinned.'

Return war dove, embrace the slow, soft burn—
Resurrection's fierce song they've yet to learn.

First Honorable Mention—Maggie Finch

In My Mirror

This is the face that launched five lovely ships.
Not one returned—each one, a perfect bird,
Coped with the crossing. How my old brain dips
And swirls, these days!—Whatever I've averred
Could be *all wrong!*—Likewise, the things we know
And I disclaim, could very well be true,
Leaving me in a pickle—This is so,
But—I don't care! Let me explain to you:
This little mirror came to me when we
Were far too young to journey to the feast;
Always she did her very best to be
As charming as the nature of the beast
Could easily allow—Now, my great age
Laughs at the grey glass, and the wrinkled page.

Second Honorable Mention—Jenny Doughty**A private joke**

I remember laughing with my father;
 helpless and wobbling as beached jellyfish
 we lolled on the kitchen table, the words
 burbling in our mouths like sodawater.
 The family couldn't prise it out of us.
 Each choked attempt to spit out what it was
 that set us giggling started the cycle
 off again until we leaned exhausted
 on each other's arms, with tears pouring down
 both our faces, cheeks flushed and mouths awry
 almost as if we had been crying.
 There's no-one now remembers that but me.
 I'm sorry that I never talked to him
 about what made him cry as well as laugh.

Third Honorable Mention—Elizabeth Berkenbile**To my mother**

I cannot find a way to give you rest,
 determined as you are in your despair,
 or bring bright birds of summer back to nest,
 now winter's chill has left your branches bare.
 You linger in the fading shades of day
 as twilight dims and night is coming on,
 reminding me you've little time to stay
 and I should cherish what will soon be gone.
 My sense of loss absorbs me like a curse.
 I can't revive your youth or make you whole,
 though if there were a way I would reverse
 the season's icy clutch, the hours that toll;
 but know my love grows stronger as we face
 the coming of the night. Let us embrace!

Youth Poetry Award

As many of you know, Maine Writers and Publishers Alliance offers annual contests for Literary Awards in a number of categories, including a poetry contest for youth. For the past several years, Maine Poets Society has sponsored this portion of the contests – as opposed to doing one of our own, which we had tried with very limited success. MWPA evaluates the entries and chooses the winner.

This year, since our president was out of the area at the time, Jenny Doughty, Vice President, had the pleasure of attending the awards ceremony and presenting the award to Tessa Holbrook, a student from Falmouth High School. Included was a copy of *Maine Taproot* and the offer of a one-year membership in the Maine Poets Society. Next year, Tessa will be studying abroad in Germany. She loves reading and writing poetry, reading books, and riding horses. When she's not busy with all this, she creates art in many shapes and forms. Here for your reading pleasure is one of Tessa's poems.

Stones

I have deep pockets to store my pebbles
 So when someone hurls a rude word to me
 I can drop one.
 And when the words start to outweigh those pebbles,
 I can follow my trail back.
 To a time when I had less insults,
 and more sanity.
 And with pockets full of pebbles,
 I can face the world.
 People say it's stupid,
 say I need a thicker skin.
 But why would I want another layer between me and the sun?
 I'd rather have heavy pockets than a heavy soul.
 So fill your pockets with pebbles, and your face with light.

Maggie Finch – an Update



Maggie Finch was our first member profiled in the *Stanza* (Summer 2012). Since then, she has moved into an apartment in Portland, living independently but with other seniors. Life is a lot easier with no real housework and all her meals included. (“Every morning someone hands me a cup of hot coffee I haven’t had to work for!” she reports delightedly.) Maggie misses the Kennebec River flowing beside her former house, the oldest in Bath, but has a view of Casco Bay from her little balcony and likes to think the gulls there have flown down from her old home just to pay her a visit!

After writing poetry for over 85 years, Maggie continues to create new poems at the age of 93—winning prizes at three of the last four MPS meetings! Her work was published in *Christian Century* and *The Lyric* a few years back and she is planning to submit more soon. It pleases her that formal (metrical) poetry is having a resurgence and is being regularly accepted in journals again—at long last.



President’s Ink

Welcome to summer (finally! after such a long, hard winter and wet wet spring). Outside my office window are bees, butterflies, & birds faint with heat. That is about how I feel too as temps continue to soar — the mug is on!

I look ahead to our September meeting in Rockland, and my thoughts turn to our society and its mission to provide fellowship and a shared sense of creativity through poetry. I am eager to see how our poetry has grown and developed over this steamy summer. What will we have learned and applied to our work? What experiments have we dared that make our poems fresh and exciting?

To that end I am pleased to announce the unveiling of Maine Poets Society’s Opportunity Grants program. This was announced to all of you at the May meeting as a concept voted upon by your Board. Working on defining and refining this program, we are now ready to begin accepting applications. Do you have a small project in mind? Is there a writing experience you’d like to attend in fall or spring? A workshop online? A workshop face-to-face? If so, the society may be able to help defray the cost.

You will be mailed a copy of the information sheet and application (by either e-mail or paper mail). The same will be available on our web site as well. You may either download or print the application to fill out and send to Anne Hammond (address provided on form).

My wish for you on this lovely summer day is to keep writing (don’t let the heat get you down!) and to make it a priority to attend the fall meeting in Rockland.

Have good ink!

Carol Bachofner, President

PS: Why not bring a new member to the next meeting?

In Memoriam

It is with sadness that we share the news of the death of Lorna Starbird, a member of the Poetry Fellowship of Maine and the Maine Poets Society for 45 years, and a person with a deep and passionate love for poetry. She died on June 8, 2014 at the age of 94. Lorna was born on September 14, 1919 in Lewiston, Maine. She graduated from Lisbon Falls High School in 1937 and attended Farmington State Normal School. She lived in Brockton, Massachusetts for many years. She was employed for 35 years as an executive secretary. For seven years she volunteered for the Brockton Public Library doing a radio program once a week for WBET. Following her retirement, she was a volunteer at the East Side Library branch of the Brockton Public Library and as a Docent at the Fuller Craft Museum in Brockton.

Her MPS dues are paid for 2014. Although unable to attend meetings for the past several years, she was always interested in the affairs of the society. She was present for our September meeting the year that she turned 90 and was honored that day with a birthday celebration. Those who have copies of our two most recent anthologies (*Coming Home Twice* and *Maine Taproot*) will find two of her poems in each.

A Memorial Service was held for family and friends at the Lisbon Falls United Methodist Church on June 30th. A few members of the Maine Poets Society were in attendance.

Check out our Website!

Please check out the MPS website (MainePoetsSociety.com) for all you need to know about the Maine Poets Society: Gatherings, Directions, Membership Application, Contests, Contact Information, President's Message, and more.

Share Your Member News

Holding a Reading or Event? Publishing a Book? Winner of a Contest? Submit your information to
Sally Joy at: jsjoy@roadrunner.com or 16 Riverton Street, Augusta, ME 04330

Please include your contact information in case of questions and
if sending via e-mail, please use **Info for Stanza** as the subject line.

Deadline for Member News for the next Stanza: January 1, 2015

How to Submit Publication News:

Members may submit to the *Stanza* and the website: (MainePoetsSociety.com) news of recent publication of individual poems, books of poetry, or books related to poetry.

- Format for book publications: member's name; name of book; publisher; date of release.
- Format for poem publications (submit news any time *after* publication, in print or online): member's name; name of poem; journal or website name; name of press if different from journal (e.g., "*the Aurorean*; Encircle Publications"); date on journal (and/or volume and issue number) or website.

Publication News

Books

James Breslin, *The Crow and Other Poems*; North Country Press; release date, June 23, 2014.

Poems

James P. Breslin, "At the Camp on Lake St. George," *the Moth* (an Irish Literary Journal), Issue 17, Summer 2014

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FIRST CLASS

Stanza is the tri-annual
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