

STANZA

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MAINE POETS SOCIETY

VOLUME 24, NUMBER 2

July 2016

NEWS OF OUR NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be Saturday, September 17, 2016, at St. Bernard's Catholic Church, 150 Broadway, Rockland.

From the North: Take Route 1 South through Camden and Rockland. From Route 1 turn right onto Broadway at the Stella Maris House at the light. The church will be on your left.

From the South: Take Route 1 North through Thomaston to Rockland. Turn left on Broadway, passing Stella Maris House on left, turn immediately left into church parking lot.

As usual, there will be a \$12 registration fee which includes lunch. (Please note that the fee applies to all attendees and is the same even if individuals opt not to share in the lunch.)

Agenda for Meeting

9:30	Registration and coffee	1:00	Contest: A poem using or making reference to a myth – 24-line limit Member judge: Jenny Doughty
10:00	Business Meeting		
10:15	Open Mic” (sign up at registration)	1:50	Member judge reads own work
10:45	Writing Prompt and a chance to write	2:30	Announcements and closing (NOTE: We need to be out of the facility by 3:00.)
12:00	Lunch and Silent Auction		

Contest Submissions

(Submission to contest constitutes permission to publish.)

- Send to Carol Bachofner
12 Center St, Rockland ME 04841
DEADLINE: August 17, 2016
- 1 poem – 24 lines or fewer (no fee)
- 2 copies of your poem (ONE identified)
- Envelope: Letter-size (long, #10) marked “CONTEST”
- INCLUDE SASE!!

CONTEST: a poem that makes some use of or reference to a myth or myths from any culture. 24-line limit. The poem can be about a myth, or it can be to do with the way mythology still appears in and underpins modern life and thought or any other use the writer wishes to make of mythology. The definition of ‘myth’ is left up to the writer and may include references to religious texts if the writer wishes.

Member Judge, Jenny Doughty is a British poet who has lived in Maine since 2002. She is a former English teacher, and Education Advisor to Penguin Books in the UK. In addition to poetry, she has also published the books *Key Poets*, an anthology of pre-20th century poetry, *Historical Diaries, Letters and Journals*, and *Breakthroughs in Science* under the name Jenny Green. Her short stories and articles have been published in a number of magazines which include *Bella magazine*, *Parenting*, and *First Steps*, where she also did a stint as an agony aunt (Brit-speak for a person like Dear Abby who offers answers to readers’ problems). Her poems have appeared in *The Aurorean*, *Pulse online review*, *Naugatuck River Review*, *Four Way Review*, Maine Poetry Society’s anthology *Taproot* and *Gathered*, an anthology of contemporary Quaker poetry. Jenny is Vice President of MPS and resides in Gorham, Maine.

MAY 2016 CONTEST WINNERS

AM Contest—Form: Ekphrastic; Judge: Carl Little**First Prize—Gus Peterson****Family Tree**

-on viewing “Safekeeping” by Karen MacDonald,
April 15th, Harlow Gallery

Behind these portholes
they stare out at the world,
this package with its trunk
unwrapped for all of us
to see – branches of wedding,
gap toothed school grins,
bent back elders shading
their canes – moments
that never bud again,
popped between Time’s
thumb and forefinger,
fragile as anything
blown full with life
dancing on air.

Second Prize— Catherine Neuhardt-Minor**Space and Flight**

Like the Brazilian contralto who sings an aria without
opening her mouth.
Like Orion, pebble-spaced, flaunting his belt.
Like balancing intuition and sensory fallibility.
Like scaling the wall, catapulting the word.
Allowing one eye to look at the other, and smile.
Like a secret being hidden.
Like the lapping of hollow-eyed dawn.
Like pardon, revenge, or oblivion.
Like deep in twilight.
Like the space between two hairs.
Like the future, already dwindling.
Like not knowing the mirrored face looking back.

Third Prize—James Breslin**Grandma Tilly on Linda’s gift portrait**

It looks like me in a way but the back-round isn’t clear.
The curtains are just strips of paint and you can’t tell what they are.
The face’s OK, I guess, and looks like me a little except the sour puss.
But the back-ground’s vague and mushy.
(I think a painting should look like what is painted.)
You made me look so stern. You could have made me smile.
My eyes look like I’m staring out at something I don’t like.
My lips look pressed together as if I might be mad and
The colors look so pale. You could have made them brighter.
Is that gold around my face?
Looks like tarnished bronze with all that green mixed in.
I suppose you meant to show the sunshine through the window.
Doesn’t really look like sun-light if you ask.
The blue dress is OK except in certain spots it looks all worn.
But the buttons don’t line up.
Now if you’re saying I don’t laugh I do. You make it like I don’t.
Like when I cheat you two at checkers
and that time I brought the hose into the house
To win the water-fight. I got you and your sister really good.
So if you want my final judgement on the picture I’d say it only so-so.
Why don’t you just keep it? And anyway, my hair just isn’t blue.

First Honorable Mention—**Lynda La Rocca****On Viewing Georgia O’Keefe’s
“Ladder to the Moon”**

How and how
to climb those vast,
black, brooding hills,
perch atop a firm, fine butte,
then slingshot, leap
the lowest rung
of yellow ladder
floating in jade sky,
green sea that cannot find its ocean.

And how to balance on each step
while reaching for a half-grown moon
that glows, white pearl,
white bone
above dark desert,
dreams of fullness,
and the golden stair to night
then back to morning.

Second Honorable Mention— Judith McCrae Harris**The Marsh**

Who can comprehend the dignity
of an autumn marsh gathering sunlight?
The birds, unknowing, ornament her reeds.
To claim such calm as this on a clear day
is something I can scarce imagine.

My greedy flesh, the craven want
that flaunts my flaws, calls me
down with a falconer’s control,
and I am bled of innocence.

Yet, even so, beside this marsh
there sings in me some
sweet, wild sensibility
that remembers the sky
and longs to fly like a golden bird
up from the silent reeds.

Third Honorable Mention—Michelle Faith**The Next Step**

after “Summertime,” by Edward Hopper

After all, it is the foot that matters,
the toe of the right one teetering on the edge
of a step like the fulcrum of a seesaw, as if
at any second the woman in the gossamer dress
may tip the balance and move one way
or another—out into the blank
beyond the picture frame or back
into the dark interior of what she knows.
Either way, what can we make of her,
her wants, her needs? A slight shift of weight
is all it might take to make things
clear.

There, in that single foot, exists
the possibility of choice—not hers in the end
but ours. One day will she go? one day retreat?
It all depends on what we bring to the moment—
perhaps having just finished our morning coffee
and anxious to get on with the day’s work,
perhaps having lost a lover
and hoping to find a new one,
perhaps annoyed at the woman,
or at Hopper, for not choosing,
for leaving all that responsibility
to us.

PM Contest—Subject, “Wild Animals”; Judge: Woody Woodsum**First Prize— Elizabeth Berkenbile****Sanctuary**

Nestled beneath cathedral boughs,
camouflaged and cradled close
in the leaf-cushioned arms of a fallen log,

I listen as branches creak,
and tiny creatures titter their vespers
in the soft dusk of falling light.

See how the glistening, green banana slug
marks her shining trail across
the dark dapple of the forest floor,

gliding through sun and shadow,
coursing a path to her secret place.

Second Prize— Lynda La Rocca**Great Horned Owl**

Gray guardian of stone and sky,
sprouting from red rock
you stand,
feathered sentinel
with eyes
eternally unblinking.
Gazing into future, past,
solemn,
steadfast,
orbs of gold
watching,
waiting,
knowing time
will curl back on itself again,
unfurl and spiral to
another start,
another end.

Third Prize— Margie Kivel**Mergence**

Settled on bench under Swamp Maple, I scan the tiny pond
for movement, send out my silent request for signs of life, my
*okay Nature, show me what's here, give me flashes of color,
sound, suck my breath out of my body* stance. I let go, sink
into water, twisted limbs, curtains of A-Z green, until there is
only me as web hung to snare life. Click my vision gloms
onto a piece of something. Dot by dot it becomes yellow-eye
stare from cutout doily of leaves, nails me to the moment.
Mind pop-up says: *this has to be bird eye watching me watch
it*. Both of us bulged on high alert, looking for clues —
another leaf-window opens to reveal long yellow bill. My
heart-beat pounds rib as pieces fall into place in a stunning
Mah Jong play that makes my eyes scream **Great Blue**, just
as the heron jumps off his hidden perch, flies low over the
pond, legs dangling, lifts to clear the trees, and is gone.

First Honorable Mention—**Mary Van Milligan****Vibrations**

Grief haunted the starless silence
since you passed, but its grasp
relaxed as I watched a small bat
swoop down from the eaves,
weave loops like fly fishing lines
cast in the air—the bat a master
at finding its way in the dark
by sensing the pulsing waves
in all things—vibrations as subtle
as regular beats of a heart,
as invisible as shimmering stars
until night reveals their shine.

When grief tried to hover again
near my bed, I listened in the dark
to the flow of my breath
blowing a feather off your pillow;
then felt the tickle of goose down
as it curled into the shadows.
I followed the feather
floating through my window
towards the curve of bat wings
and upwards to the stars
flickering with a message
across the silence.

Second Honorable Mention—Anita Liberty**Sweet Falling**

Mid-winter famine --
 Under leafless tree,
 One thin doe
 Gazes at
 Out-of-reach apple.
 O, the generous wind --
 Sweet falling.

Third Honorable Mention—Gus Peterson**Ants**

The day will come
 when they overrun
 our poison moats
 and Trojan Horse traps,
 swelling from floorboards,
 dripping down walls,
 pillaging sweet ambrosia
 from the larder of this lathe
 and plaster Olympus,
 and we gods shall rage
 at this upending of the order,
 boiling homes, loosing plague,
 mashing body after body
 beneath thumbs that blot
 the sun, yet they muster
 as Demeter greens her grass
 with jubilation, unspooling
 paths delicate as thread drawn
 through a glint of shears,
 touching faces where one
 ends and another
 begins.

Electronic Copies of Winning Poems for the Stanza

When you submit poems for our contests, be sure to keep an electronic copy *as submitted* on your computer. If your work is selected for recognition by a judge (whether a prize or an honorable mention), please email an electronic copy to *Stanza* editor, Sally Joy, as soon as possible after the meeting. If you've made changes since your submission, please do not include them. Give us the poem to include in the *Stanza* as it was judged. Thank you.

Please Let Us Know When Your Contact Info Changes

Because most copies of the *Stanza* are distributed by email, it is especially important that you let us know of changes as soon as they occur. Margery Kivel, Membership Secretary, is the person to contact with changes (address, phone number, and/or email address). She can be reached at mtkivel@gmail.com Thank you.

Why not invite a friend to come to the next meeting with you.

Reminder: Your Maine Poets Society dues include membership in the National Federation of State Poetry Societies. Thus, you may enter many of their contests offering cash prizes. Visit their website: nfps.com. Click on "Strophes" at the left-hand side of the home page to get access to their newsletter.

Opportunity Grants Update

Opportunity grants (on a first-come, first-served basis) are available to members in good standing for help—up to \$300—for attendance at a workshop, to take a class, or to attend a poetry festival or residency. You can download a Membership Opportunity Grant Application and guidelines from our website. Click on “Membership” at the home page. As we finalized this issue of the *Stanza*, there was still \$550 available for 2016.

Publication News

Books

David McCann, *Same Bird*; Moon Pie Press, 2016

Charles Eastland, *TRIPLETS*, eBook, April 2016, available on Kindle through *Amazon.com*.

Reading

David McCann will be reading from his book *Same Bird*, at Longfellow Books, 1 Monument Way in Portland, on July 14, at 7 p.m.

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. If sending via e-mail, please use **Info for Stanza** as the subject line.

Deadline for Member News for the next Stanza: November 20, 2015.

Round Robin Update

Our Round Robins have had a serious slump over the past few years and need to be revitalized. If you have been part of a robin that has disappeared or seems not to be flying at full speed, or if you asked to be part of a robin and haven't yet been actively involved, here's your chance.

Please email James Breslin at jameslindabreslin@gmail.com **and** Sally Joy at jsjoy@roadrunner.com or send a note via US Mail to Sally Joy, 16 Riverton Street, Augusta, ME 04330. Include in your request your name, mailing address, and preferred email. If you have a preference for lyric (rhymed and metered poetry as opposed to free verse), please include that information. We'll send you a list of others who will be part of your robin and instructions as to how to proceed.

Round Robins are composed of six or seven members who constructively criticize each other's poetry by mail. When a participant receives the Robin, she/he puts in an original poem, comments on the other poems, and sends the packet on to the next person in the list.

Past practice has been that the Round Robin Secretary should be informed when this happens. We may change the notification process to ask that all members of a robin be emailed both when a packet is received and when it is put back in the mail again.

When the Robin comes round again, the old poem -- now covered with comments -- is removed, replaced and the packet sent on as before.

Sad News

We recently received news of the sudden passing of long-time MPS Board member Anne Hammond. Anne served for many years as the society's Treasurer and Membership Secretary and was generally seen at the registration desk at the start of our meetings. Most recently, she has been our Historian and has contributed two excellent member profiles to the *Stanza*. She will be greatly missed.



President's Ink

It's with heavy heart that I write to inform you of the unexpected death of our former treasurer and historian, Anne Hammond on or about July 7th. I have no details yet as to any arrangements made by her family. Our thoughts and prayers go out to her husband, Steve and their family.

As summer rolls on toward our September 17th meeting in Rockland, I want to let you know about a bit of a change (well maybe a BIG change) in our meeting format. In our surveys (thanks for sending them in!!!) it was obvious that many of you were ready to have a bit more involvement in the meetings. Many said they were ready to try something new in terms of how we conduct the meetings. So, for this ONE TIME, we are trying the following format.

1. Coffee and registration – 9:30-10:00 a.m.
2. Brief general meeting – 10:00 -10:15
3. Open Mic reading (this replaces reading in the round). Bring one poem you'd like to share with the group. First readers will be those who have NOT entered our contest, followed by anyone else, including guests.
10:15 - 10:45
4. Writing Prompt! Yes, that is correct...a chance to do some writing together. 10:45-11:45
5. Lunch - noon
6. Contest Judge and awarding of prizes; judge reads her own work and imparts wisdom – 1:00-2:45 p.m.
7. Clean up and departure; **we need to be out of the facility by 3:00 p.m.**

As you can see, we will have only ONE contest. Hopefully we can get feedback form you as to how this format works to get members more involved (hands on) and how well this format did or did not make our meeting more dynamic. There will be a BRIEF (one- three questions) questionnaire for you to fill out before you leave the meeting.

As I write this, it is getting H.O.T. here. I hope you are somewhere cool doing something cool as you read this. See you at the meeting in Rockland on September 17th at St Bernard's Catholic Church. Don't forget to bring a notebook and pen along with a poem to share at open mic.

Wishing you "good ink,"

Carol Bachofner, President –

STANZA, Maine Poets Society
16 Riverton Street
Augusta, ME 04864

FIRST CLASS

Stanza is the tri-annual
newsletter of the
Maine Poets Society
promoting good poetry
since 1936

FMI or to join, write
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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.