

Minutes of the Third 1996 HSA National Meeting

[as reported in the *HSA Newsletter*, Vol. XI, No. 4, autumn 1996]

The meeting was held in the Northbrook Public Library, Northbrook, Ill., on Saturday, September 14, 1996.

Executive Committee Meeting. The meeting was chaired by HSA President Barbara Ressler. Other officers present were Lee Gurga, First Vice President, and Charles Trumbull, Newsletter Editor.

A report from Acting Secretary Dee Evetts gave the current membership total as 612, and increase of one member since the same date in 1995.

A motion to change the HSA Regional Divisions was made and carried as follows: Maryland and the District of Columbia are transferred from the Northeast Region to the Southeast Region. This move was made at the request of the respective regional coordinators after consultation with HSA members involved.

With regard to the proposed HSA World Wide Web page, the following motion was carried: that Dee Evetts, John Hudak, Charles Trumbull, Alice Benedict, and Michael Dylan Welch work on this, with Dee Evetts as project leader. The Executive Committee retains authority to approve all contents of the Web page. The Committee approved placement of the HSA Information Sheet and the HSA Newsletter on the Web page.

A proposal was approved to acknowledge the contributions made by Mrs. Harold Henderson to the HSA. Barbara Ressler will implement this.

A proposal to appoint Kristen Deming as "Adviser to the Haiku Society of America" (with reference to next year's joint conference with the Haiku International Association in Tokyo) was approved, and the appointment duly made by President Barbara Ressler. A request from Ce Rosenow for the HSA to endorse or support Haiku North America 1997 was discussed, and Lee Gurga was authorized by Barbara Ressler to deal with this issue.

General meeting. This was attended by the following (as well as some others who did not sign up): Sara Brant, Randy Brooks, Patrick Brown, MaryJo Cally, Jocelyn Conway, Patricia Donegan, Lee Gurga, Bud Goodrich, Chuck Goodrich, Harvey Hess, Doris Kampfe, Joe Kirschner, John S. O'Connor, Barbara Ressler, Lidia Rozmus, Robert Spiess, and Charles Trumbull.

The meeting began with a welcome from organizer and regional coordinator, Sara Brant, followed by a lively round reading. Pres. Barbara Ressler presided over a short business meeting, during which the Minutes of the previous national meeting and the nominations for HSA officers were read and accepted. She reported on the main items of business from the Executive Committee meeting. Charles Trumbull read the names of the winners, the winning entries, and judges' comments from this year's Harold G. Henderson and Gerald M. Brady Senryû contests that had been received from Second Vice President Alice Benedict.

Robert Spiess kicked off the main program with a paper titled “Juxtaposition in Haiku.” He focused on the use of the *kireji* (“cutting word”) to create the split necessary for true haiku juxtaposition, hypothesizing that the most highly formed haiku juxtaposition usually follows three basic rules: (1) the two sections created by the *kireji* must be sufficiently distant and disassociated; (2) despite the distance, the sections must not be too dissimilar; (3) there must be a two-sided connection in which each image enhances the other.

Following Robert Spiess’s presentation, Randy M. Brooks explained how Gestalt psychology could be used to examine the organization of a haiku moment in “The Gestalt of Perception.” Using several poems to build on a foundation of Gestalt theory, which categorizes the way that people perceive their experiences, Randy explained how haiku poets juxtapose images in order to illuminate certain aspects of the landscape that might not otherwise emerge.

Papers on juxtaposition in haiku that had been submitted for the meeting were then read aloud; these included statements by H.F. Noyes, Patricia Neubauer, Michael Dylan Welch, Dee Evetts, and Lee Gurga.

Following a brief break for homemade strudel, Patricia Donegan, who received a Fulbright grant to work with translator Yoshie Ishibashi to bring the work of Chiyo-ni, perhaps the best and best-known woman haiku poet, into English, gave a personal and extraordinary talk about her forthcoming book, *Chiyo-ni: Woman Haiku Master*. Beginning with some details about her own studies, Patricia provided biographical details about Chiyo-ni. She focused on the sensuality of female imagery that distinguishes Chiyo-ni’s work, reading several of her favorite translations, including:

wrapped around
this world’s flower
hazy moon

change of kimono
showing only her back
to the blossoms’ fragrance

The afternoon concluded with a talk by Lidia Rozmus about the Polish haiku movement—altogether appropriate for a meeting in Chicago since its Polish population is the largest of any city in the world save only Warsaw. Lidia’s discussion focused on the history of haiku in Poland, which began during the German occupation in 1942, and has culminated in a major awakening during the 1990s. The first periodical in Poland devoted entirely to haiku has been thriving since 1994. According to Lidia, who visited Poland earlier this year and held readings of her haiku and showings of her *sumi-e*, the surge in interest in haiku in Poland shows that more and more people around the world are finding the common language of haiku. The general meeting adjourned at 5:00 P.M.

Afterwards. Attendees decamped to the home of Betty Dustman (Lee Gurga’s mother-in-law, through whose good offices the meeting room was secured) for a gracious

reception. After supper, an open reading by HSA members and friends and moderated by Sara Brant was held at Borders Books in Northbrook, Ill. This session included one paper, "Politics versus Haiku" by Charles Trumbull, that had been bumped from the afternoon session because time ran out.

— Sara Brant