

Third 1998 HSA Quarterly Meeting

[as reported in the *HSA Newsletter*, Vol. XIII, No. 4, autumn 1998]

Executive Committee Meeting. The HSA Executive Committee met before the National Meeting in Northampton, Mass., September 19, 1998. The meeting was chaired by Treasurer Raffael de Gruttola, as President Kristen Deming who was not able to attend. Frogpond editor Jim Kacian was also present.

The EC approved a proposal to charge a fee of \$10 for each submission to the Merit Book Awards contest, which will cover expenses of the contest and mailing. This includes sending all submitted books to the American Haiku Archives at the conclusion of each yearly contest. It was also decided to pay \$1 to poets whose haiku, articles, or other contributions appear in Frogpond, instead of sending them a contributor's copy. It was proposed that distribution of Frogpond be expanded beyond the membership list to include colleges, public libraries, etc., but it was agreed that further discussion of this idea was needed.

The Treasurer's report was read and approved. Because of rising costs of publication and printing, as well as domestic and international mailing, and rising general expenses of managing HSA, the EC approved an increase in dues to \$25 for U.S. members, \$27 for Canadian members, and \$35 for overseas members, beginning in 1999.

General Meeting. The Third 1998 HSA Meeting was hosted by the Haiku Poets' Society of Western Massachusetts at Wright Hall on the Smith College campus in Northampton, Mass., to a record-breaking attendance of 62 persons, many of whom were new to the HSA. Lovely fairy-sized flower arrangements by Barbara Farrington graced the room.

The morning program began at 10:00 a.m. with coffee and registration. A welcome was made by Alice Ward, a founding member of the HPSWM, after which Linda Porter introduced the first two guest speakers. Patrick Frank, whose topic was "Haiku Sequencing, Creativity & Personal Growth," gave a highly personal talk about the use of atypical sequencing schemes to break up habitual ways of thinking and find unexpected connections.

Tom Clausen, whose theme was "Why I Continue to Read and Write Haiku," gave his own "thirteen characteristics of being and spirit necessary for the creation and appreciation of haiku (after Blyth)." These included patience, curiosity, solitude, ritual, and faith, and Tom's remarks elaborated his own philosophy of haiku interwoven with daily life. The morning session concluded with a round reading of haiku by attendees.

At noontime a box lunch was provided and socializing took place both in and out of doors, as the weather was perfect. A group photograph was occasion for laughter with so many attempting to squeeze in.

Treasurer Raffael de Gruttola chaired the business meeting and read a greeting from President Kristen Deming. He reported on the Executive Committee meeting, read the names of candidates for the HSA elections, and announced the winners of the HSA Merit Book Awards (see p. 14).

A ginkô at the Smith College gardens and botanical greenhouse (including a magnificent ginkgo tree) began at 2:00 p.m. and was concluded by a discussion of the ginkô haiku led by Wanda Cook.

Driving past too quickly
to remember its name —
that crimson bush

Carol Purington, Colrain, Mass.

for just an instant
dragonfly footprint
on a lily pad

Anna Pearce, Amherst, Mass.

marsh grass —
a boy stirs the pond
with one long blade

Joann Klontz, Holden, Mass.

At the book table during the mid-afternoon break authors were available for book-signing. A featured publication was *Bridge Traffic: Haiku and Related Poetry by People of the Massachusetts Pioneer Valley*, edited by John Sheirer of Tiny Poems Press (1998).

After the break Judson Evans led a workshop on linkage and shifting in renku. An excellent presentation was followed by small groups writing and reading their work. An enthusiastic hubbub filled the room but was cut short by the need for dinner.

The evening open haiku reading was hosted by John Sheirer, and the afternoon ginkô haiku were posted on the wall for voting. The first prize award was a haiku book sculpture created by Wanda Cook that had been on exhibit all day. This charming sculpture, titled "Ladybug on a Ginkgo," incorporated several haiku of the Western Massachusetts poets into a three-dimensional whimsy. Winner Timothy Russell walked away with the prize — and, unfortunately, his haiku too!

Some favorite haiku of the day:

rosemary blossoms —
whose footprints
are on the greenhouse roof?

Paul David Mena, Somerville, Mass.

a poet in red
sits by the lily pond
white butterflies

Joe Kirschner, Evanston, Ill.

waiting for her second smile —
the girl with the jewel
through her tongue

Hayat Abuza, Northampton, Mass.

— *Larry Kimmel*