

The
Broadmead Journal
of Poetry and Prose

Fall 2024



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18th Edition

Fall 2024

A Writer's Magazine

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St. James Park London Dorian Borsella

Late October disguised as midsummer
But for the angled shadow-lengthening sun.
Leaves of amber, red, gold falter to fall
As if deserting tree an act of treason.

Readers negotiate sharing of benches.
Lovers stretch in the grass and the glow.
Tourists linger to watch a pensioner
Coax a tame squirrel eating peanuts from hand.
Children scurry to the ice cream man.
Ducks paddle in the pond.
A God-glitter day defying season.

Might someone ponder this same park in 1649?
A regal figure
Paraded across snow-frozen stark terrain.
A sharpened ax awaits.

King Charles First adorned in white
Knew he would be reborn that night.

A Particular Heat Hillary Barry

This morning the sky is the color of cream.
The linden and the redbud
stand motionless, weighed down by unaccustomed heat.
Their gleaming leaves,
waiting for a breeze, touch each other.
The wide arched branches of the redbud form a
sunburned canopy for a downy woodpecker,
zig-zagging up an invisible flight of stairs,
seeking shade, and shelter from
a suffocating day.



An Ordinary Day Hillary Barry

A new day begins its quiet journey.
Darkness hides the color of the wind,
life outside I cannot see.
Sitting quietly, I wait for morning light,
knowing not what the day will bring.
Little by little, the sky brightens.
I rise and raise the shades.
Close to the jagged trunk of the old black oak,
a young squirrel, crazy with life,
is scrambling, up and around,
playing with its fluffy tail.

**Last Spring When I Went Out Looking For
A Poem Hillary Barry**

There are days I venture out
beyond the confines of myself.
This is how I live,
forever searching for something
that draws me closer to mystery,
a sense of wonder, a greater beauty.



Yesterday, walking along an empty,
concrete sidewalk,
I stopped before a young dogwood tree,
covered with shining white blossoms.
New green leaves peered out through the small
airy spaces between each flower.
Its smooth branches reached toward the sky.

Lingering, I looked at it from different angles.
I wanted to reach out, to be close
to its simple loveliness.
I walked on, remembering.

This morning, after the night's rain,
I found little white butterflies sleeping
on the wet grass beneath the glistening branches
of the dogwood tree.

My Journal Doug Fambrough

On turning sixty I began a journal,
Soft leather bound, its pages edged in gold,
Therein my deepest thoughts and surest feelings
To chronicle, whatever might unfold.

How could I fail to see the losses coming?
How could I not know fate would take its toll?
For tragedies loom large on people's journeys,
And huge mistakes weigh down the brightest soul.

Might giving permanence to pain be foolish?
Such honest words so bravely written there
What could they do but resurrect old sorrows
And amplify remembrance of despair?

The healing power of time is ineffective
When wounds are kept as fresh as on the day
They were first felt. Should I not close my journal?
Refuse to fashion wounds a means to stay?

Old gravestones stand arrayed in solemn beauty
To serve as timeless markers for the dead,
Once chiseled out by masons with precision
Now weathered 'til the names can scarce be read.

So might it be with memories of misfortune:
Their presence ever savaging the heart,
But banned from consciousness, becoming blunted,
Become less able anguish to impart.

My journal entries now are carefully chosen.
I've added pictures of my friends who try
With smiles to show that ours are lives of pleasure.
Small fragments of the whole, but not a lie.

Today I made the most important entry:
That yesterday the two of us embraced
And each said to the other one, "I love you."
And on the other's lips a kiss we placed.

That time heals all is only an illusion.
The grinding wheel of time just dulls sharp pain.
It's Love that is by far the greater healer.
I've written last, "Love makes us whole again."



Broadmead Musings Hillary Barry

Reflections

The morning is filled with the bluest sky,
without a wisp or whisper of cloud
hiding in the clear crystal air.
The sun touches every small thing,
pouring out gold, like trumpets
announcing the arrival of a queen.
It warms the stones of the old spring house,
and the stories of Broadmead lives
tucked into its quiet spaces.
It illuminates the moss-green water
in the shining beauty of the pond nearby.
There is no instruction for pleasure,
As is nature's way, the splendor of the day
is simply there.

Peter's Pence Dorian Borsella

The doctors stopped my heart
During quadruple bypass. My mother would
Stop the pendulum of the grandfather clock
Reset it.

I am no longer young.

No longer young and the paintings on these gray walls
Are not my choosing, remind me daily
That I am the hand-me-down man.

I must live within my means.

The church ladies all moved to Park Place Mews.
Downsized. Generously offered poor Peter his pence.
End tables. Table lamps. Artwork by Aunt. Annebelle
Long dead who fancied herself an Artiste.
Jackets enough to last me to the grave.
Jennifer's husband only bought quality.

Sometimes resentment rises like heated gas.
People from that damn church again
Jetting off to Florida or London or Khatmandu.
I volunteer to water their houseplants.

Oh, there are still some perks for life-worn bachelors.
Occasional spare ticket to the symphony.
An old crone wanting a balanced table for a dinner party.
My manners are impeccable.

My life has always been church-centered.
Appropriately both the Episcopal Church and I are in decline.
I deplore this preponderance of female priests.
The blue-haired ladies open their purses wider to a man
And I - that gorgeous male curate- never mind.

All told, not a bad life
For this balding old Queen who never had a chance
To serve a king in this world. Perhaps I'll find him
In the next if such exists, where we will sing with angels.
Gloria in Excelsis Deo.



PIGS' NIGHT OUT..... Anne Fogg

When pigs go out to dance and dine
With their friends, the other swine,
They'll eat good food and drink some wine
Choosing venues quite refined.
Cultural events and dancing
They feel are very life enhancing.

Stopping For A Red Light On Eastbridge RoadHillary Barry

Waiting, looking across the empty road,
a row of tall, dark evergreens
gives definition to a clear blue sky.
They are motionless on this hot summer day.

The light is red and long.
There are a hundred ways to find beauty
in this unexpected tableau.
Every small thing captures my attention.
Looking up, I feel a pervading calm.

The light is suddenly green.
I continue on my way.
The soft stillness of the pines,
against the blueness of the sky
stays with me, protecting, forgiving.

A Cautionary Tale

Anne Fogg

Imelda Marcos' predilection
For footwear led to her collection
Of many varied boots and shoes
Arranged in order by their hues.
Red and blue, pink, green and white,
Gold, and purple, dark and light:
Every color you can posit
Represented in her closet.
High heels and pointy toes she favored
Being tall was what she savored.
Elegance she also wanted
And so her feet she daily flaunted.

But alas, because she wore
Tight pointy shoes, her feet grew sore.
Corns, bunions, Achilles tendonitis
Are the result of too much tightness
In a shoe, as we all know.
Imelda seemed a bit too slow.
She didn't see what was at stake
Until her feet began to ache
All day, all night her feet were painful.
Until now she'd been disdainful
Of women wearing shoes like Nike
Instead of heels both high and spiky.

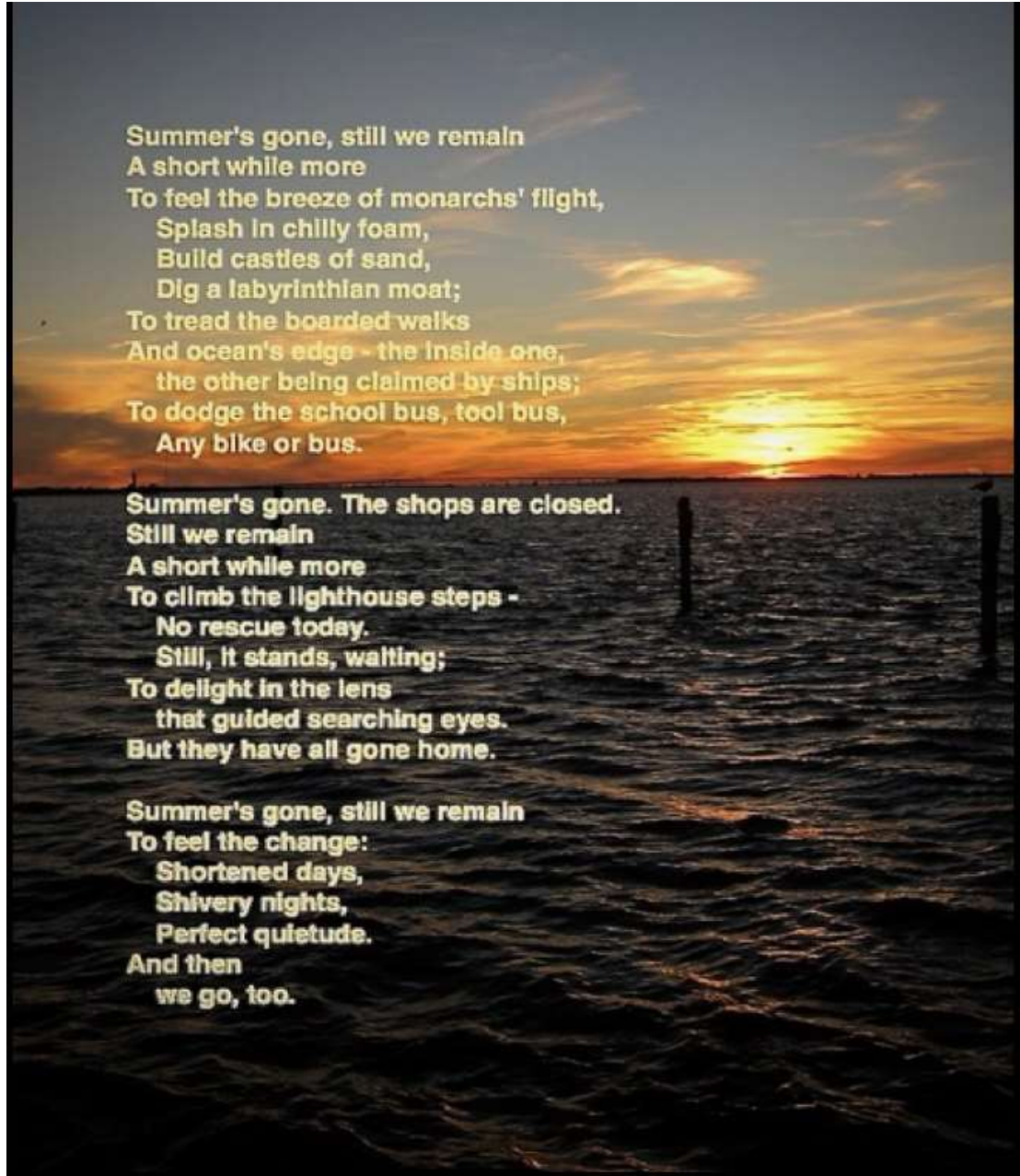
But after trying salves and ointments
She made a series of appointments
With an orthopedist who
Prescribed a different kind of shoe.
Heavy shoes with soles of rubber
So ugly that they made her shudder
And to add to her disgust
Thick cotton socks were now a must.
All her other shoes must go.
She pleaded, but the doctor's "NO!"
Was final. So with many a moan and sob
She went home to do the job.
In the end she had to use
Two moving vans for all her shoes.
It took twelve hours the trucks to fill.
Three thousand pairs went to Goodwill.

Good care of feet will circumvent
Imelda's fate. So if your bent
Is three-inch heels and panty hose,
You still have time to save your toes,
Your feet, your arches and your tendons.
Just ditch the shoes that you depend on.
Wear leather shoes with tie up laces,
Heavy soles (completely graceless)
Thick woolen socks to warm the toes
And thus avoid Imelda's woes.

Attila (Why Spelling is Important) Anne Fogg

They said he was a human terror
But that is actually an error.
Someone misspelled part of the name.
One letter wrong is what's to blame.
A momentary lapse, a slip,
of an historian's penmanship.
For Attila was a hen
Who found a way out of her pen
and gathered friends from nearby farms.
She trained them in the use of arms,
a bold and daring enterprise
that took the Romans by surprise.
Brave soldiers fled before the horde
of poultry armed with spear and sword.
Attila lived to ripe old age.
She died in bed, not in a cage.
And those she'd conquered quickly scurried
to ensure the truth was buried.
Not wishing to appear ridiculous
They hired historians meticulous
Who would make sure to hide the facts:
Namely that all known attacks
Were instituted by a bird
And so, one letter in a word
Misspelled, played loose and fast
With our knowledge of the past.

Summer is gone Elizabeth Elliott



Summer's gone, still we remain
A short while more
To feel the breeze of monarchs' flight,
 Splash in chilly foam,
 Build castles of sand,
 Dig a labyrinthian moat;
To tread the boarded walks
And ocean's edge - the inside one,
 the other being claimed by ships;
To dodge the school bus, tool bus,
 Any bike or bus.

Summer's gone. The shops are closed.
Still we remain
A short while more
To climb the lighthouse steps -
 No rescue today.
 Still, it stands, waiting;
To delight in the lens
 that guided searching eyes.
But they have all gone home.

Summer's gone, still we remain
To feel the change:
 Shortened days,
 Shivery nights,
 Perfect quietude.
And then
 we go, too.

we teeter on a ragged edge..... maggie babb

project 2025

king above the law

power

assassinate

liberties

American

deportations

domestic

basic

executions

power

tribunals

military

televised

arrests

power

vengeance

exact

criminality

cataclysmic

punishment

police

power

state

militarized

librarians

disabled

protests

Lesbian

Gay

Bi

Trans

Queer

Intersex

suppression

military
retributive

power
abuse
unlimited
monarchy
law
banned
constitution
statutes
monies
federal
power
spending
DeptEd
overreach
war
power
declare
laws
interpret
final
arbiter
CDC
power
executive
explosive
prosecution
criminal
ATF
immunity
absolute
FBI
smash
power
loopholes

A Good Son.....Lily Kouo

(after Confucius)

In China, how can you tell a Good Son?
By his kind heart and sympathetic ear.
He should not travel too far in a year
When his parents live and enjoy the Sun.

Above all he must always be fair.
He must have a keen mind and ready ears.
When the parents pass, he must, for three years,
Look after the family affairs with care

There was a time when Confucius' wisdom
Was deeply rooted in the people's mind.
These times are past and lost, but still I find,
wildfire



Home Sweet Home, or Thinking in a quiet night A Chinese poem by Li Bai, Translated by Lily Kouo.

The bright Moon is shining through the window by my bed,
Like winter frost on the ground.
I look up: I see the Moon,
The bright, bright Moon.
I look down: I dream of Home,
My sweet, sweet Home.

Scars.....*Mari Quint*

The tiny pale teardrop
just below the outside
corner of my left eye
faded so slowly I
scarcely noticed.

I was maybe ten, restless
before the vanity mirror
watching my mother
braid my too fine frizzy hair,
when she mused, “that scar
is from the forceps.
When they brought
you to me it was
hidden by a blanket.”
Hidden from me too,
except before a mirror.
It’s absorbed now
into aging wrinkles.

A thin white line
stretched from my pinky
almost to my wrist,
remnant of an encounter
with a bushel basket wire.
For years I marveled
that of all the scars of
childhood mishaps
this lovely one remained.
It too has finally faded
and I miss it.

Across my belly, a much
later scar—the incision from
which they drew Matthew
from my womb. The obstetrician
apologized because it is so long
and ugly. Though still visible,
its reward is far too great to care.

Scars in my heart not
seen but felt, fade too.

Indoor vigilMari Quint

Two calicos, crouching at the glass,
hips twitching, heads tracking
squirrels tapdancing on tin roof,
leaping, chattering, chasing,
around and down the tree,
across the grass.

Low guttural clicking.



MIGRATION MAGICNancy Rowe (1998)

A wondrous wave of winter wings flew in at dawn.

Dozens of darting, disparate birds in zealous rivalry flutter around the feeders fighting for a perch or feverishly forage for seeds of frost-killed flower heads each edging out another only to find itself dislodged.

Starved from arduous hours of flight
through frigid darkness
all reserves of energy expended
flocks refuel for further flights
still farther south
where more fulfilling feasts
await their finding.

Lingering here will be a few who earned their right to rule the roost ,
knowing from experience one seed in the bill is worth two seeds in
the field.

UM MITTERNACHT. Eduard Mörike (1804-1875)

Gelassen stieg die Nacht ans Land,
Lehnt träumend an der Berge Wand,
Ihr Auge sieht die goldne Waage nun
Der Zeit in gleichen Schalen stille ruhn;
 Und kecker rauschen die Quellen hervor,
 Sie singen der Mutter, der Nacht, ins Ohr
 Vom Tage,
Vom heute gewesenen Tage.

Das uralt alte Schlummerlied,
Sie achtet's nicht, sie ist es müd,
Ihr klingt des Himmels Bläue süßer noch,
Der flücht'gen Stunden gleichgeschungnes Joch,
 Doch immer behalten die Quellen das Wort,
 Es singen die Wasser im Schlafe noch fort
 Vom Tage,
Vom heute gesesenen Tage.



AT MIDNIGHT. (Translation: 2020)R. Youngblood

Calmly lady night disembarks,
Leans dreamily against the mountain's shear;
Now her eye sees the golden scale of time stand still,
Motionlessly at rest in even measure,
 And the springs rush up more boldly with their sound,
 They sing into their mother's, night's ear
 About the day,
About the day that was today.

The age-old, ancient lullaby,
She's tired of it, pays no attention to it,
The yoke that is evenly arched;
The blueness of the sky still sounds sweeter to her;
 But, as always, the spring water's word is victorious;
 The waters sing on in their sleep
 About the day
About the day that was today.

GABRIELE D'ANNUNZIO (1863-1936)

O falce di luna calante
che brilli su l'acque deserte,
o falce d'argento, qual mèsse di sogni
ondeggia al tuo mite chiarore qua giù!

Aneliti brevi di foglie,
sospiri di fiori dal bosco
esalano al mare: non canto non grido
non suono pe 'l vasto silenzio va.

Oppresso d'amor, di piacere,
il popol de' vivi s'addorme...
O falce calante, qual mèsse di sogni
ondeggia al tuo mite chiarore qua giù!



Translated by R. Youngblood

Oh, slice of moon in final stage
You, casting a bright light on the deserted waters
Oh, slice of silver, what planetary god of dreams
Is rocking to your gentle lighting here below!

Brief sighings by leaves
Flowers in the woods give off their scent
Exhalations to the sea: not a song, not a cry
Not a sigh is moving across the vast silence.

Subdued by love, by pleasure,
The community of the living is falling asleep...
Oh, declining moon, what planetary god of sleep
Is riding the waves here below by your gentle moonlight!
(Translation: 2022)

Ode to Doggerel..... Doug Fambrough

“Do you write doggerel?”
I was once asked.
Alas, that’s a limelight
In which I’ve not basked.

But it’s the very genre
To which I aspire!
And I quite often wonder
Will I e’er be afire

With a poetic flame
That will lick at my heart
‘Til my heart burn inspires me
To do my full part

To advance that great art form,
Beloved by the masses?
Doggerel’s truly
Verse that surpasses

The most perfect sonnet,
The best-crafted odes.
I’ve begun to work on it,
And how well that bodes!

For, lo, I have written
Five quatrains already!
My pulse, it doth quicken.
I’m feeling quite heady!

Just a couple more lines
And I’ll swear that I’ve met
All requirements for Doggerel
Poet Laureate.

Breath Paula Scheye

My grandfather with his hammer
knew the breath of things.
That's what he said,
or rather what I heard.
At four, I didn't know breadth
but I knew things breathed--
the voile curtains in my room
when the windows were thrown open,
the coal furnace in the basement
breathed fire like a dragon,
the opened freezer
blew cold air in my face.
Seashells I whispered secrets into
breathed them gently back into my ear.
and the ocean—waves that we called grabbies--
washed in and out along the shore,
the roaring breath of earth.

Storming Paula Scheye

Not yet. Warm days tease
me into thinking it's spring.
Winter chuckles.

Sleet. Hard rain that knocks
at my window. Let me in
it says. I say No.

I complain about
the weather while tanks invade
Ukraine. Winds of war.

Wind howling outside,
Tyger and I snug in bed,
one of us purring.

Storm clouds and vultures
darken the sky. In Ukraine
MIGs block out the sun.

IN OUR DAY WE KNEW THAT

NIKE was a Greek Goddess
TENNIS SHOES were for
playing tennis.
BIG BERTHA was a large
German cannon.
GENDER was for nouns and
pronouns.
RACE was a horse, car, or foot.
BROTHER was a sibling.
SISTER was a Nun.
BOND was an investment.
HON. was an abbreviation for
honorable.
DRAG was a quick draw on a
cigarette.
CLOSETS were for clothes-not
coming out of.
GAY was to be festive.
HIPPIE was broad in the hips.
BUTT was a cigarette.
BUNS were hot cross.
MOVIES were flicks.
BEETLE was an insect.
OJ was orange juice from
Florida.
NEWT was an amphibious
reptile.

IN OUR DAY THINGS WERE SIMPLE

We were before the
computer, IBM, HMO,
HBO, DH, VW, BMW,
RV'S, NOW, IUD, UN,
WWW, FDA, JFK, RFK,
EPA, ERA, CIA, DNA.

MOUSE was a creature not
stirring.
CAT was a feline.
RAM was a male sheep.
CAD was a boulder.
WINDOWS were something you
looked through.
CHIP was off the old block, or a
stroke in golf.
CD was a Certificate of Deposit.
MACINTOSH was an apple that
you ate.
SURF was waves breaking on a
beach.
BUG was a bacteria.
WEB was something a spider
made.

Dakota Robin Tate



Dakota is also called Kota. Kota is a black lab rescue with less than ten percent poodle. A handsome lad. He was 7 years old when I got him. Poor Kota and me had to deal with heart worm twice. Sad. Fortunately Lab Rescue paid for injections of arsnic. Now is heart worm free and so glad. Kota is 12/1/2 years old now. A bit Arthritic. Still able to walk five times a day. Part of the Senior community at Broadmead. Loves to socialize with other young and old dogs.

Kota still loves to chase squirrels, rabbits, foxes and deer. The cleaning carts, maintenance vehicles and other loud noises scare Kota. At first Kota would have nothing to do with men. Now some men he likes. Especially if they get at his level or have a treat.

Dakota went through Beginners, Intermediate and Advanced Dog Training classes. Of course he passed with flying colors. Kota experienced trying to sniff out a domestic rat in tube hidden in hay on an Agility course. Other tubes were hidden with feces or nothing. Total of three tubes.. He also tried Agility and was fun for a while. Now as he is older has a mind of his own. Robin is the owner. Kota is spoiled from time to time. As a lab always. loves to eat. Many people know him

and Kota knows who gives him treats. I enjoy crabs. This is one thing that I am not sharing with my lab, Dakota. I will give instead, Ricotta. Oh how boring.

A friend of my owner has a Toyota. Wonder if I could get a ride to Sarasota? Sorry Dakota! You are too precious to let you go. Even though I've had many dogs, Kota is the love of my life. This black lab is glad to have me as his owner. Dakota is pawsome.



**VOYAGE OF THE CACHALOTE Galapagos Islands January 6-13,
1993 (continued) Sue Baker**



Day 5
Rabida and Chinese Hat

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A sea lion bubbles past me as I am snorkeling...Walking high, we pass tall cactus fingers set in a barren lava landscape - but not so barren as Chinese Hat, another small island off the coast of San Salvadore. At Rabida the sand was red, at Mexican Hat it is white, ground from coral. Mexican Hat is full of lava tubes, surmounted by iguanas nodding like Parkinson patients.

Late in the afternoon iguanas gather in piles to keep warm for the night...A pair of baby sea lions emerge from their lava cave; curious, they come within a few inches and I move away, having been warned that my scent could cause their mothers to abandon them.

A pelican scoops up gallons of water when it dives, then has to squirt it out so it can eat any large fish; that's when the noddy terns await their snacks.

Day 6.

Tower

Sailed last night (sail plus engine) from 11 p.m. until 7 a.m., a lovely smooth trip. Following the narrow channel into the great volcanic crater, a couple of miles across, that now circles the boat, the captain was guided by a pair of tall diamond-shaped lattices on shore; when they were lined up, we were on course.

Such birds! Blue-billed red-footed boobies intermingle with beautiful white black-masked boobies, frigate birds, lovely doves, even an owl on our afternoon walk...The ruddy turn- stone strides the beach, turning over stones to look for his next meal...

The loooooong tail of the white tropic bird streams behind as he flies; made of just two feathers, it curves and waves and settles on rocks or cacti next to his landing spot. His legs are so short he can't walk easily, so he sort of waddles to the cliff edge for an easy takeoff.

Two masked boobies preen one another with their long beaks, unmindful of me as I photograph...A mother red-footed boobie has a very fluffy youngster in her nest

Male frigate birds mate once a year, the females once every two years — but the females mature at 5 years and the males at 8 years so I guess it all evens out. One male displays his brilliant puffed-out red breast; why does he need to go to so much trouble for females that haven't mated for two years??

Tower's vegetation is largely palo sante, breaking up the lava as it grows; groves like leafless orchards, some trees with makeshift nests.. Its sap has a wonderful smell and the wood is burned as an insect repellent.

Cactus on this island has soft hairs rather than thorns, because there are no iguanas or land tortoises to eat it: no predators, no protection needed. Elsewhere

the huge cactus pads, often a foot across, disappear quickly down someone's gullet; here they are left to decay.

A small spotted ray trapped in a tidal pool is outlined against white sand.

The only other boat at Tower has a group from Baltimore, including Tim's classmate Jonas Rapaport and one of our interviewers from SRA.

The panga deposits us at the foot of a steep cliff for an afternoon trip to another part of Tower, topped with great flat areas of black lava. Every 30 feet or so there's a bird sitting motionless. The doves are lovely, but the brilliant white masked boobies the most striking.

Seven hammerhead sharks swim nearby as we motor back; I'm glad they weren't around when we were snorkeling.

A young scarred whale, alone in this great bay, surfaces many times near us. It concerns me that we never have life jackets in the panga, even on long trips across deep water — except at Academy Bay and our starting point, where I suppose the captain or someone would be penalized if we were seen without them. Our panga trips have always been smooth, but it is not pleasant to think about the off chance of being overturned by a whale, or by everyone going suddenly to one side of our little boat; it would be hard to hold onto the smooth bottom of the panga.

Day 7 Bartolome

The well-known pinnacle, viewed from any direction, is spectacular. At its base, penguins sit by the water or waddle and skid down to the edge, then slip in and glide away. Bird above the water but fish when submerged.

A fluffy, puffy, rather revolting looking penguin sits alone part way up a cliff above the water. He looks depressed, and with good reason, as he'll stay in that spot for two weeks until he finishes molting — no food, no cooling dips, no social interchange.

A long climb, including 300 steps, to the top of volcano, where a marker tells us we are at 00° latitude and 90° 33' longitude, an unlikely location for these improbable islands. Viewing the moon from this moonscape, we feel as if we might be looking at the less barren earth. A single huge cactus defies the age-long drought.

We look down at crater within crater within watery crater. In one, a school of millions of small fish darkens the water like a cloud shadow, then parts with the passage of a hungry sea lion.

Swimming, we are approached by floating pelicans. With their wings folded they look like catamarans.

A narrow land strip, decorated by brilliant green portulaca with tiny white star flowers, separates our swimming cove (which sports sea lions, pelicans, and penguins) from another cove. Here there are scores of sea turtles, their tracks in the sand telling where they spent the night.

A late afternoon walk on the lava flow of James (also called Santiago). The pahoehoe lava here is distinctive with its medusa-like curls, broken bubbles, great black expanses. Here and there an indentation marks the grave of a small tree, trapped long ago in the fiery current of lava.

Day 8 Seymour

The early sun rose-tints the soft bellies of low clouds as we sneak ashore before breakfast, well ahead of still-sleeping occupants of another boat anchored nearby.

Sea lions are just awakening on Seymour's low cliffs. Two male frigate birds display energetically, 6 feet apart. A female swoops between them but does not pause; perhaps she finds it hard to choose between the two, with their enormous red pouches splitting their black breast feathers.

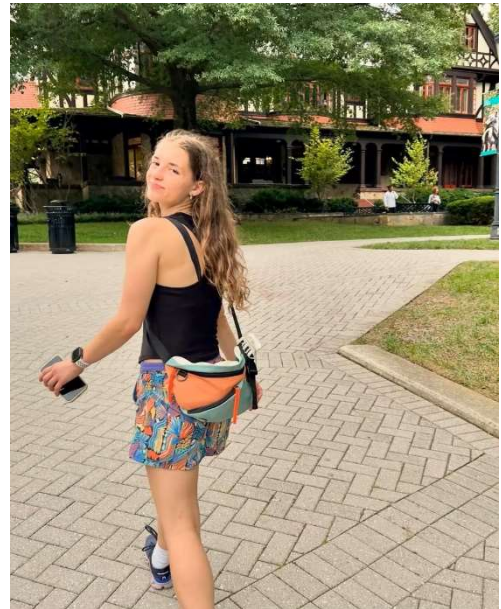
Building a nest is hard for a frigate, when another snatches your branch in midair! ...25 large juvenile frigata perch near one another on trees; nearby, a mother cuddles her fluffy white fledgling.

On to the airport and another world. With luck, I will never forget the sound of the barking sea lions, the brilliant night sky filled with disoriented constellations, the peaceful birds and animals.

Great granddaughterAnne Allen B Dandy



Great granddaughter Belle Vining, 18 years, is safely ensconced from Wisconsin at Loyola University on the Charles Street campus and she will be studying Psychology. She promises to visit and meet all of you at Broadmead Retirement Center.



Anne Allen B Dandy died October 23, 2024

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Pre-October Fest Anne Allen Boyce Dandy



Welcome to my “Pre-October Fest”. Jenny’s newly published mystery novel *The Brownstone on E 83rd Street* is prominent, backed up by my Walter’s 62-year-old fig tree. Its prolific large green leaves crowd the ceiling and provide shade for John’s everblooming yellow marigolds and ripe red tomatoes. Among the pink and gray small rocks, the tiny yellow fuzzy baby chick holds a tete-a-tete with the attentive bullfrog. Fragrance of two varieties of fresh mint leaves delight as the sun sets in the west on a

perfectly clear evening.

Jenny’s hand knit pumpkins and the scary black owl remind us that Halloween is just around the corner.

Carol’s summer hanging basket of impatiens and Nancy’s coral begonia are still much in evidence. My 98th birthday present from December the 3rd, the very red cyclamen has never stopped blooming.

My trusty binoculars are handy here to catch the antics of large bunny rabbits bounding right next to my seat on the screen porch. Honking, returning geese call from high “Happy New Season to All”.



Up and Away..... Anne Allen B Dandy

40 years ago, today Walter and Jenny were married on a Monkton hilltop. A Brown Memorial minister presided over the ceremony on a clear day. There was no wind, a necessary condition for the successful launching of the hot air balloon. “What if it rains, and those 200 cars will be marooned,” admonished my husband Dr. Dandy while they argued two weeks earlier. “I know it will be fine weather,” responded 33-year-old son, with all the youthful total faith and exuberance.



The less worried Walter, proved to be right. They were landed in the cow pasture on Pocock Road next to my mother’s home. Earlier plans had arranged for their rendezvous outdoor wedding dinner. All the family and friends ranging in age from about 2 years old to about 80 years enjoyed their celebration. September 8, 1984 lived up to optimist bride groom’s expectations. Their twins, Walter IV and Ellicott arrived on their 7th anniversary eve followed by Robert a few years later.

Colorado is their home of preference. The Rocky Mountains claim their alliance. Congratulations!!

Another tale from Social Security Joe Nietubicz

I rode the bus to work with an actuary. I am not sure what an actuary is or does. I think they deal with statistics and draw conclusions, for example, he once told me that in certain sections of the city, 80 percent of the Social Security checks were cashed in bars. OK!?!? (we have direct deposit today).

It was election year. He told that a crew from the Democratic Party came to his office and studied his data. After a week of pouring over his files, they came up with what became a plank in the Democratic Platform.

After a few weeks, a crew from the Republican Party came into his office and did the same thing. After a week of pouring over his file, they came up with what became a plank in the Republican Platform.

Now, you have to appreciate that these two documents didn't agree with each other. In fact, they were at compete odds. It is amazing that people can study that same data and come up with different conclusions.

All of which proves that, "FIGURES DON'T LIE - - - LIARS FIGURE!"

Amahl and the Night Visitors Susan Nicol Saunders

A Christmas Note to Our Grandchildren About a Gift I Gave Them

Dear Lucy, Helena and DV,

When you watch this DVD, and I hope you do, please imagine that it is Christmas Eve, 1952. I am 9 years old and the GG's [my parents] are 46 and 49. We are watching TV in the living room of our small third floor apartment in Rodgers Forge. The TV was a surprise from my dad, waiting for us when my mom and I returned from a summer visit with my grandparents in Youngstown Ohio.

This Christmas Eve there is a tree with bubble lights and tinsel. My Mom and I decorated our front door with shiny red paper and angels we made out of spun glass called, appropriately enough, Angel Hair. We did not know we needed to wear gloves when we molded it so our hands are very sore. The door is beautiful.

Dad tunes to the Hallmark Hall of Fame and we watch the first opera ever commissioned for TV. It was composed by Gian Carlo Menotti. It was performed live, no commercials, forty-five minutes of gorgeous music, wonderful sets and enchanting acting. You will see for yourselves, I hope.

We saw Amahl on TV every year it aired. I know most of the music by heart. All three of us would be sniffing by the last scene. It isn't sad. it is poignant.

To my great joy our church put on Amahl at Christmas 1967, the year we were married. Your Grandpa and I were shepherds. He was 25 and I was 24. I was the only dancer in the cast, so I choreographed and danced the Shepherd's dance alone.

The Church put Amahl on again in 2005. This time I was shepherding the very elderly GGs to see it, so I was not in the cast. Grandpa had a singing role as the Page. Your Nicol and Saunders relatives have loved this little opera for decades. I hope you will too.

Love, Merry Christmas, and Happy Viewing, Grandma

Celebration Susan Saunders

March 11, 2022, the day I wrote this memory, was, would have been, my, our 55th wedding anniversary. The descriptive words are problematic when the celebrants no longer live in the same dimension. Before Death moved Larry somewhere else, we shared a wonderful honeymoon in Key West Florida, followed by 46 more years of anniversary celebrations. We usually travelled for these events, to the eastern Shore of Maryland, to Sanibel, Cedar Key or Anna Maria Island in Florida, to a little house high on a promontory in St. Johns for our 25th anniversary and to Fiji to visit our son Dave in the Peace Corps for our 30th anniversary. My 91-year-old Dad, with the help of my dear friend Maia, gave us a lovely 40th anniversary party. Not many people still have a living parent after 40 years of marriage.

One of my best anniversary memories is of our 22nd celebration. I warn my readers that this event is much better after the fact than it was at the time. Larry and I were both busy with work and raising our two sons. So, we decided to have a low-key anniversary in a place close by that neither of us had really explored. We booked a long weekend in a semi-fancy hotel in Annapolis, Maryland.

We left home later than we intended on a Friday night and arrived just as the dining room was closing. The staff took pity on us and offered to prepare our dinner anyway. We had the dining room to ourselves. I ordered crab cakes. They were good but, as we were eating dinner, I asked Larry “Do you smell ammonia? I am getting a hint of it.” He did not but he said, “They are probably cleaning the kitchen.”

Those of you familiar with the vicissitudes of sea food may know what is coming next. We were innocents in this regard. Sometime in the middle of the night what was coming came. My body basically liquefied. I spent the rest of the weekend seriously indisposed or sound asleep.

Larry was there with me through it all. The major distress passed by afternoon on Saturday, but I was totally wrung out and slept deeply until Sunday morning. I remember telling Larry I was sorry to ruin his vacation. I encouraged him to go and see some of the sights of Annapolis. But every time I opened my eyes he was sitting beside me reading or watching TV. He must have stepped out for a minute because we suddenly had a supply of Gatorade and saltines.

Larry did a little research and discovered that the odor of ammonia indicates that crab is spoiled. We were booked in the hotel till Monday, but on Sunday morning, when I

thought the worst was over, I suggested we leave and save the cost of another night in the hotel which had poisoned me.

Larry said “You have really been ill. Let’s just let you rest up, get rehydrated with Gatorade and try some saltines and leave tomorrow morning as we planned.” Again I offered him an opportunity to go and see some sights himself. But he said he was where he wanted to be.

On Monday morning I peeled myself out of bed, took a shower and we drove home. All I kept thinking was “Thank God this was our 22nd anniversary and not our honeymoon or any other milestone event. And Thank God for Larry.”

It was not our easiest celebration, but it has become one of my favorites. We make a lot of promises when we marry. We all hope for Better and Richer and Health, rather than Worse, Poorer, and Sickness. Yet, the gifts of weathering challenges together are absolute trust and lasting gratitude. That is worth celebrating.

My Last Halloween Paula Scheye

For Halloween I usually wore my mother's skirt, a puffy blouse and lots of necklaces. That passed for a gypsy in my suburban neighborhood and my friends and I trouped from house to house, giggling at our neighbors who pretended amazement at our group of cheerleaders, gypsies and ghosts. When someone was giving out BIG candy bars, not the usual miniatures, we passed the news along to all the ghouls and goblins we passed in our rounds: "Make sure you go to Miss Ginny's. She has real Milky Ways."

For a reason I no longer remember, when I was in the sixth grade, my mother decided to make me a Halloween costume. She was an excellent seamstress and maybe she was inspired by a woman's magazine. She determined I would be a pumpkin. Not just any pumpkin, but the Great Pumpkin, of Peanuts fame. It first appeared, well, actually failed to appear, in the Peanuts strip on October 26, 1959. At the beginning of October 1960 my mother bought yards of orange cotton and disappeared into the basement with her sewing machine. There were many discussions at the dinner table about how to make the costume stand out like a round pumpkin. Stuffing seemed impractical and much too squishy. Ever inventive, my mother got pliers and started reshaping wire clothes hangers which became the frame for the cotton. My job was to appear for fittings.

Halloween was overcast and threatening rain. I put on a pair of green tights and green leotard, then the pumpkin was slid into place. I was 3 ½ feet tall; the costume was 4 feet wide and swished from side to side as I walked. It was deemed far too good to be wasted on the neighborhood rounds. I was glad of this since most of the children in my neighborhood was much younger than I, and I considered myself too cool to hang out with them. My family piled in the car and we headed to the parking lot of my father's Presbyterian Church, where a neighborhood party was planned. This might have been one of the first "safe alternatives" to trick or treating.

I had to stand in the car so I wouldn't crush my costume or bend my frame. When we got out, my mother spent a lot of time arranging all the seams, and pinning on my stem cap. A light rain was starting and my mother fussed that the starch in the cotton might go limp. I was feeling rather limp myself. I stood out, quite literally, and as a shy girl that was the last thing I wanted to do. I didn't know anyone at the gathering except my family and it seemed to me that all the children there were first and second graders. I remember some hot apple cider, which I thought was quite wonderful, and a lot of squawking from loudspeakers. As the rain got heavier, things were speeded up and we were all herded into the center for costume judging. Lots of families were leaving as they announced the winners, and as I remember, my mother told me we won best costume as we ran toward the car.

Ode to My Holly Tree Ann Allen Dandy



The almost perfectly round moon rose before dawn yesterday in the East. Later, at about nine p.m., I observed its total brilliant golden glow as it set. Today the Holly is bursting with yellow and reddish buds providing a feast for the migrating birds and also for our year-round resident avians. The gorgeous Cedar Waxwing's calls zeee zeee are heard as the flocks descend upon their favorite food. Even the gregarious English Sparrow gives space to those aggressive birds. A breeze creates a concert among the Holly branches below a cloudless blue sky. The scene has created a true glimpse

of Nature. It surely deserves Ode to My Holly Tree planted by Walter Dandy twenty years ago.

Yet another tale from Social Security Joe Nietubicz

Somewhere, somehow, in here, Social Security built an on-line system; ten main frames, concentrators spread across the U.S., and 80,000 PCs spread around the world. The concentrators were mid-size computers whose only job was communications.

In the United States, the Pcs connected to the concentrators by landlines and the concentrators send data to the main frames in Baltimore by satellite. The Social Security Facilities outside of the US in Europe and locations east were located in the US Embassies and used satellite.

Originally, the Pacific had an old WW II network, which was a stratosphere bounce system. Instead of cable or phone lines or whatever, the signal bounced off the stratosphere to whoever the receiver was. It took approximately two seconds per communication. Absolutely aint gonna work for a computer network. Ergo, cable was laid throughout the Pacific. Okinawa and the rest of the Pacific area used the newly laid cable to San Francisco and satellite from there.

Putting this network together and testing it and trying to get it to work, we were having trouble every day for some period of time, it varied. We could not connect with any body, so the problem was on the Baltimore side and not the concentrators. We worked this problem for days, weeks. We could not find it. We even hooked up a speaker on the line, so we could know when it was happening and we would run and check-out all of our equipment.

One day, one of the consultant super techs was standing by the window taking a smoke break. (we could smoke in the building in those days). His jaw dropped and he started to laugh and he called everybody to the window. There, in the middle of the satellite dish was one of the maintenance crew sweeping out dead leaves.

PROBLEM SOLVED!!!!



Sharon McKinley

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