



Voices Israel Group of Poets in English Voices Newsletter November 2018

NOVEMBER MEETING DATES AND PLACES

HAIFA

**Tuesday, Nov. 13
at 7:30 pm**
Iris Dan`s
1 Stephen Wise,
French Carmel, Haifa
Tel: 04-8332472

Coordinator:
Wendy Blumfield
Tel: 04-837-6820
Mobile: 054-524-0412
wendyb@netvision.net.il

TEL AVIV

**Thursday, Nov. 15
at 7:30 pm**
AACI
94 A Allenby Street,
Tel Aviv
**Please call Mark that
morning to confirm.**

Coordinator:
Mark Levinson
Tel: 054-444-8438
nosnivel@netvision.net.il

JERUSALEM

**Tuesday, Nov. 20
at 6pm**
Toby Shuster's
5 Aza Street, Apt. 3,
Rehavia, Jerusalem

Coordinator:
Ruth Fogelman
Tel: 02-628-7359
ruthfogelman@gmail.com

UPPER GALILEE

**Wednesday, Nov. 14
from 5-7pm**
Reuven and Yehudit's
128 Keren HaYesod
Artists Quarter, Tzfat

Coordinator:
Reuven Goldfarb
Tel: 04-6974105
Mobile: 058-414-0266
poetsprogress@gmail.com

BET SHEMESH / MODIIN

**Sunday, Nov. 4
at 8:00pm**
Judy Belsky's
Nahar Hayarden 120/4
Floor 2
Bet Shemesh

Coordinator:
Dr. Judy Belsky
drjudybelsky@gmail.com

NETANYA & SHARON

**Monday, Nov. 26
at 7:30pm**
Susan Olsburgh's
2/6 Zalman Shazar.
(3rd floor) Ramat Poleg

Coordinator:
Susan Olsburgh
Tel: 09-885-5629
olsburgh.susan@gmail.com

WESTERN GALILEE

**Sunday, Nov. 18
at 8:30pm**
Kibbutz Evron

Coordinator:
Phyllsie Gross
Tel: 052-874-6880
phyllsie@hotmail.com

LONDON UK

For information please
contact Esther.

Esther Lipton:
eblipton@talk21.com

GUSH ETZION

Please contact Mindy if
you are interested in the
group re-starting.

Coordinator:
Mindy Aber Barad
Tel: 05-4667936
maber4kids@yahoo.com

SOUTHERN

Wednesday, Nov. 14
Please contact Miriam
for more details.

Coordinator:
Miriam Green
Tel: 05-7388640
miriamsgreen@gmail.com

ASHKELON

Please contact
Chaim for more details

Coordinator:
Chaim Bezalel
bezalel.levy@gmail.com

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Ramat Poleg, Netanya
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olsburgh.susan@gmail.com

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Jerusalem 96263
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42/46a Leon Blum
Haifa 33852
Tel: 04-838-1218
susanndick@gmail.com



Voices Israel Group of Poets in English

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT NOVEMBER 2018

Dear All,

We are in the process of welcoming new members but it is sad to lose longstanding ones. That was the case this month when we learnt of the death of longstanding Jerusalem poet Ettie Aman Goldwater. On behalf of Voices I extend Haim Aruchim to her family members and hope they will be pleased that a poem by Ettie is included in this newsletter as a tribute.

Our former webmaster Johnmichael Simon was the pioneer of this essential publicity tool maintaining it for many years. This has been much appreciated. He says he is both pleased and relieved to no longer have to maintain the Voices website and he has waxed lyrical to me recently about the technical skills of our new webmistress, Haifa poet, Judy Koren. She has certainly been most energetic and after intensive discussions with our publicity officer, Wendy Blumfield, and myself, is very nearly ready to launch the redesigned Voices Israel website. I am sure you are going to find it very user-friendly and I am sure too it will increase the volume of traffic to the site. Kol HaKvod to Judy. We are so glad we have you on board.

Wendy certainly works very hard publicising our events and recently as a result of her efforts the launch of the 2018 Voices Anthology gained an unprecedented slot in the Jerusalem Post's Grapevine column written by Greer Fay Cashman. Greer focused on Henry Foner, Jerusalem poet Judy Foner's husband. You may know of the 1927 song by Herbert Farjeon, "I've danced with a man who's danced with a girl who's danced with the Prince of Wales." Henry Foner, a Kindertransport child, met recently in Jerusalem with Prince William at Yad Vashem to recount his experiences. Henry's visit to our launch and Greer's coverage angle reminded me of the song bringing an unexpected touch of British royal connection to the successful launch evening.

A full room enjoyed fifty poems, a selection from the recently published anthology, with over 20 poets present to read their own poems and several proxy readers doing a great job reading poems representative of poets unable to be present. A lively venue, very acceptable refreshments and a happy atmosphere developed. A presentation was made to Dina Yehuda as a token of thanks for all her devoted work as chief editor of the anthology. Thanks are due to David and Sylvia Fellerman, Donna Bechar and Miriam Feigelman for handling registrations and book sales at the stall.

The stall proved a popular opportunity for our own poets to sell their wares. Poets came from all directions, many with their spouses to support them, and all their efforts to travel added to the evening's dynamic. In addition, several non-members attended.

Soon dates will be announced for a Voices poetry workshop in Jerusalem and for the AGM and Open Mike in Tel Aviv early in 2019.

All our Voices groups are now up and running again after summer breaks so I wish you all much creativity in November.

Susan Olsburgh
President
Voices Israel



Voices Israel Group of Poets in English

NEW PAYMENT INFORMATION

A new option for payment of dues, etc., to Voices has been added. Payments can be made either by cheque or bank transfer.

1. Send a cheque made payable to Voices Israel to Chanita Millman, 15 Shachar Street, Jerusalem 96263
OR
2. Pay by bank transfer to:
Kolot (Voices) Israel
Discount Bank, Clal Branch 159
Account 6624199

CALLS FOR SUBMISSIONS

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS: THE DERONDA REVIEW is looking for poems and short prose for an issue with a section on "Utopia." Other topics, especially seasonal poems, also welcome. Send up to five poems to derondareview@gmail.com, maber4kids@yahoo.com or P.O.B. 6709 Efrat 90435, Israel.

Helen Bar-Lev reminds us that there are various contests offered through Winning Writers: Essential Contests for Serious Writers - Subscribe Free at fundsforwriters.com

APOLOGIES

Due to a printing mishap, **Donna Bechar's** poem 'Onomatopoeia', on page 13 of the Inspiration By The Sea chapbook, was not printed in its entirety; therefore, it is printed herewith, in its entirety, on the Poetry Page.

In the last newsletter I incorrectly identified **Michael Stone** as living in England. He does in fact live in Israel!!

CONGRATULATIONS

To **Matthew Anish** who had two poems published in the July-August issue of the Amulet.

To **Esther Cameron** who was interviewed by Rivka Levy, founding editor of Sasson Magazine, whose "about" statement begins: "Sasson is the brainchild of a group of creative orthodox Jews who believe that the best things occur outside the box." Esther says: "It was a chance to talk about one of my books -- *Soul's Evidence* -- and what I am trying to do in general." To listen to Esther's interview: <https://sassonmag.com/hear-poet-esther-cameron-interviewed-on-the-jewish-book-review-podcast-2/>

CONDOLENCES

We have lost one of our long-standing poets, Ettie Aman Goldwater, from Jerusalem. May her memory be for a blessing. We send our condolences to her family.

IN MEMORIAM
Ettie Aman Goldwater z"l
(26.9.2018)

Holocaust poetry

With what ferocious fervour
we buried the ground
where once the wild red poppies grew
such energy
to obliterate the bright red past
with small white stone,

A cemetery
of pure white stone-
no drop of mud will
be allowed to stain
that impeccable domain.

Dead, quietly dead
the proud earth lay
no one attends its funeral
no one to mourn the poppies
for they too
are memory.

Beware a world of pure white stone
where flowers will remain
only in poetry.

Ettie Aman Goldwater
Israel



Voices Israel Group of Poets in English

NOVEMBER 2018 GROUP SELECTIONS

Onomatopoeia

He lay in his bed
 My father, my daddy
 The bed in his studio room
 In the assisted living facility
 Where he's lived for the past
 Two and a half years
 He lay in his bed
 Just home from the hospital
 He lay, in what would be
 His last night in this bed
 Staring at the ceiling and
 Then at me, sitting in the
 Paisley-patterned armchair
 By his side

Looking at me
 With relief in his eyes
 He says, "Onomatopoeia"
 And smiles wanly
 "That's the word", he says
 And sadly, I know, I reluctantly
 Know, I gladly know
 That he's made his decision
 In this misused word
 He's found his peace
 His forehead now relaxed of dilemma

In his decision to
 Let go of pained life
 My cringing heart releases
 A smile for him
 "Yes, I'm glad for you, daddy"
 I tell him
 "Onomatopoeia"

by Donna Bechar

From "Inspiration By The Sea", pg. 13

Preparing To Land

I was
 In a holding pattern
 Like that
 - look along the street -
 Pink plastic bag
 Snatched by the wind
 From a tree
 Where it had hung for months
 Look!
 Propelled above the traffic
 Of the main road
 Waiting? Avoiding? a chance to drop
 Puffed aloft by a bus
 sliding down to a taxi
 On, on, not touching tarmac
 Not yet
 And now I know:
 Until landing -
 Turbulence

R.M. Kiel

Tel Aviv selection

Voices Israel Group of Poets in English

'I, Too, Am Israeli

I am the newcomer.
They laugh silently,
uncomfortable with my Hebrew speech
accented with clear sounds of American origins.
But I, too, ID Israeli.

I live here in the Land among them
strive to observe the commandments,
happily prepare for the holidays,
remember the Shabbat.
I am proud to be an Israeli.

One day tomorrow
my children will be 'them' and
I will be remembered as
the one who came from the 'old country.'
Then they will be proud that their mother was an Israeli.

Simcha Angel, Jerusalem selection

A poem after Langston Hughes, "I, Too" suggested in Netanya Poetry By the Sea

Rounds

Oh!
Did the boy shout in his sleep?
I'll check on him.
I dreamt I got smaller, then bigger.
Just a dream! Are you all right?
Dad, I don't want to be little —
I'm already ten —
I can run like the wind.

Dad, I know you ran up beaches.

If we don't win the game, all will be lost.
Coach says I have to make a goal.

All I have to do is feed the cannon,
Wife and kids waiting at home.

Eli Ben-Joseph

Western Galilee selection

Voices Israel Group of Poets in English

There's always too much on my plate

The threshold of the eighties crossed,
my youth and middle age are lost,
I'm tireder than I used to be,
a noon-time snooze - obligatory.
Things take much longer to get done,
where I did five jobs, now it's one,
the rest are left aside to wait,
there's always too much on my plate.

My body changes, growing old,
but on my plate, if truth be told,
there really isn't any *more*
than what there was the year *before*.
I shrink and wrinkle, cell by cell,
perhaps the plate has shrunk as well?

Last week my birthday came again;
an idea sparked inside my brain -
I won't go *up* to eighty four
(where old age waits behind the door),
but *down* to seventy six instead!
My family gave the go-ahead,
endorsing it right down the line,
so far it's working – I feel fine!

I'm full of life now, in my prime!
My eightieth comes in four years' time.
When people ask me to explain,
"How can you celebrate *again*?"
I tell them, "Though it was well done,
that first time was a practice run."

More energy, no need to snooze,
which job today? No need to choose -
I do them all, no longer tired,
with eight years off I feel inspired!
No longer do I need to state:
there's always too much on my plate.

Rumi Morkin, Haifa group

THAT RACE TAG

I, too, was Jewish
but nobody knew it.
My father taught us
not to disclose it.
So we were cut off
from the community
of our people.
But it was all right
my father said.
That way we were safer.
"Safer from what?" I thought.
"From being cut off."
"What did it matter?"
My father said.
"It was just an odd chance"
that we bore that race tag.
But it never worked
To cut it off.

(From an assignment at a poetry workshop last spring)

Betsy Ramsay
Jerusalem selection

Voices Israel Group of Poets in English

Dancer's Dream

Impatiently waiting
For someone to answer
The broadcast I sent out,
The call of a dancer;
The need for a partner,
A dancer from birth,
A body with rhythm,
A soul full of worth;
A person in balance,
Mind/body in tune,
A being appealing--
Please, come to me soon!

Be strong, unafraid,
Independent, not shy;
Feel equal and eager;
Look me straight in the eye.

Together we'll dance
An intimate duet,
A deep dialogue
Full of pleasure and sweat.

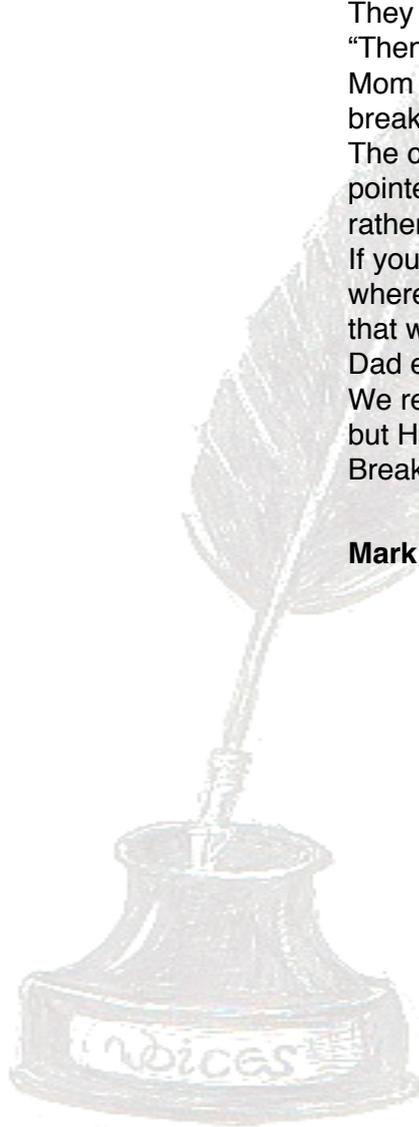
Ethelea Katzenell

Southern Region selection

The Comet

They bribed me to get up for the comet.
"Then we'll have breakfast at Howard Johnson's,"
Mom said, and I felt that the world of the
breakfast menu would be new and adult.
The comet looked not just foreign but wrong,
pointed obliquely against the sunrise
rather than joining it or circling it.
If you noticed a stray sock on the floor
where it couldn't possibly have landed,
that was the comet. "Comets move sideways,"
Dad explained, if you call that explaining.
We returned to the car. Not yet rush hour,
but Howard Johnson's was bright and active.
Breakfast tasted too good to be kosher.

Mark L. Levinson, Tel Aviv selection



Voices Israel Group of Poets in English

Some thoughts on being old

Words rattling
Tales tumbling
Head like an over-furnished house
Treasures and bric-a-brac
Confusingly jumbled.

Family demand
"Write it down!"
One more burden
Archivist

Mindful of time blurred
Torn fragments of memory
Resurrecting of dramas
Long played out.

Sighing I type
A few mediocre sentences
"Do better!"
Shriek the ancestors.

Old age
Not just muscle lost or painful joints
Emotional inflexibility
Can cripple days
When grief surges.

A tide of bereavement
Foundations swept away
All gone, that childhood sandcastle
And tomorrow's tipsy existence
As fragile as a dandelion clock.

With past and future insubstantial
The Now needs elongating
Pulling the thread of the moment
Lengthening the day
Focusing on a fly
Not caring that the Horizon
Is under one's nose.

Malijoy Livingstone, Netanyahu/Sharon selection

Voices Israel Group of Poets in English

Bat Galim Tsunami

The Mediterranean Sea is calm today,
 the breakwater is lined with fishermen
 dangling their baited hopes; two swooping gulls
 pattern with herring-stitch the gentle swell
 hunting for minnows; but beside the road
 a notice that I never saw before –
 square, black-on-white, uncompromising, loud –
 proclaims: Tsunami Evacuation Route!
 A tidal wave would drown this neighborhood:
 flee for your lives eastward to higher ground
 (over the highway? over the railway lines?)
 you'll only have two minutes: follow the signs!

I contemplate the Great Israeli Public:
 three Russian matrons, comfortably stout,
 a pair of soldiers, talking Arabic,
 a girl talking American to her phone
 with eyes for it alone, colliding past me;
 a string of raw recruits from the naval base
 puffing and panting, struggling to keep up
 (no breath for talking) with a female sergeant
 barking commands in Hebrew; a mother and
 child;
 a sprinkle of pensioners by the café,
 two cats eyeing each other warily
 and one stalking a pigeon – which of these
 could outrun a tsunami?

Ah, but what's new?

We are surrounded by tsunamis here –
 to north, northeast, southwest, a boiling sea
 endlessly threatening to overflow
 and storm-clouds massing far over the east:
 why should we spare a thought for *this* tsunami?
 With all the threats that cannot be outrun
 why care about one which may never come?

So the inhabitants of Bat Galim –
 Russian and native, soldiers, pensioners,
 gulls, cats and pigeons – disregard the signs
 and carry on their uneventful lives.
 The Mediterranean Sea is calm, today.

Judy Koren, Haifa selection

Horizon

And it bounced right back to blight her
 the mayor's plan for homes by the sea:
 ten thousand people shall dwell nearby
 in brand new blocks rising to the sky.
 Their taxes will give us so much more,
 much more political power and
 they will always see the horizon
 from their decks and balconies,
 have happy lives in comparison
 with old neighbourhoods far from the sea.

So the ten thousand dwelt there happily
 in their smart high rises by the sea
 enjoying their view of the horizon
 yet still the development went on -
 the protesters felt quite needlessly.
 Eight hotels were scheduled to follow
 blocking out that fine view of the sea;
 the builders had lobbied successfully
 so traffic would get stuck endlessly
 like jam attracting huge honey bees.

The ten thousand now were not happy -
 their horizon view would disappear.

Holding protests in the community
 they urged ending the mayoralty.

And the only One who has a sea view
 stretched unending and eternally
 sees the machinations and meddling;
 will they never ever learn said He
 to view earth's horizon more wisely
 if they choose to live by the sea.

Susan Olsburgh, Sharon/Netanya selection



Voices Israel Group of Poets in English

POEMS FROM OUR OVERSEAS MEMBERS

Metropolitan Winter Dream



After watching
a political speech
on
my T.V.
I become more hopeful
The speaker pledged
to aid the unfortunate homeless
out there in the cold
he pledged to
"keep us together"
rather than divide us
and he promised
that all he is saying
will be achieved
The speaker brought me some
hope
in the cold, cold afternoon
Winter in the metropolis
It is quite frigid outside
But in the hearts of the citizenry
there is warmth
At this time - the beginning of a New Year
Let's open our hearts
Spread a little kindness around
As they say "What goes around comes around"
Good Karma!
and the joyful expectations
of a better day

Matthew Anish, USA