



AUGUST

August 2019

Amuta No. 58-019-703-6

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear All,

First of all, I want to wish mazal tov to our secretary Linda Suchy and her family, on the birth of granddaughter baby Leila. Linda is spending an extended time in the USA carrying out grandma duties and yet she is still amazingly organised to maintain her Voices Israel secretarial duties from thousands of miles away. The wonders of modern technology continue to impress.

The Haifa workshop chapbook has now gone to the printers. Collator Judith Fineberg has worked hard with Johnmichael Simon to produce an impressive memento of the Voices workshop held in June at Susan Rosenberg's home. Over 40 poems have resulted from the three topics presented and a summary of the theory is included at the start of each section. An order form will soon be circulated. Copies at 30 shekels will include postage within Israel (Overseas rates to be advised).

The energetic Haifa group is planning an exciting joint event with the Haifa English Theatre, H.E.T. It will be held on Thursday 19 September in Haifa from 5-8:00pm. Further details will follow but do keep the date free as it will be something special - an event featuring readings and dramatisation of a selection of members' poems.

The 2019 Voices Israel Anthology, volume 45 is in the final production stage and will then be distributed by treasurer Chanita Millman. Please remember you do have to have paid your membership dues to receive a free copy. Most of our members are now in that happy position. The launch is likely to be in November after the Chagim.

Currently the 30th International Reuben Rose Poetry competition is open for submissions. Full details are available at <https://www.voicesisrael.com/reuben-rose-competition>. Please do submit a selection of your best poems. Obviously not all can win but the entrance fees paid, which are very reasonable in comparison with many other organisations, are the main source of funding for Voices Israel apart from dues.

I wish you a happy August wherever you may be, travelling or at home, with leisure time to read, enjoy and write poetry. I recommend Adam Nicolson's "The Making of Poetry" which follows the creativity of a year in the life of Coleridge and Wordsworth 1797- 98 when they were writing some of their greatest achievements. It is a fascinating read.

Warm best wishes to you all.

Susan

Susan Olsburgh
President Voices Israel



VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH



AUGUST 2019 MEETING DATES, TIMES AND PLACES

HAIFA

TUESDAY, AUGUST 20
AT 7:30 PM
Iris Dan's
1 Stefan Weiss Street
French Carmel, Haifa
054-803-2472

Coordinator:

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

TEL AVIV

SUNDAY, AUGUST 18
AT 7:30 PM
Beit Ariela (in T.A. main
library bldg.)
Conf Room, Floor -1
25 Shaul HaMelech Blvd.
Tel Aviv

Coordinator:

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

JERUSALEM

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14
AT 6:00 PM
Toby Shuster's
5 Aza Street, Rehavia
Jerusalem

Coordinator:

Avril Meallem
Tel: 02-567-0998
aemeallem@gmail.com

UPPER GALILEE

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 28
FROM 6-8 PM
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

NO MEETINGS PLANNED

NETANYA & SHARON

TUESDAY, AUGUST 27
AT 7:30PM
Susan Olsburgh's
2/6 Zalman Shazar.
(3rd floor) Ramat Poleg

Coordinator:

Susan Olsburgh
Tel: 074-704-2736
olsburgh.susan@gmail.com

WESTERN GALILEE

MONDAY, AUGUST 26
AT 8:30PM
Kibbutz Evron

Coordinator:

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

LONDON UK

FOR INFORMATION, PLEASE
CONTACT ESTHER.

Coordinator:

Esther Lipton
eblipton@talk21.com

GUSH ETZION

PLEASE CONTACT MINDY IF
YOU ARE INTERESTED IN THE
GROUP RE-STARTING.

SOUTHERN

NO MEETING IN AUGUST

ASHKELON

FOR INFORMATION, PLEASE
CONTACT CHAIM

BERLIN, GERMANY

FOR INFORMATION, PLEASE
CONTACT BRITTA.

Coordinator:

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

Coordinator:

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

Coordinator:

Chaim Bezalel
Tel: 054-674-5900
bezalel.levy@gmail.com

Coordinator:

Britta R. Kollberg
brkollberg@yahoo.de

President

Susan Olsburgh
2/6 Zalman Shazar
Ramat Poleg, Netanya
Tel: 074-704-2736
olsburgh.susan@gmail.com

Secretary

Linda Suchy
Haim Laskov 5/7
Netanya 4265605
Tel: 054-497-8812
secretary.voices@gmail.com

Treasurer

Chanita Millman
15 Shachar St.
Jerusalem 9626323
Tel: 02-653-6770
millmanm@zahav.net.il

Membership Coordinator

Susan Rosenberg
42/46a Leon Blum
Haifa 3385209
Tel: 04-838-1218
susanndick@gmail.com

Overseas Connections Coordinator

Helen Bar-Lev
3 Hairus St.
Metulla 1029200
Tel: 077-353-5548
helentbarlev@gmail.com



CALLS FOR SUBMISSIONS

REMINDER: From **David Ades** of Australia (**deadline September 1, 2019**): "Poetry on Planes" will be an anthology featuring the work of 99 poets from around the world. We invite you to submit original works that, ideally, were written while you were a passenger on a commercial airliner. Here is a communication we received recently [May 2019] from Gerry Murphy and Peter Frey

Fellow Poets, Having reached what pilots call 'V1' (the speed at which stopping is no longer possible and the airplane is committed to fly) – it feels like the right time to give you a status report on how things are going with the Poetry on Planes project.

We've received entries from two hundred and thirty-nine poets so far, about equally divided between men and women. About 20% have sent in one poem, the rest submitted multiples, so we have more than 500 submissions so far. That said, please keep in mind that we'll be choosing 99 poems for the book, from 99 different poets.

Twenty-four different countries and territories are represented, including; Ireland, England, the Netherlands, France, Spain, Italy, Greece, Scotland, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Iran, India, Pakistan, Turkey, Uzbekistan, Bangladesh, Nigeria, the Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Palestine, China, Hong Kong and South Africa.

The youngest poet that we're aware of is 15 and while we don't have an exact number on the oldest, one of you has just had a 50th anniversary retrospective of your work and one of you became a first-time novelist at age 80.

And your credentials are, to put it mildly, stunning. You've written, between you, more than a thousand books, and won an absolutely uncountable number of prizes, fellowships and other honors. Several of you are poets in residence, a dozen hold PhDs and five hold the title of Professor Emeritus. Among your number are the heads of the poetry department at major universities, the founder of a national poetry festival, six Poets Laureate (past or present) and five Fulbright scholars.

Since poetry is rarely a living, there are teachers, doctors, dentists, optometrists, truck drivers, several lawyers, a television presenter, a politician, a librarian and even a consulting arborculturalist. Also, as you might expect given the nature of the Poetry on Planes concept, pilots and cabin crew (who have little good to say about how they're treated by passengers; you might remember that next time you fly.)

And the poems you've submitted are equally varied. A number are about the flight experience itself, some with special focus on fear of crashing (umm...), the food, the person sitting next to you, the turbulence, the movies, the little electronic map that shows you where you are and the navigation light at the end of the wing. One was about the moist towel you get before landing (we're assuming this poet was flying first class... and the poem was more interesting than it sounds). And there was one about how the only book of poetry he could find in the airport bookstore – on the discount counter – was titled "Poems for a World Gone to Shit." We hope to do something about that.

Others range from the shape of clouds outside the plane window inspiring the name of a baby to a caged grey parrot in the lobby of the hotel at the end of the flight. Lots of poems about love, heartbreak, and the beginning or end of a flight as a turning point. A few say nothing at all about planes, but are quite evidently inspired by the airborne muse.

1,101 of you have visited the PoetryonPlanes.com web site in the last 60 days, 457 in the last week and 115 yesterday. And every one of you who has submitted a poem has, without exception, commented favorably about the concept behind Poetry on Planes.

Some of that may be purely flattering the poem-pickers, but most of it feels genuine enough to validate that all of us, as a group, are creating something special. Before closing, a word to the young, unpublished poets out



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there wandering the world and sending in poems over the Wi-Fi connection in the airport concourse; keep them coming. People on planes will be buying Poetry on Planes, and they'd like to hear from you.

Regards, Gerry Murphy / Peter Frey

Poetry Super Highway **Announcing the 2019 Poetry Super Highway Poetry Contest** - It's the **twenty-second annual Poetry Contest** featuring **cash prizes** and **60 sponsors** who've donated **128 additional prizes**. Last year we were able to send every contest entrant a prize for participating and we're hoping to do the same this year. See, <http://poetrysuperhighway.com/psh/>

The Mslexia and PBS Women's Poetry and Pamphlet Competitions are back! Entries are now open until the 16th September 2019, 5pm GMT.

<https://www.poetrybooks.co.uk/pages/mslexia-pbs-womens-poetry-prize>. The Poetry Book Society (PBS) is delighted to be partnering with Mslexia on two prestigious women's poetry prizes. The Women's Poetry Competition will be judged by the award-winning poet Malika Booker. Entrants can win up to £2000, alongside publication in *Mslexia* and the *PBS Bulletin* poetry magazine, as well as the chance to be mentored by PBS Book Selector Sandeep Parmar and attend a writing retreat at Scotland's International Artist Residency Centre, [Cove Park](#). The Women's Pamphlet Competition offers women poets the life-changing opportunity to publish a pamphlet with leading independent publisher, Seren. Both competitions are open [via our Submittable page](#) from the 1st June to 16th September.

CONGRATULATIONS

- to **Pesach Rotem**, whose poem "The Adventures of Shrubbery Man" was published in *Poets Reading the News* at <http://www.poetsreadingthenews.com/2019/07/the-adventures-of-shrubbery-man/>.

- to **Reuven Goldfarb**, whose poem, "Visiting Empire Haven: A Naturalist Resort in Moravia, New York," won Honorable Mention and \$100 in this year's Winning Writers Wergle Flomp Humor Poetry Contest. He was one of 15 finalists out of 5,541 who entered, each with a single poem. The names of the winners and their poems will be posted on the Winning Writers web site on August 15. In the meantime, here is the link to Reuven's winning entry: <https://winningwriters.com/past-winning-entries/visiting-empire-haven>

- to **Reuven Goldfarb**, who is announcing the class he will begin to teach in September. It's called "Formal Elements in Poetry. The class will most likely meet on one or two Wednesdays a month starting at 5 or 6 pm lasting for a couple of hours. A more detailed announcement will be coming soon. Here is a link to Poetry Foundation's glossary, which Reuven hopes many people will enjoy browsing or using as a reference. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/learn/glossary-terms>.

SAVE THE DATE

19TH September 2019 at 5 p.m.

HAIFA ENGLISH THEATRE AND VOICES ISRAEL PRESENT A MEETING OF POETRY AND DRAMA -- Join our poetry and drama café in the lobby of Beth Hagefen, Haifa.

Voices members will read their poems which will then be dramatized by actors from the Haifa English Theatre. Details of registration and submission of poems will be sent at a later date. But meanwhile save the date and look through your files to find one or two poems that are suitable for dramatization.



GROUP POETRY SELECTIONS

Portrait of Gerry

Gerry —
 Launched on a shrouded trajectory
 You blazed briefly and crashed
 Into a torrid sea
 Where Nemesis snatched you
 Like a crocodile
 Leaping from its leafy cover.
 Did you provoke the prowling beast?

Swaggering in your spring
 You fell into a vat of excrement
 Struggled to cleanse the stench.

Your devouring and scouring spouse
 Found you blighted by blackness
 Dumped you from your manse
 Into an infernal hovel
 In a desert in an oasis.

Destiny dashed
 Your artist's brush
 Your deft translator's pen
 From your faltering grasp.
 Bedlam broke your body and mind.

Gerry —
 Gargantuan greybeard
 Darkly human and rudely wise
 Grousing and carousing
 Smoking like a burning haystack
 Gnashing
 Lashing at the lurking brute
 Yet enticing it —

Ghastly night has gulped you.
 Peace, eternal peace is yours.

Roy Runds, Tel Aviv selection

A Precious Moment

a chill breeze on my skin
 dry sand between my toes
 songs of seagulls
 streaks of pink and gold
 a blood red sun on the ocean's horizon
 sparkling diamonds on crests of waves
 a scene of dreams
 of hopes and desires

a precious moment in the tide of time

Avril Mealem, Jerusalem selection

EBB AND FLOW

(Inspired by the presentation on metaphor at the Haifa workshop)

Storm clouds gathering force
 Distant thunder
 Receding in calm and quiet
 Lightening forks as thunder nears

Fire smoulders in the grate
 Winds rage against the window pane
 The storm is nearer now
 Again a brief interlude of calm and quiet

With one mighty clap of thunder,
 Waves crash upon the shore
 No time between the ebb and flow
 Waves breach the sea wall
 My son is born

Wendy Blumfield, Haifa selection



I Never Meant to Tell You (Villanelle)

I never meant to tell you what I knew,
I thought to keep it secret all my life
Knowing you loved her still, and thought her true,
Knowing that you would never love me too,
Desiring to prevent unwanted strife
I never meant to tell you what I knew.

For pity's sake I kept the truth from you,
Diverting every rumour that ran rife –
Knowing you loved her still, and thought her true:
Ignorance often breeds a happier view.
Knowing that words cut deeper than a knife
I never meant to tell you what I knew.

But one night, drunk with envy, that foul brew
I spoke the name of him who loved your wife
Knowing you loved her still, and thought her true:
How could I guess my words – so late, so few
Would summon the Grim Reaper with his scythe?

I never *meant* to tell you what I knew,
Knowing you loved her still, and thought her true.

Judy Koren, Haifa selection

Wandering

I. My aimless wander has its purpose
Goal-free and open-hearted
There is wonder to be had
In detours and waylays upstarted

Doors and drawers
Closets, niches
Brush-hidden pathways
Sun-entranced beaches

There's wonder in wander
Though feet remain still
Down memories, dreams, and mindscapes
There are moon pockets that thrill

II. I wander through corridors
Of subconscious construction
Through thickets of syllables
Searching for silken and burlap words
Through caverns dank with chill
Filled with mazes of sharp-toothed stalagmites
I wander under the sea, not needing to breathe
Swim-stepping with fetching fearsome fauna
I wend my way free, burrowing tunnels at
Surging speeds, like a lightning creature
I have wandered through places my feet
Have not seen, for the Earth is vast
But the mind is vaster

III. Is it a burden of the soul
To wander without pause
Or a lightness of the heart
To wander without cause
Do we meander down streets
Looking here, searching there
Just to steer our way through
tear, lair and the fair, thrilling air

Donna Bechar
Netanya/Sharon Selection



I wrestled with Authority

I wrestled with Authority
by rubbing its unyielding stone
with hands of deft fluidity,
and hoped Omniscience I'd know.

Yet the Angel of Coercion
taking hold about my Hip,
denied my skirmishing Perception
some pronouncement through my lips.

I said I'd let the Seraph go
for a glimpse of Liberation,
a Gift the Ancient Thing bestowed
because I battled my Detention.

I never learned the Creature's name,
its mouth held tight with stolid teeth,
but sense that my Enlightenment
is mere Ephemerality.

Eli Ben-Joseph, Western Galilee

Intelligence

I try to make sure
my eyes won't stay
more than a second
on those Googles ads.
Artificial intelligence
is likely to misread it
as a sign of interest,
so I'll be flooded
with even more unwanted ads.
So how come you, Love,
don't read me properly,
although my eyes
are on you for hours?

Shulamit Bat Or, Southern selection



POEMS FROM OUR OVERSEAS MEMBERS

An Answer to the Cynical

Shabbes comes once a week
Many scoff and ignore it
But they are making a mistake
For a day of rest after a hectic week
is something to cherish
Let them scoff
Friends - we are gathered here tonight
to celebrate creation
to take a respite after the world's struggles
We forget for a while our economic woes
and forget the rat race for a while
Peace comes when we celebrate Shabbes
for it is a great gift which was given to us
Shabbat Shalom

Matthew Anish, USA

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August 2019 Newsletter

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