

GEPPO
the haiku study-work journal
of the
Yūki Teikei Haiku Society

Volume XXI:5

September–October, 1998

Members' Haiku for Study and Appreciation

- | | | | |
|------|--|------|---|
| 2918 | "Just floatin" the quadriplegic boy answers from the therapy pool | 2929 | towards evening spread over Greater City a mackerel sky |
| 2919 | in the sauna I watch me drip away | 2930 | all of us field street & wild seek shade |
| 2920 | Sunday evening after feeding my son again I leave the hospital | 2931 | thru bamboo hedge a drifting tune the ice-cream man |
| 2921 | in the heavy air I awaken from a dream expecting thunder | 2932 | ripe plums and pears litter the ground under the trees |
| 2922 | the first day of school a walk through a parking lot in a sweaty shirt | 2933 | hunting for red leaves we are careful to avoid the poison ivy |
| 2923 | summer vacation the woman who lives alone begins to unpack | 2934 | gleaming salmon's leap not quite high enough to clear the third fish ladder |
| 2924 | my youngest boy gone to another woman— first day of school | 2935 | in the pickup's wake whirling in all directions thistledown blizzard |
| 2925 | Labor Day lazy dust devil stirring last year's leaves | 2936 | chill morning fog late august late summer |
| 2926 | early sun burning a red hole in the fog | 2937 | spider last of our wildlife and you in the tub |
| 2927 | changing his colors fighting against his fate a praying mantis | 2938 | alpine meadow sharing snow-melt from a tin cup |
| 2928 | after closing time still keep non speaking roles chrysanthemum dolls | 2939 | harvest moon— dad's rusted scythe etching light |

- | | | | |
|------|--|------|---|
| 2940 | day of revelry as guests depart... echo of crows | 2953 | harvest moon ... shorn stubbled fields bundled cornstalks |
| 2941 | stone in my shoe, tripping on a shadow... autumn reverie | 2954 | ancient crypt — a padlock drops still unlocked from a casket |
| 2942 | leaning on brooms over the first fallen leaf — gossiping neighbors | 2955 | taste of persimmon keeps the dog's tail wagging wet terracotta |
| 2943 | restless at 3 a.m. — yesterday's double latte fills her night with stars | 2956 | Labor Day Weekend leaping onto my lap flounder |
| 2944 | teenager sleep-walking from screened porch to bedroom this first chilly night | 2957 | Evening at the beach cloud of seagulls leave lasting white rain |
| 2945 | beginning of autumn we long for our youth as days shorten | 2958 | black arrow earthbound disintegrates in grain field wild Canada geese |
| 2946 | the strong sun a woman carries water a parched lawn | 2959 | north woods holiday a hint of winter chill in loons lonely call |
| 2947 | the crowds thin as autumn comes closer empty city streets | 2960 | the Nasdaq fell— a tip of skyscraper bitten off by fog |
| 2948 | Squirrel on the ground Scampering through fallen leaves its acorn-puffed cheeks | 2961 | autumn fashion show in Central Park. . . trees in their best colors |
| 2949 | Boys in black Tees bob on boards wait for wave seals at play. | 2962 | a color chosen for this autumn — deep crimson of refugees' blood |
| 2950 | Bi-plane dragonflies bombard the beach, loop the loop frantic for fast-food | 2963 | kitten playing with a cord its lizard |
| 2951 | Sanderlings stalk sand morning suits last week, today black and brown tweed backs. | 2964 | letter after letter memories crumble in the fireplace |
| 2952 | pale woman in a wrap like the backside of a leaf | 2965 | hummingbirds migrate - silence hovers around the bird feeder |

| | | | |
|------|---|------|--|
| 2966 | recycling van — plastic bags full of empties shopping carts double park | 2979 | hollowed pumpkin filled with yellow light Halloween |
| 2967 | a colt throws its head prances through dry leaves — the old man's eyes | 2980 | harvested field the scarecrow obsolete |
| 2968 | raked into neat piles autumn in black sacks and white ties | 2981 | a pair of quail the only colour in their feathers |
| 2969 | autumn shadows a crow feather settles down | 2982 | trailing rosemary at one blossom, another the hummingbird |
| 2970 | early fall backwater another leaf crowds the pool | 2983 | shaking his jacket a cluster of pine needles caught on the pocket |
| 2971 | scenic trip litter removal signs trashing my view | 2984 | far side of the pond the slow wake of a mallard spinning out moonlight |
| 2972 | the aspens quaking with Santana gusts of wind summer's departure | 2985 | In my bedroom hours are passing slowly. Long chilly night. |
| 2973 | autumn's lantana covered with small butterflies I feel so left out | 2986 | Deep in the forest a forgotten freezing pool. On the ice: the moon. |
| 2974 | no wild geese flights actually just as well my second stroke | 2987 | Ancient scarecrow: Shreds of a forgotten fate beaten by the wind. |
| 2975 | airport parking lot in autumn wind mother's scarf a stream of color | 2988 | ginko poets heads together over a mushroom |
| 2976 | high tide — the moon's reflection on the salt marsh | 2989 | autumn clouds the red mass of Turkey on a grade school map |
| 2977 | autumn wind the clouds cross quickly beyond the mountains | 2990 | I turn fifty: across the street, another time and temperature |
| 2978 | morning glories I touch my lips to a glass of water | 2991 | one by one they boast new skylights - old roofs of france |

CRICKET

Haiku with the challenge kigo 'Cricket'

- 2992 getting laid
with a warm and cozy
fallen birch tree
- 2993 across the sun disc
dark bits and pieces
of the white mist
- 2994 Early morning fog
Flying herons disappear
into the gray sky
- 2995 Two lonely seeds
turn up suddenly
in my seedless grapefruit
- 2996 Lounging on the beach
Crashing waves and squawking birds
punctuate my dreams
- 2997 Friday night
she slow dances-wonders about cowboys
who wear Old Spice ...
- 2998 his ship at sea -
she undresses coyly
for full moon's pleasure...
- 2999 female lineman
climbs another pole -
makes a Freudian slip...
- 3000 geese flying south —
under lake ice
muskrat bubble trails
- 3001 frost on the pumpkin—
the trick-or-treaters
dressed as eskimos
- 3002 arriving school bus—
whoosh of the sprinkler
through the chain-link fence
- 3003 setting crimson sun
shines through a mine-dark cloudbank
watching us drive home
- 3004 taking flight from reeds
heron unfolds into sky
(fish suspect nothing)
- 3005 my middle-aged angst
seasons passing faster
only make it worse
- deaf man
sleeps soundly
as crickets chirp
- looking upward
crickets trapped in light fixtures
of the men's washroom
- kitchen cricket
the cat freezes
mid-stretch
- mid-summer eve
turn up my hearing aid
crickets
- hazy morning,
eyes of a cricket...
I jump first!
- the long summer night
drone of air conditioner
and cheerful cricket
- starting out
to walk alone
then the crickets
- the fridge's hum—
leg of a cricket
under a dropped penny
- Regret or delight?
Cricket chirps persistently
"me, too, me, too, me."
- creaking floor
echoed
by cricket
- midnight intruder
under my bed a cricket
chirps. . .change of seasons

David Bachelor

Jerry Ball

Yvonne Hardenbrook

Robert Gibson

Gloria Procsal

Eve Jeanette Blohm

Eugenie Waldteufel

Michael Dylan Welch

Christine Doreian Michaels

Alec Kowalczyk

Robin Chancefellow

Mary E. Ferryman

Haiku with the challenge kigo 'Cricket' (continued)

Chinatown dusk
boxed mechanical crickets
two for one
Fay Aoyagi

abandoned cottage
front yard
filled with crickets
Naomi Y. Brown

scattered feathers
the cricket sings softly —
sleeping cat
Ross Figgins

black oak forest
a river of cricket song,
the milky way
Laura Bell

silent as we pass
resuming when we're gone
at dark crickets sing
George Knox

singing along
at the country music fest
crickets
Louise Beaven

sounds of music
on a tree behind the church
a cricket chirps
Patricia Prime

There is a cricket
illuminating the deep night
with its bright song.
Ertore José Palmero

at the mall entrance
the terracotta planters
veiled in cricket song
Alice Benedict

close at hand
a cricket quiet — I wait
for it to fly
Alex Benedict

the furnace pauses
the cricket goes on
alone
John Stevenson

Here and there, all night
a ventriloquist cricket
throws his voice around.
John Tabberah

The cricket-filled night
Trees gently swaying
Ha-a-a-r-umph from the pond
Richard Bruckart

**Challenge Kigo for
November–December
FIRST COLD NIGHT**

by
Michael Dylan Welch

.....
The impending chill of winter begins in the autumn when we first notice we need an extra blanket at night. Autumn is a season of hunkering down, of melancholy, a time of contemplation. Leaves may be turning colour and the joy of Christmas may be just around the corner, but in late autumn we turn inward—coming indoors both physically and mentally. We are touched by autumn on the first cold night.

my neighbour's light
goes out too—
the chill of night
Shiki

The first chill night:
The mother finds herself
Covering up the dolls.
Cicely Hill *

first cold night
smell of hot dust
from the vent
Michael Dylan Welch

.....
*Haiku World (Kodansha, 1996), page 180.
.....

**SEASON WORDS
for early winter**

selected from the lists in the 1996 Members' Anthology.

Season: early winter months: November, December, chilly night, departing autumn, start of winter, depth of winter, short day, winter day, winter morning, winter night.

Sky and Elements: sardine cloud, frost/hoarfrost, freeze, hail, ice, icicle, north wind, sleet, snow/first snow, winter cloud, winter moon, winter rain, winter solstice, winter wind.

Landscape: reaped or harvested fields, stubble fields, vineyards, winter creek or stream, winter mountain, winter sea or ocean, winter seashore, winter garden, withered moor.

Human Affairs: gleaning, harvest, Thanksgiving; bean soup, blanket, brazier, hot chocolate, charcoal fire, cold or flu, cough, foot warmer, gloves/mittens, grog, heater, hunting, falconer, fish trapper, overcoat/fur coat, popcorn, quilted clothes, shawl, skiing.

Animals: deer, shrike (butcher bird), siskin, snipe, woodpecker, bear, hibernation, fox, marten or sable, oyster, owl, perch, rabbit, reindeer, sardine, sea slug, swan, weasel, winter bee, winter fly, winter sparrow, winter wild geese, wolf, whale.

Plants: cranberry, pomegranate, dried persimmon, heavenly bamboo (Nandina), pine nuts, radish, scallion, tangerine /mandarin orange, turnip, winter chrysanthemum, winter grass, winter tree or grove, withered or frost-nipped plants.

July–August Haiku
Voted as Best by the readers of *Geppo*

the war monument
 completely hidden
 in the summer weeds
Teruo Yamagata

under redwoods
 a slight shimmer of the creek
 over a flat rock
Alice Benedict

writing haiku
 in the Japanese garden
 a snail moves
Patricia Prime

sea wind
 fat paper fish
 tug on the line
Robert Gibson

a man with a cane—
 he takes his old seeing-eye dog
 for a walk
Michael Dylan Welch

north cascades
 hiking with a pebble
 in my mouth
Robert Gibson

abandoned country diner —
 the ring left behind
 by a coffee cup
Michael Dylan Welch

long summer sunday
 in my drifting dreams the drone
 of power mowers
George Knox

summer sun
 over the new cemetery
 shade of saplings
John Stevenson

the final exam
 marked in red and handed back
 it becomes a fan
Jerry Ball

At the puddle's edge
 every tiny sparrow gulp
 breaks apart the sky
Edward Grastorf

slow afternoon
 we run through conversation
 into quietness
Alice Benedict

Members' Votes:
July–August 1998 Issue

- John Stevenson - 2831-11 2832-10 2833-3
- Michael Welch - 2834-16 2835-15 2836-4
- Robert Gibson - 2837-16 2838-18 2839-5
- Deborah Beachboard - 2840-2 2841-3 2842-6
- Anne Homan - 2843-5 2844-3 2845-0
- Teruo Yamagata - 2846-3 2847-5 2848-25
- Echo Goodmansen - 2849-5 2850-8 2851-5
- Ross Figgins - 2852-0 2853-1 2854-0
- George Knox - 2855-1 2856-15 2857-7
- Carolyn Thomas - 2858-4 2859-0 2860-2
- Yvonne Hardenbrook - 2861-6 2862-9 2863-2
- Robin Chancefellow - 2864-0 2865-1 2866-1
- Richard Bruckart - 2867-4 2868-7 2869-0
- Louise Beaven - 2870-2
- Patricia Prime - 2871-0 2872-21 2873-9
- Steve Bertrand - 2874-1 2875-0 2876-1
- Gloria Procsal - 2877-2 2878-2 2879-7
- Ertore Palmero - 2880-2 2881-1 2882-0
- Mary Ferryman - 2883-0 2884-0 2885-5
- Naomi Brown - 2886-4 2887-1 2888-0
- Jerry Ball - 2889-10 2890-2 3891-7
- Christine Michaels - 2892-0 2893-1 2894-1
- Edward Grastorf - 2895-10 2896-2
- Joan Zimmerman - 2897-3 2898-1 2899-1
- Fay Aoyagi - 2900-8 2901-3 2902-8
- Roger Abe - 2903-1 2904-0 2905-2
- Alex Benedict - 2906-6 2907-2 2908-3
- Alec Kowalczyk - 2909-0 2910-0 2911-1
- Alice Benedict - 2912-14 2913-2 2914-23
- Zinovy Vayman - 2915-1 2916-5 2917-0

Editor's Correction:
 The July-August 1998 Issue contained an error in the vote count. Poem 2754 earned 3 votes instead of the 23 votes listed.

GEPP0

is the bimonthly study-work journal of the Yūki Teikei Haiku Society. Haiku are published as submitted, and members may cast votes for haiku from the preceding issue. In this way we learn by studying the work of others, and by the response to our own work. Subscription is \$15.00 per year, which includes membership in the Society.

Editor • Jean Hale
Design • Alice Benedict
Yūki Teikei Haiku Society

1996-97 Officers

*Alex Benedict, President • Roger Abe, Vice President
 Kiyoko Tokutomi, Treasurer • Alice Benedict, Secretary
 June Hymas & Patricia Machmiller, Board Members at Large*

Submission Guidelines for GEPP0

Deadline for the next issue is December 10!

- Print your name, address and all poems and votes on a **single, full size sheet of paper**. You can include:
- **Haiku** - up to three unpublished haiku appropriate to the season. Haiku should not be under simultaneous submission. Poems must be in three lines.
- **Challenge Kigo Haiku** - one 3-line haiku that uses the current issue's Challenge Kigo. Try to use just the one season word. The poem will be printed with your name.
- **Votes** - Write numbers of up to ten poems from the current issue that you especially appreciate. Choose up to three poems to receive 5 points each; others will receive 1 point. Poems with the top number of votes are reprinted with the author's name in the next issue. Send to:
Jean Hale

NEWS AND EVENTS

UPCOMING

Yūki Teikei South: 3rd Saturdays Long Beach branch of Borders Books

Those in the Los Angeles area can meet with Jerry Ball the third Saturday of every month at Borders Books, Long Beach. Contact Jerry at (310) 430-7335 for more details.

Holiday Party December 12

The Holiday Party will be a potluck with festivities at Pat and Claire Gallagher's home. Please bring 25 copies of a haiku gift, and ALSO plenty of winter haiku to read and for participating in Claire's Tree of Haiku. Please call the Gallaghers to let them know you will be coming:

Their address is

Driving directions are available upon request, by email from the Gallaghers, or from Alex Benedict at

1997 MEMBERS ANTHOLGY

Though delayed, the 1997 Anthology is in progress. We apologize for the delay, but hope to have this to the participants soon.

the 1996 Members Anthology

Copies of still life with stars are available for \$5.00 each. Please send requests with payment to Alice Benedict.

Book Review *An Owl Hoots, by Sosuke Kanda*

The contact of English-language haiku writers with Japanese haiku poetry continues to expand. With organizations such as Haiku International, and magazines like *Kō*, we see more and more present-day haiku being translated, in both directions. Mr. Sosuke Kanda adds his voice with his book, *An Owl Hoots*. This beautifully produced book, the work of a haiku poet of many years' experience, is the first book that I have seen where the poet translates his own work. The haiku are arranged by seasons, and each seasonal section is prefaced by a short essay on what the season means to the poet. Mr. Kanda evokes clear memories, almost haiku-like in themselves, of events from childhood: flying kites, catching cicadas, a first day at school, and also impressions from later periods of his life, both in his own country and abroad. Because haiku arise out of experience, I particularly enjoyed reading first the poet's memories, and then the haiku.

no word at all
reaching out to touch
a winter peony

Mr Kanda's haiku are personal, and often touched with humor. They cover a broad range of subject matter, from poems of "nature", to family life, to the connection of a place or event with a memory of historical events or literature.

bathing in the sun
even a dog enjoys his own time
on Sunday

the old battlefield
dimly seen by spring lightning
splash of waves

now my son is driving
on this long trip
Mt Fuji in winter

With *An Owl Hoots*, we have the privilege of seeing collected work of a living Japanese poet in both original language and in translation. These poems, in their clarity and humanity, are indeed a pleasure.

just a little drunk
shaking hands to say "goodbye"
in the hazy moonlight

like a figure in fabric
life is woven
late autumn

—by Alex Benedict

Winners of the 1998

Kiyoshi Tokutomi Memorial Haiku Contest

This contest is for writers of English-language haiku using a traditional seventeen-syllable form in three lines of 5, 7, and 5 syllables. Each poem must contain one (and only one) season word from an assigned list. In Japan, contests are often held in which all entrants must use the same specified season word. But because this might be too restrictive for some, we try to supply enough season words so that poets who enter can choose one most harmonious with their life and practice. Assigned season words for the 1998 contest were: Spring: melting snow, camellia, spring rainbow, spring cleaning Summer: fan, summer sky, fireworks, iced coffee Autumn: persimmon, quail, harvest festival, morning glory, persimmon Winter: winter seashore, icicle, fox, sleigh ride New Year: first dream (of the year), new years' photo, first sunrise (or, New Years' Day sunrise)

The 1998 contest was coordinated by Roger Abe, and the selection committee was Kiyoko Tokutomi, Alex Benedict, and Patricia Machmiller. Final judge was **Kohjin Sakamoto**, a writer of haiku in both English and Japanese, who has won many awards for his haiku in English. Mr. Sakamoto lives in Kyoto, Japan. The contest committee and judge thank the contestants for the many enjoyable poems that were sent. May all who participated continue to write and enjoy haiku!

First Place

Christopher Herold

New Year's Day sunrise
the back of the pickup truck
filled with donations

In Japan, when a New Year's haiku is composed, quietness or "sabi" is usually incorporated. The vital power in this haiku is unique.

Second Place

Yvonne Hardenbrook

wet from melting snow
meter reader leaves behind
official footprints

"official footprint" is a very interesting expression!

Third Place

Robert Gilliland

the breeze bearing them
only a second or two . . .
camellia petals

The first and second lines caught a very subtle feeling. But when a camellia drops off, the whole flower head falls, and makes a loud sound.

Honorable Mention

(in alphabetical order)

first dream of the year—
waking from it I decide
to start another

Dennis Davidson

gathering in sand
along the winter seashore
uncollected shells

Dennis Davidson

the unsteady gait
of her new hip--a trellis
of morning glories

Claire Gallagher

old boundary fence
wound with wild morning glory
past the county line

Robert Gilliland

the squealing children
gazing skyward at fireworks
ears tightly covered

Anne Homan

fireworks finale
a ripple of oohs and ahs
across the lawn chairs

Susan Rudnick

a piece of driftwood
rests on the winter seashore
without being found

Susan Rudnick

the winter seashore
a young man jogs with his dog
among the driftwood

Sybil Taylor

a sailplane rising
in the cloudless summer sky
—I'm called for dinner

Michael D. Welch

Renku Workshop at International House, UC Berkeley

The unique chance to hear a modern Japanese linked verse poet discussing this literary form was afforded Bay Area poets on September 6 at Berkeley's International House. About 25 people met in the Home Room to greet our guest from Japan, Prof. Shinku Fukuda, and to write the beginning of a traditional 36-verse poem with his guidance. Several Bay Area poets also gave talks on renku related topics.

Prof. Fukuda opened his talk with gracious and endearingly humorous parallels between the perils of travel and literary collaboration. Writing renku, he said, is a process of discovery and negotiation with the unexpected. As a poem unfolds, we empathize, and respond, in ways that we trust will be understood by our writing partners. Renku rules help make a 36-link *kasen* into a mandala of human experience - a meditation that touches on many aspects of humanity and nature. Writing such a poem is a way of reaching out to other people, so it is especially suited for international exchanges of poetry. The renku master's task is to make sure that lines of communication remain open. He or she sees that everyone has a chance to speak in their own voice, yet in a way that follows the traditional form and harmonizes with the other participants. This is what is required for a renku to be successful.

Prof. Fukuda has been leading the Milky Way Renku group for many years, and has formed relationships with collaborative poets in many parts of the world. He spoke of his efforts to create a renku park on his native Sado Island. There, poets will meet and write. Celebrations have already taken place there that have brought together poets from many lands: collaboration by fax has been especially successful. A feeling of solidarity with far-flung poets is one wonderful result of these renku events. And, Prof. Fukuda mentioned the enthusiastic response of poets in the midwest and other places to create their own renku parks along with the development of the one on Sado Island. Prof. Fukuda spoke in Japanese, but since Fay Aoyagi was our simultaneous translator, we almost felt we had been hearing his talk directly!

With Alex Benedict as moderator, Bay Area renku poets spoke briefly of various aspects of renku writing as it has been introduced and practiced here.

Kiyoko Tokutomi described her efforts to learn about renku. She prepared herself by extensive reading and study to help American poets learn more about the traditional form and style of *kasen renku*. One of the results is the traditional renku party at the society's annual retreat at Asilomar, where many people have been introduced to renku for the first time. She has also lead annual or twice-yearly renku exchanges with the Milky Way Group.

Patricia Machmiller spoke about season words, or *kigo*.

The proper understanding of the use and power of *kigo* is essential in writing traditional renku. After touching on the history of seasonal reference in Japanese poetry, she pointed out that a *kigo* is a powerful literary device that evokes a specific time and a constellation of associations in the minds of participating poets. With a *kigo*, the imagistic verses in a renku take on allusive qualities that deepen their emotional impact. Her examples of Japanese poetry and of Western words that have this kind of feeling, such as 'rose' and 'robin', convincingly illustrated her points.

Christopher Herold, representing the Marin Renku Group, gave a brief history of this group of Bay Area poets that has been meeting about once a month for over 15 years. The group writes many types of poems, including 6-verse *rengay*, and 12- and 20-link poems, as well as free-style linked verse. One session resulted in a double *kasen*: two *kasen* linked by a common *hokku*. Christopher outlined his own involvement with the group's deepening interest in traditional renku, as currently understood among American poets.

Alex Benedict, creator of the home page for the Yuki Teikei Society, described what was involved in setting up a system to write international renku on the worldwide web that allows the participants to see a renku and commentary as it unfolds. He extolled the web as a powerful medium to create immediacy so often lacking when poets must write by mail, fax, or even email. He outlined design issues and pitfalls, but overall felt that access is now so easy that almost anyone can get the tools to create a functional site for renku.

Fay Aoyagi ended with thoughts on her experience of learning to write traditional renku with Prof. Fukuda and Mrs. Fumiko Tachibana as instructors and guides. Before starting this process she had written haiku, tanka, and linked verse only in English: this was her first foray into writing traditional poetry in her native language. Her diary of this experience, translated into English, has appeared in 6 parts in the Geppo over the last year. Briefly, she would send 5 candidate poems for each link, and Prof. Fukuda would respond with commentary and his selection. She learned by doing very quickly! For her it was an intense and rewarding experience. After the first poem was completed, Fay agreed to act as translator for a *kasen* with American and Japanese poets, with Prof. Fukuda as renku master. This poem and its commentary are posted on the Yuki Teikei Web page.

After a break we formed two groups and began writing renku - one group led by Prof. Fukuda, and the other led by Patricia Machmiller. In this short workshop it was possible to finish the first 6 links of two *kasen*, each beginning with the same *hokku* by Prof.

(continued on page 10)

Renku Workshop (continued from page 9)

Fukuda. This first section of a renku requires painstaking care, and has many special rules. So, it often takes extra time to complete. These renku were completed later in the week, first at an all-day Labor Day Renku Extravaganza, hosted by Patricia Machmiller, and then at the Asilomar retreat. By September 13th, various participants had completed three full kasen renku, and at least two half-kasen! With the warm September sun shining on the Golden Gate in the distance, we ended the workshop with mutual good wishes and a feeling that we'd come away with a little better understanding of renku and of collaboration.

Renku Poets Visit the American Haiku Archives

In the first official visit of a Japanese poet to the American Haiku Archives, Prof. Shinku Fukuda was given a special tour arranged by Jerry Kilbride, the Archives' Honorary Curator on Wednesday, September 9, 1998. After introductions, Garry Gay gave a brief history of how the Archives were established. Then Prof. Fukuda was shown a selection of books, periodicals, and papers relating to English-language linked verse from the Archives' collections that Jerry had set aside for the occasion. Prof. Fukuda was intrigued by papers relating to Jane Reichhold's manuscript for "Those Women Writing Haiku", which included her original correspondence with haiku poets from around the world, including Japan. Letters between renku poets in which poems in progress were being sent back and forth and discussed were also particularly fascinating.

Librarian Karen Smith led the group of about a dozen poets on a tour, which included meeting the librarians and archivists who are so painstakingly conserving these literary artifacts for future generations.

The tour ended with a meeting with California State Librarian Kevin Starr. Dr. Starr welcomed Prof. Fukuda, and spoke eloquently of the contribution of Japanese people and culture to all aspects of life in California: agriculture, architecture, fine arts, and literature. Alex Benedict presented Prof. Fukuda, and Dr. Starr and the Archives with an edition of the kasen renku 'First East Wind' that was printed as a gift for its participants, and in honor of Prof. Fukuda's visit. This poem was a collaboration between Japanese and American renku poets, with Prof. Fukuda as renku master. Prof. Fukuda responded cordially, touching on his gratitude at being introduced to the repository of work of American poets in the Archives. He further expressed thanks for his warm reception in California.

*October 2 Moon Viewing
Overfelt Park, San Jose*

The full moon was the impetus for a Haiku and Moon Viewing Reading and Party at the Sun Yat Sen Pavilion in San Jose's Overfelt Park on October 2. Vice President Roger Abe arranged for the use of the space, a high-ceilinged Chinese-style pavilion housing a bronze statue of Dr. Sun Yat Sen. With tall folding doors open to the view of a tranquil pond and the pink sunset sky, poets met, chatted, strolled in the gardens, and wrote haiku until the sun set.

Featured readers were Roger Abe, Anne Homan, Ebba Story, Fay Aoyagi, and Christopher Herold. Each poet thoughtfully used their unique style and voice to craft remarkable readings. Somehow, these different voices harmonized with each other very well!

Roger Abe alternated sections of haiku with longer poems and haibun. A personal favorite was his haibun on the joys of exploring tidepools on a sunny day.

Anne Homan organized her haiku seasonally. She brought swaths of different colored ribbons to symbolize each season—a visual accompaniment to poems that are alive with her attention to California landscapes. She also read a charming haibun about her childhood in Baltimore.

Ebba Story's selection of poems began and ended with autumn themes. Her attunement to her own place within the poems, and her sensitivity to emotional nuance gave her poems - on the tattered wing of a butterfly, or a bouquet of zinnias - a special resonance.

A voice floating out of speakers at the feet of the bronze statue announced Fay Aoyagi's reading. She slowly entered the space, intoning deeply personal haiku and tanka. Several of her poems spoke of her experience as one grounded in both Japanese and American life and culture.

Christopher Herold, the final reader, dimmed the lights so that the room was lit only by votive candles flickering at the statue's feet. In half-shadow, he read haiku and haibun that re-created moments in his life over his many years as a haiku poet. Together these poems of great clarity and depth became a kind of meditation that invited us into his emotional world.

At the break, we gazed again at the brilliant white moon, caught up on each others' news, wrote, and feasted on potluck goodies. Then we all gathered to read several rounds of haiku composed during the evening. Poems of the moon, of course, but also of glimpses of the gardens, and whimsical poems about the statue made for a warm-hearted evening.

— Alice Benedict

Notes from Asilomar September 10-13, 1998

by

Anne M. Homan

The fall weekend began as it ended—with perfect weather for the annual Asilomar retreat of the Yuki Teikei Society. That was indeed fortunate since the only covering over the Julia Morgan dining hall was plastic, as workmen restored the roof. Following Thursday dinner, we met for the opening ceremony by Christopher Herold who sought to gather our senses and perspective away from our ordinary separate worlds to an immediate shared weekend. Patricia Machmiller, our weekend hostess extraordinaire, welcomed us and encouraged us to introduce ourselves with a haiku that revealed part of our personality. A favorite with the group was a poem by Helen K. Davie:

leaf in my palm
its stem extends
my life line

Helen said this haiku expresses her deeply-felt personal connection with the natural world. We were glad to see first-time attendees: Kathy Combrink, Richard Enfield and Tony Mariani. Tony found us through our new Internet Home Page! We also welcomed Mr. and Mrs. Sosuke Kanda from Japan. After this gathering, June Hymas led what started out as a moonless walk to the beach. Without flashlights, we stumbled our way along. The Big Dipper was so low in the sky that it almost touched the ocean. About 11:15 a bright yellow half-moon at last emerged from skyline trees.

Each morning, Christopher Herold opened the meeting room at 6 a.m. for those who wished to begin the day in meditation. Friday after breakfast, our whole group took a ginko to the beach and through the dunes. Afterward June talked about new approaches to writing haiku, emphasizing that the more we practice, the more we learn. She recommended The American Heritage Dictionary (available in hard copy as well as on the Internet) to consider derivations of words and nuances of meaning. Later in the morning, we made visual representations of our haiku with art materials provided by June.

In the early afternoon, Professor Shinku Fukuda from Tokyo gave an informative and entertaining lecture, translated by Fay Aoyagi, about renku poetry. For the second half of the afternoon, June led a sekidai, a voting on and critique of haiku. An especially beautiful sunset glowed at the horizon now clear of fog. The sun sank in the ocean, its orange-red lingering on waves and wet beach.

At the evening renku party we all had the opportunity to work with our renku master, Prof. Fukuda, again

through Fay's non-stop, on-the spot translation. By midnight we had finished the 36-stanza renku started the Sunday before at Berkeley's International House. The first verse, or hokku, by Prof. Fukuda is

Pacific Ocean
refreshing breeze
through the hall's window

Saturday morning, our workshop leader Clark Strand took us on a ginko, asking us to write haiku quickly, one after the other, sketching from life. He advised us not to judge each effort, but to proceed immediately from one poem to the next. We could move about, or perhaps find one place to look closely at what was there. Throughout, Clark and Michael Welch kept up friendly teasing (which went on through the weekend) about Clark's emphasis on 5-7-5 syllable count. Back in the meeting room, Clark held an oral sekidai. After the voting, each voter was asked to say why he/she chose a haiku. No negative comments were allowed. We liked this technique: it ensured that everybody who had something to say would participate. Clark's talk about his view of the spirituality of modern haiku started with his personal contact and experience with haiku and haiku poets. His examples of recent and current Japanese writers who maintain that elusive quality we recognize as being part of haiku poetry were illuminating.

In the afternoon, Ikebana master Mrs. Suiun Matano demonstrated flower arranging of the Ikenobo school. She discussed the history and methods of her art as she created three beautiful formal flower arrangements. Ikebana, we learned, "expresses both the beauty of flowers and the beauty of longing in our own hearts." Mrs. Matano, her assistant intimated, has "magic hands." She seems to know just how far she can bend a twig to shape it without breaking it. After her expert demonstration, Mrs. Matano invited volunteers from the audience to make a simple three-stem arrangement, with her encouragement.

Following this, Clark Strand challenged us to write down quickly one haiku after another, using the same autumn kigo. Then we were to perform the exercise again, this time writing poems without kigo. His point in advocating quick writing is to loosen our imaginations. After each exercise, Clark read poems we turned in, so we could hear and feel the differences between poems with and without kigo.

In the evening, Contest Chair Roger Abe announced
(continued on the back page)

Asilomar 1998 (continued from page 11)

and read winners of the Tokutomi Haiku Contest. Winners who were present received their awards and gifts in appreciation of their fine haiku. Then Clark, as the evening's featured poet, gave a reading from his book on haiku practice, *Seeds from a Birch Tree*.

Sunday morning we gathered in the circle a final time, to end the retreat reading rounds of haiku. Thanks were given to those who worked hard to make this a special retreat: registrar Mary Hill, kigo policewoman Fay, and many others. After Alex Benedict's closing words, Christopher named those who were absent, but with us in spirit, in this magical warm circle of writing friends. For him, "coming to Asilomar is like coming home." We joined hands in his ceremony that ended our 1998 retreat as it had begun, with the sound of a bell reverberating into silence. The plastic dining hall roof flapped good-bye in a brisk sea wind.



In the next Issue—Reflections on writing haiku in English by Kiyoshi Tokutomi, as read at Asilomar by Clark Strand



Haiku on Asilomar from Japan

After attending at the Asilomar Retreat, Mr. Sosuke Kanda was kind enough to send haiku he wrote during his and his wife's travels in California, and to allow the poems to be printed in the Geppo. Mr Kanda is the author of *An Owl Hoots*, a book of haiku reviewed on page 8 of this issue.

-trip to San Francisco with my wife after thirty years -

Unchanged, unchanged all
sounds, mists, and slopes
and Golden Gate

autumn skies
native land—far away
Golden Gate

pine groves
the sound of surf
in the autumn breeze

talking together
back to the lodge
stars falling

sea roar
pine trees soaring
stars falling

autumn cool
now in my sixties
many dreams

Calendar of Events

Nov 14 Regular meeting, Saratoga Public Library
Dec 12 Holiday Party at the Gallaghers.

Deadlines

Dec 10 Submissions to Nov-Dec GEPP0

IN THIS ISSUE

| | |
|------------------------------|---------|
| <i>Book Review</i> | 7 |
| <i>Challenge Kigo</i> | 5 |
| <i>News and Events</i> | 7, 9-12 |
| <i>Haiku</i> | |
| <i>Challenge Kigo Haiku</i> | 4 |
| <i>Members' Haiku</i> | 1 |
| <i>Top-Voted Haiku</i> | 6 |
| <i>Season Word List</i> | 5 |
| <i>Submission Guidelines</i> | 7 |
| <i>Tokutomi Contest</i> | 8 |