



CSPS Poetry Letter

Dear CSPS Members, Friends of Poetry, CQ Readers and CQ Contributors,

“*CQ* is the Morse Code for ‘query’ or ‘seek you’ or ‘call you’! It is also the short title for the California State Poetry Society Quarterly.” So it says on p. 3 of the *CQ* Vol. 1 No. 2 (Winter 1973). And so it says in every issue published during the first three volumes of the *CQ*! That’s what I’ve been reading in a *very* significant gift to the CSPS from early CSPS member and *CQ* contributor Bruce Gallie. He is still a member and still a contributor. We thank him *very much* for the following issues:

Volume	Number(s)	CSPS President	Season & Year
1	1	Romayne Dowd	Fall 1972
1	2	Romayne Dowd	Winter 1973
1	3	Romayne Dowd	Spring 1973
1	4	Romayne Dowd	Summer 1973
2	3	Romayne Dowd	Summer 1974
2	4	Joyce Odam	Fall 1974
3	1&2	Joyce Odam	Spring 1975

In the 1970s, the *CQ* had only one editor; he was Gordon Curzon of Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. There were also representatives for Southern California – Kenneth Atchity of Occidental College – and for Northern California – Howard Lachtman of the University of the Pacific, Stockton. If you knew any of them, I would appreciate hearing from you.

These issues are utterly fascinating; the poems are intellectually lithe, sprightly, and highly experimental. I am much impressed (what did I expect??) Now you want to know which poets famous in those days were included. Do you? Ah! To be continued . . .

What came after the *CQ* Vol. 3’s double issue 1&2? I’m asking you! Dear members, readers, if you have any old *CQ* issues that you don’t require, or if someone has passed on and left you some, *please* send them to us. The California State Library in Sacramento has agreed to house one complete run of our poetry magazine; actually, they want even two sets, one could then be borrowed by library users.

All good wishes for your *Cinco de Mayo* and other delights, and good writing! As always, if you read this and are actually not a CSPS member, please contact our membership chair Richard Deets at rdeets@att.net.

Your *Poetry Letter* editor,

Margaret
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To thank Bruce Gallie, I would like to republish one of his two poems from the first issue of the *CQ* in the fall of 1972:

JUST ONCE IN MY LIFE

Soft as wool
And cotton round
And the night
Had found your face
In a loving pale ball
That turned the trombone's shag
To satin sound.

Light of morning,
Come down—
Drown the redolent fire
Of the heart
I once found
That burned in symphony
All night long.

Bruce Gallie, Rancho Cucamonga, California
First appeared in *CQ* Vol. 1 No. 1

Following are two winners of our monthly poetry contests as indicated below each poem. We thank Keith Van Vliet, the Monthly Contest Chair, for his continued dedication to the Monthly Contest.

AUTUMN HURRAH

A small girl prances
chestnut corduroy jacket
feet encased in pink suede boots
she kicks through fallen leaves
they crackle and crunch
she turns shuffling sideways
for maximum decibels

then knees up
arms pumping
leaves swirl
lift as
brisk wind catches
the pile flies high
far over head
shrieks of laughter



erupt into spontaneous dance
skirt in a whirl
hands flung high
the nearly bare tree
applauds
in one last shower
as she spins twirls
in the waning
gold light

June Gerron, Santa Rosa, California
CSPS 2015 Monthly Contest – 3rd Place

HIGH BANK CANTO IV #2107

Mild ocean swells rocking us like the arms of a loving mother,
rumbling engine below us singing a deep throated lullaby,
and we,
coursing a gently swaying course across the sea,
a dark object,
still touched with the night's cover and not yet revealed by dawn slipped
in a half-glimpsed arc beneath the waves,
mirage perhaps,
trick of the sea or something to come,
portent, messenger, or spirit,
and perhaps no difference among the three,
the first neared us,
then a pair,
then dozens, hundreds
of sleek, dark porpoises surrounded the Booby Hatch,
beneath the bow,
off the stern,
sliding down the keel,
they danced and skipped through sea and sky,
slipping silently beneath the froth splattered waves only to surface,
for hours they stayed the course,
an abundance of moving, graceful life around us,
one after another these curious beings closed on us,
sometimes gazing or winking before disappearing beneath the sea,
allowing us to be with them.

George Samerjan, North Chatham, New York
CSPS 2014 December Monthly Contest – 2nd Place



The last is a poem by Tom Feeney, which I'd accepted for the *Poetry Letter* I don't know how long ago; sorry for the delay and continued good writing!

DOORS

Lining swift hallways that
years are a series of.
Experience assures: one never opens
but another swings shut.
As on odd weekends
when waking up in the broom closet
you scrounge bleak cupboards
for the cooking sherry.

Because, if truth be told
thru this maze of obscure corridors
this tangle of pity and dust
gusts a devious wind
fooling children's faces
rattling knobs, slamming wood
hard on flesh

In ripened dark, pain chills
Once more your best shot goes caroming
off the moon. You catch a breath,
blink, and right there, that's
all the stars
you'll ever get to see.

Tom Feeney, Raleigh, North Carolina

First published in 2004 in HADROSAUR TALES

Your *Poetry Letter* editor,

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