

THE SOUND OF WATER: *FROGPOND* AT 40

Charles Trumbull

If there is to be a real “American Haiku” we must—by trial and error—work out our own standards. ~Harold G. Henderson¹

In his famous letter to James Bull and Don Eulert, editors of the pioneering haiku journal *American Haiku*, Harold G. Henderson considered the possibility of writing haiku in English. Although derived from the Japanese, English-language haiku, he believed, would be of no lesser quality. Henderson went on to cofound the Haiku Society of America. It is the HSA and its members, more than any other group, that has concerned itself with establishing standards for American—indeed, English-language—haiku.

Frogpond editors have always been in the vanguard in realizing Henderson’s call. They have brought different points of view and (pre)conceptions as they sought to define what *Frogpond* should be and do, for example:

- ◆ Unlike independent publications such as *American Haiku* and *Modern Haiku*, *Frogpond* is a membership journal. What constitutes good service to the members? Is *Frogpond* obliged to publish the work of all dues-paying members? If not, should membership be a consideration for acceptance at all? Perhaps good service means bringing to the members the best work from all sources, foreign and domestic? Should the journal be analyzing classical Japanese- and/or English-language haiku in depth? Or maybe finding and printing the newest experiments?
- ◆ Is the HSA membership *Frogpond*’s only audience? Should it try to find a place for itself on bookshelves and coffee tables

alongside mainstream poetry journals? Should issues of *Frogpond* be available in school libraries, colleges, and other institutions? Should it be sold in bookstores? Is it desirable for *Frogpond* articles—haiku even—to be indexed among scholarly publications? The goal of making *Frogpond* the very best haiku journal possible implies applying stringent standards for the selection of haiku, emphasizing *quality* over *quantity*.

- ◆ Where should the editor come down on the eternal question of form in haiku? How closely will *Frogpond* hew to 5–7–5–syllable structure? Will the editor promote one-line haiku? Concrete or compressed haiku? How like Japanese haiku should American haiku be? What should be the balance and focus of the journal in terms of forms and genres? Haiku will likely always be of primary importance, but should the editor also dabble in other *haikai* such as senryu, haibun, haiga, renku and sequences, and even latter-day inventions such as renga, yotsumono, or cherita?

As we will presently see, the various *Frogpond* editors each found their own responses to these key questions, producing a lively and colorful history of the journal.

Publication has been a major activity of the HSA from the early days in 1968–69. The Society's needs are both informational and literary. A variety of formal and informal media—minutes, newsletters in print and, later, electronic formats—have been developed to report on HSA activities and bring news of contests, new books, and HSA goings-on as well as to propagate Society members' best work.

The first meetings of the HSA were held in the library of the Asia Society in New York City and were later moved to the Japan Society. Minutes of the meetings were kept by the Recording Secretary and were often detailed records of the spirited discussions of the members.

The minutes were called the Minutes & Proceedings from 1975 until early in 1978, when they were essentially replaced by the Society's magazine, *Frogpond*. Since then they have been either nonexistent or little more than short summaries. Papers

presented at meetings are occasionally printed in the magazine.²

Under the true hand of Secretary Doris Heitmeyer, the HSA Minutes became a formal publication and started to include news of haiku developments nationwide. Minutes & Proceedings morphed into a quarterly mimeographed newsletter in 1985. When Heitmeyer retired after issue XI:1 (February 1996), her official positions were split: Dee Evetts took over as HSA Secretary (for membership and records) and Charles Trumbull assumed the new position of Newsletter Editor (publishing the Minutes and haiku news). Two years later an HSA website made its debut alongside the print *HSA Newsletter* and *Frogpond*, providing an inexpensive and convenient source of information for the members—at least those 50–60% who were computer savvy.

Meanwhile in 1967, two years before the establishment of the Haiku Society of America, Leroy Kanterman had begun publishing the biannual *Haiku West*. Through the intercession of another haiku pioneer, Nick Virgilio, Kanterman met Harold Henderson, recently retired from teaching at Columbia University. The two men began meeting weekly to discuss haiku and editorial matters, which led to their founding the “Haiku Society.” Kanterman was its first president.

With such a pedigree, it was quite natural that *Haiku West* should become the organ of the HSA. It was officially so designated in April 1969, and it remained the official Society journal until it ceased publication in January 1975. *Haiku West* published two issues a year, mimeographed and saddle-stapled in 5½×8½” format. Rather conservative in matters of haiku form and subject matter (but no more so than other publications of the 1960s) *Haiku West* published many of the leading haiku writers of the time. Notable items among its contents were the first publication of 19 haiku written by Henderson himself (under his *haigo*, Tairō), more than 100 haiku in the groundbreaking sequences by O Mabson Southard, and more than 80 haiku about the scarecrow, a special interest of Kanterman’s. When the journal closed down the HSA was left without a literary voice.³

The very first issues of Frogpond were my teachers.

~Ruth Yarrow⁴

By 1978 the idea of starting a new HSA magazine like *Haiku West* that would serve as a place for members to publish and discuss their work began to take shape. The driving force was Lilli Tanzer, who was chosen to be the editor of *HSA Frogpond* (a name that was chosen in a contest among HSA members) when it began publication that year. Tanzer also held the post of HSA Recording Secretary. Mildred Fineberg was named editorial assistant, and in the first issues Yasko Karaki assisted as Consulting Editor and Stephen Wolfe as Correspondent in Japan. “The editors originally intended to publish all haiku submitted by HSA subscriber/members, but this policy was almost at once found to be infeasible, and the magazine welcomed haiku, senryu, linked verse, essays, and reviews by members and nonmembers alike.”⁵

Early issues contained information, such as records of HSA meetings, updates of the membership, and the Secretary’s and Treasurer’s reports that had earlier been given to members in the *Minutes*. In later years these areas were covered in the *HSA Newsletter* and *Ripples*, the online newsletter, but member information appeared off and on in *Frogpond* as well. Useful lists of haiku journals and new books and information about contests have also been recurring features in *Frogpond*.

By dint of its status as a membership journal, *Frogpond* has always had the largest readership of any print haiku journal in the English-speaking world. HSA membership—and therefore *Frogpond* circulation—topped 500 in the mid 1980s, reached 800 in 2004, and has remained more or less at that level since. In financial terms, the journal is the most significant expenditure of the Haiku Society of America, typically accounting for about half the annual budget.

The *Frogpond* editor is an elected officer of the HSA and sits on its Executive Committee. She/he has full operational authority for the journal, subject only to the general guidance of the other officers, and like them labors as an unpaid volunteer.

Candidates for *Frogpond* editor (as well as the newsletter and web editors) place their names on the ballot for officers each year, but this is an empty fiction. Almost always, a single candidate has been recruited through an arduous search by a Society nominating committee. The prerequisites for the *Frogpond* editorship—available time and energy, editorial experience, people skills, knowledge of haiku, and computer savvy for starters—are so demanding that stalking, wheedling, and arm-twisting are the usual techniques for securing a new editor. When elected, some editors have sought to lighten their workload by signing on assistant or associate editors, art or book review editors, and the like. These positions are informal and, although their names appear on the *Frogpond* masthead, these assistants have no formal status among the HSA officers. Joint editorship seems now to have become the norm.

Evolution of *Frogpond* over its 40-year history has produced a fairly stable table of contents, embracing front matter, editors' and presidents' statements, memorials and obituaries of prominent haikuists, a large section of new haiku and senryu (sometimes in separate sections, sometimes not), a selection of linked forms such as haibun and renku, essays, and book reviews. *Frogpond* has always published the winning entries in the competitions of the Society. These include the Harold G. Henderson Awards for best unpublished haiku and the Gerald M. Brady Awards for best unpublished senryu (both established in 1976), Bernard Lionel Einbond Renku Award (from 1990), the Nicholas A. Virgilio Memorial Haiku Competition for High School Students (promoted and judged by the HSA, from 1990) and the HSA Haibun Contest (begun in 2011). Results of the annual or biannual HSA Merit Book Awards for outstanding achievement in the field of haiku publication, later renamed in honor of Mildred and Leroy Kanterman, have been reported in *Frogpond* since 1974.

In 1981 the Museum of Haiku Literature in Tokyo made available a grant of \$100 a year to the HSA to support a best-of-issue award in *Frogpond* as well as the British Haiku Society's organ, *Blithe Spirit*. The amounts were raised to \$200 a year in 1994 and to \$300 in 2000. The HSA Executive Committee selects

the winners, which have been featured at the front of each issue beginning with *Frogpond* IV:1 (1981).

Small sounds... ~Lilli Tanzer

In the inaugural issue of *HSA Frogpond*, Lilli Tanzer defined the sections of the magazine she would be editing in these terms:

- HAIKU NEWS is—haiku news.
- CROAKS—? are noises HSA members are making in the process of living, writing, and communicating. Each of us is responsible for his/her own “sounds,” but *Frogpond* will try to honor your wishes at all times....[That is to say, all submissions, including articles and essays.]
- WATERSOUNDS—Small sounds some of us have made in CROAKS—? that our selections panel deems significant enough to be repeated in WATERSOUNDS—as HAIKU.
- haiku TRANSLATIONS/DERIVATIONS may or may not be a new idea. It is, to me. It stems from my ignorance of the Japanese language....

Early gatherings of the Society devoted a great deal of effort to working out a dictionary definition of haiku and using that definition to identify what short verses might properly be called haiku, senryu, or something else.⁶ *HSA Frogpond* took up this inquiry into the nature of haiku: “In the beginning the magazine was concentrated on helping the new haiku writers to acquaint themselves with the form and build their skills.”⁷ The HSA definitions of “haiku” and related forms that emerged from the HSA meetings, as well as discussions in print such as “CROAKS/WATERSOUNDS,” realized Henderson’s call “to work out our own standards” and quickly became the default definitions of English-language haiku.

Thus, the CROAKS—? section in *HSA Frogpond* I:1 included 28 verses submitted by members. They looked like this:

Joan Couzens Sauer
C, S

The unseen wind,
blows through the snow
leaves a path

The code letter C on the left indicated that readers' comments were invited, while S was a notation to send this haiku to the WATER-SOUNDS selection panel. The panel's judgment would be recorded in that section in the following issue. In this case, for example, Sauer's haiku was examined by the panel of 14 top poets. It was one of the 22 submissions that were "checked as haiku," but it received the certification of only one judge. So, we might assume, Sauer's work was a haiku, but not an outstanding one.

Also included in the inaugural CROAKS—? section were essays, including Fr. Raymond Roseliep's "A Time to Rime" and the first part of Cor van den Heuvel's influential "Haiku Becoming," which contained this passage:

There was a time in this country when certain critics insisted haiku must be written in three lines of 5–7–5 syllables. Such archconservatism as to form seems ridiculous today. Now we are being told that haiku must always present two explicit images—in the manner of Basho's "crow/autumn evening" haiku, and goes on to suggest that the two-image formulation could be replaced by "a resonance between the reader (man) and a single image (nature)."

In the first *Frogpond* issue, HAIKU TRANSLATIONS/DERIVATIONS featured comparative translations with annotations of haiku by Taneda Santōka and Yamamoto Gorō by Stephen Wolfe, Hiroaki Sato, and Alfred Marks. The issue concluded with suggestions for reading and a list of current periodicals.

For issue I:2, five leading journal editors—Eric Amann, Rhoda deLong Jewell, Randy Brooks, Jan Streif, and Nobuo Hirasawa—were invited to write short responses to the question "What Is a Haiku?" The resulting short essays included the second part of van den Heuvel's "Haiku Becoming" and a new piece by Raymond Roseliep, "Cry, Windmill." The translations were of two haiku by the contemporary poet Nakamura Kusatao.

Number I:3 added essays by James Kirkup and Lorraine Ellis Harr to the "What Is a Haiku?" feature and in the translations highlighted haiku by Chiyo-jo. This issue allotted space

to reporting the visit to the HSA in September 1978 of two top Japanese haiku poets, Yamamoto Kenkishi and Mori Sumio, and reproduced a translation of their comments in full. Also in this issue, William Higginson's contribution to the "What is Haiku?" discussion was included.

Volume II began the year with the same editorial resources and format, but at midyear it was decided to reduce the number of issues annually. Accordingly 1979 saw only three issues. Highlights were a two-part article, "The Structural Dynamics of Haiku," by Canadian Rod Willmot, Prof. Earl Miner's address to the HSA Annual Meeting titled "Haikai Then and Now," a selection of "Haiku from Yugoslavia," and comparative translations of haiku by Murakami Kijō. A new section, Teacher Croaks, was added in order to feature children's haiku and discuss problems of teaching haiku in schools.

In its third year *HSA Frogpond* appeared with two issues following the same layout as before. Especially notable items published in the year were reports from haiku events in Germany and Yugoslavia and a short article by Marlene M. Wills (Marlene Mountain), "Single-image Haiku."

shining self-confidence... ~Jane Reichhold

With the arrival of a new editor, Geoffrey O'Brien, in 1981 came a professional remake of the journal, starting with dropping the "HSA" from its title and the lowercasing of "*frogpond*" on the cover and title page. Cream-colored card covers with clean black and white line art or prints, different for each issue, graced *frogpond* through volume X. The insides were now offset printed with crisp new fonts. The CROAKS/WATERSOUNDS features were consigned to history, replaced by sections that basically corresponded with the divisions that are still in place today. There were sections for essays and reviews as well as HSA and contest news. A few leading poets were each awarded a full page for a handful of new haiku, and recent work by HSA members was presented, one to a customer, in an HSA Sampler

section. O'Brien devoted more than half of his first issue to articles about and samples of linked poetry in English. California haiku poet and critic Jane Reichhold summed up the status of *Frogpond* in 1981: "Gone were the articles of indecision to be replaced with haiku, haiku sequences, interviews and book reviews; all written with shining self-confidence."⁸ O'Brien was able to produce only four issues of *Frogpond* before he was overwhelmed by other commitments. He went on to a sparkling career as a writer and cultural historian and has been editor of the Library of America since 1998.

*Frogpond [will] continue to develop as a forum for critical
(and even controversial) discussions of various aspects of haiku.
~Bruce Kennedy⁹*

Brooklyn-based Bruce Kennedy took over as editor of *Frogpond* beginning with the first issue of 1982 (V:1). In that issue he announced that no change in editorial policy was planned. Indeed the format remained the same even as Kennedy broadened the landscape of haiku studies by publishing in his second issue Higginson's essay, "Afro-American Haiku" and a piece by Barbara Ungar on Jack Kerouac, as well as statements about haiku by Etheridge Knight and Robert Creeley. The latter, for example, wrote:

I think the idea of haiku is really what's had influence, not a strict adaptation of the form itself (which would be simply a didactic and wooden count of syllables, trying to force a "form" from one language into the resistant fact or another). The latter interests me not at all whereas Allen Ginsberg's recent country western adaptation of Basho's poem (from whence came, I take it, the title of your magazine) is a pleasure indeed.

Elizabeth Lamb wrote: "In the one year that Kennedy was editor, the number of submitted haiku published was diminished for the inclusion of many challenging and lively articles."¹⁰

Alexis Rotella... began to tire of the meagerness of available themes. Increasingly she turned to expressing her moments with herself and her relationships within the haiku. ~Jane Reichhold¹¹

After six issues the burdens of editorship caught up with Kennedy, and the processing of submissions began to slow significantly. Alexis Rotella, who was already serving as HSA President, was asked to edit the journal temporarily. Rotella made no major changes in editorial policy or format, although in her second issue (VI:4) she added an interesting new feature:

I personally feel that the HSA Sampler was the weakest section of the journal and in many cases felt it was a token gesture to keep our members happy. In my opinion, it did nothing to promote the art of writing good haiku. It was decided that we would begin a Haiku Workshop in place of the Sampler. Each quarter a different haiku poet(s) will give her/his opinions on anonymous submissions.

Ruth Yarrow was drafted for the job of workshop leader for the first installment of the Haiku Workshop. William Higginson and Penny Harter, then Geraldine C. Little, did the job in later issues before the feature lapsed with issue VII:2. Another highlight of Rotella's years as editor was issue VII:1, which was dedicated to Raymond Roseliep who had died in December 1983.

After relinquishing the editorship of *Frogpond*, Rotella went on to found the haiku journal *Brussels Sprout* and the senryu magazine *Prune Juice*.

Elizabeth emphasized the classical background of haiku. She was, however, always willing to accept an experimental piece when she believed in the talent and integrity of the submitting poet. ~Virginia Brady Young¹²

With the second 1984 issue, Elizabeth Searle Lamb, a charter member of the Haiku Society of America and former

president, climbed into the catbird seat and began the longest tenure as editor in the journal's history (27 issues, 1984–1990, plus 4 more when she returned as editor in 1994) and what many still view as the golden age of *Frogpond*. Although she had lived in Greenwich Village for a decade or more and was quite active in the New York City group of haiku poets who founded the HSA, Lamb had already moved to Santa Fe, NM, when she took on the editorship, thus becoming the first *Frogpond* editor from outside the Northeast Metro area.

Jane Reichhold lauded the new editor:

In this capacity she...influenced the writing of new enthusiasts with her clear-cut ideas of the standards of haiku as proposed by the Haiku Society of America while being a most kind and diplomatic woman. Untold numbers of her carefully worded letters are treasured as sources of inspiration and encouragement as beginners struggle with the learning of haiku. By accepting and publishing more haiku than ever before, the readership of *Frogpond* [had] now risen to over 500—an all-time high.¹³

Lamb retained Editor O'Brien's handsome format and his basic organization of contents. *Frogpond* now had sections titled Haiku, Sequences & Renga, Book Reviews, and And More, the last of which included editorials, awards, reviews, and "bits & pieces." During Lamb's editorship few essays appeared in the journal apart from book reviews, but many of these were substantial review-essays. She published an interesting clash of views on the nature and direction of North American haiku between Canadian Rod Willmot (based on essays in Marshall Hryciuk's anthology *Milkweed: A Gathering of Haiku*; in XI:2) and Anita Virgil (based on Alan Pizzarelli's paper read at a Haiku Canada meeting, "Modern Senryu"; in XI:3). This exchange was perhaps the closest that *Frogpond* ever came to direct involvement in the theoretical and political storms that blew across the haiku world in the 1980s. HSA President Adele Kenny had some misgivings about the debate, however, and she

wrote an editorial (XIII: 3) on the effect such discord was having on the Society:

Through my correspondence and talks with individuals, a number of concerns have come to light, among them are strong feelings of discontent and lack of unity among our members. I'm deeply troubled by complaints and criticisms and reports of "nit-picking" and "back-biting." I'm also concerned about a growing competitiveness among haiku poets.

Kenny went on to urge members to replace criticism with more involvement in the workings of the HSA and to position themselves as peacemakers in the fray.

Other highlights of the Lamb years as editor are too numerous to list, but a small selection might include issue VII:4, which was dedicated to pioneering haikuist and artist Foster Jewell (1893–1984) and the Haiku Workshop column that featured comment by a top poet on haiku submitted anonymously (from the May 1985 issue onward).

Issue IX: 2 (May 1986) was the first issue of *Frogpond* to be perfectbound (that is, to have a spine rather than staples, considered a step up in the periodical-publishing world). As Lamb said in her editorial, this was an issue with an international flavor, as it included a set of haiku by Japanese Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone and a review of a book by Rafael M. Salas, Under-Secretary of the United Nations.

In *Frogpond* XII:4 (after he had launched a trial balloon in XII:2), Bill Higginson announced a new column that he called Seasoned Haiku in which he categorized and commented on haiku submitted by readers according to specified seasons and themes. This groundbreaking, structured analysis of Western haiku eventually led to Higginson's 1996 books *The Haiku Seasons: Poetry of the Natural World* and *Haiku World: An International Poetry Almanac*.

My best advice is to read all the haiku you can lay your hands on, both classical and contemporary, and try to form a group with other haiku writers. And remember, use all your senses to point the way to what is true for you in the miracle of any given moment. ~Sylvia Forges-Ryan¹⁴

In her “Word from the Editor” in *Frogpond* XIII:4 (November 1990) Elizabeth Lamb announced her retirement. With little fanfare, Sylvia Forges-Ryan of North Haven, Conn., took over as editor with the first 1991 issue. She asked her good friend and haiku mentor HSA past-President Virginia Brady Young to be Consulting Editor, and the two women met every few weeks to review the submissions and talk about larger haiku matters. Four issues of 44 or 48 pages were published in 1991. One notable change was glossy four-color covers that featured artist Sandra Olenik’s striking watercolor drawings with calligraphy adapted from Bashō’s original rendering of his “old pond” haiku. Forges-Ryan’s first year’s issues were again saddle-stapled, but the two issues each in 1992 and 1993, with double the page count, were perfectbound.

Forges-Ryan brought back essays as a regular feature and published two to four substantial pieces by Sr. Mary Thomas Eulberg, Sanford Goldstein, Penny Harter, William Higginson, Patricia Neubauer, Toshimi Horiuchi, Dave Sutter, Kenneth Tanemura, Tom Tico, Lequita Vance, Anita Virgil, Michael Dylan Welch, Paul O. Williams, and Ruth Yarrow. Some years later Forges-Ryan wrote, “I also tried to use poems pertinent to the time of year, holding poems for future issues according to their seasonal subjects.”¹⁵

Elizabeth Searle Lamb, First Lady of Haiku.

~Raymond Roseliep¹⁶

In 1993 Forges-Ryan decided not to continue her editorship, and a mini-crisis of leadership was averted when Elizabeth Lamb agreed to return temporarily. She prepared the four 1994

issues of volume XVII. For a cover illustration for all four issues she used a black-ink print of a desertscape by her Santa Fe friend Karen Hargreaves-Fitzsimmons on glossy card stock.

Lamb returned to the content organization she had used previously. She did, however, publish a few essays and workshops. The Spring issue was dedicated to John Wills, who had died in September 1993. The Summer issue featured “Senryū vs. Haiku,” a talk that former HSA President Hiroaki Sato had delivered at the December 1993 HSA Quarterly Meeting. In the Autumn issue, Michael Dylan Welch offered “Introducing Rengay” and included samples of the form by himself together with Christopher Herold and rengay inventor Garry Gay. Linked verse was again highlighted in the Winter 1994 issue, led by William J. Higginson and Tadashi Kondo’s essay “Shorter Renku” and including a renku by Kenneth Tanemura and Jerry Kilbride, sequences by Kim Dorman and Marian Olson, and a double tanka string by Sanford Goldstein and Pat Shelley.

I would rather make mistakes than a dead frogpond.

~Ken Leibman

In the HSA elections of 1994, Kenneth C. Leibman was chosen *Frogpond* editor, having been nominated by Lamb and Higginson “on the basis of his obvious broad interest in haiku and in the Haiku Society of America, and his editorial skills.” Leibman, a retired professor of biochemical pharmacology, was a former HSA Southeast Regional Coordinator and founder of the then-regional haiku journal, *South by Southeast*.

Leibman conceived of *Frogpond* as essentially a members’ journal, as was *SxSE*. Perhaps more than any editor before or since, he gave precedence to submissions by members, and he expanded the number of haiku published in each issue manyfold. Elizabeth Lamb in her four issues preceding Leibman’s editorship, had published 137 to 167 haiku.¹⁷ Leibman’s first issue included 227, and the count grew quickly, peaking at almost 500 in issue 19:2 (September 1996). Some HSA members “felt that

publishing more than two issues a year of *Frogpond* was not consistent with maintaining high quality,” but Leibman “did not see why quality should suffer, since approximately the same number of poems would be selected in either case.”¹⁸

In the May *HSA Newsletter*, Leibman noted with regret the decision to begin publishing three rather than four issues a year but with a greater number of pages in each issue. He presented some statistics indicative of the editor’s workload and direction the journal was headed: of a total of 948 submissions in 1995 he received 7,732 haiku, 245 tanka, 76 sequences, 26 linked poems, and 76 other items. Year-on-previous-year, in 1995 Leibman published *inter alia* 1.14 times more pages, 2.14 times more original haiku, 2.64 times more sequences, 3.67 times more haibun, and 32.0 times more tanka. The HSA discussed the possibility of adding an art editor and maybe an assistant editor to the journal’s staff and approved using a mailing service to distribute the journal.

The look of the journal was changed in accordance with the new editor’s wishes. First, he lowercased the name—*frogpond*—and simplified the cover graphics, using a different monochrome drawing or print by Robert T. Malinowski on tinted matte card stock for each issue. When the page count reached 80 in issue XIX: 2, *Frogpond* again went to perfect binding.

Leibman took an “all-of-the-above” view of content: he continued to include large numbers of sequences and linked forms, haibun, and even tanka, and yet found room for specialists’ articles and book reviews. He delighted in finding connections between submissions and put them together by themes. His first issue, for example, highlighted “youth,” with a selection of haiku by high school students as well as the results of the 1994 Nicholas A. Virgilio Haiku Contest. The Summer 1995 issue spotlighted “summer” and paired a series of war haiku by John Dunphy with a review of Marijan Čekolj’s collection *Haiku iz rata / War Haiku*. The Autumn issue had features on linked verse, including some newly invented forms. *Frogpond* XIX:2 carried a report on the 1995 Haiku Chicago conference, which for the first time brought together luminaries from of Japan’s Haiku International Associa-

tion and the HSA, as well as a report by John Shirer about haiku on the Internet. Leibman also was the first to feature in-depth examinations of individual haiku in such occasional columns as the “Favorite Haiku” of H. F. Noyes and the “Readings” of Tom Tico.

*Many things are being done in the name
of haiku around the world. ~Jim Kacian¹⁹*

At the Winter 1997 HSA Quarterly Meeting, Leibman announced his resignation as editor and a search began for a successor. Jim Kacian again followed in Leibman’s footsteps as editor from *South by Southeast* to *frogpond*. Kacian was well known in the haiku community, having published his haiku since 1990 and founded Red Moon Press in 1993. Kacian’s vision for the journal was quite different from Leibman’s as he sought to make *Frogpond* (restoring the capital “F”!) a top-shelf poetry—not merely haiku—journal.

Kacian hit the ground running. His first step was an extra, fourth issue in volume XX, subtitled *A Supplementary Journal of Theory and Analysis*. This volume comprised thirteen papers by Japanese and North American specialists delivered at the 2nd Haiku International Association—Haiku Society of America Joint Haiku Conference in Tokyo in April 1997. Such a volume of proceedings of a major haiku meeting had never before been attempted, at least in America.

Kacian totally made over the format of the journal, and in the first number of volume XXI introduced an elegant, all-white, heavy card cover with an embossed “FP” logo and a brightly colored flyleaf. The new interior featured jumbo-sized fonts with full-page white-on-black section dividers. The departments in each issue—Haiku, Senryu, Linked Forms, Essays, Books & Reviews, and HSA News—were kept as they had been. The number of haiku in *Frogpond* under Kacian’s stewardship dropped by about 50% from the Leibman years, and initially only one or two of the more scholarly articles per issue were included. Added, however, were three columns: The Cyber Pond by A. C. Missias

(which gave an overview of developments in haiku on the Internet and ran for eight issues beginning with issue XXII:2); The Conscious Eye by Dee Evetts (eleven installments beginning in XXII: 2, on sociopolitical topics in English-language haiku); Michael Dylan Welch's The Practical Poet (four essays with advice on writing and editing one's own haiku); as well as Richard Gilbert's series of think-pieces, Haiku in the Wild (in the three 2004 issues). A "Haiku Workshop" item signed by Jim Kacian and John Stevenson, in which five haiku from the previous issue were critiqued, was published in issue XXV:3. This led to a new feature beginning in XXVI:1, Re:Readings, a sort of letters-to-the-editor column where readers could comment on individual haiku from previous issues.

Budgetary constraints forced the cancelation of Kacian's hoped-for *Frogpond* supplement in 1998, but a second supplement appeared the following year as a fourth issue in 1999. This issue contained nine essays by leading international haiku specialists.

Another of Kacian's inspirations took form at the beginning of 2001 in the International Haiku Issue. In his editorial introduction, Kacian wrote,

Many things are being done in the name of haiku around the world. Not all of these things are in strict alignment with our old ideas of what haiku ought to be. We have already successfully resisted the *pro forma* notions of a strict syllable count and *kigo* in English-language haiku. But there are other issues about which it is possible to be just as dogmatic, and which are worthy of our attention and consideration. If haiku is poetry, then why do mainstream poets not consider us poets? It is too self-serving simply to dismiss them as not knowing better—some of these poets have made serious study of haiku, and have arrived at a place different than our "mainstream." What of metaphor? Aren't all haiku, and all poems, metaphors on the meta-level of reality? Why do we dismiss them categorically? What do keywords offer me that *kigo* don't, and why should I study, not to say, adopt them?²⁰

The usual haiku section in the front of the issue was replaced with a potpourri of haiku by poets from 25 or more countries or cultures.

The Minutes of the April 2001 HSA Quarterly Meeting recorded: "Jim announced that he has begun to plan for a special 25th anniversary volume of *Frogpond*, which will contain the best work from the past 25 years of the journal. He views this volume as a replacement for *The Haiku Path*, which is no longer producing viable sales." The project was not realized, however, except that the planned companion work, an all-haiku index to the first 25 years of *Frogpond* prepared by Charles Trumbull, was completed and made available to society members and later posted online.²¹

In the same vein, Kacian was eager to expand distribution of the journal beyond the HSA membership to include schools, colleges, public libraries, and overseas institutions. A proposal for an electronic edition of *Frogpond* was discussed at the autumn 1999 HSA National Meeting, but was tabled, though that same meeting decided to recruit an Electronic Communications Officer to oversee the HSA website and the dissemination of society news and information by e-mail.

During his tenure Kacian again brought up the need for an assistant editor, and the HSA Executive Committee approved the addition of John Stevenson in that position at the Second 2002 HSA Quarterly Meeting. Stevenson's name was added to the *Frogpond* masthead beginning with issue XXVI:1.

Another topic of discussion at HSA Executive Committee meetings in these days was Kacian's proposal to change the policy of awarding a contributor's copy of the magazine to those whose work appeared in *Frogpond* and instead pay one dollar for each haiku accepted (as had long been done by *Modern Haiku*).

My hope is that this issue of Frogpond will strike readers as recognizably the same publication it has been, but with enough differences to suggest new possibilities. I expect this process to continue, gradually, with future issues. ~John Stevenson²²

After seven years of vigorous and exemplary service, Jim Kacian moved on, and his hand-picked and trained successor, John Stevenson, slid into the saddle... or perhaps the harness! A theater major in college and professional actor for some years thereafter, Stevenson worked a day job as administrator for the New York State Office of Mental Health in Ithaca. He had discovered haiku in 1992 and joined several haiku societies, including the HSA. He was HSA Northeast Metro Regional Coordinator in 1996–97, the members' anthology editor (1997), and Society president in 2000. He also brought to *Frogpond* his experience as book review editor for *South by Southeast* (1997).

Stevenson introduced a more sober look to *Frogpond*, favoring a matte, pebble-grained cover with the new HSA logo, a *sumi-e*-style drawing of a heron. He also harmonized the look of the contents by standardizing typeface appearance, size, and leading. A novel feature was Fay Aoyagi's Dissection of the Haiku Tradition, in which over the course of nine issues she examined mostly contemporary Japanese haiku in terms of their *kigo* and topics. Stevenson continued Kacian's dedication of space to "favorite haiku" and "readings" essays.

Stevenson asked Kacian to write all the book reviews for his first issue and to serve as Book Review Editor thenceforth. Stevenson hoped to enlist a graphics editor and perhaps a production editor, but that did not come to pass.²³

The 30th anniversary of the Haiku Society of America occurred on John Stevenson's watch, and he commemorated the occasion by reprinting selected haiku from earlier issues, one decade in each of the three 2007 issues, as well as reminiscences by Ruth Yarrow, Brent Partridge, Dan Schwerin, Billie Wilson, and Sylvia Forges-Ryan. After leaving *Frogpond*, Stevenson took over the editorship of the respected hybrid print/electronic haiku journal *The Heron's Nest*.

We hope that you [enjoy] the new cover design and the changes in the layout of the pages in between. Such mutations are as inevitable as new menus when different chefs take over a kitchen.

~George Swede & Anita Krumins²⁴

Editor Stevenson already announced his retirement several months before the end of his term, and again the Society began looking for a successor. The spinning bottle stopped at George Swede. Swede's credentials were most impressive: he was a pioneering haiku poet from Toronto with some 2,500 haiku and 40 books in print and a cofounder, in 1977, of Haiku Canada. He was a tenured professor of psychology and department chair at Ryerson University. His wife, Anita Krumins, also a tenured professor at Ryerson, served as Assistant Editor. In his inaugural *Frogpond* editorial Swede referred to "the editors," the first time the editorship was acknowledged as a joint undertaking. In fact Swede and Krumins collaborated closely on all aspects of their work.

A few eyebrows were raised at the nomination—for the first time—of a non-U.S. citizen as an officer of the Haiku Society of America, but the sailing was smooth with the minor exception of figuring out how to edit the magazine in Canada but print and distribute it primarily south of the border.

Frogpond issue 31:2 was Swede's first. His innovations included a new cover style, a matte beige field featuring permutations of "frog pond" in concrete-poetry style, color-coded to suggest the seasons of the year, and a new colored title page also designed by the editors with the logo "fr g" encased in an egg-like circle. Another innovation was the use of in-line photographs (in 33:3) and color photos (in the report on Santa Fe's "Haiku Road-signs Project" in 35:1).

The submission period was reduced from four months to two for each issue. Separate sections for haiku and senryu were combined into Haiku and Senryu in issue 31:3, returning the journal to its pre-1990 situation. Henceforth, poets whose work was published in the journal were located by state or country of residence (and later the city was added as well). The editors

explained, “We feel that this extra information will help readers relate even more to the work of the contributors.”²⁵ In an address to the Haiku Poets of Northern California in September 2009, Swede revealed what he and Krumins found most important in the selection process: “George outlined some of the basic characteristics of good haiku, such as immediacy, the creation of a sense of awe or wonder in the reader, juxtaposition which is not obvious, the present tense, and brevity.”²⁶

Earlier workshop-type features were discontinued, but, the editors wrote,

In terms of content, we have introduced a new column, “Revelations: Unedited.” For each issue, we will invite a different poet to reveal trade secrets or pet peeves or whatever else he or she wants to say. By “Unedited,” we mean exactly that—there will be no run-through in the test-kitchen. The poet will have total freedom, but of course, with that will also come total responsibility.

Over the next four years the poets honored—deliberately boy-girl-boy-girl—were Lenard Moore, Roberta Beary, Paul Miller, Marian Olson, Richard Gilbert, Ce Rosenow, Garry Gay, A. C. Missias, Randy Brooks, Ferris Gilli, and Penny Harter. Memorial pages for Bill Higginson, who died in October 2008, were prominently featured in issue 32:1. Book Reviews, normally by outside reviewers, were augmented by a subsection, Briefly Reviewed, normally by Swede, for somewhat longer treatment than had appeared previously in Jim Kacian’s Also Received addendum to the Book Reviews.

The growth in number of haibun published in *Frogpond* was notable, as was the count of haiku, which reached a 15-year high of 378 (including haiku in essays and reviews) in issue 34:1. That same issue serendipitously published several essays on the general theme of “where do haiku come from.” Jessica Tremblay’s delightful Old Pond Comics were given a berth in the journal beginning with issue 34:3.

Other notable accomplishments in the Swede/Krumins years

had to do with the professionalization of *Frogpond*. A requirement was introduced in issue 32:3 for contributors of articles to follow one of three standard academic style guides—Modern Language Association, University of Chicago, or American Psychological Association. In addition to an expanded index, a listing of *Frogpond* articles was secured in the Modern Language Association’s annual *International Bibliography* and the *Humanities International Compete* index. Also, HSA President Ce Rosenow was instrumental in arranging subscription exchanges for *Frogpond* with a number of important literary publications, including *African American Review*, *American Poetry Review*, *The Kenyon Review*, *Poetry*, and *Pembroke Magazine*. “We are also sending *Frogpond* to the following places to increase its visibility within the poetry community: Hugo House, The Loft, Poetry Center, Poetry Daily, and Poets House,” Rosenow wrote.²⁷

Looking back on their years as editors, Krumins pointed out “altogether we published submissions from 47 of the United States, 6 provinces of Canada, and 44 other countries.”²⁸

You must do the thing you think you cannot do.

~Eleanor Roosevelt

With this quote began the next four years of *Frogpond*’s history. Francine Banwarth and Michele Root-Bernstein may have started with such a modest assessment of their capabilities, but these women’s tenure, spanning issues 35:2–38:3, continued the high level of professionalism and stewardship editors had brought to the HSA journal. Their titles—Editor and Associate Editor—belied the intensively collaborative procedures that these two women worked out and brought *Frogpond* close to a truly peer-reviewed journal, i.e., one in which each submission was carefully judged by more than one editor. Banwarth came to the project as a professional editor and proofreader who had been involved with local haiku groups in the Dubuque, Iowa, area and had served as HSA second vice president and on the board of *Modern Haiku*. Root-Bernstein brought academic skills:

she was a Ph.D. historian, independent researcher in creativity studies, and adjunct professor at Michigan State University.

A new régime was apparent from the elegant covers designed by Christopher Patchel, a professional graphic artist from the Chicago area. Subtle and bold at the same time, Patchel's artwork featured large colorful compositions of isolated objects, mostly natural, suggesting a sense of immediacy (like haiku) and the season of each issue. Patchel's early cover objects—such as autumn leaves, an origami snowflake, and a frozen-fruit confection on a popsicle stick, or an herb, nut, and spice potpourri—centered over a two-tone background with the division, like a water level, across the title “frogpond.”

The interior of *Frogpond* changed little, however, and the traditional sections remained much the same. The editors seemed intent on bypassing innovation in favor of consolidating the quality of the contents and enhancing the page count, which on their watch occasionally swelled past 180. “We more than doubled the number of poems in the Haiku/Senryu section as we strived to be inclusive, to encourage excellence, and to explore haiku poetics.”²⁹

On the initiative of HSA President David Lanoue, International Exchange, a few pages of haiku from sister haiku organizations abroad, was begun with a selection from the Romanian Haiku Society in issue 36:6. Work from organizations in Serbia, the U.K. and Germany, Bulgaria, Colombia, and Canada was published in succeeding issues.

As a flagship journal for haiku in English, I believe Frogpond can be a teaching tool. Most agree that in order to write and appreciate haiku, one must read good haiku, In order to read good haiku, one needs exposure and access to good haiku.

~Aubrie Cox³⁰

After considering a number of candidates, the HSA nominating committee in 2015 selected Aubrie Cox, a recent student of Randy Brooks's at Millikin University to take over from Banwarth and Root-Bernstein. Despite her youth, Cox had racked

up impressive editorial credentials as haiga editor for the online haiku journal *One Hundred Gourds* and service on the editorial committee for The Haiku Foundation's scholarly journal *Juxtapositions*. In an unusual turn of events, there was an actual contested election for an HSA officer when well-known haikuist, anthologist, and critic Bruce Ross added his name to the race for the editorship. Cox won, however, 176 to 68. As Associate Editor she named her fiancé, Jim Warner, a published poet, blogger, and managing editor of the poetry journal *Quiddity*, and they began work on issue 39:1 (Winter 2016). In her maiden editorial, Cox affirmed her belief—harking back to the intentions of the journals' founders—that *Frogpond* can be a teaching tool and expressed her dedication to attracting a new, broader readership. In the Summer 2016 issue of *Frogpond*, however, HSA members read Cox's editorial statement: “[D]ue to health issues I have decided to step down upon the printing of this issue. This was unexpected and a difficult decision to make; however, not only do I need to take care of myself, I need to be mindful of the integrity of the journal. I promise to find other ways to continue to promote the haikai arts in English.”³¹

Editing an edition of Frogpond. There is nothing like it for deepening appreciation: for all the labor of love by all the previous editors... for the chance, and the privilege, to carry the baton for this stretch of the course... for the adage that no creative project is ever finished, only abandoned when you run out of time. ~Christopher Patchel³²

Christopher Patchel agreed to finish the 2016 term as interim *Frogpond* Editor and stood for the post in the elections for HSA 2017 officers. The election was again contested by Bruce Ross, but Patchel won the members' confidence by a margin of 126 to 85. Connecticut poet Joyce Clement was taken on as Coeditor (the first time this title had been used).

Clement and Patchel kept the sleek, modern look of the journal, including the latter's striking covers and redesign of the

interior with clean and classy typography. The number of haiku in each issue dropped from the ±450 average under Banwarth and Root-Bernstein. In successive issues Patchel began to introduce some small changes in presentation style and, apropos his day job as graphic artist, added a full-color section of haiga in issue 40:1.

And thus, vital and more beautiful than ever, *Frogpond* proudly completes its fortieth year and boldly continues on its mission to educate and entertain the membership of the Haiku Society of America and set new standards for English-language haiku.

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NOTES:

1. Henderson's letter was published in *American Haiku*, no. 1 (1963).
2. The establishment of the Society is detailed in Haiku Society of America Twentieth Anniversary Book Committee, eds., *A Haiku Path: The Haiku Society of America 1968–1998* (New York: Haiku Society of America, 1994), 23–28.
3. Ibid.
4. Ruth Yarrow, "Looking Back on Frogpond," *Frogpond* XXX:1 (2007), 63.
5. Charles Trumbull, "The American Haiku Movement—Part I: Haiku in English." *Modern Haiku* 36:3 (autumn 2005), 33–73.
6. These discussions are skillfully summarized in Chapters 4 and 5 of *The Haiku Path*.
7. Jane Reichhold, "Chapter 3: Haiku Magazines in USA," in *Those Women in Haiku*, <http://www.ahapoetry.com/twchp3.htm>; accessed May 4, 2017.
8. Ibid.
9. "Editor's Note," *Frogpond* V:1, 3.
10. Elizabeth Searle Lamb, "A History of Western Haiku (III) Period of Expansion." *Cicada* 3:3 (1979), 3–10.
11. Reichhold.
12. Virginia Brady Young, "Thanks, Elizabeth," *Frogpond* XIV: 1, 3.
13. Reichhold.
14. Sylvia Forges-Ryan, "Letter from the Editor," *Frogpond* XIV:2 (1991), 3.
15. "From Sylvia Forges-Ryan," *Frogpond* XXX:2 (2007), 71.

16. "In 1980 Roseliep dedicated *Listen to Light* to 'Elizabeth Searle Lamb, First Lady of Haiku.'" Donna Bauerly, *Raymond Roseliep: Man of Art Who Loves the Rose* (Winchester, Va.: The Haiku Foundation Publications, 2015), 241.
17. The counts include haiku that are cited in essays and book reviews as well as the haiku sections.
18. Quotes are from Minutes of the Third (Annual) 1994 Haiku Society of America Meeting, Sept. 17, 1994.
19. Jim Kacian, "International Haiku Issue," *Frogpond* XXIV:1, 5.
20. Ibid.
21. The *Frogpond* index can be downloaded from the HSA website at <http://www.hsa-haiku.org/frogpond/frogpondindex.html>.
22. "Editor's Letter," *Frogpond* XXVIII:1, 3.
23. Ibid.
24. "From the Editors," *Frogpond* 31:2 (2008), 96.
25. "From the Editors," *Frogpond* 34:2 (2011), 132.
26. *HSA Newsletter*, September 2009.
27. Ce Rosenow, "Frogpond Subscriptions Traded with Leading Literary Journals," *Ripples* [the renamed HSA Newsletter] 25:3 (December 2010), 8.
28. Personal communication, July 7, 2017.
29. Banwarth and Root-Bernstein's editorial philosophy and process is revisited in *The Haiku Life*, published by Modern Haiku Press in 2017.
30. "From the Editor," *Frogpond* 39:1 (2016), 102.
31. "From the Editor," *Frogpond* 39:2 (2016), 3.
32. "From the Editor," *Frogpond* 39:3 (2016), 3.

