

# *Poetic Expressions*



*Winifred Keane*



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*Nature*



# Sunset on the Pond

Leaves shimmer brightly in the gentle breeze-

Birds chirp their conversations

while distant traffic drones quietly in the background.

I sit with back and arms supported on a green chair,

watching the peaceful scene from my porch.

The tall trees are filled with golden leaves reflected by the sun descending

A warm radiance stretches slowly across the long horizon.

The water below mirrors the silver-grey sky framed by graceful lacy branches.

Here in my new home, I spend my twilight years in solitude and community.

With safeguards for my failing body,

I am free to use my growing mind and spirit.

Serene and stable, I live my days fulfilled

Until the night engulfs me.

# NATURE POEMS from POWELL HOUSE

I

Tall trees, reaching  
White clouds, moving slowly eastward,  
Rich blue sky looking over grassy meadow  
Where a tiny man stands gazing.  
In the distance, dogs bark in descending decrescendos.

II

Queen Anne's Lace,  
Moving gently in the breeze,  
Long stem slightly edged beneath the strong green spokes.  
Above, white flowers open in separate delicate clusters.  
Two dead ants rest peacefully in the center.

Royal flower, don't bend down!  
Too much touching can weaken your support.  
Hold your head high, and face the sun!

# Dandelion

I float like a dandelion into the sky!

My grey hair carries me and I become weightless -

I am free to travel to far off places -

Adventure and curiosity can be going with the flow of

wherever the wind takes me.

Awareness of my surroundings is awe-inspiring!

Floating like a dandelion can be fun!

I become lighter and open myself to joy -

Allowing my creativity to take wings, I go where it takes me.

I float like a dandelion into the sky!

# Sunken Garden

Sunken Garden is a tranquil space inhabited by fairies  
Sprinkled with people and flowers, it provides a stage  
for music and poetry

Good friends connect here and are enlarged by the  
aesthetics

A peaceful spirituality pervades the place  
Wise poets express the nuance of their perceptions  
And the wind leads the dance of the trees

## A Cornstalk in My Garden

What is a cornstalk doing in my flower garden?

I didn't invite it!

Yes, the weeds have invaded that tiny piece of earth.

The gardener warned me they would come back if he didn't spray.

The tall thin evergreen he planted there is still classically elegant,

And prolific flowers of quiet mauve continue to flourish.

But ugly crabgrass has ravaged the sidewalk edges,

And in the center from the greatest of heights,

That one regal cornstalk is gracefully nodding her tasseled top.

I like it there!

# Tree House

A cobwebbed canopy covers the still water

inhabited by ecstatic birds

Below, a profusion of golden forsythia

Tiny lilacs offer future fragrance

Spring is God's promise of Hope and Resurrection

Alone, my soul expands

# Birds and Blossoms

Fat fluffed robin moving fitfully across the grass

Found a juicy worm to toss and taste

Little wren with twitching motion

On the rail-fence searching for food – or company

Bird Calls, varied in distance and timbre

A whole community of feathered friends –

Laughing bird, lonesome bird

While large Hydrangea plant blossoms profusely on the porch

I wonder at all the things I've never noticed

Surrounding me for all these years

Time for Expansion of Open Awareness

Take it all in, before I go out

# Summer 2010

Soon I'll be at Bowman Lake with Walter.

What a beautiful place to spend the summer!

How many years will we have together there?

God will know.

# **Taborton Vignette**

In solitude, I walk the tall-treed road  
with just enough incline to activate my abdominal muscles.

At the top, I sit on a large hollowed-out rock to rest.

Beside me, an undulating fir tree displays her fingertips,  
newly adorned with bright green growth.

I meditate awhile in the silence and beauty around me.

Then I smile.

Dana, the owner of this property, told me  
he was going to install a parking meter!

## Moments at Sunrise

Pink ribbon flows across a spiderweb of empty trees  
yellow glow beneath

Half-moon is forest high above the pond

Tranquility of God's grace throughout a troubled world

Gratitude for my body well enough to stand  
and spirit wide enough to see

Creative ventures continue to prevail  
as music bursts into fruition

Support from kindred souls prolong my life and warm my intuition

This moment is enough

## Last Leaf of Autumn

'Tis the last leaf of Autumn  
Left hanging there alone  
While birds chirp their longing  
And the breeze is gently blown

For the Winter's soon upon us  
With its snow and bitter cold  
And my body's not behaving  
'Cause I'm getting very old

## **The Blue-Black Time of Day (at 18)**

# **Blue-Blackness**

I am 18 and open to amazement!

A Navy family, we live in Philadelphia

The second story back porch overlooks the park

A Music major at Penn

My first phonograph arrives at Christmas

A classmate picks out records for me

Moved by the majesty of Brahms 4th Symphony

I watch the sky, filled with Blue-Blackness

After the sunset retreats

Above the trees, a dramatic scene unfolds

Watching and Listening

I stand there - mesmerized!

## The Blue-Black Time of Day (at 88)

# After Twilight

The large and leafless trees with thick cobwebs of branches  
reach out against a dramatically moving sky.

It's the Blue-Black time of day.

Beyond the empty porch, the trees form a panorama of extended arms,  
crossing in all directions.

In the distance, tiny cars travel swiftly onward.

From another window's viewpoint, the pale iridescent blue continues  
while many trees hold delicate hands across —

Some of the empty branches move gently in the breeze.

A carpet of stationary lights are grounded in buildings far down the hill.

Water and sky striped horizontally by tall and naked trees extend  
against the whole frame of sight.

The Pond Ridge building across the pond is lit in rows of peopled windows.

Lights from houses, reflected, form different colors and shapes.

They shimmer in the water.

Cars continue their movements,  
bringing workers home to rest as the weekend begins.

Soon will come bedtime for the young and very old.

# Invisible Trails at Dusk

A messenger dove surveys the coast

Whitecaps surround the seals

Follow invisible trails at dusk

for butterflies lost in mist

Search in wonder

with childhood hands

Invisible Trails - at Dusk

# WINTER

leafy branches  
heavy with snow  
white haired people moving slow

ghostly spectacle  
against the sky  
crystal patterns begin to cry

slush impending  
walking hard  
stay indoors now  
welcome the bard

winter's wonders inspiring awe  
unlike the oldsters  
will begin to thaw

springtime remembered  
memories call  
autumn splendor  
achievements fall

frail and vulnerable  
ancients retire  
all the seasons  
our souls inspire

# December

Barren trees reveal the starkness of the lake

Winter coats are worn against the biting wind

Lights of color begin to brighten darkest days

Rejoicing music abounds in glorious abundance

And warmth of friends and family keeps the cold at bay

## WINTER SOLSTICE

The Solstice is a time of quietude, of firelight and dreaming,  
when seeds germinate in the cold earth.

The Winter Solstice is a time for retrospection,  
a time to ruminate and revue.

What seeds came to flower so beautifully this year,  
so breathlessly wafting perfume to the world?

And what fruit will we incubate,  
slowly germinating to fruition in the time to come?

After the long hibernation, The Summer Solstice will harvest  
Our decisions, our efforts, and our dreams.

# Water

The bracing freshness of water from the well

The soothing stillness of the lake

The crashing excitement of an ocean wave

The sweet sound of rain on a hot tin roof

And ominous ice keeps melting

Bringing us deserts and floods and sizzling heat

What will become of us?

## **Red Fox**

Displayed at the Audubon Society in Hartford

Are taxidermy specimens of birds and animals

One creature, artistically and realistically presented,

Was a red fox

It was beautiful and touched my heart

If it were on the endangered list, I would be sad to see it go

So much of the animal habitat has been cut down

by human greed and growth

Environmental hazards of flooding, forest fires,  
radical temperature changes and the guns of hunters

Killing the beautiful animals for sport

## FRAGILITY

Wolves & whales & broken glass  
Precious sounds extinguishing  
Awareness of rare beauty lost  
On those who value money more

Like Indian smoke signs, wolves cry out  
Courting, connecting and warning danger  
Voices of whales, high and low and small and large  
Try to keep the group together amid the plastic trash

Water and land, like broken glass  
Once destroyed cannot be mended

Only fragility remains

Words and Music by Winifred Keane  
(wolves & whales sounds, broken glass & voice)



## **Audubon**

Up against a timeless sky  
Airborne creatures flying high  
Daring mountains to impede  
Under clouds increasing speed

Beautiful Birds the artist drew  
Outbound folks enjoy the view  
Nothing can compare with this -  
A panorama filled with bliss!

# Rooster Morning

Quentin and Charlie announce the daylight  
with soprano and alto clicks and calls.

Charlie comes out of nightly chambers  
with quiet elegance and regal English bearing.

Ruffling his feathers, white on black,  
he stands balanced on one foot while he eats.

Quentin is more petulant, a Rhode Island Red,  
He darts away quickly,  
Jumps up a tree to hide,  
or chases Charlie all around the pen.

When nightfall comes,  
The two birds clean each other's beaks  
and nest together in their hay filled home,  
Serenely awaiting another day.

# *Graceful Gazelle*

*Lovely gazelle*

*Graceful dancer*

*Artist in motion*

*Traveling faster*

# Beardsley Zoo

Warm bright November with glorious foliage

After a ten-year absence, my son and I went to the zoo

Magical rainforest with yellow monkeys and vividly orange birds

Stately bison couple standing quietly close together

Exotic goat with graceful legs like a gazelle and sweet deer-like face

Just ahead, a child is chasing a free roaming peacock

Cats of all sizes and colors - I thought of my great-aunt's ocelot coat

Brian said the large lion could eat him in one mouthful

But the smaller cats would avoid humans -

they might get hurt and unable to hunt

He remembered his very young sons frolicking energetically by the river

I remembered the American Indian program and colorful poncho

from a trip there with my special man

Last summer, I went to Tanglewood with my daughter

This fall, I went to the zoo with my son

I am so thankful that my bucket list is full of special things



*Arts*



# Legacy

When it's time for a final sleep,  
what gives me a peaceful departure?

My MUSICAL LEGACY can be heard on website

Winifred Keane Composer

Three Children are my BIOLOGICAL LEGACY

A book of WINI's POETRY, when completed,  
will serve as addendum

# The Black Sheep

At age 9, I wrote a 22-verse poem "The Black Sheep"  
That was me  
I asked my father for help and he gave me the adjective "atavistic"

I met my husband in college  
We were well matched  
We married when I was 21

By age 26, I had three children and a job directing a church choir  
Too much to handle  
I crashed

At 31, I sang a solo concert in Carnegie Recital Hall  
I wore a gold lame dress that defined my hourglass figure  
I was beautiful (on stage)

At 45, I divorced my still loved husband  
After many years of alcoholic abuse  
I felt ugly and worthless

At 50, I composed and produced my Chamber Opera, Antigone  
It got a standing ovation  
I was still a loser

At 67, Walter's gentle love brought me back to life  
I blossomed  
When he died, I joined a Poetry group

I'm 88 now  
People are telling me that I am beautiful, inside and out  
Amazing!

I'm not a black sheep misfit anymore

# PERSPECTIVE

Finding my way Through the tangle of life  
Lost in the maze Then seeing the light  
God is my guide  
Love is my comfort

Music transports me To a Spirit beyond  
And lifts me expanding Through terror and joy  
My mind hears again the sounds I once made  
From a child raking leaves to artist I sang  
Monteverde to Ives -Schubert and Hahn

While I nourished my children Made love with my husband  
And was hurt by them all  
But God sent me ears To transcribe my own music  
Creating evolved And continues today  
Agnus Dei to Ode to St. Paul

French horn duets to International Greeting  
Finding my strength As a powerful woman  
Accepting the frailty that aging requires  
Looking back at my life In wonder and beauty  
Through scars of pain And triumphs connecting  
Grateful for all - Perspective and Thanks

# Pastorale

Blue skies

White clouds floating

Now a gentle breeze blows through

Sun glows

These peaceful days

Joy and good friends

Sunset

Bright glow of colors fading fast

Moon hush

Cloaking the night

Hold before the beauty

Continues on

Words & Music by Winifred Keane  
(soprano, tenor, oboe, piano)

# My Sunshine

You are my scintillating sunshine  
Your welcoming smile just blows me away  
You walked right into my heart -  
And lightened my being with all of your smarts

Why did you leave me alone in these clouds -  
Just finding my way without light  
Your sparkling seduction is warming me still -  
Enticing sweet memories bright

You are my scintillating sunshine  
Your welcoming smile just blows me away  
You walked right into my heart -  
And gave me the courage to go on with my day

Words and Music by Winifred Keane  
(soprano voice, flute, piano)

# The Chase

Playing Tag .... Chasing .... Darting in and out

Stopping and Hiding

Racing .... Tagging lightly on the shoulder. .... YOU'RE IT!

Peek-a-boo

Quick step...Halt

Running fast.....CATCH-UP

Resting.....Peering about..... Waiting

Speeding together.... Perky....I Dare You!

Time out.

Words and Music: by Winifred Keane

(flute, oboe, piano + voice)

# QUEEN of the FOREST

O Queen of the Forest

A Child may bring a Bear to your door

Shot with Hatred and

Hoping for Healing Magic

Strong and Gentle, a Moose

Has risen out of the Lake

From the Depths of the Soul

Carrying on his Antlers

The Precious Gift of Serenity

That You provide

Words and Music by Winifred Keane  
(soprano and flute)

## Healing

Healing, healing goodness and healing

God is our healer, body and soul

Healing, healing, God is our healer

Teaching us courage, wisdom, and love

## Thank Thee, Lord

Thank Thee, O Lord for all of Thy blessings

Thank you for all your gifts great and small

We welcome Thy Spirit into our lives

We welcome Thee

Trouble comes to us all at times

God brings comfort

Thank Thee, Lord for all that you give us

Warming our winters with Hope, Love and Joy

Words and Music by Winifred Keane  
(SATB choir + organ and cello)

# Reaching, Reaching

Reaching, Reaching

Toward the Ineffable Unknown

The Source of all Being

Creator of the Universe

My Soul yearns for your Love and Light

Words and Music by Winifred Keane  
(SATB choir, Bass soloist, organ + krumhorn)

# Achilles Horn

French Horn Players

Everyone has handicaps.

Blow your horn through them

And be the best you can!

Frank has prostate cancer.

He makes soulful melodies

Rise to passionate heights.

Reed was paralyzed in a car smash.

His lips form pitches on a natural horn

Because his fingers can't.

Alone in life, I sit between them.

Warmed by their efforts,

I make my music, too.

## Two Siamese Cats in Heat

On a visit to Claire on Paoli's Maine Line  
I heard her two cats in heat  
Now Siamese cats have a half human cry  
And their unearthly cry was unique

Their voices still haunt me & I tried to find cats  
who would reproduce the din  
Two Siamese cats were locked in my John  
And recording their plaints could begin

I was learning the Moog & made synthesized sounds  
And sang with the cats as they wailed  
Percussion was added to taping techniques  
And the gathering sounds did prevail

The cats went with me to the studio session  
And ornery, hid 'neath the drums  
The engineers there recall our excursion  
And wished that I never had come

MAO, Electronic Cat - Music by Winifred Keane  
(Siamese cats, voice, Moog synthesizer, percussion, piano strings)

# Poetry Acrostic

Poetry is a flight of fancy,  
Order and depth always enhance it.  
Each poem has a life of its own.  
Truth is condensed and carefully sown,  
Reaching the souls of others that hear it,  
Yearning to share a mind and a spirit.

# Why I Write Poetry

Creative urges still a-twitching  
Words and music keep me witching  
Performing days are over  
French horn playing's at an end  
Singing days are silenced  
with voice box on the mend

I wished I was an artist  
To capture the beauty I spied  
Too late to capture paint techniques  
Though, as a youth, I tried

Cooking can be creative too  
Combining leftovers into a stew  
I served the plates in colors bright  
Remembering to keep it light

Food creations are quickly gone  
Though photos bring some memories  
Music concerts are over soon  
Though recordings can preserve them

Composing music's a lonely struggle  
Scoring the notes is a computer's game  
Finding musicians to play them takes persuasion  
Creating and Producing are not the same

Writing poetry is so compact  
Pen and paper's all I need  
Nice to share it when it's done  
But self-expression is what's fun

## Buddha Acrostic

Buddha from China, my father's special gift,

Under his care, preserved without jewel in the knee,

Delivered to me as his most precious possession.

Divine Mercy of the Goddess Kwan Yin!

Handed over to my eldest son, at his request,

Announcing his spiritual connection.

But my Buddha's serene countenance is sorely missed.

(with mixed feelings of loss and benevolence)

## The Trees at Toni's

From her studio, I look out the large window

At a multitude of trees, barren with winter.

Some branches are straight and tall, reaching for the sky.

Others are bent gracefully, accommodating to the wind.

Two are close by and may include birds' nests.

Some distance against the horizon,

Spaces for wonder and new magic are waiting.

A dense cluster to the left is busy with whispered communion.

Is this what life is all about?

And where is the spiritual core?

Silence knows.

# Emma

Emma, sweet young girl, lithe and lovely as Terpsichore

Dancing gracefully with disciplined abandon

Creating her very own movements in changing tempos

Transformed by the Music, her Spirit leaps in Joy

Inspiring admiration

She wears the Laurel on her head

And leans in to play the harp

Dancing with wonder and energized commitment

She moves as an Artist in Ecstatic Celebration

A transpiring star

# *Movement*

Movement is a sign of life

The tops of trees have greater movement than the lower branches

Like Spirituality, they oscillate unpredictably

Even stones move, though very, very slowly

The capacity to experience deep sorrow

Gives the ability to experience great joy and appreciation

The opposite of love is not hate

But indifference - no movement

(Composed after a Quaker picnic)

# Seven Senses

## SIGHT

I see twin rainbows after a storm.

I see birds gathering food for their noisy nestlings.

I see the smooth skin of innocent babies  
and deeply weathered wrinkles of old men.

I see the trees changing their colorful foliage  
with spiraling sequential seasons.

I see twin rainbows after a storm.

## SMELL

I smell the delicate fragrance of American Beauty roses  
and the heavy aroma of short seasoned lilacs.

I smell the salt and fish on lonely beaches  
after the wave's caress.

I smell the charcoaled steak sizzling in its juices  
bringing welcoming moisture to the mouth.

## TASTE

I taste the pungent lemonade, honey-coated,  
Bittersweet, like life itself.  
The delicate flavor of avocado teases the palate,  
the salsa burns,  
The taste of onion may bring tears;  
Hot pepper makes us sneeze.  
A friend approaches and a loving kiss can fill the soul with joy!

## TOUCH

I touch the velvet softness of your warm embrace.  
I feel the muscled strength beneath your arms enfold me.  
Your whiskers scratch my cheek.  
Our bodies join and then release.  
The memory of a tender touch can warm the journey  
of our silent searchings, in solitude,  
for the serenity of our souls!

# SPIRIT

*Quiet now, I wait and listen.*

*God speaks in whispers to our open ears.*

Inner knowing may be intuition,  
The heart and mind are linked to vast invisible sources.

*Quiet now, I wait and listen.*

*God speaks in whispers to our open ears.*

Faith is real, but can't be proved in laymen's terms.

*Quiet now, I wait and listen.*

*God speaks in whispers to our open ears.*

Let go of willful yearnings.  
Trust Spirit's guide along the path to Truth.

*Quiet now, I wait and listen.*

*God speaks in whispers to our open ears.*

*Quiet now, I wait and listen.*

*God speaks in whispers to our open ears.*

## SOUND

*Listen to the wind, the rain, the thunder,  
Listen to the sound of birds and baby's coos.*

The rhythm of a hundred heartbeats can produce a symphony.

Discords can continue or resolve,  
in a balance of change or sameness,  
as sound continues,

Spiraling throughout Eternity to the Great Unknown!

*Listen to the wind, the rain, the thunder,  
Listen to the sound of birds and baby's coos.*

## SEEKING

The senses are our human means to reach for awesome Spirit,  
to know and love our world and its inhabitants.

To strive for unattainable Perfection,  
we ponder the Divine.

We wonder always,  
in the presence of the great I AM!

## **Firefly - Firing - Firebird**

Firefly is a family of winged beetles  
active at night

Whose abdomen usually glows  
with luminescent light

Firing is the application of heat  
to harden on glass pottery  
Creating beautiful items  
like Mary's amazing platter

Firebird is any of various birds  
with brilliant coloring  
Scarlet Tanager - Baltimore Oriole  
or Stravinsky's blazing music

# **The Importance of Air**

Air carries sound waves of words and music

It also carries noise

A cooling breeze is welcome in summer heat

Balloons need air to float on high

The air gets thinner on mountain tops

making breathing difficult

Singing requires fully disciplined air flow

And lack of air can kill you

# Changing Concepts of Earth's Place in the Universe

Flowers and Food we plant in the ground  
for the sustenance of animals and people

The four Elements (earth-air-fire-water)  
are necessary for the support of Life

They can be misused causing the Hell of  
Earthquakes, Smog, Forest Fires, Floods

Once people thought the world was Flat  
Science has taught us otherwise

Masons recite a prayer:

To the great Architect of the Universe  
The Universe refers to the whole system of  
Planets, Stars, Space and everything in it

The unknowable vastness is beyond our comprehension

Within the immense size and scope of the Universe  
our Tiny Earth resides



*People*



# Fast Dance to Countdown

## Hurry!

Finish that inventory of lists of things we've done or yet to do.

Get our paperwork organized & our trophies counted & placed in view.

Collect our memories in tidy packages –

our friendships and love affairs & family too.

So little time and energy to complete the wrap-up

of the fullness of a life long-lived!

## So Slow!

Children impatient to grow up & do things that grownups do.

Time moves very slowly then, seemingly endless.

When will we ever learn our multiplication tables & learn to drive?

When will we marry, live happily ever after, & find our wishing star?

## Carry ON!

High in the saddle of mid-life complexities & multitasking.

Exhausted from busy management of children & careers.

Vacation is letting go of responsibilities for a little while.

But multi-rhythmic outreach is our usual style.

## Hurry!

Finish that inventory of lists of things we've done or yet to do.

Get our paperwork organized & our trophies counted & placed in view.

Collect our memories in tidy packages -

our friendships and love affairs & family too.

So little time and energy to complete the wrap-up

of the fullness of a life long-lived!

# Beverages

Ida likes English tea with hand-made biscuits

Beth likes sweet and spicy herbal tea

I can relax with Chamomile

Sheila likes smooth and mellow Australian coffee

Brian likes well caffeinated bitter "mud"

I like instant decaf, not too strong

Hot toddies are nice

A warm cup of dark chocolate superb

So many choices

What will I have today?

Water with lemon, please

## Haiku Observations

Warmth of eyes show love

Tender caring gently felt

Age well together

Hurtful words oppress

Safety threatened by abuse

Guard feelings well now

## ACROSS THE DIVIDE

How blessed is the steeple  
That's filled with good people  
Who reach out across the divide

With views so alarming  
And fears of great harming  
We wish our true feelings to hide

We know that the others  
Are still our dear brothers  
Regardless of what they believe

So across our great nation  
And for the duration  
Our unity may we achieve

## **Damnit Doll**

When frustrations mount and the day is bleak  
And your face is red and your knees are weak  
You can swear a lot to relieve the pain  
And be ready to get up and go again

Just whack the damnit doll!

# **Freddy-Lou Harbert**

Born in Beijing in the 1930s

While Chiang Kai-shek fought Mao Tse-tung

American Navy withdrew my Doctor-Father

Meanwhile the Great Depression in United States

Continued to threaten lives and welfare

FDR started CCI camps and sent my father there

Named after my father and born in China

I was called "Freddy-Lou" for many years

But I could not be a boy!

## Bettye Breezer

Bettye Breezer was my Girl Scout leader

As a child, she reached out to nurture me

When my singing voice she found, she really liked the sound

And in the wooded assembly, she had me singing "Trees"

Overnight on the ground, with canopy of branches above

Her caring warmth did show me, an example of unconditional love

# Sisters / The Harbert Girls

Out of six, four remain - Lorraine left five & Jean left two  
Still here are Wini, Babs, and Mary, now in our eighties  
With Carol in her seventies, tagging along

The first four sisters were close, like "Little Women"  
Then ten years later two more were born  
Dad wanted a boy but got a harem instead

The University of Pennsylvania was Alma Mater  
to father Fred, daughter Winifred, and grandson, George Marin.  
Medicine, Music, Business & Engineering

Dr. Fred Harbert was otolaryngologist in the Navy & at Jefferson Medical School  
Daughter, Dr. Mary Harbert Weightman was an anesthesiologist  
Grandson, Dr. Allen Morey, was urologist,  
as was his son who died suddenly this year

Carol Amling lost her husband, Frank, just before Christmas in a terrible accident  
They were planning a trip from Maryland to Washington state  
To see sister Mary and her husband, Jack (the only couple still alive)

Wini and son Brian drove down for the funeral last week  
We stayed with sister Babs who greatly enjoys her three great-granddaughters  
Then overnight at George Marin's house  
where quiet tugboats passed by the bedroom window

We saw his wondrous Stained-Glass creations  
and remembered his brother Donnie's sensitive Taxidermy exhibits  
Lorraine's legacy of Art to her sons

So now we are four sisters again, The Harbert Girls  
Born in China, Michigan, Samoa, and Florida  
With all the descendants continuing to add to our family tree

# **Too Many**

Too many children scattered around

Too many ants creeping there on the ground

Too many aches and pains as I try

To manage the lot of them all with a sigh

# How Did My Children Get So Old!?!?

My baby girl is 59 in May  
Like Irish twins, my boys, 63 & 62  
I remember them playing baseball in the yard  
And making music, which they all still do

Australia is my daughter's home; she lives there with her spouse  
Grand-dogs, George and Gracie, also share the house  
She works as PT at hospital there with patients old like me  
But just last week, she herself had surgery on the knee!

My middle son lives in Connecticut  
A builder's career he did choose  
The cello he plays and shingles he lays  
With orthotics in his shoes

My eldest son gave me two grandsons  
As composer of music, he rates  
In work he does sit and he keeps himself fit  
But got a hernia from lifting weights

By 26, I was mother of three and now I'm eighty-five  
My children are in their sixties, and their Mom is still alive!

# Sixty-Four

My first born is turning sixty-four

(Yes, I still need him and continue to feed him my support)

Like his forefathers, he has achieved three forms of immortality

sons, students, and great works

As composer of renown, fame and fortune he has found

His Music Library contains hundreds of original compositions

Aired professionally on ESPN and PBS

What he'll do next is anyone's guess

This year he managed to lose eighty pounds

Now with solid elegance, he enters another era

What new adventures will he explore when he turns sixty-five?

## DOVER ROAD

There are Four of us who live alone on Dover Rd.  
Three of us are Artists  
We have lived here for more than Forty years  
Two of us have raised our Families here.

There is Hilda Krauss who makes exquisite Jewelry  
She is ninety-three now,  
Drives a Bright Red Car to work at the Library,  
And went to Alaska with a friend.

David Barton makes gigantic Paintings  
He used to play baseball with my son  
His brother gave him a Bone Marrow Transplant  
And now he's fifty-five years old.

Mary Salerno's a Nurturing Lady  
She still mothers her three daughters  
She helps at the office and takes care of grandchildren  
She's Steady and Loyal to all of her friends.

Winifred Keane, that's me, makes Music  
She teaches and sings and creates new sounds  
Sometimes she even writes Poetry  
She raised her three Children here.

Westport's a Beautiful place to live in all seasons  
Lots of Cultural opportunities here  
It's quiet and safe with wonderful people  
Why would we Leave our Dover Road home?

## ARRIVAL

On arrival at Ashlar, as we walked down the hall  
Walter reached out to touch me and told me to smile  
His radiance shown with his greetings to all  
And I learned about friendship and warmth all the while

## DEPARTURE

As Walter lay dying and Wini was crying  
Jack helped me to cope with the process to come  
His comfort and guidance through grief was so trying  
From the very same illness his wife did succumb

## Sonnet of Elegy

The pealing bells did vibrate through the air  
Their calming voices helped provide serenity  
The casket sailed through flowers full and fair  
Below the snails conversed about eternity

Frozen forsythia yellowed by the window  
As cathedral trembled, people bade goodbye  
When loved ones came with sympathy to show  
The pain of loss produced a mournful cry

A lifelong partner climbs the wall of wonder  
His abject wife is left alone remembering  
Cruel Death still holds our lives asunder  
And forces us to bear the coldness of December

Longing, Longing,  
Longing for September

## Elegy

The pealing bells did vibrate through the air  
Below the snails conversed about eternity

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As cathedral trembled, people bade goodbye

A lifelong partner climbs the wall of wonder  
His abject wife is left alone remembering

Longing, Longing

# Daughters

Birthing through pain and JOY

Watching them grow

Watered by the Love you gave them

Seeing their choices and directions in life

Sharing the families they create

Then the pain of losing them

Wrenched from us cruelly

Much too early, too soon

for Mary-Beth and for Jane Bouvier

# Martha

Martha, tall and strong, regal and imperious  
Highly intelligent, musically gifted, and open to a chosen few  
Daily she walked the long steep hill to see her husband  
When his health removed him from their home

Now her own health is receding rapidly  
She lies in pain with exhausting treatments weekly  
But she is still Martha and wants to go to the opera  
We will go together if she is able

We used to make music together and perform for others  
She understood and supported my composing  
She sang and played piano until her left arm failed her  
Her left leg, broken, is in a boot

Courage and determination define her  
Fiercely independent, proud and discerning  
She chooses wisely where she wants to put her energy  
And who she wants to share her ebbing life

My dearest friend, I will miss you  
When your painful journey is done  
With memories of the time we spent together  
Your essence is engraved forever in my heart

# MEMORIAL DAY 2020

To My Sisters

## Remembering Our Grandma Lina

It's Memorial Day weekend and I'm thinking about our Grandma Lina.  
She loved her six granddaughters - (four "Little Women" and two more, ten years later)

She took care of us and taught us many things.

"Use a thimble" - "Wear an apron" - "Sit still in church or I'll pinch you!"

She could correct without shaming you. "This is the way to do it."

I remember visits to Detroit and Sunday night suppers on the porch swing  
eating strawberry short cake and ice cream with Vernors Ginger Ale.

Dad used to say "She came to visit us twice a year and stayed for six months!"

Grandma Lina loved to flirt with the men! She would rest all afternoon and then was  
alert and charming when Dad came home from work. (Mother didn't appreciate this.)

Do you remember when we honored her with a presentation?

- This is your Life, Grandma Lina! -

She was proud and independent — imperious — self-confidant & generous.

At college, I didn't want a Sorority so she paid for my Voice lessons.

I wore her elegant jewelry when performing solo concerts as a lyric soprano.

We all admired and appreciated her.

She was an important part of our lives and we are grateful for our time together

To My Children

## Remembering Your Grandfathers

Al Keane was in WWI and Fred Harbert was in WWII

Both came back scarred by the experience

Al was a young Army man sent to Germany

When he came back, he would be drinking and

sometimes rave angrily at Grandpa Krebs,

his German father-in-law, thinking he was the enemy

Fred was a Navy doctor sent to the Pacific after Pearl Harbor

He served time on a Submarine, a Battleship, and a Hospital Ship

He told me how he had to pick up the remains of a red headed sailor  
that had been killed on deck by "friendly fire"

I'm glad you three didn't have to go to war

# Ode To Bailey

Bailey was Betty's best friend - loyal and true  
Bailey with the soft ears, the gentle eyes, the swishing tail  
Bailey who buried bones that others gave her  
And would only eat from Betty's hand  
Bailey who abundantly lapped up water from her dish  
And went outside to discharge it

Everybody loved Bailey  
Walking around the neighborhood,  
Bailey would greet other persons and animals with exuberance  
Julie's dog liked to play with Bailey

At home, Whiskers was jealous and batted Bailey to keep her away  
He knew she was the master's favorite  
Bailey accepted the abuse without retaliation

As Episcopalian Priest, Betty has brought much solace to the bereaved  
Now it's time for her to grieve and accept the love of God  
And the warm wishes of people who understand her heartbreaking loss.



# CAT SITTING

WHISKERS

RAN AWAY FROM ME

I FED HIM ANYWAY

NOW HE COMES TO GET HIS TUMMY SCRATCHED

AND BUMPS HIS HEAD AGAINST MY CHIN

SITS ON MY LAP

AND PURRS

## To a Lovely Little Girl

We looked at each other on the screen

I was mesmerized - so was she

The child that I was wanted to play with her

The woman that I am wanted to honor her open trust

Almost five and in love with Poetry

(Her brother in love with Mud)

A beautiful girl with a deep soul

Her gentle wonder spoke to the child in me

"Let's go see what's behind that corner," I said

Her Curiosity replied, "I want to go there, too"

I took her hand and we went together to help create

The amazing new world about to begin

# It's YOU I Like!

Don't be afraid - I'll protect you

Don't be lonely - Come play with me

You belong with ALL of us

We love you and would never hurt you

YOU are LOVABLE, just the way you are

## YOU'RE SPECIAL

I need you and appreciate you

Trust is earned - Reality cannot be denied

TRUST your OWN feelings and thoughts

You are safe now, unique and welcome

And it's YOU I LIKE!

(Inspired by Mr. Rogers)

## Three Men I Loved

Dad was a strong, self-made man  
Frequented used bookstores - always learning  
Introduced me to the stars and spiritual awe  
His hard work led to accomplishment and acclaim

My first love, George  
Father of my children  
We sang duets together  
Wonderful Renaissance Man  
With an Achilles heel

Walter, I miss you so!  
My shining light, throwing warmth to all  
Head and Heart strong while body declined  
Intelligent Mind and outgoing personality  
We sang duets together, too

# Getting, Giving, and Gathering

What am I getting?

What are we giving?

When is the gathering & where?

Snow gently falling, sleigh bells are calling,  
handle the treetops with care.

Bright star is watching,

awaiting God's journey,

sending a message of peace

Do we remember the meaning of Christmas?

Connections of Love to release

# EASTER

There was Mary-Lou and Pammy-Lou and Freddy-Lou  
And Poppie loved them all

With Grammie and Pop-Pop came Easter bonnets  
Jelly Beans and Bananas for Breakfast

The Easter Bunny hid colored eggs in the yard  
For Dylan and Wylder to find

Ever Expanding Meals with Ever Extending Family  
Singing and Sharing Love and Support

Celebration of God's Rebirth amid the Blossoming of Spring  
The smell of lilacs and narcissus

Spring awakening with little sprigs of Hope  
Memories - of Gladness and Loss  
And Music

St.Mary's, Saugatuck, FCC in Cheshire  
All traditional white churches with large congregations

Mozart's Ave Verum - as Choir Director at 23 in Lee  
Soprano & Tenor duets in Saugatuck, Choral member at 86 in Cheshire

And Music is the Crowning Glory 2017  
Grand Finale of Halleluja Chorus / SATB, Organ and Brass Quintet

## Halloween Limerick

*A beetle flew into a cobweb*

*Which covered him over complete*

*His mother could now never find him*

*And he thought that was really quite neat!*

# LIGHTEN UP!

The gentleman in white tuxedo and top hat  
admonished his wife who was trying to smile  
“Lighten up, my dear, or you’ll never be able to fly  
and I’ll have to dig a deep pit and plant it with  
flowers”

His wife in green and purple nodded her head  
“How dashing you look in your noble new boots  
And your skull is exceedingly sexy !”

He answered with charm and offered to tickle her tootsies  
She giggled her bonnet and gave him her broomstick to try  
And the two of them danced in the moon’s lovely light  
while the children shopped for their candy

“Lighten up !” they said to the tiny young tots  
“We’re here to delight you, not really to fright you  
It’s absurd to be scared on the night of Halloween!

# Winifred, The Witch from Wallingford

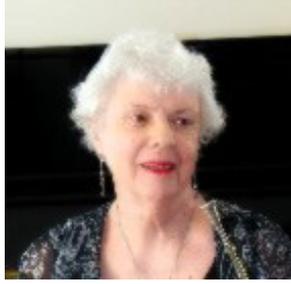
This invitation is from one witch to another  
Two Winifreds, 350 years apart

Let's meet at midnight for a drink of witch's brew  
and take a ride on our broomsticks

We can protect our sisters and brothers  
who are falsely accused of harm

Then we can sprinkle a little mischief  
with raucous laughter

Let's get together again in another 350 years!



## About the Author

Winifred Keane is a commissioned and award-winning composer with three degrees in music from the University of Pennsylvania, Western Connecticut College and Sarah Lawrence.

As a concert singer, the New York Times wrote: "She combined intelligence, good musicianship, wit, and sensitivity in her interpretations."

Commissioned to compose for artists, writers, and organizations, she received awards and prizes from The Westport Art Center, The National League of American Pen Women, and The National Endowment of the Arts (see website at [www.winifredkeanecomposer.com](http://www.winifredkeanecomposer.com)).

From a background as a singer and composer of music, she has come to focus her creativity on writing poetry.

## About the Poetry

(by Karen Ciosek, SMwP poet)

Winifred Keane is a lifelong musician, composer, and poet who has composed music to many of the poems she has written. Her poem, *Fragility*, is an example of a poem read to a selection of 'natural' music she composed to emphasize the need to pay attention to our earth.

In *Poetic Expressions*, her first collection of poems, she divides her book into chapters of Nature, Arts, and People. In each section, she reveals her personal thoughts, loves, and memoir of her relationships with the fine arts, the beauty and delicate balance of earth with human civilization, and those significant people in her life.

She has been recognized for her lifetime music achievements. In 2017 the CT Teachers Association honored her, and young composers played their original works for her. She continues to be active in composing music and writing poetry.