

# *Robert Frost Farm Friends Newsletter*

(*Robert Frost Homestead Foundation*)

*The  
Robert Frost Farm*



*P.O. Box 1075 Derry, New Hampshire 03038  
A National and New Hampshire Historic Site*

*Issue 3*

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During the years Robert Frost taught at Pinkerton Academy he often advised his students to write about "things they know." Underlining his "literary belief" that poetry had to be true to experiences "that begin in something more felt than known," the snow-filled poems of Frost emerge from the utter isolation of winter storms that blew across the stony landscape of his Derry farm.

The familiar sweep of icy pellets hissing against the farmhouse window so evocative of place has been indelibly imprinted on the literary psyche of poetry lovers everywhere.

**When the wind works against us in the dark,  
And pelts with snow  
The lower chamber window on the east,  
And whispers with a sort of stifled bark,  
The beast,  
"Come out! Come out!" —  
It costs no inward struggle not to go,  
Ah no-**

**Storm Fear**

When we think of Frost's poems celebrating the return of Spring across the New England countryside, we are once again reminded of the poet going forth to repair the damage done by the "something that doesn't love a wall."

The poet by setting the stones in place has placed these lines firmly in the Derry landscape of memory.

**"Something there is that doesn't love a wall,  
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,  
And spills the upper boulders in the sun;  
The work of hunters is another thing:  
I have come after them and made repair  
Where they have left not one stone on a stone,  
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,  
To please the yelping dogs. The gap I mean,  
No one has seen them made or heard them made,  
But at spring mending-time we find them there."**

**"Mending Wall"**



## SUMMER 2003 LITERARY SERIES

Inviting guest speakers to Derry to celebrate the work of America's foremost poet is a tradition at the farm.

Lectures are held in the Farm's barn theater at 2 P. M. and are open to the public without charge.

### "ROBERT FROST in an INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT: DERRY and the WORLD"

SUNDAY, JULY 13 — JOHN ZUBIZARRETA



John Zubizarreta is a Professor of English and Director of Honors and Faculty Development at Columbia College in South Carolina. A Carnegie Foundation/C.A.S.E. Professor, John has also earned recognition for teaching and scholarly excellence from the American Association for Higher Education, and Columbia College. He is President of the American Culture and Popular Culture Association in the South and President-elect of the Southern Regional Honors Council.

He is co-author of *The Robert Frost Encyclopedia* published by Greenwood Press in 2001. The Encyclopedia is considered a valuable resource for readers of Frost where they can find entries that serve as introductions to the poems while helping to place them in the larger context of Frost's life and work. With over one hundred contributors, the encyclopedia can be viewed ... "as a celebration of the rich, multiple, sometimes opposing perspectives that continue to define the emerging state of scholarship on Frost." Zubizarreta has also published articles on Frost in journals such as *The Robert Frost Review* and *Comparative Literature*.

John is an avid telemark skier, a former six-time national champion in whitewater canoe competition, and an adoring father of two pre-school girls who keep him busy outside the ivied walls.

### "MIDSUMMER FROST" — RENNIE MCQUILKIN, SUNDAY, JULY 27

Rennie McQuilkin has been an instructor of English for many years at schools including Phillips Academy, in Amherst, Mass. and Miss Porter's School in Farmington, CT. Until recently he was director of the prestigious Sunken Garden Poetry Festival held each summer at Hill-Stead Museum in Farmington, CT. His involvement in promoting the work of regional poets led to his most recent venture, the founding of a publishing house dedicated to presenting the work of New England poets. His own poetry has appeared in many journals, among them *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Poetry*, *The Southern Review*, and *Yale Review*. New work is forthcoming in *The American Scholar*. His most recent collection, just issued, is entitled *Counting To Christmas*. An earlier book, *We All Fall Down*, won the Swallow's Tale Poetry Prize. Two other collections were also awarded poetry prizes. McQuilkin has received a fellowship from the NEA as well as five grants from the Connecticut Commission on the Arts.



Of his work, Richard Wilbur has said, "Rennie McQuilkin's poems are pungently exact about the properties of the real world... In a book which has poignancy, gusto, and many another mood, there is never a false feeling."

Rennie and his wife, the artist Sarah McQuilkin, live on a small farm in Simsbury, Connecticut.



Marie Harris, Poet Laureate of New Hampshire is a prolific writer whose writing encompasses a wide range of literary work. Her books include *Your Sun, Manny: A Prose Poem Memoir* (1999) and more recently, *G is for Granite: A New Hampshire Alphabet* published in 2002.

She has made contributions to a many acclaimed anthologies, to name a few, *Ardis Anthology of New American Poetry*, *The Party Train: North American Prose Poetry* and *Portsmouth Unabridged*.

Her articles have appeared in a number of magazines and newspapers, such as *The New York Times*, *Boston Globe*, and *New Hampshire Sunday News*. *Poetry Lore*, *Poetry Miscellany*, and *New Hampshire College Journal*, are some of literary journals where her work has also appeared.

Ms. Harris has received an *NEA endowment* and a *Fellowship* from the New Hampshire Council on the Arts. She holds membership in several prestigious national and regional writers and poets groups. Her five-year term as New Hampshire's Poet Laureate runs through 2004.

**"ROBERT FROST and the NATURE of NATURE" - JAY PARINI-SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21**

Jay Parini is a poet, novelist, and biographer. He is currently Axinn Professor of English at Middlebury College, where he has taught since 1982. He is also director of the program in Creative Writing at Middlebury.

He was born in Pittston, Pennsylvania where he attended local schools and later, Lafayette College. He spent his junior year abroad at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland, from which he eventually received the degrees of B.Phil. and Ph.D.

Parini's books include *SINGING IN TIME* (1972), *ANTHRACITE COUNTRY* (1982), *TOWN LIFE* (1988), and *HOUSE OF DAYS* (1998). His novels include *THE LOVE RUN* (1980), *THE PATCH BOYS* (1986), *THE LAST STATION* (1990), *BAY OF ARROWS* (1992), *BENJAMIN'S CROSSING* (1997), and *THE APPRENTICE LOVER* (2002). His critical and biographical works include *THEODORE ROETHKE: AN AMERICAN ROMANTIC* (1979), *JOHN STEINBECK* (1994), and *ROBERT FROST* (2002). A volume of his essays, *SOME NECESSARY ANGELS*, appeared in 1997.



Parini often writes essays and reviews for periodicals such as the *TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT*, *THE NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW*, *HARPER'S*, and *THE NATION*. He has edited over a dozen books, including *THE COLUMBIA HISTORY OF AMERICAN POETRY* (1994), *THE COLUMBIA ANTHOLOGY OF AMERICAN POETRY* (1995), and *THE NORTON BOOK OF AMERICAN AUTOBIOGRAPHY* (1999). He is general editor of *THE OXFORD ENCYCLOPEDIA OF AMERICAN LITERATURE*.

Parini's awards include fellowships from the *ACLS* and the *Guggenheim Foundation*. He received an honorary doctorate from Lafayette College in 1997. His book on Frost won the *Chicago Tribune-Heartland Award* for the best work of nonfiction in 2000. He was awarded the *John Ciardi Lifetime Achievement Award* from the National Italian American Foundation in 2002. He recently won the *Josepha Hale Award for Literature*.

Parini lives in Vermont, with his wife Devon Jersild and three sons, Will, Oliver, and Leo.

*In an effort to acquaint our readers with members of the Robert Frost Farm Board of Trustees, we would like to introduce you to another of our valued and distinguished trustees.*

### JOSEPH WILLIAM PEPPERRELL FROST



An 11<sup>th</sup> generation Frost, cousin and lifetime friend of the poet, Joe Frost has been engaged in civic activities throughout his life as well as involved in historic preservation. It seems only natural that he would become part of the group of dedicated and hard-working poetry lovers led by the late John Pillsbury and his wife Jane, whose zeal and dedication resulted in the restoration and preservation of Robert Frost's farm home in Derry.

Without doubt, Joe's role as a Trustee of The Robert Frost Homestead Board was driven by his interest in preserving and restoring the Derry Farm to its original 1900's appearance. However, one suspects he was also motivated by his recollection of a late 1950's visit with Frost to Derry, and Frost's anguished reaction to seeing the Farm in its then run-down condition, the surrounding fields littered with discarded junk cars.

Appointed to the Robert Frost Homestead Board of Trustees in the early 1970's by Governor Meldrim Thompson, Jr., Joe who was born in the family's ancestral home, (the Frost Garrison in Eliot, Maine), is no stranger to preservation and restoration of old buildings. His ancestor, Major Charles Frost, had one of the earliest garrisons in New England built in 1634 on land where the Frost family still lives.

While attending college in Boston, Joe stayed with Frost in Cambridge where the two cousins, although from separate generations, formed a close bond. Joe recalled with a chuckle that Frost "was afraid Boston would corrupt me; and I was afraid it wouldn't!"

Although his knowledge of history and folklore is legendary, Joe is best known as an antiquarian; an antiquarian who started collecting at an early age. An inscription in a book by New Hampshire author Henry Shute offers evidence of his early interest: "To Joseph Frost of Eliot, Maine the only ten-year old antiquarian and historian in the world." Since no one in his family collected the poet's books, Robert Frost saved odd pieces for him from his travels. One inscription deftly illustrated Robert Frost's understated humor. On a collection of poems entitled *From Snow to Snow*, the poet scrawled on the dust jacket "And from Frost to Frost."

A graduate of Boston University, Joe is now retired from various careers ranging from Assistant Superintendent of Schools to Purchasing Agent for the Seaward Construction Company.

Known throughout Maine for his unparalleled knowledge of history, he has visited seacoast classrooms sharing his love of the subject with several generations of Maine and New Hampshire school children.

His contributions to the Derry Farm have been many, especially in the area of acquisitions, where his passion for collecting enabled him to furnish several items typical of the era. These include books for the parlor bookcase with titles replicating Frost's collection; a telescope for the children's room reminiscent of the one used in their study of astronomy, and more recently, an old lantern for the barn. During his appearances as guest speaker at the Derry Summer Literary Series, Joe, who is considered a real "yarn spinner", has shared any number of anecdotes and stories both humorous and intimate, about his enduring friendship with Robert Frost.

# THE ROBERT FROST YOUTH POET PROGRAM

## Program Description

It was New Hampshire that inspired Robert Frost to create much of his poetry. Its rich history, natural beauty and remarkable people inspire all of us in unique ways.

The Robert Frost Youth Poet Program offers New Hampshire fourth grade students in public and private schools the opportunity to express their feelings about New Hampshire in a poem. The sponsors of the program hope to increase appreciation of our state's natural and cultural resources, and also hope to encourage students to discover the poets in themselves.

The Robert Frost Farm is a State Historic Site also a National Historic Landmark. This was the home of Robert L. Frost and his family from 1900 to 1909. On the property are many sites Frost wrote about in his poetry, including "Mending Wall," "Hyla Brook," and "The Pasture."

*The Robert Frost Youth Poet Program is generously supported by:*

The Finisterre Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation.

The Trustees of the Robert Frost Homestead Foundation.

University of New Hampshire Library.

State of New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development —  
Division of Parks and Recreation .

The Poetry Society of New Hampshire.

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Contest Theme — 2003

The theme selected for poems that will be written by New Hampshire fourth grade students is "*Changing Times in New Hampshire.*"

This year's award ceremony will be held on Saturday, June 21, 2003 at 12 noon in the Barn Theater of the Robert Frost Farm in Derry.

### *HYLA BROOK*

*By June our brooks run out of song and speed.  
Sought for much after that, it will be found  
Either to have gone groping underground  
(And taken with it all the Hyla breed  
That shouted in the mist a month ago,  
Like ghost of sleigh-bells in a ghost of snow)—  
Or flourished and come up in jewel-weed,  
Weak foliage that is blown upon and bent.  
Even against the way its waters went.  
Its bed is left a faded paper sheet  
Of dead leaves stuck together by the heat—  
A brook to none but who remember long.  
This as it will be seen is other far  
Than with brooks taken elsewhere in song.  
We love the things we love for what they are.*

**FRIENDS of the ROBERT FROST FARM MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM**

STUDENT.....\$10.00    INDIVIDUAL.....\$20.00    FAMILY.....\$35.00  
SPONSOR.....\$50.00    SUPPORTING....\$100.00    CORPORATE...\$250.00

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Ian Veitenheimer, Treasurer  
Friends of the Robert Frost Farm  
P. O. Box 1075  
Derry, NH 03038

**THANK YOU FOR RENEWING YOUR MEMBERSHIP --- Please tell a friend.**

**DIRECTIONS FROM ROUTE 1-93**

Rte. 193, Exit 4. East on Rte. 102 to Derry New Hampshire Traffic Circle. South on Rte. 28 for 1 ¼ miles to the farm. Programs are made possible by grants from the New Hampshire Humanities Council and are sponsored by the Robert Frost Homestead Trustees and the Friends of the Robert Frost Farm. Speaker Programs are free to the public.

Telephone (603) 432-3091

[www.nonprofitumbrella.org/frostfarm](http://www.nonprofitumbrella.org/frostfarm)

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