

Georgia Poetry Society

**THE REACH OF SONG SUBMISSIONS INVITED
JANUARY 15 – MARCH 1. SEE PAGE 9.**

Julia Caroline Knowlton Featured January Meeting Reader



We are delighted to announce that poet, author, and educator **Julia Caroline Knowlton** will be reading at the GPS Winter Quarterly Meeting on Saturday, January 23, 2021.

Julia, a member of the Georgia Poetry Society, is Professor of French at Agnes Scott College in Atlanta, where she has taught for twenty-five years. She has a PhD in French Literature from UNC–Chapel Hill and an MFA in Poetry from Antioch University.

Her most recent collection of poetry is *One Clean Feather* (Finishing Press, 2019). Julia published a memoir, *Body Story* (Ohio U. Press), in 2004, and was named a Georgia Author of the Year in 2019 for her poetry chapbook, *The Café of Unintelligible Desire*. She is the recipient of an Academy of American Poets College Prize and is a Pushcart nominee. Her work has appeared in such literary journals as *Boston Literary Magazine* and *Raw Art Review*.

See page 3 for more January meeting information.

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2021 Officers

Steven Shields, President
Alyson Shields, V. President
Michael Diebert, Secretary
Donna Rose Mulcahy, Treasurer

2021 Board

John Ottley
Ashley Rainge
Angela Washington
Ann Willis

From the President



Dear Members,

If ever a year needed waving goodbye to it, surely it would be 2020. What an unnerving and distressing year this has been. Yet despite the chaos, the Georgia Poetry Society remained active and even found ways to thrive:

- Thanks to Miriam Jacobs and Andrea Jurjevic, we began the year by successfully concluding our 2019 contest cycle, awarding prizes to several worthy competitors. We built on this success midyear by surveying our membership to make additional improvements to the 2020 contests.
- Quarterly meetings, moved to Zoom, still offered interesting and enjoyable content, thanks to VP Alyson Shields.
- Treasurer Lyn Hopper helped us secure a new laptop and updated software for it. Lyn was invaluable in helping us manage the buffeting caused by the pandemic, as were Secretary Ann Gillespie and our *NFSPS Strophes* reporter Duanne Kaiser.
- Our webmaster Marion Owen and I dug into the GPS website to make it more user-friendly. Besides a facelift and reorganization, we added an online bookstore, better security, and a YouTube channel to allow members to view any missed online meetings.
- Our GPS publications all came out on schedule, thanks to newsletter editor Ann Willis and *Reach of Song 2020* editor Michael Diebert. The winning Dickson chapbook, *Long Journey Home*, also appeared on schedule in April.
- Last, but not least, our Board provided wise counsel as conditions constantly shifted. Many thanks are due Kristin Gorell, Ed Hall, John Ottley, and Ann Willis, as well as the many members who emailed me with concerns, questions and comments. I appreciated all of them.

That behind us, looking ahead like Janus to 2021 I have three projects in mind:

First, as the pandemic eases, ***to emerge from our bunkers and look outwardly again.*** I found it interesting that what drew the most contest entries this past year was the Ira Harrison social issues competition. People have something to say, evidently. How can the Georgia Poetry Society do more to facilitate dialogue on such issues?

Second, ***to recruit the many talented volunteers we need to ensure a smooth succession into 2022*** as I and others finish our terms. Please volunteer or say yes when the Nominating Committee calls upon you.

Third, ***to retrieve and make available an online and physical archive of our past publications***, including newsletters, chapbooks, volumes of *The Reach of Song* and any other historic publishing artifacts.

In closing, let me offer a virtual and supportive thumbs-up. We've made it this far, and I remain optimistic that soon, very soon, all this will seem like a horrible dream from which we have awakened. In the meantime, here's hoping for a safe and happy start to the New Year for you and yours. I hope to see you online later this month.

Steven Shields, December 2020

**MISSING THAT POETRY CONNECTION?
JOIN US FOR THE FIRST QUARTERLY MEETING OF 2021!
SATURDAY, JANUARY 23, 2021
10 AM—NOON ON ZOOM**

Members and Non-Members all welcome

*Featured Reader Julia Caroline Knowlton
Announcement of Fall Contest Winners
Reading by the new Ron Self Chapbook Competition winner
Open Mic for GPS Members
Meet the new GPS board members*

**The Zoom link will go out by email to members a few days ahead of the meeting.
It will also be posted on the Meetings page of the website.**

www.georgiapoetrysociety.org

WANT TO TAKE PART IN THE OPEN MIC? BOOK YOUR SPOT!

**Email Alyson at vp@georgiapoetrysociety.org
by Tuesday, January 19, to sign up.
Note: Only GPS Members may read at the open mic.**

**GPS SPRING NEWSLETTER
Your input makes a difference!
Deadline: March 12, 2021**

Do **you** have any Member News,
Georgia Poetry Event News, or anything else interesting to share with fellow members?

April is Poetry Month: let us know if you a creative idea of how to encourage poetry
during this time of COVID.

Please email Ann Willis, Newsletter Editor, at newsletter@georgiapoetrysociety.org

INTRODUCING THE 2021 GPS BOARD

Steven Shields, President (continuing): Steven is a former all-night FM disc jockey and present-day college professor of mass communication (MA, Journalism, Ball State University; PhD, Mass Communication, University of Wisconsin). He is the author of *Creation Story* (Brick Road Poetry Press, 2019) and *Daimonion Sonata* (Birch Brook Press, 2005). He is a past president of the Georgia Poetry Society and has served on its board several times.

Alyson Shields, Vice President (continuing): Alyson is a Midwestern daisy replanted below the Mason-Dixon Line. During the day, she writes and reads the news for all the flowers in the Piedmont. At night, she blooms creatively with the help of a blue pen and to the delight of her rescue pets. While her journalistic works have created a garden of facts and stories, her creative works are just beginning to bud publicly.

Donna Rose Mulcahy, Treasurer: Donna Rose holds an MS in Organizational Development and co-manages Johns Creek Poets. She has published two poems in the *Reach of Song*. As the owner of Miss Bliss LLC, she works with clients as a business and transformational life coach, a registered mediator in Georgia, Kundalini yoga teacher, and Reiki master. She is also a burlesque dancer. She is currently working on two projects, a multimedia piece containing art and poetry, and a magical reality novel.

Michel Diebert, Secretary: Michael is Associate Professor of English at Georgia State University, Perimeter College. He served as president of GPS from 2015 to 2017 and as poetry editor of *The Chattahoochee Review* for nine years. He is the author of the collection *Life Outside the Set* and is at work on a second manuscript. Michael lives in Avondale Estates, Georgia, with his wife and dogs.

Ashley Rainge: Ashley is a New York-based writer, artist, and activist currently living in Savannah, Georgia. She serves as non-profit professional, community organizer, and historian in the daytime, while allowing her love of surrealism and comedy to thrive as she makes by the moonlight. Her poetry, plays, and collage work blend social issues with absurdist themes. When she is not working or creating, Ashley enjoys playing video games, reading philosophy, shouting at clouds, and rewatching episodes of *The Real Housewives*.

Angela Washington: Born in Vidalia, Georgia, raised in Florida and inspired to write in Tennessee, Angela has a BA in Psychology from University of North Florida and is the CEO/Founder and “Angel” of Angel of Words. She uses poetry to connect with victims, as well as victors. Her mantra is “No matter what happens today, tomorrow will be different!” Her poems have been published in best-selling health-improvement books, and she is a contributing writer for *The Christian View Magazine*, as well as a motivational speaker.

John Ottley Jr. (continuing): Davidson College graduate in English, MS in journalism, Columbia University, John is the author of three volumes of poetry: *The Seventh Deadliest Fear*, *The Hope of Upstream Water*, and *That Nature Might Stand Up*. He published and edited *Midwest Poetry Review* for five years and has judged more than 40 national or state poetry contests and presented numerous poetry lectures. He is a past president and treasurer of GPS and was treasurer of NSFPS. A retired army colonel, his article on the last B-29 raid on mainland Japan was featured on the September 2014 cover of *Aviation History*.

Ann Willis (continuing): MA, English, UW-Milwaukee. Ann lives with her husband in Habersham County. Retired from careers in marketing and education, she volunteers with Second Chance Greyhounds and serves on boards for SNCA (cultural center) and for the Alliance for African American Music in NE Georgia. She edits books and plays and writes poetry for pleasure.

THANK YOU, DEPARTING BOARD MEMBERS!

A special thank you to our outgoing Secretary, Ann Gillespie, and long-serving Treasurer, Lyn Hopper, and to departing Board Members Kristin Gorell, Ed Hall, Miriam Jacobs (Past President), and Andrea Jurjevic, for all their hard work, creativity, and generous giving of time and talent in support of the Georgia Poetry Society and its membership.

The Faces of the GPS 2021 Board



Steven Shields
President



Alyson Shields
Vice President



Donna Rose Mulcahy
Treasurer



Michael Diebert
Secretary



John Ottley Jr
Board Member



Ashley Rainge
Membership Chair



Angela Washington
Poetry in the Schools



Ann Willis
Newsletter Editor
Book Sales



“You may look out and say
there’s a whirlwind out yonder!

When already it was likely me
blowing your hat off
as I danced right by you.”

from “Gone Dancing” by Mildred White Greear

Mildred White Greear, former longtime Georgia Poetry Society member, celebrated her 100th birthday in Helen, Georgia, on October 19, 2020. Mildred is a two-time Charles Dickson Chapbook Contest winner for *A Species of Ruin* (1994) and *At the Edge* (2003) and was a selected contributor to the 2011 chapbook *Under a Hundred* to honor Edward Davin Vickers. Her poetry has been published nationally and internationally. Her magnum opus, *Moving Gone Dancing* (Fall Line Arts Press, 2007), is an extraordinary collection of poems written through her life (go find a copy if you have not read it!).

Once met, never forgotten, Mildred has inspired many people as a teacher, writer, poet, and mentor. For several years, she led a poetry group in the Northeast Georgia mountains. GPS member Duanne Kaiser was fortunate to be part of that group: “Everything I know about writing poetry, I first learned from Mildred Greear. Everything I love about writing poetry, I learned from her, too.”

May you always keep dancing, Mildred White Greear!

Photograph of Mildred Greear, September 2013 (courtesy Ivy Rutzky)

GPS Member News

TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

Just click here: [Membership | Georgia Poetry Society](#)

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING GPS AND POETRY IN GEORGIA!

Kathy Ellis was invited to open up an online Frankenstein production with a few of her mystical poems. The Halloween program was sponsored by Unitarian Universalist Church's performing arts group.

Andrea Jurjevic's translation from Croatian of *Dead Letter Office: Selected Poems* by Marko Pogacar (The Word Works, 2020) was published in June.

Randy Mazie has had two poems published in the latest edition of *The MacGuffin*, Fall 2020, Vol. XXXVI, No. 3. They are "The Buck Stops Here" (a clerihew) and "If Subtlety Is Worth Its Weight in Gold" (a sonnet). Available through www.schoolcraftbooks.com.

Ivy Rutzky's newest publication is *Bear With Me*, a collection of a decade of her popular newspaper columns (with photos) about her new life in the Northeast Georgia mountains after twenty-five years working at the American Museum of Natural History and living in New York City. Not yet online, so email Ivy at ivyruzky@gmail.com to buy a copy.

Angela Washington was a contributing author to *There is no Health Without Mental Health: Men and Mental Health* (July 2020). Her poem "Relentless Angels" was featured in *Entertaining God* magazine, June 2, 2020 issue.

We were glad to welcome the following new Georgia Poetry Society members in 2020:

Chani Butler; Pamela Cook; Lisa Cottrell; Kimberly Gibbs; Jerri Hardesty; Daniel Holmes; David Hutto; Jeremiah Johnson; Robert Keeler; MWM Communications LLC; Ruth Martz; Ed Nichols; Shelby Nish; Angela Washington; Susan Wilkin; Side Door Poets.

Other Poetry News

Louise Glück, 2003 US Poet Laureate, was awarded the 2020 Nobel Prize in Literature for "her unmistakable poetic voice that with austere beauty makes the individual existence universal."

Healing, Hope, and Inspiration through Poetry



Treat yourself by dipping into the [Poetry Foundation's New Year's Collection](#) of “poetry to reflect on the past year and ring in the new.”

And enjoy this gift of a poem by Angela Washington, 2021 GPS Board Member and “Poetry in the Schools” Chair, who describes her motivation for writing and sharing it: “Through all the stressful moments 2020 has presented for the health care industry, I was blessed to write one specific poem for them. I watched numerous tearful videos of nurses and doctors crying, as they described making video calls for dying patients. The tears, their voices, and just the point of it all, was almost too much to bear. ‘Relentless Angels’ is a poem of hope, appreciation, and inspiration. This poem, with a few others, was given to Emory Hospital in Decatur, Georgia, and to countless health care providers in the Greater Atlanta area. It was featured in *Entertaining God* magazine, June 02, 2020 issue. ‘When the physician is the patient, sometimes the treatment for pain is poetry.’”

Relentless Angels

We appreciate your time,
the long nights and no rest,
the needle sticks, the x-rays,
and every single test.
Sometimes, that's all we need.
Sometimes, we need much more.
Sometimes, you're the last we see,
before the tears will pour.
Exhausted and relentless,
you go about your day,
for these reasons I say, " Thanks,"
and for all of you I pray.

Angela Washington

The Reach of Song 2021

Submissions Welcome

The Georgia Poetry Society is pleased to invite submissions to *The Reach of Song 2021*.

Submissions are welcome between January 15 and March 1, 2021.

These submissions are for consideration for the non-contest member section of our annual anthology, published since 1979.

Member submissions selected for inclusion are automatically entered into consideration for the Member Excellence Awards for first, second, and third prizes.

There is no fee to submit.

For full submission guidelines, please visit the [GPS website](#).

NFSPS SPRING CONTESTS
Deadline March 15, 2020

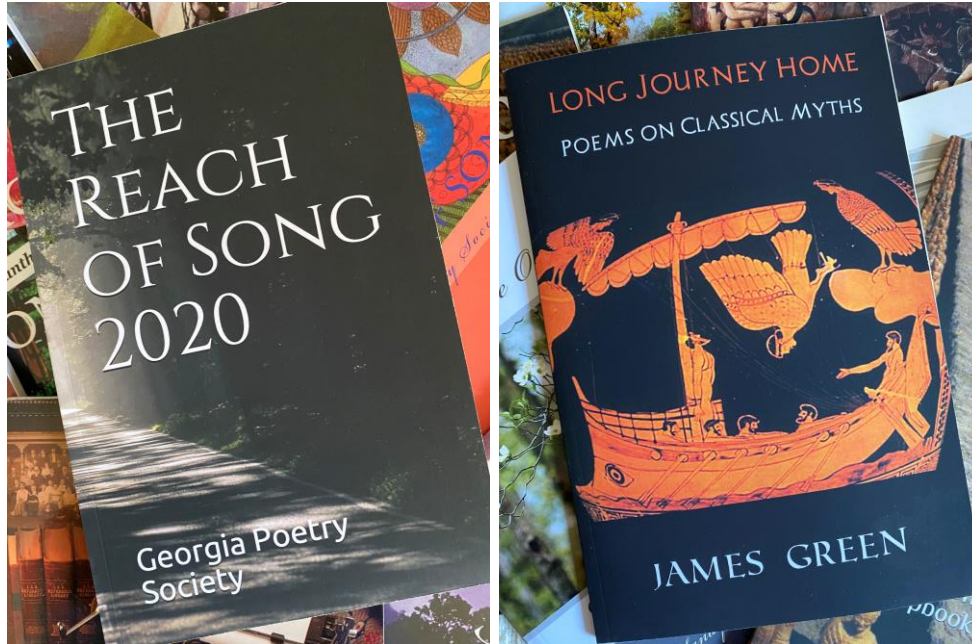
As a member of GPS, you are automatically a member of the National Federation of State Poetry Societies.

The NFSPS holds a wide selection of poetry contests every spring, including one sponsored by GPS.

We encourage all GPS members to support NFSPS by entering their annual contests.

For details, go to:
https://www.nfsps.com/poetry_contests.htm

RECENT GEORGIA POETRY SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS



Support GPS and your fellow members by buying books for yourself and as treasured gifts for others. Donate a copy of *The Reach of Song* to your local library!

Check our [Bookstore](#) page on the GPS website to buy *Reach of Song* anthologies (including some older issues) and chapbooks. In addition to buying from Amazon for print-to-order, you can get small quantities of most of our publications direct from GPS using the [GPS order form](#). We will soon be adding a PayPal option for in-house orders as well ... see “Coming Soon” below.

Also on the [Bookstore](#) page are featured member books with links. If you would like your book to be included, email Steven Shields at president@georgiapoetrysociety.org.

Coming Soon!

A new-look bookstore with more online ordering options

Watch for news of this in the coming weeks!