

The Quill

**The Monthly Newsletter of the Monadnock Writers' Group
May 1, 2024**

Supporting Writers Since 1984

The Monadnock Writers' Group is a registered 501(c)(3) organization.
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Welcome to the Monadnock Writers' Group! Since 1984, the MWG has provided community, inspiration, and support to the writers of the Monadnock Region. All are welcome! Our membership includes writers of every variety: from poets to journalists, from mystery writers to playwrights, and from career writers to those just getting started. We meet on the third Saturday morning of each month, September through June, at the Peterborough Town Library, unless otherwise noted. Monthly meetings start at 9:45 a.m. and go to about 11:30 a.m., but times can vary. Meetings include a 15-minute meet-and-greet, announcements, a ten-minute reading from a member, and a main speaker sharing professional writing experience and answering questions. Coffee and light refreshments are provided. Our monthly Speaker Series is open to the public and free of charge. Our speakers are instructive and inspirational for writers of all literary forms, genres, and levels of experience. For more information, please go to our website at www.monadnockwriters.org, or join our Monadnock Writers' Group [Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/groups/monadnockwriters/).

MWG NEWS

April 20: Nationally known singer-songwriter **Cosy Sheridan** of Harrisville led an interactive discussion at our April meeting in honor of National Poetry Month. Cosy sang, played, and took members and guests through a free writing exercise, while answering questions about the similarities and differences between poetry and songwriting, and songwriting as a form of storytelling. Thank you, Cosy, for a wonderful event!



Do You Know a Great Speaker? The MWG Board is starting to plan our 2024-2025 Speaker Series! Do you know a novelist, poet, podcaster, storyteller, memoirist, editor or agent or other writing-adjacent person who might be a wonderful speaker for the MWG? Email us at mwgquill@gmail.com or talk to a board member at one of our meetings.

May 2: The works of five artists previously published in *Smoky Quartz* will be featured at the next Jimmy Pappas Conversations on May 2, 7:00 p.m. Amber Rose Crowtree, Barbara Danser, Frank Gorga, Lew Holzman, and Alison Deland Scott will share their artwork. For the Zoom link to the event, email jpappas235@gmail.com.

Member Survey: MWG is putting together a member survey to learn more about what you would like from our organization. More details will be emailed in the coming weeks.

2024 SPRING MEETING & SPEAKER SCHEDULE

May 11: Please note this meeting is the second Saturday in May to avoid a conflict with the *Children in the Arts Festival*. Celebrated author **BRINDA CHARRY** will talk about her new novel, *The East Indian*, which was published by Simon & Schuster. Inspired by a historical figure, *The East Indian* tells the story of Tony, a native of the Indian subcontinent who came to Colonial America. It is a story of loss, love, and survival, and of the early years of the English settlement of Virginia. Charry, a professor of English at Keene State, is an award-winning fiction writer who has published in the U.K., the U.S., and India. <https://brindacharry.com/>



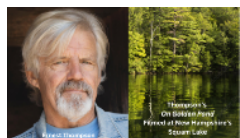
June 15: BIENNIAL MEMBER READ-AROUND. Our second Member Read-Around of the year has the same rules as in December...please come, share your writing, and keep your selection to ten minutes so everyone will have a chance to read! Our Read-Arounds are always surprising, humbling, entertaining, and inspiring. Come learn what your fellow MWG writers are working on!



Spring Board Meeting: Saturday, May 11, following the general meeting.

RESOURCES FOR WRITERS

Save the Date! The NH Writers Project Annual 603 Conference is June 8. This year's keynote will be American writer, actor, and director Ernest Thompson. Thompson is best known as the author of the play *On Golden Pond*, about New Hampshire's Squam Lake, which he wrote at the age of 28. He later won an Academy Award for Best Adapted Screenplay for his own play of the same title. More information available at <https://nhwritersproject.org/>.



GrubStreet Center for Creative Writing in Boston is the nation's largest creative writing center, and Boston's premiere literary destination bringing people from all backgrounds together over a shared love of writing and reading. GrubStreet offers live and online classes, workshops, seminars, and a competitive Novel Incubator program. The annual Muse and Marketplace conference is one of the largest networking conferences in the country. Financial aid is available for all programs. <https://grubstreet.org>.

The *Poets and Writers* website is one the best sources to find information on writing contests and grants, plus listings for small presses, literary and poetry magazines, and literary agents. The magazine by the same name covers issues in the world of contemporary publishing and literature and highlights new writers. They also feature guides to MFA programs: <https://www.pw.org>.

Poets&Writers

Helping Writers Become Authors (HWBA) is a website/blog and podcast, which has more than 1,500 episodes and 1 million+ downloads. It is regularly named one of the best podcasts for writers. The blog and podcast are run by speculative fiction and fantasy author and writing teacher K.M. Weiland. She is the author of bestselling writing craft books including *Outlining Your Novel*, *Creating Character Arcs*, and *Writing Your Story's Theme*. HWBA's free podcast covers every aspect of writing and publishing, from narrative voice to Jungian archetypes, and from designing a book cover to marketing your work. <https://www.helpingwritersbecomeauthors.com/>



Writing Excuses: Because You're In a Hurry, and We're Not That Smart! This long-running podcast created by science fiction luminary Brandon Sanderson and friends leads "master classes" in all aspects of writing. You can start at the beginning of the podcast, which has been running for 15 years, or jump into the current series. The podcast covers every aspect of the craft and business of writing with humor, and the rotating cast of hosts has deep experience in the business. <https://writingexcuses.com/>



Authors Publish, the Magazine for Creative Writers, researches and curates legitimate publishing opportunities, and shares new opportunities and updated deadlines every month. Resources addressed include literary magazines, small presses, websites, and more. Authors Publish also offers classes and resources for writers. <https://authorspublish.com/>

Writer Beware is a blog that reports on publishing scams...and there are a lot of them. The site sends alerts for new scams and phishing techniques writers need to be aware of, including predatory publishers, sketchy agents, suspicious contests, and much more. <https://writerbeware.blog/>



Career Authors: Write, Sell, Repeat offers resources for craft, marketing, and publishing, as well as classes and writing retreats. The site offers articles from well-known authors on specific

genres, how to fit writing into your life, and current issues like how authors can use TikTok. <https://careerauthors.com/>

Reedsy is a comprehensive website of resources for professional and aspiring writers including the *Bestseller Podcast*. Reedsy offers databases of independent publishers, agents, writing apps, literary magazines, and even “plot generators.” They also offer classes, writing contests, and scholarships for their offerings. <https://reedsy.com/about>

MEET A MEMBER: JIM KATES

Jim Kates (J. Kates) is a published poet, a literary translator, and co-director of Zephyr Press. He has been awarded three National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships, an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Hampshire State Council on the Arts, the Cliff Becker Book Prize in Translation, and a Kämpylä Translation Prize. He is also the co-translator of six books of Latin American and Spanish poetry.

The Quill Questionnaire

How long have you been writing?

Writing...since I could form letters. Practicing serious writing...from junior high school on. I began to think of myself as a “writer” in high school, but not professionally. The first poem I had placed in a literary magazine came in my last year of college. For many years, I taught school, and wrote. At one point one of my colleagues called me no longer a teacher who wrote, but a writer who taught. Gradually, freelance writing took over more and more from adjunct teaching.

What are you working on right now?

Mostly, I’m working on avoiding work. On and off, among other things, translating poems from the French Resistance. In prose, trying to assemble a number of scattered personal essays about my civil-rights activism into a coherent collection. My own poems come slowly, if at all.

Who are some of your favorite writers?

“Favorite” is an odd word. It doesn’t mean much. Reading is fluid. Whatever I’ve read with attention most recently is a favorite. A couple of weeks ago, I immersed myself in Delmore Schwartz’s poetry — ostensibly, to write a review, but the attention was there, and I discovered and rediscovered his genius. Does that make Schwartz a favorite? This week I’m enjoying some poems by a poet in North Carolina. Does that make him a favorite? Denise Levertov? Natasha Trethewey? I am constantly going back again and again to the classic Latin and French poets I fell in love with as a high-school student. The writers who interest me are those who write well and carefully about the world, not just slop around in their own sensibility. (Goethe has written eloquently about this. Does that make him a favorite?) And I haven’t even touched on prose

Do you have a writing routine/process that you stick to?

The process I trust most is time. Any writer experiences the same elation after drafting a terrible poem as after drafting a good one, and I'm as guilty as anyone of thinking what I write is good. Therefore, time is the best of editors. I let a few days, weeks, months, years, pass, for perspective, to know whether I want to proceed with what I've written. Most of what I write I throw away, because it's nothing but drill, rehearsal, or self-indulgence. My poems are a game played to artificial rules in a protected space that every once in a very long while bursts its bounds into meaning — something that reaches and affects other people. My translating work is a way of close reading while I play by other people's rules. My prose is usually written to a purpose and a deadline.

What is your favorite/least favorite thing about writing?

Reading aloud is what I like best about poetry, including my own. The words in my mouth, the music in the room, the power of the sound. What I like least is self-delusion, and the sense of self-importance writing lends itself to, and also the confounding of an autobiographical voice with the voice of the poem. I want what I write to be more about the reader than about me. (I publish using my initial — J. Kates — to minimize that.) As a wise man once sang, we are all bozos on this bus.

***THE EXILE* by J. Kates** (from *The Briar Patch*, Hobblebush Books)

Well before he died, the decree was repealed.
But after all, it made no difference to him.
“Home!” he would snarl, “Where should I call home?
The ground my parents lie buried in — that expelled

me? The land that landed me like a prize
flapping fish to show off their expertise
in political tolerance and the humanities?
Don't talk of home, please. It hurts my eyes.”

His eyes hurt. He buried his head in his hands
and flew everywhere and sang in a dozen tongues
to keep from swallowing bile. Still, his lungs,
heart, guts — down to the Islets of Langerhans

detached and floated free in an endless ache.
Nothing connected to anything else. Horses
lashed to his limbs galloped in different directions. His torso
lay in its shivering skin on nostalgia's rack.

He married again. This time, a younger woman

of unimpeachable family and personal mystery
who worshiped him like Othello for his stories
and loved him for the thinning hair his demon

left scattered on pillows all around the world.
He hectored his students. Scorned his natural colleagues.
Kept in touch with his friends. Read only catalogues.
His opinions grew increasingly double-barrelled.

He died in a hotel room in a city he hated,
in a state whose name he'd never learned to pronounce.
Where he'd been born, they raised him monuments
As a great spokesman of the once-defeated.

ALL ABOUT MWG

- **Submit your bio as a member of MWG.** Are you a member? If you would like your bio added to the [About Our Members](#) page on the MWG website, please send it to Mary Marchese at mwgwebmaster@gmail.com. Bio: Maximum 200 words, 3rd person, feel free to include links to your website, most recent publication, or listing on Amazon, and social media.
- **Volunteer!** If you would be interested in bringing refreshments, being our ten-minute reader or have ideas for speakers or events, please let us know at monadnockwriters@gmail.com.
- **Send your writing news or announcements to *The Quill*.** If you would like to submit to our monthly newsletter, please contact Jess at mwg.quill@gmail.com at least a week before the end of the month. As a member, you may include your author events and announcements.
- **Who are we at MWG?** Established in 1984, the primary mission of the Monadnock Writers' Group is to offer fellowship and support to professional writers and to those actively engaged in developing their writing skills. To learn more: www.monadnockwriters.org/about-us
- **Please explore MWG online.** Visit our website, www.monadnockwriters.org, for news, member profiles, speakers series information, contests, publications, and more. Find us on Facebook under Monadnock Writers' Group: www.facebook.com/groups/monadnockwriters/
- **Monadnock Writers' Group membership information:**
 - Annual membership fees are \$30, or \$25 for students and seniors, \$50 for Patrons, \$100 for Benefactor, and \$250 for a Corporate membership.

- Individual members are encouraged to announce their own projects such as workshops, social gatherings, group support sessions, or whatever the writing-related endeavor. Feel free to take the floor at the monthly meeting, or contact the newsletter editor at mwg.quill@gmail.com to send an announcement to the membership in the monthly newsletter.
 - Bring a friend to one of our monthly meetings, and if they join MWG, you will receive a \$20 gift certificate for the Toadstool Bookshop!
 - See the full list of membership benefits here: www.monadnockwriters.org/membership
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The MWG 2023-2024 Board of Directors

President: Jesseca Timmons *Vice President:* Rodger Martin *Treasurer:* Carl Mabbs-Zeno
Secretary: Susan Gebo *Members at Large:* Deni Dickler, Tori Haring-Smith, Maura MacNeil, Mary Marchese, Ronnie McIntire. *Emerita:* Ann Day