
The Quill

**The Monthly Newsletter of the Monadnock Writers' Group
May 1, 2025**

Supporting Writers Since 1984

The Monadnock Writers' Group is a registered 501(c)(3) organization.

P.O. Box 3071, Peterborough, NH 03458

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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

MWG Board Vacancy Alert! We are sad to announce that Deni Dickler will be rolling off our board after many years of dedication to the MWG. She will be very much missed! Please contact Jess at jesstimm17@gmail.com if you have any interest in serving on the MWG Board as a Member at Large. Our boards meets four times a year, after our October, January and April meetings, and with a dinner meeting in July. It is a great group, a very low time committment, and a lot of fun. Join us!!!

May Meeting at MacDowell. Just a reminder our meeting on May 17th is at the James Baldwin Library at McDowell at 100 High Street in Peterborough. The library is the stone building toward the back of the campus on the left as you drive into the main parking lot. For direction please go to <https://www.macdowell.org/>.

SATURDAY: Three-Minute Fiction Contest!

The Monadnock Writers' Group will hold its annual short fiction contest on May 3 at 10:00 in the Eben Jones Classroom of the Peterborough Town Library. Competitors will read their original fiction up to three minutes in length. All are welcome!!!

Two judges from outside the MWG will determine the winners. Anyone may compete by registering at the event. There is no fee.

The New Hampshire Writers Project has not announced whether it will be holding a contest this year, but if it does, the winner in Peterborough will be invited to participate.

RECENT EVENTS



We had the great fortune to host **New Hampshire Poet Laureate Jennifer Militello** on April 19. Jennifer shared some of her work and her insights into the world of poetry and was a truly delightful and inspiring speaker! Many thanks to Maura MacDonnell for arranging this event. Jennifer is the author of the forthcoming hybrid collection *Identifying the Pathogen*, which has been named a finalist for the 2024 FC2 Ronald Sukenick Innovative Fiction Prize; poetry collection *The Pact*; the memoir *Knock Wood*, winner of the Dzanc Nonfiction Prize; and four books of poetry. Her work has appeared in *Best American Poetry*, *Best New Poets*, *American Poetry Review*, *The Nation*, *The New Republic*, *The Paris Review*, *Poetry*, *Poetry London*, and *The Poetry Review* (UK). <https://jennifermilitello.com/>

SPRING MEETING SCHEDULE

May 17: We are scheduled to hold our May meeting at MacDowell to make up for the cancellation of the September meeting due to COVID. The speakers at the meeting will be current MacDowell artists in residence: **Dantiel Moniz** (Fiction) Dantiel W. Moniz is a 2024 USA Fellow, the recipient of a National Book Foundation “5 Under 35” Award, a Pushcart Prize, the Alice Hoffman Prize for Fiction, and Fellowships from Yaddo, The Lighthouse Works, and MacDowell, among others. Her debut collection, *Milk Blood Heat* was a finalist for the PEN/ Jean Stein Award, the PEN/ Robert W. Bingham Prize, and the New York Public Library Young Lions Fiction Award, as well as longlisted for the Dylan Thomas Prize and The Story Prize. Her writing has appeared in the *Paris Review*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *American Short Fiction*, *Tin House*, and elsewhere. Moniz is an Assistant Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison where she teaches fiction.

Mira Jacob (Fiction) Mira Jacob is a novelist, memoirist, illustrator, and cultural critic. Her graphic memoir *Good Talk: A Memoir in Conversations* was shortlisted for the National Book Critics Circle Award, longlisted for the PEN Open Book Award, nominated for three Eisner Awards, and named a New York Times Notable Book. It is currently in development as a television series. Her novel *The Sleepwalker's Guide to Dancing* was a Barnes & Noble Discover New Writers pick, shortlisted for India's Tata First Literature Award, and longlisted for the Brooklyn Literary Eagles Prize. Her writing and drawings have appeared in *The New York Times*, *Electric Literature*, *Tin House*, *Literary Hub*, *Guernica*, *Vogue*, and *Harper's Bazaar*. She is an Assistant Professor at The New School's MFA in Writing program and a founding faculty member of the MFA Writing Program at Randolph College. At MacDowell, she will be working on *We Killed Anji Alexander*, a novel about the murder of a white-passing Indian actress. It has been optioned as a limited series by Sony Pictures.



June 21: Member Read-Around. Please come, share your writing, and try to 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!

July & August: No meetings.

CALLS FOR SUBMISSION

Scribeworthy invites writers and poets to submit their best work for publication! We're seeking fresh, thought-provoking narratives across poetry, fiction, non-fiction, and visual art. Whether you're an emerging voice or an established writer or artist, this is your opportunity to share your stories and perspectives with our growing audience of literary and visual art enthusiasts. <https://www.scribeworthy.com/>

We are **The Metaworker**, an online literary magazine where great stories are forged. Our mission is to publish great things to read. Send us the stuff you don't think will be published anywhere else. We want new ideas, words that make us ponder, narratives that upend stereotypes. We don't care if you're an established writer or someone who's never been published before, if you're a student or returning to writing after a career in something else, if you're 16 or 80, if you live in the United States, in India, in New Zealand, in Mexico – if you've got something you think needs to be shared with the world, submit it to us! We publish fiction, non-fiction, poetry, art, and more on our [website](https://themetaworker.com/) every Monday at noon PST, plus we sometimes post fun extras (like our podcast episodes) on Wednesdays or Fridays. <https://themetaworker.com/>

Sunspot. Sunspot Literary Journal was founded to cut through the blinding flashes. The publications present writing that is meaningful. Writing created by individuals who might not have a large social media following, but who still have something important to say. Micro-fiction, flash fiction, poetry, short stories, plays, scripts, literary works and well-written genre pieces up to novella length are welcome at Sunspot. <https://sunspotlit.com/about>.



Macrame Literary Journal. There is beauty in every creation, from a tiny stalk of grass swaying in the wind, to the greatest flights of human ingenuity in art, music, and literature. Here, we celebrate the works of poetry and fiction which display the DNA of the author on every page. We want to be inspired and moved by your work, motivated to reach for new heights. We are thrilled to publish the work that reaffirms our belief that words and creativity have great power for good and can give readers new insights, bring joy and enrich their lives. <https://macramelit.com/>



History Through Fiction Press. History Through Fiction, along with our imprints HTF Publishing, HTF Romance, and HTF Fantasy, is dedicated to publishing high-quality fiction rooted in historical research. We are interested in stories about real people and events, with fictionalized elements that may include (though they are not required) nonfiction features like footnotes, endnotes, or a bibliography. These elements provide transparency and allow readers to explore the history behind the stories. When submitting, ensure your historical novel is both informative and educational while being a compelling fictional narrative. <https://www.historythroughfiction.com/submissionguidelines>.



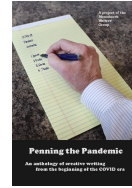
MWG PUBLICATIONS

The *Smoky Quartz Tenth Anniversary Anthology* features the work of writers and artists with ties to New Hampshire. The theme of the anthology is *Transformations*. This print edition celebrates the ten-year anniversary of *Smoky Quartz*. The 168-page paperback contains 77 poems, 6 stories, and 24 color images of artwork. The cover art is by Barbara Danser. Price: \$20.00 The Anthology is available at MWG meetings, can be ordered through the Toadstool Bookshop, or by emailing mwgsmyquartz@gmail.com.



The Mud Chronicles. Experiences of New Hampshire's "fifth season" highlight this anthology, showing how much landscape and seasonal cues matter to our contributors. You can find copies at the Toadstool Bookshop in Peterborough, or contact monadnockwriters@gmail.com for a discounted price. <https://monadnockwriters.org/publications-2/the-mud-chronicles>.

Penning the Pandemic. The creative writing in this volume shares the shock, the anguish, the courage, and the resilience of humanity in extraordinary times. After science and politics have had their say, art is left to record what the survivors felt and what they learned at heart. To purchase a copy, please email the MWG at: monadnockwriters@gmail.com.



MEET A MEMBER: BRUCE MCGUFFIN

Bruce McGuffin of Antrim is known for his humorous poetry. He has volunteered as a ten-minute reader and has been a member for several years.

How long have you been a writer? I compose light verse, and there's not a lot of call for that. For a few years I just posted an occasional poem on Facebook, until one of my facebook friends told me I should submit to Light. They accepted my first published poem and now they'll never get rid of me.

What are you working on right now? Right now I have a couple of half-finished poems kicking around in my head. In theory I have two books I want to put out, but I haven't found a publisher I want to work with. The most prolific publisher of light verse requires me to guarantee they'll sell at least 1000 books, and my family is just not that big.

Who are some of your favorite writers? My all time favorite poet is (surprise) New Hampshire's own Robert Frost. Other favorites are Wendy Cope, Lewis Carrol, A. E. Stallings, and Don Marquis. Metre is important to me (sorry Don), and rhyme doesn't hurt.

Do you have a writing process that you stick to? I don't really have a writing routine. An idea comes to me at random. Usually a first, or better yet a last line. Then I'll keep that growing poem in the back of my head and add lines as they occur to me. It's important to have a pen and paper handy. Walking helps. This process can take a day, or a month, to write a single poem.

What is your favorite/least favorite thing about writing? My favorite thing about writing is that I just enjoy words. I like the sound of them, the way some of the better words feel when you say them, and the ways you can play with them. I also like to make people smile. I write purely for fun, so there's no pressure. I guess my least favorite thing is when I can't think of the right way to complete a nearly finished poem. Or getting a poem half finished then realizing it doesn't want to be iambic, it wants to be anapestic, or vice-versa. That and rejections.

Most of my published poems appear in Light (<https://lightpoetrymagazine.com>) or Lighten Up Online (<https://www.lightenup-online.co.uk>) both of which specialize in light verse. I've also had poems in Better Than Starbucks (sadly defunct now), The Asses of Parnassus, plus a few here and there in other journals. The *Antrim Limrik* always has one or two short verses.

This is my favorite poem. It appeared in *Better Than Starbucks*, Nov. 2021

And was reprinted on the website *Form in Formless Times*:

Tunnels

A snowy field - sun sparkles on the ice -
Devoid of life to those who do not know
That underneath a furtive swarm of mice
Lives out their lives in tunnels through the snow.
My dog, who finds them out by smell or sound,
Runs snorting through the snow in wriggling glee.
Then back and forth ecstatically he'll bound
Until some mouse has nowhere left to flee.
For so it goes with mice as well as men,
Those tunnels where we run turn into traps
When forces that are far beyond our ken
Play out their game until our ways collapse.
Do waiting mice envision what impends?
That somewhere up above a canine snout -
Deus ex machina to mice - descends
To pierce the snow and pull those trapped mice out?
Few things in life will make that dog as glad.
The mouse may not rejoice - Its life is through.
But whether killing mice is good or bad
Depends completely on your point of view.

This poem appeared in *Lighten Up Online*, in March 2022

The Bears In Spring
Awakened with the warming breeze
And drawn by newborn greenery,
Bears leave their dens and climb up trees
To view the vernal scenery.
At times like this I wonder how
Bears balance on a limber bough.
Much like the bears I left my home
To wander from this busy town,
Drawn by the warming sun to roam
On narrow paths, uphill and down.
While passing through the woods today
I saw the bears aloft at play.
But here you are, a drudge indoors.
The sky is blue, the world is wide,

Tomorrow you can do your chores,

Pack up your work and go outside.
Enjoy the woods, forget your cares,
But do watch out for falling bears.

This poem appeared in *Blue Unicorn*, Oct. 2020. It's based on characters from Don Marquis' work. If you haven't read *Archy and Mehitable* you owe it to yourself to do so.

A Warning To Poets

You know Archy the cockroach, a talented poet?
He's gone. Let his death be a lesson to all.
Consider your safety when writing, although it
May hamper you answering Euterpe's call.

As Archy arced over the keyboard composing
His verses by landing head first on each key,
In the office at night while Don Marquis was dozing,
Head trauma, compounded, became CTE.
His good friend Mehitabel cried:
"On one day it's sunny, the next day there's rain.
Wotthehell, come and dance. There's the devil to pay,
And life's too damn funny for me to explain.

But uncontrolled mood swings left Archy perplexed.
Until one day, despondent, he said "Wotthehell,
This life is for suckers, I'm off to the next."
Then he went and checked into the Grand Roach Motel*.

*Don't worry about Archy. Every time he dies, he's reincarnated as a poetry-writing cockroach.

This poem appeared in *Snakeskin*, August 2022:

Number One Fan

I used to think of God a lot,
But now he doesn't interest me.
He may exist, or maybe not,
An unobtrusive deity.
Most likely God collects a pension,
Spends his time at beach resorts,
Relaxes, rarely pays attention,
Sits in bars and watches sports.
That would explain those athletes who

Believe God's watching all they do.

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. Maximum 200 words, written in third person, and feel free to include links to your website, most recent publication, 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:**
 - Membership period runs September through June. 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

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