

# Leas Lit



ORIGINAL WRITING AND ART  
BY RESIDENTS OF MEDFORD LEAS

NUMBER 49                      JUNE 2025  
PUBLISHED CONTINUOUSLY SINCE 1998



## ***LEAS LIT STAFF***

### **Editors:**

Bob Edelson

Cindy Page

Kathy Riley

George Rubin

Joyce Linda Sichel

### **Layout:**

Ann Campbell

### **Distribution:**

Ruth Podolin

### **Illustrations coordinator:**

Joyce Linda Sichel

### **Cover illustrator:**

Dorothy Cebula

### **Issue illustrators:**

Nancy Cressman

Cynthia Dayton

Janet deVry

Molly Gayley

Cicely Anne Reid

Joyce Linda Sichel

### **Published by:**

Medford Leas Residents Association

1 Medford Leas Way

Medford, NJ 08055

© Copyright remains with the author

Publication of *Leas Lit* is made possible by support from the  
Medford Leas Residents Association Activities Fund.

## CONTENTS

The Hole in the Cloud	<i>Stacy Moore</i>	1
Walls and Borders	<i>Marilyn Quinn</i>	4
Ocean	<i>Writers Roundtable</i>	7
Babbling	<i>Bob Edelson</i>	14
Reflections at 100	<i>George Rubin</i>	16
Speak of the Devil	<i>Kathy Riley</i>	19
Through the Closet Door	<i>Edith Roberts</i>	22
Non-Healing Wound	<i>Cindy Page</i>	24
Summer at the Track	<i>Joyce Linda Sichel</i>	25
Big Bertha	<i>Edwin Hann</i>	29
Child of Immigrants	<i>Alvin Migdal</i>	32
Mission: Improvable	<i>Bob Edelson</i>	35
I Like Hats	<i>Joyce Linda Sichel</i>	37
Pockets	<i>Janice Wilson Stridick</i>	39
Main Street to Country Road	<i>Nancy Cressman</i>	42



## THE HOLE IN THE CLOUD

**M**y flying club had about 20 aircraft, and my favorite was a blue and white, four seat Cessna-182, single engine, high wing aircraft. On this day the weather was favorable, and my pre-flight inspection was completed successfully. No visible dings, dents or scratches on the aircraft, windshield clean, wing fuel tanks full, oil level correct, wingtip lights and tail beacon operating as required.

I climbed into the pilot's seat, buckled up and continued preflight requirements. Radio check, performed engine run up and completed the same, as well as other required tasks. Put in 10 degrees of flaps for take off and proceeded to the active runway.

I monitored the radio to stay familiar with any aircraft at or near the airport, particularly aircraft entering downwind, base or on final approach for landing. All clear, and I announced takeoff on wind-favored Runway 19.

Add full power, and gain speed down the runway until the aircraft decides it wants to fly. And so it does. Up it goes. Retract wing flaps. Faster and faster it goes, finally reaching 125 knots. It is smooth, no turbulence at 1000 feet. Still gaining altitude over fields, trees, lakes, homes and roads. Altitude at 2000 feet, as everything on the land below shrinks in size. At this altitude visibility is unlimited, with buildings in Philadelphia, Trenton and Atlantic City on the horizon.

However, there is a nearly solid layer of cloud at 3000 feet. The cloud layer is about 500 feet thick, and I decide to climb above it. Where is a hole in the cloud which I can use?



I find a small hole, add power, gain altitude, and proceed up through a doorway to unlimited sky. I proceed in the hole in the cloud for about 15 seconds, circling in the white tube, and then I am out and free. There is clear sky in all directions. Flying 500 feet above the cloud layer, I can no longer see the ground, but I can see forever. So quiet, except for the hum of the engine, which I am quite happy to have.

I am alone, cruising at 4000 feet, yet not alone. Just me, my aircraft, and occasional reports or conversation from other aircraft over the radio. I could converse with them, but I prefer the solitude of being in the atmosphere, no visible ground below, only a seemingly endless beautiful white cloud, and a seemingly endless blue sky above. In a small way I feel like the astronauts must have felt.

I am one with the sky. It is exciting, yet I feel quite calm. There is a sense of peace and serenity, and I feel safe in the company of someone or something as the engine hums along. Time passes as I fly, going nowhere in particular. An

occasional commercial jet flies silently overhead, so much higher than I am.

I feel I could cruise forever, but it is time to leave this tranquil scene.

Another small hole in the cloud appears before me, and I reduce power and glide in a soft spin down through the cloud. All of a sudden there are fields, trees, lakes and homes, and roads with many cars speeding along urgently, heading for their very important destinations. I am about to return to the chaos of life on the ground, multitudes of people, places and computers, with their attendant disagreements, commotion and malfunctions.

The airport is soon in sight. I announce my position and intention to land on Runway 19. I enter the pattern: downwind, base, then final, dropping flaps along the way to slow the aircraft as it loses altitude. I am at 850 feet, 500 feet, 300 feet, 20 feet, 2 feet. Finally, the aircraft chooses to fly no longer, and settles softly onto the runway.

I guide the aircraft to its parking spot and tie it down. I thank the aircraft for the exhilarating, extraordinary journey it took me on. Just me, and the cloud and the sky, so alone but never alone. What an experience.

*Stacy Moore*

## WALLS AND BORDERS

Most of us recall the Berlin Wall. The closing of the wall happened on the night of August 12-13, 1961. Walls are still going up at borders, made of all kinds of materials, including metal, wire (some electrified), and men with guns. Some walls are enhanced by hidden bombs, mines, or traps. There are many reasons for constructing them. They entrap people and animals, preventing their migration or escape as well as blocking entrance by outsiders.

My trips in 1969 through the Berlin Wall were a special education in how borders and walls can evolve in an ever-worsening process of extreme social entrapment just to increase political power over others. I learned that while borders are to be respected, some can be cruel.

I spent two years as a student on a scholarship and an adventurous hippy in the rebuilt city of Munich, during the Cold War and only a few years after the Wall was closed. I lived in a building that miraculously survived the bombing but showed shell marks and a mysterious plate identifying it as a part of the Third Reich. I rented a room in the apartment once owned by the Krupp family, famous for using slave laborers from concentration camps.

During my first year, I had the opportunity to go to a student conference in Berlin. The train I boarded in Munich was Russian and was full of nervous West Germans. I was blissfully unaware of the tension at first, until I began talking with my fellow travelers. This was not like one of my many train rides from school to go home for the holidays.

During the train ride, a young man came bouncing down the aisle, slid the compartment door open, and threw a pile of chocolate chip cookies in my lap. That helped release the tension from watching soldiers unscrew panels to look for people or forbidden material hiding behind the metal walls. Every now and then, guards forced travelers to stand so they could search under their seats to make sure no western magazines or newspapers were on board.

We went the entire distance across East Germany without stopping. We slowly floated through stations populated only by armed guards and dogs, stations of famous cities I later in life was finally able to visit: e.g., Leipzig, the city of Bach, Mendelssohn, and Schumann. The Berlin train station was organized to prevent borders being crossed by the wrong people as they boarded and got off.

I learned later at the conference what had been making people nervous when I was on a special tour bus to show East Berlin to my student group. One of the students in my group was ordered by border police to leave the tour because the guards thought she resembled someone. Another time, I went via Checkpoint Charlie with a friend. While waiting for documents to be approved for crossing, I watched men take apart a car that intended to drive over to West Berlin. They literally removed panels from the sides and from underneath to check for stowaways. Once when it began to snow, and it was getting dark, my friend and I decided to return to the West but were told ominously at the closest gate that we had to return the way we came. So we found our way back to Checkpoint Charlie with our map.

It was still a fabulous visit that let me visit the Pergamon Museum in East Berlin, buy large music books cheaply in

stores in the East, and in West Berlin to turn pages for an organist in the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church, which is a church renovated from war ruins but left imperfect as a memorial.

This visit to the two Berlins was an in-depth lesson for a young person on both the world of war (death) and a contrasting world at peace (life). As Kurt Vonnegut said, “And so it goes.” Life goes on and death goes on, and we cannot always control the circumstances we are dealt. But, we can try, or we can at least learn to live with it.

*Marilyn Quinn*



## OCEAN — WRITERS' COMPOSITE

Members of the Writers Roundtable vary in their thoughts and feelings about the subject of “Ocean.” Here they share those thoughts with you in brief written snatches. We wonder which of these thoughts are most like your own: that oceans are symbolic of eternity, a steadying influence, vast and deep, overwhelming, beautiful, romantic, mysterious, full of sounds and smells, changeable in tides, changeable in light, a challenge for painters, rough for travel, cause seasickness on boats, are difficult and cold for swimming, potentially dangerous, subject to extreme weather changes, an adjunct to happy beach experience, a playground for surfing, their salinity a potential healer, a source of delicious food, the fisherman or woman’s purview, exotic faraway shores, world adventuring, educational opportunities, eco-friendly source of power. We hope you find this collection interesting and thought-provoking.

**December 31, 1999, 11:38 p.m.** The doomseers have predicted chaos at midnight.... We walk to the boardwalk at the lifeguard shed where a wide gap in the dunes allows a clear view of the beach. A few yards away a person wrapped in white sits on the sand, occasionally flashing a powerful light toward the water. We wait and watch. Presently a tall figure emerges from the surf, removes his wetsuit hood, walks to the sitting woman and pulls her up.... We all introduce ourselves.... “I plan to spend every New Year’s eve on the beach somewhere,” he says.... We pop the cork on the champagne we have brought and pour into the two glasses we have; a wetsuit glove becomes a makeshift container for our companions. We drink to the New Year

and to his ambitious vow. We admire his enthusiasm about the world's oceans.

*Pat Williams*

**I really don't like the ocean.** I realize that as a person whose family LOVES the beach....I can't swim and there are things floating around in there that are unidentifiable... and it's too cold or too hot whenever I do decide to dip my toes.... I remember a trip to Chincoteague and Assateague islands ... .Husband and two year old waded out into the water. "Mommy," she called, "come out with us!"...."Mommy will be on the blanket with juice when you and Daddy are ready," I smiled and explained as I trudged back to the dry sand. Just as I almost reached safety and warmth, a rogue wave...knocked me to my knees. I tried to get up, when another one, bam! knocked me down. I struggled to catch my breath and crawled as best I could. Bam! another one; this one rolled me.... When I finally stood and staggered out of the water, the hubby and daughter waved gaily. They thought I was enjoying a romp with the surf.

*Cindy Page*

**Years ago on a tour of Israel,** I accumulated a collection of scrapes on my shins and knees from a tour in a jeep that seemed to have seen military use before tourism. Soon after this experience, our itinerary called for a dip in the Dead Sea, which is really a landlocked salt lake, not a real ocean despite its name. It is called "dead" because its high

salt percentage keeps most sea life from living and growing within. It was the most unusual bathing I have ever done. After I bobbed around in buoyant, waist-deep water for five or ten minutes, I had swallowed my fill of salt water. My happy surprise when I emerged was that the scrapes and irritation on my legs were almost all better! I have stayed good friends with salt water, if not other oceans, for relief of many ills.

*Joyce Linda Sichel*

**Ocean City, NJ, my first beach**, set my early expectations for oceans: sand, tides, buoyancy, and fireworks on the beach.... Oceans in my life? There were many, each with an epiphany of its own, especially when memories are wrapped in nostalgia. Being stung by a jellyfish in the Mediterranean proved a learning experience; bypass all traditional remedies like salt or urine and go straight to the pharmacy. The Masai tribesman in traditional attire complete with spear and white heart-shaped plastic sunglasses walking on a resort beach in Zanzibar showed cultures colliding. Not every place looks like its National Geographic photographs....However, my favorite ocean-related holiday spot...is St. Andrews, Scotland, on the North Sea.... From fishing villages on the shoreline, we could hear the waves and smell the sea.

*Kathy Riley*

**Though far south, the hurricane off the Baja coast** was roiling the sea at Venice Beach, California. The crashing waves were not the “glassies,” beloved of surfers, but large,

rough, and spuming, with a shore break and a powerful rip current. It was night, but the stroller on the concrete walkway, a hundred yards from the water, knew of their power.... He could not see much more than the dim streetlights reflected from the whitecaps, but he could hear the roar and crash. He could smell the heavy salt spray thrown high in the air, and even feel tiny droplets of water in the star-filled sky. He imagined the vibration carrying through his shoes from the triphammer pounding. He shivered, glad he was ashore warm and comfortable as, fresh from the nightshift, he enjoyed his early morning ramble. But there was something... On the beach? Just off the walkway. A black hump that shouldn't be there.

*Bob Edelson*

**I am ocean**

You are sea  
I am motion  
You cannot be

I am current  
You are still  
Not by intent  
Not by will

You be you  
I'll be me  
Nothing to do  
We are free

*Barry Klieger*

**The first ocean I crossed was the Atlantic.** It was June 2001 and we were sailing on the Queen Elizabeth II from New York to Southampton. I wasn't sure how I would fare crossing the ocean, but I was not seasick at all and it was a wonderful experience. The next time I crossed the Atlantic was on the Queen Mary II in 2005... That time we were caught in hurricane Wilma and I did get seasick, but I was able to recover enough to go to dinner in a not very full dining room. I went around South America two years later and found that the Pacific was not much different from the Atlantic. We were told that rounding Cape Horn would be rough and that the Straits of Magellan are usually rough, but for us it was smooth sailing. We sailed up through Patagonia and saw the glaciers. If it wasn't for my love of sailing on oceans, I never would have gone there.... When we were on a ship that crossed the equator, we watched a (memorable) "crossing the line" ceremony.

*Doris Kabley*

**The first time I flew over the Atlantic,** I was in a propeller plane. We left from Idlewild Airport in New York City in the evening, and our first stop in the dark was Gander, Newfoundland, to refuel before crossing the ocean. I slept intermittently. Having a window seat, I watched the engine near me and was comforted by its continuous blinking light. As dawn approached, I could see that we were over the ocean, with the water appearing gray below and no land in sight yet. Flying was an eerie experience with no feeling of boundaries. I was glad to land at Heathrow Airport on solid ground. I crossed the Pacific Ocean many years later when I flew to Hawaii from Dallas, Texas. It was in daylight

and I realized that we would be flying over the ocean for many hours. Every time I looked out of my window, all I could see was water and it occurred to me that we would have little chance of survival if the plane dropped into the water. Happily, this event never materialized, and we had a great time in Oahu at a hotel on the beach at the edge of the ocean.

*Alvin Migdal*

**We were in Mount Lavinia** which bordered the Indian Ocean on the Western side of Sri Lanka. We had walked down to the sea and there saw a most precious and unique sight. A father dressed from head to toe in his fine Muslim clothing was standing about six feet out in the quiet sea waters which came up to his calves. His little boy was sitting at the water's edge between his two mothers, who were barefoot but otherwise covered by black chadors. Papa was calling his son to walk into the ocean, but the little one was just so happy to be at the water's edge. And this pleasant memory—how did it end? Staring is impolite and so on we walked—never ever to know.

*Deedy Roberts*

**The sun was hot but the breeze from the ocean was cool.** I stood on the last stair of the steps going out to the sand from our rental in North Carolina and felt how really lucky I was to be there. Every year my extended family rented a house right on the beach for two weeks. Every year I got to spend time in a house with toddlers and teenagers

rushing around, playing loud music and even drinking milk directly from the carton! I even got used to Shark Week playing non-stop on the TV. I always felt somehow younger there. I loved it!

I love the beach and always have. There's not much that will get me out of bed at sunrise, but I will cherish those memories of sitting on the deck with my coffee, the sun flashing gold across the water, and whistles and clicks of the dolphins following the shrimp boats that would bring us the freshest shrimp I will ever have. After a long day of sunning and swimming, the evenings brought some quiet and no little ones on the deck. Some nights we even saw the Milky Way! Those memories are precious and will stay with me for the rest of my life.

*Marge Rodney*

## BABBLING

Once upon a time in Babylon  
The friars thought to build a tower on  
The plain between the Euphrates and Tigris  
Where traffic of traders would be the highest.

The base would be massive, it had to be strong,  
To bear the helical stairway thereon.  
The steps would rise in narrowing spirals  
As skyward the vast ziggurat cycled.

Wood derricks would lift, by means of stout cables,  
The stones, bricks, and tiles described in the fables.  
No structure its like had ever been thought of  
So costly the masonry it must be wrought of.

But “Why,” you ask, “did the monks seek such funding?  
Baffling all with a project dumbfounding.”  
A step-studded obelisk has no use.  
Buying this beast was a public abuse.

These monks were no dummies. With advertising,  
The pilgrims would come to seek heaven arising  
Atop the breathtaking steps they see dwindle  
As to heaven approaches the towering spindle.  
And each of these pilgrims, for only a shekel  
Would get to climb this tower heretical  
And gain heaven by this journey hysterical.  
The clerics in glee would watch them rise apical  
While counting their profits with grins maniacal.

But God in heaven is averse to migration  
Without legal certification.  
No one would value paradise at all

If to get there all it took was a crawl.

So the Almighty, in infinite wisdom,  
With a flick of his finger altered the system.  
Gravity's pull was enhanced just a touch  
So blocks, bricks, and tiles weighed a bit too much.

Down came the tower in a terrible roar,  
And with it the dreams of contractors galore.  
The stock market shattered, bonds were shivered,  
And to criminal court the priests were delivered.

All that remained was the babel of speakers  
Talking in tongues in vain hunt for their visas.  
No trace is left of the great edifice,  
Just tales like this, ignominious.

*Bob Edelson*



## REFLECTIONS AT 100

It's like watching a film running from its earliest beginnings or maybe flipping through old photos, but I see very clearly a life lived and experienced. A child growing up in Brooklyn, NY. A small boy carrying school books tied with a leather strap on his way to public school 167, his knickers held up with rubber bands, always uncomfortable, and usually pulled down as soon as school was let out. I see him walking home past the local bank, with lines of people waiting to take their money out. He knows that the Great Depression has touched every family in his neighborhood, but his young brain doesn't yet see the extent of this catastrophe.

There are those wonderful days going to the 1939 World's Fair in Flushing Meadows, "The World of Tomorrow." The exhibits would astonish him for months after he had seen them. It would be summer soon, and he knew it meant a bungalow at Manhattan Beach. Just maybe the Marx Brother family would be next door again. Everyone loved their funny antics.

His film is now moving on fast forward; it takes two trolley car rides to get to Erasmus Hall High School. This school and its quadrangle take up a full block. At lunch time, he would sometimes rush to Junior's Cafeteria for their great cheese cake. Then there was going with his classmate Marty to swim at the hotel St. George pool, with its art-deco architecture and a waterfall at one end. He remembers the hot steam room and large chocolate sodas on the way home.

His graduation from high school took place at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. It meant receiving a diploma in one hand and his draft notice to serve in the military in

the other. He knows what comes next on the rapidly moving film. He experienced two and half years in the Air Force that then needed to be put behind him. The next step was college. His search and the advice of an uncle led him to Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts, a small liberal arts school. On Friday nights there were always movies at the downtown Worcester Paoli Movie house, followed by a pastrami sandwich on Water Street, and beer at the Wagon Wheels Bar. He can still see and hear his classmates, Walter and Stan, walking down Main Street, singing loudly, "Here's to the men of Clark, seldom sober after dark."

Try to visualize his first romantic attachment. It was glamorous to be in classes with Priscilla Alden Webster, a descendant of one of the first Pilgrim families. Who could top this? At the very same time, while visiting with his aunt at her summer retreat in South Egremont, Massachusetts, he was introduced to Margery. This led to taking her out in a canoe. The outcome of that ride is their seventy-five-plus years of marriage.

His marriage was followed by four years at the College of Podiatric Medicine and establishing a practice in Hicksville, on Long Island. Thanks to his army service, an opportunity opened for a home in Levittown, L.I. With the family growing, including dogs and cats, came the need for a bigger house which led them to Westbury, L.I. As time moved on, so did the children, and soon the big house seemed very lonely. It was time to downsize and move back to New York City. They did and were transplanted to Roosevelt Island, a lovely community in the middle of the East River.

His retirement was a time to travel, to Europe, Japan, the National Parks, and the west coast, including Canada.. He remembers returning to Sudbury, England, for a special ceremony to honor the American 486th Bomb Group. As a member of that group, he was stationed there in World War II. He attended a special ceremony honoring the Group, and an American and British honor guard unveiled a plaque in their memory.

The film of his life is almost finished. He can see that his life at this point is like the sun beginning to set in the west. He recognizes the need to retire to a continuing care community. Medford Leas appears on the screen.

His vivid memories are like a film he can stop and put away. They and old pictures and postcards are what remains of a long and full life. That small boy had dreams that never came true but also adventures he never anticipated. What remains true are the reflections and memories of a life lived with all its joys and sorrows. A life filled with successes and a few failures. And also that small boy's dreams of what might have been.

*George Rubin*

## SPEAK OF THE DEVIL

I was the last to arrive at the February meeting of the Writers Round Table. As usual, I'd had to seek alternative parking because the Hawk HVAC trucks had taken not only my designated spot but the visitor spots for Woolman Ground as well. I still haven't learned to budget time for writing a righteously indignant note to leave on the offending truck's windshield. When I made my belated entrance, one of our writers exclaimed, "Speak of the Devil!" I'm not sure what the context was; indeed, I'd prefer not to know. Instead, I suggested that expression for a March writing topic. Another writer chimed in, threatening a Quaker homily on "There is that of God in everyone," and the game was on.

Alas, I do not have access to Bartlett's Familiar Quotations, the tried-and-true source of my youthful quote searches. As the editor of my high school yearbook, I sought out tag lines for myself and my 53 classmates using that volume. It was standard operating procedure, but I wanted to be original. The faculty advisor rejected "What is the sound of one hand clapping?" and "It's all right to live it up if you can live it down," as unsuitable, and the staff returned to such accepted platitudes as "Petite, charming, and pleasant to be with," and "I never met a man I didn't like." Really? For an eighteen-year-old? Even with only 54 to find, some were repeated more than once. I had wanted my first suggestion above for myself but got "Who hath not served cannot command."

Lacking Bartlett's, I began my Devil Quotations Quest with Google, aware of its weaknesses but hopeful that I'd

find some quirky answers about sources and meanings. Great was my reward. The following points about “Speak of the devil . . .” are the generally agreed upon:

- Superstitious belief: The core idea is that speaking the devil’s name could invoke his presence.
- Full phrase: The original version was “speak of the devil and he will appear.”
- Modern usage: Now, it’s a lighthearted way to say someone you were talking about has just arrived.

Examples from different cultures had amusing substitutes for “the devil.” In Serbian, the phrase translates to “Speak of the wolf, and he is at your door.” French translates it to “Speak of the wolf, and you see its tail.” My two favorites: In Scandinavia it’s “When you speak of the trolls, they’re in the hallway.” In Hungarian it is “Emlegetett szamár” meaning approximately “Here is the mentioned donkey.”

Who is this much alluded to devil? Although the contemporary sayings are delivered jokingly or as cliches, the origins are religious and superstitious. To speak the name is to summon the evil one himself. Gradually, that changed to general bad luck or great difficulty. That contemporary “devil in the details” isn’t wielding a pitchfork to poke you into Michelangelo’s Last Judgement; he’s the conundrum of trying to slow climate change.

A task may put you “between the devil and the deep blue sea.” Not surprisingly, this has a nautical origin. Google reports that sailors faced a dilemma in repairing their ship’s hull when it sprang a leak. It was a dangerous job and might

even drown some of the sailors, but neglecting it would plunge all of them into the sea. The term conveys a sense of being trapped in a predicament without any ideal solution. The Devil of the Bible is not involved in this saying from at least the 1600s. He has been replaced by a seam around a ship's hull near the water.

My parents sometimes remarked of an activity we were about to undertake, "Let the devil take the hindermost." We children did not have to be admonished twice, not because we feared Satan, but because we knew that we should get going immediately or face parental wrath. A specific contemporary meaning applies to bicycle racing in the Miss and Out competition. The devil is a competitor who has ridden in the back of the pack, picking off riders one after another. At the final lap he sprints to finish first, "pipping" the other riders.

Today the superstitions and religious fears are no longer part of many devil references. Dancing or dicing with the devil may be risky, a devil-may-care attitude could be quite attractive, and devil's advocates are strategists clever enough to dissect the popular side of an argument. Deviled ham and deviled eggs are chopped and spiced, and to be devilishly clever is a compliment. Just to be on the safe side however, I leave you all with the Irish blessing: May you be in heaven half an hour before the Devil knows you're dead.

*Kathy Riley*

## THROUGH THE CLOSET DOOR

I read aloud *The Chronicles of Narnia* to my children as we quietly drift into the evening on the Chesapeake Bay. As we float and as we listen, we step through the closet door and off into that magic kingdom where children are introduced to the great mystery.

In the home where I grew up, we had our own entrance to Narnia—a huge, not-to-be-explored closet on the third floor. My brother's room was the first door on the right, and then the hall stretched out towards the front storage room. A closet lay just past my brother's door—entrance strictly forbidden. Now, twenty years after my mother's death, the century-long tenure of our family in that house was over. It was time to open the doors of Narnia.

Had Mother been afraid I would get lost in its depths? I knew there was a strong pole holding the off-season clothes of my mother and sister. I knew there were some strange hats on high shelves, quite out of reach of young children. For some sixty years, I had only ever peeked into the front two feet of closet.

It was a time machine. The outer layer had its own treasures. A beautiful blue velvet dress of my sister's will be cut down to make a party dress for my granddaughter. Quite decent suits from my sister's office days are alas too small for me. A high-top beaver hat now hangs in my son's room in our home in Gloucester County—Quaker classic morphed into modern exotic. Also in the closet were the old Halloween costumes—moth-eaten wigs and tired witches' masks. Dad's old college reunion outfit had his class of 1922

all appearing as ex-cons in brown and beige stripes. Where is this coveted Halloween costume now?

We leave behind my sister's young adulthood, my own early childhood, my father's youthful thirties. Trash bags await the more commonplace. The fabulous materials and the tall black hat are saved back. It is time to go deeper into the closet into sections I had never dreamed of. Beyond the outer layer, our closet yields a generation unknown to anyone living today. It is our own Narnia. There are old Quaker summer clothes—long slender quietly patterned gingham dresses. There is a lacy wedding dress, yellow with age. I think of my great grandmother whose memory still lingers in that closet. One-eighth of her blood is mine. She rests next to her brother in our Quaker graveyard. A flowering cherry tree adds beauty overhead. And yet she can still be found here in this closet, smiling forth the bravery of her wedding day.

Here, in the attic section of our great coal-fired chimney, are bountiful memories and nostalgia for our lost world. I miss it and reconnect as I lovingly remember.

*Edith Roberts*



## NON-HEALING WOUND

The scar that doesn't heal  
The hurt that keeps on hurting  
Cannot be dismissed by ibuprofen  
Or Tums.

The heart can't be healed  
With band aids or duct tape  
Or explained away with  
Self serving solicitations on TV.  
Each day takes you one step away  
From the fresh pain  
The newer hurt, the unforgiving ache.  
Each day steps more into the world of  
The now instead of then.

And the world seeps itself into  
Your conscious mind, blurring the thoughts  
Numbing the tracks, smearing the lines  
Of thought.

Until time slowly slips a skin over the  
raw mark. But it never goes away.  
And it breaks afresh once in a while  
In a tide of onrushing emotions that can't  
Be held back with tissues, but is helped with hugs.  
Until, once again, the steps of each new moment  
Take you out of the past into the day with  
A broken heart and a scar that can't be healed.

*Cindy Page*

## SUMMER AT THE TRACK

**I**t is a perfect August day in Saratoga Springs, New York. The sun is shining on the big oval track where the best thoroughbreds in the world race during this one month. The horses are beautiful; their coats gleam in the sunshine. Horses who have dark coats are bays, those with reddish coats are chestnuts or sorrels, while roans have white hairs coming through a darker base coat. Some come to Saratoga from distant places (even other countries, like Saudi Arabia). But as the advertising says, “Saratoga is the August place to be!”

The jockeys on the horses’ backs are wearing bright silk jackets in the color of the owner or stable of the horse they will ride in the coming race. Ladies in tiered viewing boxes or at tables in the special dining tent dress beautifully too, with large-brimmed hats (like those at Ascot, the elegant old British racetrack in *My Fair Lady*).



Horses for the coming race are saddled and mounted in the paddock (an open area near their stalls) wearing their numbered saddle cloths as they walk down the road to the track. We often go there to look at the horses. Sometimes, when one looks especially ready-to-run or acts up temperamentally, we may change a prior betting decision. Grooms (horse handlers) urge the horses into their assigned post positions in the long, movable, horizontal starting gate for the current race. In moments, the horses surge out of the opened gate to run the length of that race—from  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile to  $1\frac{1}{8}$  miles. A huge outdoor scoreboard next to the racing gives continual information about the race, including each horse's odds of winning (based on bets placed on that horse), how far from the inside each is racing, and which is in the lead, second, third, and fourth at each moment. At the end of a race, the scoreboard tells the betting payouts.

During our yearly family visits there, my sons and I start the mornings with the purchase of several copies of the Daily Racing Form, which is the must-have tabloid newspaper about horse racing in North America. On one of the verandas at our imposing old hotel, we spread them out for reading, calculations, and discussion of the experts' opinions. This newspaper contains all currently racing horses', trainers', and jockeys' statistics, as well as comments on what the participants have been doing lately at other racetracks. For all that day's races, it shows the odds each horse was given to win by the expert track handicappers. What is this thing called "handicapping?" Most people only know it as a term used for disabled people. But handicapping is also what racing-knowledgeable people do to figure out how particular races might play out—which horse will win, place (finish second), or show



(third). This is an important part of the fun for me and my family. The young men are best at figuring out which horses will compete for the lead, which will likely come up from behind, what their performance in recent races says about their chances, which horses' starting post positions are most advantageous, whether the horse's sire (father) and dam (mother) are outstanding, the likely condition of the track (from "good" to "sloppy"), recent minor injuries, changes to a horse's usual jockey or equipment (like more weight to carry, peripheral vision blockers), and who has been on a winning streak recently. I like recent winners, which is called current fitness, because if a horse is "hot," she or he might stay hot. I do not favor horses with fine pedigrees who are being downgraded into races with more common horses. It means their current fitness is not excellent, and I rate them unlikely to win.

My husband Al and I rarely bet more than \$5 on a race, and we don't do the "exotic wagering" that the young fellows do. Not only do they bet on which horse will win, place, or show, but bet on the order of finishing or the winners of two or three races in a row. These bets have fancy names like exacta, quinella, trifecta, and daily double. The guys probably win a little more often than they lose.

We spend most afternoons of our visits at the racetrack. Horse owners and high bettors (not us) have access to special betting windows. Many more windows are distributed throughout the whole stadium—where you wait your turn in line. You also redeem winning betting slips at the windows, but losing slips (torn or whole) make their way to the ground.

We time our trips to include at least one major stakes race, the ones with only horses who fit stringent requirements. The horses in these races are the best-of-the-best, and the prize money (*purse*) for winners is the highest. We were privileged to see The Travers and The Whitney on occasion. When it is time to go home each year (for us, it used to be Texas), we make our hotel reservations for the next year. In the autumn, we get the New York Racing Association's mailing for next summer's race tickets and send off our check. These are some of our most enjoyable vacations. We have togetherness, challenge, and wonderful ambience in the old spa town. How fortunate that it kept up its wonderful old racetrack among the other summer attractions!

*Joyce Linda Sichel*

## “BIG BERTHA”

Some time ago, my wife and I took a vacation trip to Las Vegas. We had never been there before, but we had heard much about it. Of course we knew that it was a mecca for legal gambling, but we did not know it was so pervasive. We had heard of the several casinos where all sorts of gambling experiences were offered, but it was still quite troubling to walk through one of those establishments to see hundreds of people sitting at card tables, around roulette wheels, and especially at slot machines hour after hour. Many of those who were at the slot machines almost seemed as if they were extensions of the machines themselves, inserting coins and pulling the arms, waiting for their results and then doing it again and again whether they won or lost. Meanwhile, surrounding the crowd was a disembodied voice pointing out that “\$50 was just won at machine number 267” and “\$100 was won at machine number 112” and even “\$1000 won at yet another machine!” And, of course, every time somebody won any amount, there were lights flashing and bells ringing to heighten the excitement. It was all quite amazing and enticing—until we looked at the faces of those at the machines and realized that they were as mechanical as the machines they were “attached” to. The industry calls it all “gaming” instead of gambling, but I have played a lot of “games” in my life, and in those casinos there seemed to be none of the fun I had experienced.

We were amazed, therefore, when we arrived to see so many slot machines everywhere. They were in the airports, at movie theaters and clubs, in pharmacies and supermarkets, and even along the streets outside of all kinds

of shops. Unlike New Jersey, Las Vegas made every effort to offer its “gaming” opportunities everywhere to everyone.

We had also heard that the city was well known for being a marriage mecca. Getting a license was quick and easy and chapels were plentiful to seal the deal, even those with “Elvis” and others ready to officiate.

We were not surprised, therefore, to see on the streets of the city couples who had obviously just been married. Their eyes twinkled and opened wide to see the lights and displays. And they hung on each other’s arms as if to let everyone know of the newly-expressed love they had for each other. It was lovely. I especially noticed one such couple walking near us as if all of life was celebrating with them. Her eyes were bright and his face was proud and their whole world was just being with one another.

And then they saw Big Bertha. At a major intersection right next to a park was the biggest slot machine I had ever seen. It was taller than any person around and its pull arm



was as large as a body builder's. With its flashing lights and colors, it was the most amazing attraction around. And it truly attracted this couple. The new bride was especially drawn to it. "Oh, Hon, we have to play it!" she exclaimed. The new groom was not so eager. "It probably costs a fortune, and the odds against you are absurd." The young woman went over and discovered that it required only a few silver dollars which her new husband just happened to have. "Come on; let's play!!" With great reluctance, the young man handed over the needed silver dollars and watched his love drop them in the slot and pull on that huge arm.

And she hit!!! In the middle of that city, bells rang and lights flashed, and money poured out like nowhere else we had seen. And the screams of joy and excitement from the young woman rose above them all. It was awesome.

At that moment, I happened to turn my eyes from the girl to the guy. His head was down, his hands covered his eyes, and his face was in anguish. What had just been created? Did he know this woman any more? Was their relationship forever changed? What had just happened to that young couple?

My wife and I walked on and have never seen that couple again. I still wonder, however, where they are and what has happened to them.

*Edwin Hann*

## CHILD OF IMMIGRANTS

**I**t is not an unfamiliar situation for immigrant children to live partly in their contemporary world and also in the world that their parents lived in before they emigrated. My parents left Poland and came to New York City in 1924. They sailed on one of the Cunard ships, the Aquitania and entered the United States through Ellis Island, as most immigrants did in the early nineteen hundreds. Poland had become independent from Russia, and my father was going to be drafted into the army for an indeterminate number of years.

Living conditions for Jews in Poland were never easy since the area was strongly antisemitic. My family genealogy in Russia-Poland goes back almost 300 years. In Zaremb (Zareby Koscielnie) everyone my parents knew was murdered by the German Nazis or their Polish helpers. The Jews were made to dig a ditch and then were machine-gunned down and buried in it. I only realized years later that emigrating was also a great hardship since they would never again see the family they left behind. They also were left with survivor guilt and massive trauma.

The question they dealt with for the rest of their lives was how could our God of Abraham have allowed all of these Jews to be killed? Where was God? Jewish families all over the world were questioning whether there really was a point of continuing to believe in and praise God. Various Jews made different decisions after all this loss. My family decided to continue their religious practices as they would have in Poland. It was better to continue their known religious practices as a familiar comfort. They could not

imagine anything else that would replace being a religious Jew.

My surviving family moved from the Lower East Side of Manhattan, where most immigrants from that period settled, to the Bronx. I was born the fourth child and second son after this move. Each one of us was five years apart and very precious to my parents. Our daily reality was this neighborhood but also our parents' faith and religious practices.

One day I would witness how my mother observed one of these. Our Bronx shopping for most things was done on Bathgate Avenue. Eight blocks of stores sold anything we would need for any occasion, including our food, clothing, medical and dental care. That day I went with my mother to the live chicken market where she picked out the one she wanted, and the ritual slaughterer, the Shochet, killed it in the ritual way, making it kosher to eat.

When she inspected the newly bought chicken's intestines, at home, they did not look right to her somehow. She thought that the chicken might not have been killed correctly, as required by the ritual method listed in the Talmud (book of religious practice) and therefore the chicken might not be kosher and should not be eaten. Perhaps the shochet had made a mistake in killing this chicken. Would it be kosher to prepare and cook this chicken and serve it to her family?

Although she lived in the Bronx and not in Zaremb, her village in Poland, she knew exactly what she would do. There, she would take the chicken to the village rabbi and have him examine the entrails to determine if this chicken

had been killed as required to be kosher. She decided to do the same in the Bronx. She wrapped up the chicken and went to the rabbi's house. The rabbi agreed with my mother and could see evidence of non-ritual slaughtering. Then my mother and I went back to the chicken market where we returned the unclean chicken and bought a new bird.

Now that the chicken was kosher to eat, she began the traditional process of using the chicken for soup. At home, the chicken was further worked on, cleaned, and usually cut into parts. The pieces were laid out on a slanted board, salted and bled for half an hour. Then they were placed into a pail with cold water. Now it could be made into soup. All meat had to go through this process at home.

Our Bronx neighborhood was strongly influenced by the immigrant community. My father took me to a storefront school where a teacher taught me the beginnings of Hebrew. We spoke Yiddish at home to my parents and among ourselves. When I was a little older, I went to school at P.S. 4, which mirrored our neighborhood. Almost everyone attending was a child of immigrants, mostly from Europe. There was some kind of church or synagogue on almost every block. When I was ten years old, I attended a Jewish day school called a Yeshiva. My parents wanted me and my siblings to live as they always had, even though they knew that our world was changed, and we would have to adapt to a new country. Eventually, we would grow up and move away from the Bronx neighborhood, but we carried our parents' world with us. There is great value and I think much kindness and honesty for us all to practice in traditional Judaism.

*Alvin Migdal*

## MISSION: IMPROPABLE

April 1, 2025

It is a dark and stormy night. John Malaprop lays in his bed quietly seeping. This is wrong! The doctor told him that surgery would solve all his prostrate problems. Yet here he is, far from enjoying sheep. What can he do?

John gets up, again. It is the piddle of the night, his fourth trip to the bathroom, and he's tired of fighting it. Must he wear a sniper? He tries to go back to sheep but outside the storm wages. The howl is deafening as the wind slashes through the tree blanches and the rain comes down in baskets. Nominally, snugly, John would enjoy the weather's violets but everything is crowding onto him, especially the lock of sheep. "That's it," he says, "I'm calling my zoologist in the mourning." This revolution eases his mind, and to spite the noise, he drifts off.

When he wakes, he is optimistic. The storm has passed, and the world is a-guilter. John takes his breakfast and then dials his zoologist. "Good day," the receptionist says, "Dr. Flow's orifice. How can I help you?"

"This is John Malaprop, burp date 01/02/50, sober security number 010-02-0000, Medicare rumba 0A01-AA0-BB10, Medigape ID ABC01100111. I'd like to peep to the doctor."

"Certainly, seer," she replies, "could you repatriate your information, please? I'm having some commuter troubles."

With gritty teeth, John retails his information—several tomes, till she has it all straight.

“Thank you, sire. The doctor’s not attainable right now. Would you like to leave a massage?”

John does, seething, but to his surprise, Dr. Flow gets back to him within the lower. “Hi John,” he says, “what’s the treble?” John tells him, alleviating no part out.

“Doc, I’m just so tired!” he says, complaintively.

“John,” the doctor says, “should you decide to accept it, I may have a solution. Can you come in this afternoon, about four?”

“I’ll do anythink, well almost anythink, as long as it’s not a sniper,” John sighs. “See you latter.”

When John arrives, he is not so cheaper. What did the doctor mean by “decide to accept it?” He’s already had his prostrate removed. What more can be done? The medical building halls feel dark and omnivorous. What’s a little sheep lost, after all? What had he been stinking? Then he remembers his exhausting, steals himself and enters Flow’s office. The doctor welcomes him and describes his solution. John excepts. An hour later he’s home. He makes some calls to get the plan in motion. A week later he’s sheeping like a baby and the problem of frequent urbanization during the day has dissolved too. And all it took was a long hose.

April foul!

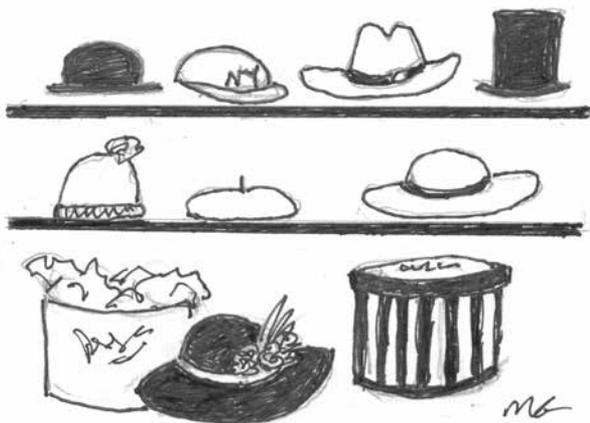
*Bob Edelson*

## I LIKE HATS

The old days weren't always tops.  
But they had millinery shops,  
And many a haberdashery.  
People found hats necessary.

Summers your hat shielded your skin,  
Winter hats kept body heat in.  
Hat-head wasn't dreaded at all.  
Combing hair was enough overhaul.

Businessmen's fedoras beguiled,  
Youths' were baseball or paperboy styled.  
No woman went hatless to church.  
Opaque hat-boxes required a search.



Men doffed hats to acknowledge  
The flag or funeral cortege.  
Women kept theirs on, I recall,  
Hatpins, hairpins were under all.

My cousin slept over with me  
For her special date in N.Y.C..  
Wearing her hat with cherries on it,  
Her image a Cassatt portrait.

Adorned in ribbons, feathers, flowers,  
To suit the day or evening hours.  
Veiled hats looked mysterious,  
or frivolous or serious.

Watching old-time western fanfare,  
Cowboy hats became classic wear .  
Bowlers on Britons showed their place,  
Like picture hats at Ascot race.

Hats are not so common these days,  
Save soldiers' and athletes' displays.  
Some religions cover the head.  
Some jobs protect the head instead .

My simple beret, cloche, and cap  
I find useful all over the map.  
You can recognize me easily,  
See a hat — it's probably me.

*Joyce Linda Sichel*

## POCKETS

When I put on your clothes  
I always find you in the pockets ~  
A small but persistent reminder  
That you were not finished.

Kleenex is a constant.  
Soft, slightly used, wadded, refolded.  
Or pieces of toilet paper ripped from a roll  
As you prepared to leave your comfy green chair to  
wait for hours, stiffly perched in a doctor's office  
or emergency room.

Carefully stacked and folded in your pockets  
These little lifesavers stood ready  
to absorb the random fluids  
exiting your fragile body.

But there are other mementos  
In these pockets of boiled wool jackets  
Jaunty little suits  
Flowing knit shirts covering hips, making you feel  
Ready ~ to roll ... to present ... to receive the needles  
and piercing questions and repetitive, endlessly  
repetitive recitations of your name, age, address,  
insurance and health history.

No matter how many times  
    you darkened their doorways  
These purveyors of healthcare  
    never seemed to know            you.  
But I knew you, and know you still.

I know you by the tissues in your pockets.  
By the consignment shop card you stashed  
while shopping for a gift.

I know you by the unfinished portraits you left,  
    unsigned, but carefully boxed.  
Never good enough . . .  
but today they stand as proud memos to the ways  
    you would define me.

You always wanted to make me whole, to make me  
happy, to let me go free but still to watch me fly,  
To shield me from pain.

Today as I don your brass-buttoned jacket for the first  
time, pulling it from a closet full of things salvaged,  
I find a tissue-thin pharmacist's page of disclaimers.

Death freed you of these exercises ~  
the needles, the needless waiting.

And here, this moment, I celebrate you.

I celebrate the sun.

I celebrate the hours  
    that stretch before me like a cat.

My face turns to heaven as I lift my arms.

My feet root deep within the earth  
    as I sink into my place.

I am long

I am light

I am impossibly alive.

I am ready to embrace this day and call it victory.

As these tears cleanse my cheeks  
I reach into your pocket to make myself whole~  
To write my lists,  
To face my questions,  
To witness the beauty of this brief life.

*Janice Wilson Stridick*

## MAIN STREET TO COUNTRY ROAD: A SALUTE TO NORMAN ROCKWELL

*Norman Rockwell, a famous American painter and illustrator best known for his idealized depictions of everyday life in the United States, may have exerted a positive influence over the memories of my early childhood. Rockwell's paintings evoke a sense of nostalgia and represent a simpler, idealized version of American life in the mid 20th century. Is it possible that my memories of the small, semi-rural town of Bloomsbury, New Jersey, and the rural town of Upper Black Eddy, Pennsylvania, have been influenced by this iconic artist, Norman Rockwell?*

Bloomsbury had tree-lined streets with uneven slate sidewalks, a small elementary school where teachers lived in town, and a Main Street doctor's office offering 24-hour service.

Best of all, there was a corner drugstore with penny candy, where my sister and I were allowed to make our own choices when we were barely tall enough to see into the raised display case.

In 1949, neighbors knew their neighbors in Bloomsbury—Bessie and Ethel, unmarried sisters in wicker rockers on their shaded porch, eager to share their sweet lemonade with us. Or 90-year-old Mrs. Heath, with needlepoint footstools just the right size for little girls to visit and pet her cat, Lizzie. And Uncle Henry, who let us play 'stone school' on his side steps if we were as quiet as mice.

It was in Bloomsbury that I learned the taste of ivory soap when I mocked passing strangers from our front porch, where I first felt shame when forced to return a “borrowed” doll to a playmate, and where I experienced humility the day I shouted to the neighbor kids, “Watch me, I can ride a two-wheeler!”—only to crash immediately into the nearest rhododendron.

The best day in Bloomsbury was the day my very creative father and Jimmy Hanes, the boy who lived down the street, brought big pieces of wood into our multi-purpose playroom. There was a lot of sawing and hammering, along with requests for us to ‘go play somewhere else’ during the mysterious construction.

In no time, a beautiful playhouse appeared—a playhouse big enough for two little girls, ages three and five, to walk right in and begin pretend homemaking of the most loving kind! There were two windows, each with a red-painted flower box flanking the rounded door opening. Inside, the scent of fresh-cut wood lingered. Fold-down shelves served as beds for our teddy bears, and there was enough space for our small table with stools and a cardboard stove. Our preschool imaginations soared! Baby dolls were fed, teddy bears were lovingly put to bed, and tea parties reigned supreme.

The beloved playhouse supported seasons of happy play until one day, it was gone—leaving a glaring empty space with discarded toys carelessly pushed into the corner. As young children, we were unaware of Dad’s business struggles or that he and my mother had set their sights on farming in nearby Upper Black Eddy, Pennsylvania. We ran outside just in time to see our dear playhouse sitting on the

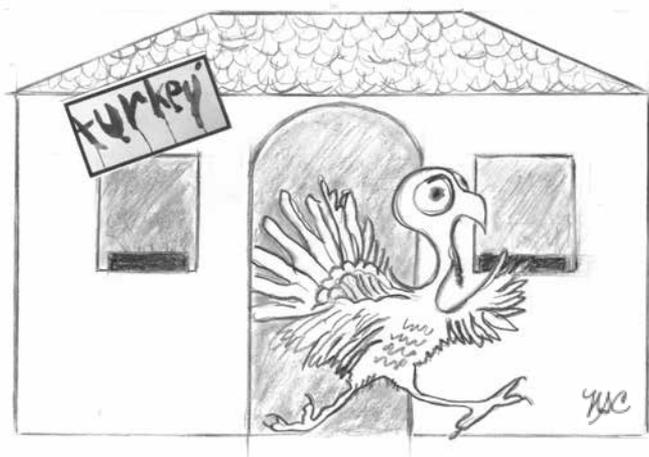
back of a rusty-colored truck, with Dad loading our bikes right behind it—including my new, slightly scratched two-wheeler!

Dad said, “The playhouse is going to be a ‘real’ home now,” as he lifted us into the cab of the rickety truck. “And your bikes are going to stay with another family until things are better,” he added with a grim, worried look as he started the engine.

The noisy gears, brittle seat fabric, and the close proximity to the bridge railing as we crossed the Delaware River filled us with anxious uncertainty. After what seemed like an eternity, Dad announced, “This is it, girls. This is our new home.” He slowed the truck to make a right turn onto a dusty gravel driveway, barely visible between towering evergreens and endless woods.

Waiting for us were two young boys and their father, all dressed in blue coveralls, waving us into the driveway. They were there to help us unload the playhouse and position it on sixteen cement blocks arranged in a clearing. “Your house is now going to be a home for real babies,” Dad said. To our delight, he opened a crate of fluffy, wide-eyed turkey poults. “These little birds will soon be big turkeys, and they thank you girls for giving them a place to live. Your very special playhouse is now the official Turkey House.”

Mom encouraged us to make the turkeys feel welcome as she handed us paints, brushes, and a big wooden board. It was just the distraction we needed to happily relinquish our once-beloved playhouse and start our new life, full of farm and country adventures. Soon, the farm became a bustling



scene of turkeys and chickens, farmhands, and noisy tractors.

Our new friends were the trees and birds in the woods, the frogs burrowing at the river's edge, and the wildflowers in the meadows. We barely noticed the old playhouse tilting drunkenly to one side with the window boxes fading to dull gray.

It wasn't Bloomsbury anymore. No neighbors with sweet tea or needlepoint footstools, but instead, neighbors with cows and barns with haystacks for hide-and-seek. No penny candy at the corner, but instead, meadows to explore, trees to climb, and berries to pick straight from the vine. It was a time to rescue a baby robin found in the grass, to feel the warmth of freshly laid eggs, and to learn how to move quietly and cautiously away from a skunk. As summer drew to a close, we nervously awaited our next new adventure—the first day of school. Standing next to our mailbox at the end of the driveway, we watched as the big yellow bus slowed to a stop and swung open its metal door. Clutching

our new metal lunchboxes and book bags, we took a deep breath and stepped up for our first-ever bus ride to school.

It's true that my memories of Bloomsbury and Upper Black Eddy may be tinged with the warm, nostalgic glow of a Norman Rockwell painting. There's a certain romance and promise to growing up in mid-20th-century America—those days felt almost magical. For that, I offer a sincere thanks to Mr. Rockwell, whose art so beautifully captured the spirit of that time for all to remember and cherish.

*Nancy Cressman*

## WRITING FOR LEAS LIT

We encourage residents of both campuses to submit original, unpublished manuscripts for possible inclusion in *Leas Lit*, Medford Leas' literary journal, which is published in June and December each year. We distribute flyers inviting submissions, with details about how to do so. There are deadlines of March 31st and September 30th for the two issues. Manuscripts received after a deadline will be considered for the next issue.

The Editorial Committee (blind as to authorship) judges which of the submitted pieces will be accepted for publication. Each resident may submit one story and one poem for each issue. Neither book reviews nor scholarly papers will be accepted. All submissions must be in English and not exceed 1600 words.

All stories and poems that have appeared in issues of *Leas Lit* since 2005 are available in the "Literary Journal" section of [mlra.org](http://mlra.org) (public website) by author and titles. This is updated for each new issue. You can use it for research or to find examples of accepted writing.

If you have a story or a poem to tell—true or fictional—or feelings to share, let us hear from you. We will be reaching out in the coming months.





