

BRIEF HISTORY OF *WIND CHIMES* (1981–1989)

Paul Miller

Wind Chimes was the passion project of Hal Roth, a public-school administrator at Chesapeake High School in Pasadena, Maryland. Roth lived on a twenty-six-acre farm located two miles outside Vienna, Maryland, that the family had bought in 1972. In letters he mentions the goal of returning it back to woodlands, and of planting thousands of trees on the property, including loblolly pines, autumn olive, dogwoods, and cypress; adding, “It is a poor flat land, wet most of the year, but I love it dearly.”¹ Aside from a main house he shared with his family, the farm had what he described as a “shack” which he used as an office and from which he did much of the editing of the journal.

Roth had yet to publish his first haiku when he conceived of the new journal, which makes the project all the more astounding.² How long he had been studying the genre, either through journals he subscribed to or books he had read, is unknown. No interview with him was ever conducted. That said, even before the first issue of *Wind Chimes* was printed, Roth was in correspondence with Raymond Roseliep and their ongoing letters provide a window into Roth’s management of the literary journal—and to a lesser degree, his personal life. The letters are available at the Roseliep archive at Loras College and have been invaluable in our research.³

In a letter to interested parties soliciting haiku for the first issue (including many prominent haikuists and editors of the period), Roth noted that one of the objectives of *Wind Chimes* was “to use the journal as an instructional tool for teaching haiku...”⁴ To further that goal, he had asked Roseliep to critically comment on several haiku per issue, noting: “Many students express grief over the shortage of critical analysis ... Your knowledge and experience could have a profound effect upon many students.”⁵ Roseliep sidestepped the request, suggesting instead that Roth ask other haikuists; but he promised to help if he could. It is unknown if Roth used the journal with students at his school, or if he instead meant students of haiku; he most likely included himself as one of the students.

The inaugural issue was mailed in June of 1981. In a letter included with the issue, Roth noted that:

I decided to have the magazine printed in a middle school on our educational complex rather than by a commercial house, thus providing financial support to the school program and educational opportunities to the teachers and students in the graphic arts department.⁶

He added that, despite delays due to press breakdowns and summer break, one dedicated teacher made the issue possible. Unfortunately, delays would be a hallmark of the journal. Roth closed the letter by setting the end of September as the date issue #2 would be available.

Wind Chimes #1 was fifty-two pages long with tan card covers and saddle-stapled. The first page of the new journal contained two haiku on the topic of wind chimes. The front page would be reserved for such topical poems until issue #12. The premier issue included:

Summer stillness
the play of light and shadow
on the windchimes

Peggy Lyles

wind in the chimes
chimes in
the bird

Bob Boldman

The issue contained haiku from thirty-one poets, including such significant English-language haikuists as Bob Boldman, L.A. Davidson, Sister Mary Thomas Eulberg, Lorraine Ellis Harr, Evelyn Tooley Hunt, Elizabeth Searle Lamb, David LeCount, Peggy Lyles, Frank K Robinson, Raymond Roseliep, and Alexis Rotella, to name a few. With a few exceptions, each poet had a page, sometimes two, to showcase their work, with room for up to five poems per page. The format was a good way for readers to be exposed to more than just a single poem from a poet. Due to today's number of haiku enthusiasts, this format is no longer possible; although some current journals, like *Dim Sum*, allocate several pages to a particular visiting poet.

The issue contained "The Water Wheel," a thirty-six verse renku by Evelyn Tooley Hunt, Annette Burr Stowman, and Patricia Allen Bott.

Linked forms were something readers could expect to see in many issues of the journal. The issue also contained a short essay, “Juxtaposition: The Arrangement of Lines,” by Bob Boldman, in which he used the term to mean the poem’s arrangement on the page. He illustrated a number of ways poems could be presented, using several of his own as examples.

In what would become an important part of the journal, and perhaps what set it off from other journals of the time, was its inclusion of pages that contained “Comment” on particular haiku from well-known haikuists. These were the critical commentaries that Roth had asked of Roseliep, and for a beginning poet the responses were educational; Roth himself supplied the poems. Included below is the first portion of a commentary by Lorraine Ellis Harr:

old eyes squinting
at the desert sun;
still, dreams of gold

This is too much imaginative (sic) for haiku. Haiku is a moment of insight. It isn’t a guess as to what is going on in someone else’s mind ... It should reveal, not by statement, but by suggestion.

old prospector
squinting at the desert sun ...
gold fever

Now, the fever can be the search for gold, or the heat of the sun, or both. Always choose words for haiku that carry as much meaning as possible.

The issue’s final page contained a list of haiku magazines and two books received. Later issues would expand the books received section to include brief reviews.

Because the issue was manually typed, and because its production occurred before computerized spell check, *Wind Chimes* #1 not surprisingly contained several typos—pointed out to Roth by some readers. In a letter to Roseliep, Roth joked, “I own three typewriters and they all spell poorly.”⁷

Even before the second issue was typeset, Roth was ambitiously planning to publish small chapbooks under the *Wind Chimes* imprint and inquired of his friends for possible candidates. He would eventually publish forty books by twenty authors.

Despite his intention of a September 1981 launch for the second issue, due to a printer's delay of six weeks, it wasn't mailed until the end of October. The second issue contained the work of over sixty poets. New poets included Randy Brooks, Betty Drevniok, Ty Hadman, George Swede, and Marlene Wills, among others. Again, it included the themed first page, this time with four wind chime poems by Elizabeth Searle Lamb, and again most poets had a page or two for their work. Due to increased submissions, Roth announced in his editor's comment that he would restrict each poet to one page of published material in future issues, with the exception of a center spread designated for a single featured poet.

One of the new poets was anne mckay. Roth would later publish sixteen chapbooks (of his imprint's forty) containing her poetry. Clearly, he was a fan.

and i will gather	torn lace and tincan
seventeen syllables ...	geraniums on sills
seventeen white petals	of secondstory rooms ...

The issue also contained "A Conversation with Elizabeth Searle Lamb," a four-page interview by Roth on Lamb's entry into haiku, her definitions, and her writing habits. To round out the Lamb-centric issue, its pages also included her essay, "On Reading Haiku." Another brief essay, by past *Modern Haiku* Guest Editor, Frank K. Robinson, titled, "The Importance of a Single Word," looked closely at the following haiku and made a case for deleting the word "only." An excerpt:

tonight
in this empty house
only a cricket

"only" merely repeats the preceding "empty" and weakens the accentual punch of the key line by needlessly stretching out the syllable count.... At

the same time, and even more detrimentally, the extra word has the undesirable effect of diminishing the cricket's importance to the speaker.

As in the previous issue, Roth continued his "Comment" section. A comment by Betty Drevniok on one of six haiku:

even in the rain
 this golden dawn —
 daffodils

Here the author is perhaps explaining too much in using the metaphor of the daffodils being the "golden dawn". A suggestion:

rain ...
 but daffodils
 brighten the dawn

Despite a 1981 copyright date, *Wind Chimes* #3 was mailed in late January of 1982. Included was a note from Roth, explaining that the issue was eleven weeks in the print shop, and thus going forward he suggested poets not wait for the upcoming issue to submit for the following one. Instead, he established February 1, May 1, August 1, and November 1, as deadlines.

The third issue contained the work of over ninety haikuists, and while some poets continued to have full pages, many, due to spatial limitations, ended up sharing. As promised in the previous issue, the centerpiece was four blue-colored pages containing three sequences from the issue's featured poet, Raymond Roseliep. The first:

DRAGONFLY

i
 on the heels of
 the rainbow
 flying jewels

ii

at her needlepoint
 Gram missing the devil's
 darning needle

iii

sleep comes slowly
 to my child who rides
 fire engine wings

Alexis Rotella provided an essay, "The Validity of Using Literary Devices in Haiku," in which she argued that "conservative editors in North America" ignored the use of personification, metaphor, and imagination in the work of Japanese haiku poets, both classic and modern. As an example of metaphor and personification, she included two from Sōkan:

Putting a handle
 on the moon, —
 What a fine fan!

Putting his hands together
 The frog
 Utters his ode.

The issue again included a "Comment" section that critiqued the following haiku:

hanging
 in the winter orchard
 the moon alone

Reponses were published from L.A. Davidson, Scott Montgomery, and Alexis Rotella. The section continued to be a valuable addition to the journal, giving a variety of informed, yet divergent perspectives on the same poem. Davison thought the poem "a perfect haiku," and noted that "although there is no one present, not even the observer, the human element is paramount." Montgomery was less kind, and after making a plea for more robust critiques, concluded of the poem: "I can find little fresh or immediately potent. Certainly, the final word is not only superfluous,

but betrays a lack of confidence in the reader.” Rotella, in a thorough analysis, agreed with Davidson that it was a “perfect” haiku, and showed through example why the word “alone” worked as it did, adding:

Subjecting this haiku to still further analysis I juxtaposed the words to read: hanging / in the winter orchard alone / the moon. Positioning the word “alone” at the end of the second line cluttered the line and took away a fraction of the “aloneness” of the haiku, although in the third line the moon was indeed left hanging in two syllables. This poem, I concluded, needed the extra two syllables of “alone” in its third line to complement the assonance of “hanging” in the first line.

The issue concluded with a brief excerpt from a larger piece by Jerry Ball, titled “Meeting Edith Shiffert.”

Wind Chimes #4 was in the mail by late April, 1982. Prior to its arrival, in referencing the long winter, Roth remarked to Roseliep, “Spring is like my printer this year.”⁸ The issue was sixty-eight pages long and again included the work of over ninety poets. It contained the four-page essay, “What About Form,” by Elizabeth Searle Lamb. In it, she quoted William J. Higginson, regarding the point of form:

[It] should not be a frame within which the poet works on each of his poems; rather it should be the particular shape which an individual poem takes as the poet constructs it.

Lamb then advocated for a broader understanding of the possibilities of form. The issue also contained “A Few Questions on Zen for Bob Boldman,” ostensibly written by Roth, that while fun, ultimately didn’t reveal much information on the topic.

The issue’s center spread featured four pages of haiku by Sister Mary Thomas Eulberg, a student of Roseliep. Two of the twenty haiku:

at the end
of the gladiola rainbow
a child’s muddy shoe

autumn window:
the potato I peel
with many eyes

Similar to previous issues, Roth had invited readers to critique a particular haiku. The haiku:

in the fog
clatter of a stick
against the picket fence

Bruce Kennedy thought the poem had potential and suggested revising it as the one-liner “a stick clatters on a picket fence fog,” adding that “such phrases as ‘in the,’ ‘by the,’ ‘under the,’ etc, tend to be weak and lack directness.” Interestingly, Alexis Rotella also suggested a one-liner, albeit in a different order: “fog clatter of a stick against the picket fence.”

Because Roth had always advocated an open-door policy regarding haiku theory, issue #4 included a brief essay by David Andrews, in which, referencing Alexis Rotella’s defense of poetic devices in her essay “The Validity of Using Literary Devices in Haiku,” he further examined the topic and advocated for:

[The] various styles and schools of haiku and haiku-like poems [to] coexist amicably, and that each person can decide which poems can reasonably be called “haiku” and which cannot.... As haikuists, let’s try to be both flexible and friendly, while still adhering to our own beliefs and artistic preferences.

However, the issue also contained a letter from Anna Vakar, Canadian haiku theorist, in which she responded to several items in the previous issues, including Rotella’s essay on literary devices. She took particular exception to the simile.

While I realize that metaphor and personification can sometimes make it in a haiku (but oh, so rarely) and have it still actually be a haiku, I see no possibility of simile ever being admissible; and this is for the simple reason that a simile as good as makes a flat statement that something is actually something else. Simile just has no subtlety, no suggestiveness, no respect for the reader’s capacity to experience life for him or herself.

More significantly, Vakar's letter also took strong exception to a haiku that Roth had quoted in a brief review of Raymond Roseliep's 1980 collection, *Listen to Light*:

campfire extinguished
the woman washing dishes
in a pan of stars

Vakar argued:

[This] is so far from being a haiku that to quote it and to praise it does a great disservice to the genre. It is an intellectually invented piece of specious bull: the campfire has clearly been extinguished so that the stars could shine in the 'haiku' (proper juxtaposition and all that), not so that anyone could see anything to wash dishes by: and the stars clearly have been put into the dishpan by someone who's never peered into a pan of soapy water with dirty dishes in it, no matter how clear and starry the night sky. Clever as Father Roseliep is, he is being self-indulgently romantic to the point of self-deluding, a quality which haiku, if respected for what it originally was meant to be and to do, could help to dispel.

Issue #5 was mailed in early July. It contained a dual centerpiece, with four light green pages each for Frank K Robinson and Foster Jewell. Two favorites:

taking her hand
aware of the bones
in mine

Frank K Robinson

The drained pond —
and listening...
all the way home.

Foster Jewell

The issue contained the work of over sixty poets, including a linked verse by the interesting duo of Tao-li and Evelyn Tooley Hunt. Interesting, because it had been revealed in 1974 that both were the same person. Whether Roth was aware of this fact or not is unknown; both authors were listed in the index.

Also included was part one of an essay by Alexis Rotella, “Blyth: A Man in Search of his Androgyny.” In it, she examined R.H. Blyth’s gender biases and contradictions, and suggested that Blyth was “struggling with his own feminine nature, his own unrecognized androgyny.”

In the place of the usual “Comment” section on a particular haiku that Roth chose to be discussed, issue #5 contained Roseliep’s pointed response to Anna Vakar’s criticism of his “campfire extinguished” haiku. After beginning with “It is obvious that her knowledge of outdoor domesticity is deficient,” he took the reader through his Boy Scout experience with washing dishes. Roth himself, in what he probably hoped would be the last word on the subject, included a brief editor’s note, in which he described taking a pan of dirty dishwater outside to see if the stars could actually be seen in it. He reported that they could, concluding “I marveled at the shimmering images between the islands of suds, images in turn of Arcturus, Vega, Capella, Rigel, Sirius, Canopus...”

In a personal letter to Roth during this period, Roseliep took note of a haiku in issue #5 by Michael Dudley, writing that it was “maybe the most beautiful poem in your whole issue.”⁹

a pebble in my shoe;
six of us
bear the casket uphill

Wind Chimes #6 was mailed at the end of October 1982. It included part two of Alexis Rotella’s essay on Blyth as well as a self-interview by Marlene Wills. In it, Wills defended her unorthodox approach to haiku in thought-provoking ways. Interviewing herself, she asked:

*What I’m trying to get at is that some [haiku] seem to be “ideas,” concepts.
For instance,*

taliswoman

It’s even a made-up word.

My moment of awareness was that *talisman* is a concept, a made-up word. Mankind is a made-up word. If you understand that “man” is *not* a generic term, but a political idea (that was an overwhelming moment keenly perceived), then the feminization of a word can be a natural response. Or in my case, “talismwoman” was a hit-on-the-head-with-a-stick. A leap...

Wills also provided a very open definition of haiku in which she suggested that, regardless of community consensus, the individual poet decided if a poem was a haiku or not (“*And your definition of haiku?* How ‘bout, life?”). She added:

That’s how I view issue-oriented haiku—its time has come. It’s unrealistic for haiku not to deal with our polluted environment, society’s violence upon itself, denigration of women, the threat of nuclear war, and so on. If creatures from outer space were to access our culture by the content of Western haiku, they would think we lived in a utopia.

As an example of an issue-oriented haiku, she provided:

clitoris of the four year old removed

Issue #6 also included a biographical interview with Geraldine Little, then-president of the Haiku Society of America, by Alexis Rotella. Rotella was also the featured poet; however, the paper used for the four-page center spread wasn’t colored as in previous issues.

The “Forum” section (in place of “Comment”) was dominated by commentary on the Vakar-Roseliep kerfuffle. Truth Mary Fowler grieved that Vakar “never saw stars in a pan of dishwater while camping and that she finds good clean bacon drippings so repulsive,” while W Elliott Greig generally agreed with Vakar concerning the use of similes.

While issue #6 had been at the printer, Roth had confided to Roseliep that “There have been mixed emotions about this whole debate, and especially about the ending of it in this way.”¹⁰ Roseliep replied:

I really don’t feel that my letter has diminished me even a little. AV wrote a strong letter and only a simpleton would answer it in a cowering, weakling

way. My whole background in writing, poetry and prose, has rested on fearlessness as well as belief in myself and my gifts. I am not about to do an about-face.¹¹

And while he did add, “Yes, it’s good now to close the issue,” he added somewhat cattily:

I wonder if the woman feels that she needs attention. Well, if she does, she’s getting it, and will be getting more. I have no intention, however, to give her any further answer to the WC “affair,” which she would probably like...

However, issue #6 would not see the last of Vakar-gate.

Issue #7 was mailed mid-March of 1983; it had been with the printer since early November. Two issues previously, in *Wind Chimes* #5, Roth had announced that issue #7 was to be devoted entirely to one-line haiku. This wouldn’t be a novel form for the journal. The form had been utilized as early as issue #1 by several poets, and later issues contained sequences by single and multiple authors. To ensure a good variety for the upcoming issue, Roth had reached out to a number of poets, soliciting poems. In a letter to Roseliep, he admitted he had trouble with some of the work he had received:

I just received the enclosed from LeRoy Gorman. I will be very honest with you, I have trouble with these—I really don’t understand them, and the struggle that ensues when I attempt to figure them out spoils any chance of enjoyment for me. But I do not wish to have my dull wit spoil it for others—I want to show a bit of all that is being done in the name of haiku.¹²

The poems he referred to were labelled “language-centered haiku (in one-line form)” by Gorman. Unfortunately, no record of the poems themselves exists, although Gorman believes they were poems that ended up in his collection *heavyn*.¹³ Two examples:

onde omb ellelle

no on b one s and d une

Ultimately, Roth didn't include any of Gorman's work in the issue, which is interesting considering some of the poems that he did include (see Boldman, below). However, Roth may have been influenced by Roseliep, who said in his reply letter: "These ARE far-out." After noting that he understood and admired a couple of the poems, he noted that "They are really too-too experimental ... But I admire his bravery!"¹⁴ Some one-liners from *Wind Chimes* #7:

rain in gloves thunder

Michael Dudley

Humid heat the wash agitates the same as always

Barbara McCoy

sundown: old Tom corners a field mouse

Tombo

the sun is touched by bones of fish on a string

Guy R Beining

&&&&&&&&&&&&&&& tickets!tickets!

Bob Boldman

dragonflytheglassmonorail

Zolo

The centerpiece of the issue was a seven-page group of sequences, each made up of short one-liners, called "distracted sequences," by Marlene Mountain (previously Marlene Wills). In them, she explored unemployment through a feminist lens. One sequence:

at forty-two prospect of minimum wage if any
 first unemployment check the heat
 mail carrier a little more of my life showing
 wing flutter pasted to the blacktop
 up late unable unwilling to read nature poems
 unoneness of reality

The issue also included brief essays on the one-line haiku. Michael Dudley, in “Horizon Haiku,” noted that the reader “establishes his own breath pace and associative word groupings.” Scott L Montgomery, in “The Handmade Poem,” explored the pros and cons of breaking the one-liner with spaces and punctuation. While Alexis Rotella, in “One-Liners: Streams of Thought,” explored their “clipped” nature.

An additional, more-letter-than-essay, appeared in the back of the journal. It was by Truth Mary Fowler. She took exception to the “run together” nature of one-line haiku, and in a nod perhaps to Paul O. Williams’ facetious “Bird Track Haiku” essay,¹⁵ suggested a new form she called “blobs” in which the one-liner was sped-up even further to create enjambed poems, such as:

Orionrisingbreathingblowseastward

She added, “Isn’t that great? Let’s devote the next issue to blobs, including articles and comments about this exciting new technique. ‘It’s new, so it’s bound to be good.’”

Issue #7 also contained the last of the debate initiated by Anna Vakkar. A letter by Steve Dalachinsky sided with Roseliep, and yet wondered what the fuss was all about, asking if Issa had really seen his snail climbing Mt. Fuji. Geraldine C. Little also took Roseliep’s side, writing rather condescendingly, “One feels sorry for the Anna Vakars of the world whose vision doesn’t permit them to enter into the larger concepts here so succinctly expressed.”

Vakar was allowed to respond, and, according to Roth, she sent him multiple drafts by special delivery before finally settling on her response. Taking up a page and a half in the issue, her response to her critics said in part:

[Some haiku poets], using the following recipe, happily conjure whatever reality seems useful or pleasant at the moment: first, take a word or two, mix with fantasy, add a figure of speech, a dash of poetic essence, and presto ... a “creation.” And they call it haiku.

As can be deduced by anyone who takes the time to think about it and to question certain metaphores (sic), figurative language is a major culprit in encouraging a kind of hubris. If the authors of such haiku are aware of what they are doing, that doesn't necessarily make their product what I would call a haiku, it makes their efforts a mere use of words to manipulate people and the natural universe to their own ends.

In response to Roth's recreation of the poetic scene, she noted its impossibility:

[The] six stars you say you saw reflected between islands of suds in your dishpan are not only too far apart to be seen as you describe, but they are the first six in a standard list of the giant stars in an encyclopedia, and one of them, Canopus, is in the Southern Hemisphere and can never be seen as far north as Maryland. So you must have been pulling everyone's leg. Or else it was a gesture of support for RR.

Roth concluded the affair by admitting that he had but superficial knowledge of individual stars, and that he had pulled the stars' names (“Arcturus, Vega, Capella, Rigel, Sirius, Canopus...”) from a book. But he maintained that “stars I did see in a dishpan that night...” Bringing the whole matter to conclusion, he finished by noting that he had received an additional twelve letters on the matter, and that:

[Ten] of them are in strong disagreement with your comment, several being critical of me for publishing it. One correspondent feels that while

your comments are “too blunt” and your remarks about simile “not quite correct,” there is some merit to your analysis of the haiku. The final letter contains the regret that the exchange has diminished us all a little. And so I shall bring to a close the now year-long debate ...

Astute subscribers would note, with one to-be exception, the cessation of the “Forum” or “Comment” sections after issue #7. The incident had taken some of the steam out of Roth—and the journal. It was an unfortunate result, since the sections were a logical part of a journal that was promoted as an instructional tool to teach haiku. Indeed, what set the journal apart from others of the period was this conversation between poets.

Wind Chimes #8 was mailed in early June. Its seventy-two pages are in places a stark departure from previous issues. Alongside the normative three-line haiku are a variety of one-liners, one-line sequences, concrete poems, and poems with curious lineation. It is tempting to point a finger at the experimentation in issue #7 as its impetus, but Roth had closed issue #8 in January, two months before #7 was mailed.

The first page of the issue, normally reserved for wind chime themed poems, contained the following poem by Roseliep:

chimes
no
wind

In a later letter to Roseliep, Roth wrote:

You might be interested to know that I have had at least four submissions of this haiku since the mailing of #8:

wind
no
chimes

Only one captioned it “after Raymond Roseliep...” I have rejected them all without comment.¹⁶

Some of the irregularly lineated poems were by Alexis Rotella, including one that added to the word “wheel” over thirty additional “e”s spiraling about its other letters. She also composed a four-word poem influenced by Marlene Mountain’s “taliswoman” in issue #6:

seamen seawomen
 amen awomen

The issue also contained a few interesting visual experiments by Finley M Taylor. In one of the more easily explained poems, the text “w rd” was set above a horizontal line; below it was the missing “o” and further down the word “play,” as if the two words were tennis players and the “o” the ball.

Bob Boldman was well represented, including short sequences by himself and Diane Zubrick, titled “Hai-Poems,” which served as the centerpiece. Boldman’s sequence “huang po:”

in the chant
 a hint
 of rain

in the sutras
 leafing

huang po
 water cracking
 his smile

light
 spilling
 from water

At the bottom of a short essay by Boldman on how he came to haiku, Roth noted that he would like to exchange photographs with the

journal's readers; however, this project was ultimately not as successful as he would have liked. The issue also contained two essays by Ruth Yarrow and Sister Mary Thomas Eulberg on how they each kept track of their haiku.

Wind Chimes #9 was mailed mid-July, 1983, a mere month after issue #8, which illustrates the continued unreliability of his printer. In a letter to Roseliep, Roth expressed some concerns about its quality, and the quality of the follow-up issue.

#9 will be in the mail in a week or two—not as good as #8, I believe. And I am concerned about #10; it is not shaping up well at all. For the first time in two years, I am beginning to get a few negative letters from people who feel I should publish more of their work, or who are annoyed because I rejected something specific which they sent.¹⁷

Yet the issue contained the work of ninety poets, and while there was less structural variety in its poetry than in its predecessor, it included just as many poems. A few favorites:

I put a dollar
in the street violinist's hat —
returning red wings

George Swede

the dog
barks at the darkness
then looks back at me

Cor van den Heuvel

In addition to original work, the issue included translations of Japanese poet Ozaki Hosai by Hiroaki Sato, which would later appear as part of his 1993 book, *Right Under the Big Sky, I Don't Wear a Hat*.¹⁸

Withered fields: a path I remember seeing

Getting out of the warm foot warmer, we part

Aside from short book reviews, the only prose in the issue were three letters to the editor at the back, under what would be the last "Forum." Stephen Gould noted, despite his initial reservations, that the one-line form

“has poetic capabilities that I have not seen in any other poetry...” He concluded: “Haiku is a live, growing art and should be so treated in our practice and appreciation, both.” The longest letter, by Steve Dalachinsky, took some issue with the overly serious analysis of the one-line form. Two excerpts: one each, relating to Scott L Montgomery’s “The Handmade Poem” and Alexis Rotella’s “One-Liners: Streams of Thought,” both from issue #7.

But Scott, what’s this stuff about “our eyes, being laterally arranged,” therefore making us “more perceptually capable when dealing with horizontals?” Is this a mistake? Does “Handmade Poems” deal exclusively with western perceptions? Our eyes are as you describe them, one on either side of the nose. It is also true that in our language we deal most of the time in horizontals, but let’s not forget about our Japanese brothers. Except for rare instances, i.e. gift scrolls, the Japanese, who invented haiku ... use the vertical form and the one-line form almost exclusively...

In A.K. Rotella’s piece, “One-Liners: Streams of Thought,” she states that “the hearse pulling away is linear in motion, not vertical.” I’m sure this was just a simple mistake. The dictionary states that linear “pertains to line or lines,” and lines can go vertically, horizontally, or any number of ways.

Wind Chimes #10 was mailed December, 1983. Reflecting upon its delay, Roth noted to Roseliep in a December 7th letter: “It bothers me when it is late, and I do get some mail from those who are anxious to be published, but my printer friend will maintain his own pace, or no pace if I were to get pushy.”¹⁹

Readers will recall Roth’s earlier reservations about the issue, and while it wasn’t as strong as previous ones, it contained some excellent work. A sampling:

on the darkened wall
of my dead brother’s bedroom:
pencil marks how tall

Nick Virgilio

After rain
the ants return
to the dead beetle

Herb Barrett

The issue also included a clever sequence by Jerry Kilbride on Paris' Cimetiere du Pere-Lachaise, where many notable literary figures are buried. Two from the piece:

balzac	above delacroix
among the moss-covered tombs	a jet draws a white line
of the bourgeoisie	across the blue sky

The single prose piece, excluding book reviews, was a tribute to Imma von Bodmershof, a German haikuist who had passed away the year before. Translations by Claire Pratt.

<i>Diese Frühlingsnacht —</i>	On this night in spring —
<i>selbst der Helm des Wachmanns trägt</i>	even the watchman's helmet
<i>eine Mütze Mond.</i>	wears its own moon cap.

Roth wouldn't receive a response to his December 7th letter, as Roseliep had passed away the day before. Issue #11, mailed sometime in 1984, made passing mention of Roseliep's death, which implies it was nearly completed when Roseliep died; ironically, the back cover included a memorial for another deceased poet: J. David Andrews. Roth noted at the bottom of a page of Roseliep's poems that he had accepted a dozen haiku from Roseliep for the issue, but that due to Roseliep's death, he was going to hold six poems for publication in future issues. Two would be published in #13, one in #14, and the remaining four in #15—all on the first page of the respective journals.

The sixty-four page issue included the work of eighty poets, including the first of what would be several translations by Ty Hadman of Spanish haikuists, in this case one haiku each from Jose Juan Tablada, Antonio Machado, and Jorge Carrera Andrade. Geraldine C. Little offered a biographical interview with Hiroaki Sato that lightly touched on the subject of Japanese vs. English-language haiku yet seemed to deflate upon his admission that he "wasn't much of a reader of modern haiku in English or Japanese."

Of interest was Jerry Kilbride's four-page review of Rod Willmot's Erotic Haiku anthology. Kilbride noted:

[Willmot] sees this anthology as a sign—a celebration—of haiku’s coming of age. His aim seems to be, as he complements us on our maturity, to help in making the break from our former restrictions.

As might have been expected, *Wind Chimes* #12 was a memorial issue for Roseliep. The majority of the issue contained prose memorials and poetic tributes. However, it is an odd issue, and in hindsight one isn’t sure what to make of it. Clearly Roth wanted to honor a man who he viewed as a mentor, yet a fair amount of space in the issue was taken up by Roseliep’s funeral homily, in addition to memorial essays by several priests who knew him. None of these pieces had anything to do with poetry. Haiku poets were represented as well, and the issue included remembrances by Sister Mary Thomas Eulberg, Edward J Rielly, and Bob Spiess. Two long reviews of Roseliep’s final book, *Rabbit in the Moon*, were given space; one by LeRoy Gorman as well as one by Donna Bauerly that had appeared in the *Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal*. The first review had been written just prior to Roseliep’s death and Roth had sent a copy to his friend in his final letter. From the memorial poems:

Sobi-Shi’s candle
lighting
the moon
Bob Boldman

be
our light
we listen
Sister Mary Thomas Eulberg

the hell with male religion(s) except your letters
Marlene Mountain

The issue also included some strong haiku unrelated to Roseliep, including one powerful poem by Charles D. Nethaway Jr on the death of his son.

how many times
did i tell him to be quiet —
child in coffin

While *Wind Chimes* would continue for another sixteen issues, much of the vitality of the journal seemed to have dissipated upon Roseliep's death. Later issues had fewer prose pieces (in many issues none at all) and reader responses to poems all but disappeared. As was noted earlier, Roth at times was frustrated with the quality of submissions he received. Starting with issue #18, no year of publication was listed on the cover and issues #18, #19, and #20 indicated on their mastheads that "Wind Chimes is published when sufficient material has been received to go to press." It must have been disheartening to his readers. With issue #21, that caveat disappeared; however, the size of the journal was reduced to forty pages. It is likely that that was the compromise Roth set for the journal: a smaller size to offset his perceived lack of quality submissions. All this isn't to say that there weren't interesting reads in each later issue and it is tempting to continue walking through the full set. Indeed, such a journey would be beneficial. However, in the interest of space, a few of the highlights below.

In issue #14, Geraldine C. Little wrote a haiku sequence on the Japanese poet Ishigaki Rin, the famed "bank clerk poet," imagining moments in her life. In the same issue, Carol Wainright discussed the then state of book reviews, noting that: "They seem to assume that such a thing as The Way exists in haiku and to approach the various collections of haiku as one might grade slabs of meat..." She would take on the role of book reviewer in issues #19 and #20. Issue #15 included the journal's first non-haiku poem, a twenty-seven-line poem in three stanzas by Christopher Dungey. Other more Western forms would appear sporadically over the rest of the journal's run. *Wind Chimes* #16 included two sequences set on opposing pages: one detailing an abortion, by Lorraine Ellis Harr; the other on the birth of a son, by David Elliott. One wonders what Roseliep would have thought of the pairing. #19 contained a powerful sequence by Adele Kenny; it imagined the final moments of a lay worker and three nuns who had been gunned down in El Salvador. Issue #24 contained the first thirty-six-link renku assembled by Roth from what he termed "random submissions." Each of the last five issues would contain at least one such composition. Vincent Tripi made a splash in issue #25 with two pages of poems, purportedly from an upcoming book, *White Mountains*

Last... Still, on the Trail... of Thoreau. No book of his was ever published with that title. Tripi would be well-represented in all the remaining issues. And it goes without saying that during the second half of the journal's run, poems of all manner were published by the usual suspects (Boldman, Mountain, Rotella, etc.), as well as new-to-it poets such as Janice Bostok, Francine Porad, Jane Reichhold, Vince Tripi, etc., many of whom would go on to larger recognition in haiku.

The final issue of *Wind Chimes*, issue #28, was presumably mailed in May 1989.²⁰ It contained a charged essay by Marlene Mountain, titled, "they shoot horses don't they." In it, she responded to two essays in the Haiku Society of America's journal *Frogpond* by Rod Willmot and Anita Virgil respectively. Mountain noted that "another haiku/senryu debate is long overdue."

But since art in a vacuum is not nearly as interesting as art with dialogue, let's present our ideas—with passion, with consideration—and hope that in some way we can communicate.

Perhaps, more importantly, she opened the door to discussion of what an American haiku could be.

Is there a North American spirit? ... Do we too have something unique to contribute to this small grouping of words?

Unfortunately, despite its early history as a place for debate and learning, *Wind Chimes* would not be the home for that discussion.

The last page of the issue contained a poem dedicated "To Sandy." This is most likely Roth's second wife, Sandra. He had gotten divorced from his first wife during the last few years of the journal. This change in domestic circumstance undoubtedly also hastened *Wind Chimes'* demise.

After his tenure at *Wind Chimes*, Roth continued running his small press until 1999, mainly producing chapbooks by Anne McKay.²¹ His own output fell as well. Of the 158 haiku he is known to have written, a little over thirty were written during this period—twenty of which comprise his chapbook, *Her Daughter's Eyes* (1990). Eventually, around the turn of the century, he stepped back from the haiku community altogether.²²

NOTES

¹ Rot 1-14 (Loras College cataloging of Roseliep-Roth letters)

² Roth's first published haiku appeared in *Modern Haiku* 12.2 (1981): distant crow: / mist carries / over the marsh, followed by two in *Brussels Sprout* 2.2 (1981): in fading light / the swirl of a trout / in the shallows; on the meadow / her worn jeans trimmed / with Queen Anne's lace.

³ I have also used the letters between Roth and Frank K Robinson.

⁴ Rot 1-59

⁵ Rot 1-59

⁶ Rot 1-57

⁷ Rot 1-41

⁸ Rot 1-45

⁹ Rot 1-88

¹⁰ Rot 1-28

¹¹ Rot 1-87

¹² Rot 1-25

¹³ Gorman, LeRoy. *heavyn*. Port Charlotte, Fl.: Runaway Spoon Press, 1992.

¹⁴ Rot 1-86

¹⁵ Williams, Paul O. "An Apology for Bird Track Haiku." *Modern Haiku* VII.3. Madison, Wis., 1981

¹⁶ Rot 1-4

¹⁷ Rot 1-8

¹⁸ Ozaki, Hosai. Trans. Hiroaki Sato. *Right Under the Big Sky, I Don't Wear a Hat*. Berkeley, California: Stone Bridge Press, 1993.

¹⁹ Rot 1-3

²⁰ Per Francine Banwarth: when Roth accepted her work for #28, he said it would be published in May 1989. She submitted to #29 in May (assuming receiving #28 was the trigger). This ties with our estimate from dated linked poems published in issue #27.

²¹ Eleven of the press' last twelve titles contain her work, either in collaboration or solely.

²² Roth started writing local histories of his Maryland region in the mid 90s and later enjoyed an interest in photography.