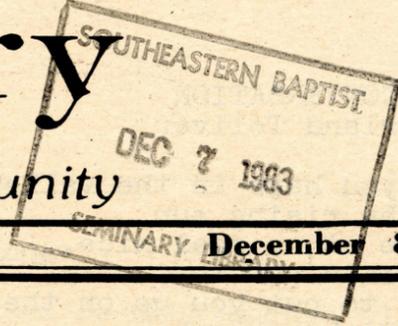


# The Enquiry

Serving the Southeastern Community

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## Fall Literary Issue

PEARL  
Garland Toliver

Writ a pome to m'sweety  
 Took a long time doin'  
 An' by th' time that I wuz through  
 I's a puffin' and a'shooin!

If we'uns wuz by ourselves right now  
 I'd probly up an' kiss'er,  
 But since she's way off crost th' hill  
 I'll jest sit here an' miss'er.

Ye see hit hain't in my line  
 Writin' pomes fer girls  
 But I's all excited  
 'Bout Pearl's golden curls.

An' when she finly spoke to me  
 Hit struck a mighty blow,  
 She even let me asker  
 To see a pitcher show.  
 I go so allfired 'cited  
 I slick fergot my money  
 An', shore nuff, you guessed it.  
 Pearl hain't no more my honey.

THE REASON LASTS FOREVER  
James Knowles

Have you heard the Christmas story  
 Do you know that it's all true?  
 Do you know that Jesus Christ was born  
 And that He died for you?  
 If you believe it and accept him  
 Then you won't regret it ever  
 For Christmas might last just a day  
 But the reason lasts forever.

Now Jesus led a simple life  
 And seldom got excited  
 He taught his Father's blessed words  
 So things might all be righted.  
 Many did not understand  
 His purpose or endeavor  
 Though Christmas comes just once a year  
 The reason lasts forever.

Now God once said, "Peace on Earth  
 Good Will to Every Man."  
 Be your brother's keeper  
 And love him all you can.  
 There is no reason why that  
 You and God can't get together  
 Though Christmas comes just once a year  
 The reason lasts forever.

So give your all in every month  
 Don't wait until December.  
 God gives us oh so many things  
 We don't seem to remember.  
 Jesus always thinks of us  
 And doesn't stop -- no never.  
 For Christmas comes just once a year  
 But the reason lasts forever.

Cars pass on the road below.  
 People rushing here and there,  
 unconcerned with the suffering  
 these hospital walls conceal.  
 Impatient with traffic lights,  
 headed for home or work . . .  
 Unconcerned about death.

Cries of a newborn baby fill the hallway.  
 What a joyous event.  
 Mother and father are radiant.  
 Family and friends  
 share the excitement.  
 A new life has begun . . .  
 Unconcerned about death.

A lady I love lies dying.  
 Machine-fed oxygen  
 sustains her life.  
 Pain infests her body,  
 weakness leaves her helpless.  
 Slowly the days pass by  
 and she lingers on . . .  
 Concerned about death.

DADDY, TELL ME...  
Syd Smith

Children chase butterflies all day  
 Through the park and never stay  
 The flight of one, dancing on the air,  
 But still, they pursue them there.  
 At evening their attention turns  
 To captured creatures in a jelly urn;  
 The fireflies that glowed in the grass  
 Now, dying, illuminate the glass.  
 Seen from safe warm beds  
 By drowsy little heads  
 That full well know the green glow--  
 But wonder, "Where did the butterflies go?"

--Jan Rush

CONVERSATION  
Garland Toliver

We put you here in the valley  
Where the rising sun  
Hits the stone real nice.  
George said not to . . .  
He said to put you up on the hill  
Close to the church.

But I ain't pretentious.

I knowed you wasn't nobody  
When you was alive  
And wouldn't feel near at home  
With them folks on the hill.

Down here the wind  
Don't blow so cold in the winter.  
Right nice spot  
If I do say so myself.

Have you ever lived where,  
everyone moved away,  
nobody ever stayed?

We have.  
Do you know what it feels like,  
to learn to love someone,  
and then they go away, so far away?  
We know what it feels like  
To cry almost every night,  
Because you don't know where  
we'll be this time next year.  
It's a terrible life to live,  
To have so many friends  
Who become part of your family  
And then one of them moves away.  
We know what it feels like  
To have all these problems.  
Ya' see, we're all seminary kids.

--anonymous

THE DIVINE FUGUE  
Peggy Haymes

When I first knew of God He seemed to be but a simple melody,  
A song of love and grace that filled my heart.  
In time another strain seemed added upon it  
And the melodies danced together in perfect harmony.  
As I grew, I heard new lines weaving in and out  
Like threads of a rich tapestry  
And what I knew of God became more complex  
Yet still ordered in harmony.  
And the notes of the first song remained.  
Sometimes in the midst of shadow  
Those first notes seemed distant and hard to hear,  
Then suddenly the melody broke through  
Filling my heart again with the familiar sound.  
As I travel on, he breaks through time after time,  
Sounding new chords, unlocking new visions.  
The music overwhelms me, yet I hear only in part.  
One day those notes will sound and be heard in full,  
And the listeners will be awed by the richness  
Of that first and simple melody.

HAIKU:

Sprouts of life wither in  
Freckled patches of space.  
Rolling stones gather.

Stops and frets withing  
the tuner and the player  
ask for sonata.

A timely and well-tuned defense,  
I hear, is no accident.  
Just freedom out on another parole.

Com-passion opines  
giving and receiving are,  
after all, one wine.

--Marc Mullinax

MEDITATION FOR CHRISTMAS  
Lois H. Morgan

Everyone  
loves you  
as a baby  
in the manger  
But where  
is the love  
for the man  
wrapped in blood  
instead of swaddling clothes  
Could it be  
the baby solicits adoration  
the man, commitment

## The Enquiry

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JAZZ  
(Preservation Hall, New Orleans)  
Peggy Haymes

The music's  
cool.  
Runnin' round your fingers  
And jumpin' in your toes  
"Till your snappin'  
and tappin'  
And you can't keep a grin from your face  
"Cause it makes you so happy.  
It makes you feel warm inside  
"Cause the players are hot,  
But the music's  
cool.  
That man who looked so frail  
In his straight-backed chair  
Is blowin' that horn  
Like Gabriel himself.  
Lord, I believe he gets reborn  
Everytime those saints go marchin'.  
His old brown forehead is shiny with sweat  
But he don't notice it yet,  
"Cause his music's  
cool.  
All I know of heaven  
Is what the preacher's tol' me about.  
But if they got a choir,  
Betch they got a band like this  
"Cause it makes me wanna shout  
"HALLELUJAH!"  
Man,  
This band's  
cool.

FEAST  
Lois H. Morgan

Drink lavishly  
of the sun;  
Serve yourself  
greedy helpings  
of the wind  
topped with  
cherry blossoms  
and eager bees;  
Lift up a heart thundering  
with thanksgiving  
to the Creator  
for this  
hearty meal.

PRAYER OF THE LOON  
Denise Cumbee Long

Lord, an aquatic aviary you gave me.  
I thank you that I am a creature of  
two worlds, lake and sky,  
that in watery depths I can seek  
darting fish, and then  
spring from fathoms to airy currents,  
turning fin to feather  
in a flurry of silver drops.  
Now, mounting the sky  
I send you my own note of praise,  
a haunting soul-cry  
thrilling in a minor mode.

DIALOGUE  
Denise Cumbee Long

SERPENT: So, you say you're God-touched clay?  
I wonder that it prides you--  
A breathing lump of earth returning  
dust to dust when breath is spent!

ADAM: And how would you have me see myself?  
A divine twin  
feasting on heavenly ambrosia?

SERPENT: Yesss.

CLASSROOM  
Lois H. Morgan

the sparkle's gone  
gone from their faces  
day upon day  
they exist  
computer-fashion  
waiting to be programmed  
waiting to spew forth facts  
the sparkle's gone  
the sparkle of creativity  
who took it away  
can i give it back

LAUGHTER  
Lois H. Morgan

Jesus,  
I believe you laughed  
As Mary bathed you  
And Joseph tickled your toes.  
I believe you giggled  
As you and other children  
Played your childhood games.  
And when you went  
To the Temple  
And astounded the teachers,  
I believe you chuckled  
As all children chuckle  
When they stump adults.  
And surely there were  
Moments of merriment  
As you and your disciples  
Deepened your relationship.  
And as you and Mary  
And Martha and Lazarus  
Fellowshipped, mirth  
Must have been mirrored  
On your faces.  
Jesus,  
I know you wept  
And anguished. But  
I believe you laughed, too.  
Create in me  
The life of laughter.

CATECHISM  
Denise Cumbee Long

Lord of axles and grease,  
he led the grandchild  
into the inner sanctum of his workshop,  
a priest inducting neophyte into the  
mystery of mechanics.

The child sat reverent  
on the three-legged stool,  
awe-eyed watching sparks  
shoot from the whirling grinder.  
The smell of oil and engine smoke  
wafted like incense into dark corners,  
and the child marvelled at the man  
who could breathe life into an engine,  
who knew the most minute detail  
of its hard, humming organs  
and every capillary of its black blood.

At the funeral  
the grandchild pondered  
how the beloved, black-rimmed fingers  
could exorcise the demon  
from an engine with a touch,  
but do nothing  
when their own worn gears shuddered  
-- and stopped.

YE KNOW YE'VE FOUND A HOME  
Garland Toliver

Ye know ye've found a home  
When the coming back is better than going away.  
When you wanna sit long in silence  
And rather than go just stay.

Ye know ye've found a home  
When the kitchen's all in place.  
When ye step inside to cook a meal  
And a smile lights up your face.

Ye know ye've found a home  
When kitty's on the windowsill  
And ye know ye'd never give it up  
Tho' the mailbox's full of bills.

Ye know ye've found a home  
When ye know where cobwebs cling  
And where to find that missing shirt  
Or just about anything.

Ye know ye've found a home  
When the sofa sits just where  
A sofa ought to sit  
And there's dust balls on the stairs.

When ye know each squeak and crack  
Of timbers long well-known  
Then ye know ye've found your place,  
Ye know ye've found a home.

SUNDAY PARK  
Syd Smith

The dying sun sweeps the place littered  
By contributing members of society who claim  
Houses with big busted lawns,  
And landscaped wives.  
Two leg boys and boxlunch girls,  
And all give dimes to the mission box trying to save  
Transient souls, nothings in the park.  
Freely moving, freely giving  
A different soul to Jesus for tonight's supper.  
And find salvation  
Snatched in snorts  
From a rotten pint  
Packed on a dirty belly,  
Behind the Memorial to Fallen Comrades (erected 1920)  
Transmigration comes  
As the All-American repacks his family  
In the Sunday hamper and in his Dodge departs.  
Unseeing they saw the multi-lost  
Whose yellow-eyed contempt spilled on all the dimes  
That cost a penny soul for a bed of bites.  
The sun is dead.