

Even more consuming than Harry's literary talent was his vibrant talent for living. I know of no man who had a greater capacity for experiencing life. This was his special gift and this was the gift that he gave to others. Age for so many means stagnation, despair, frustration, bitterness and a withdrawal from the pulsating life that surrounds us all. But this could not be said of Harry. He was hungry for life. He possessed a courageousness of spirit that made all hopes and all dreams possible. He awaited each day's dawn for the rich experiences he knew it would surely herald.

Young In Spirit

In a world where so many people exist in living bodies and dying spirits Harry was that marvelous incongruity of a fiercely living spirit, within an aging, dying body. He forced his body as sick as it was, to keep going. Towards the end he labored beneath the great weight of flesh that was wracked by disease and pain. But neither disease nor pain dominated Harry; Harry was too busy living.

This year, however, he spoke more and more of the pain and of the difficulty. I knew then that he would soon die. He greeted the dawn for the last time on the morning of August the eighth.

One wonders whether the spiritual momentum generated by his tremendous passion for living can ever really be stopped. One can feel that his dynamic spirit was obliged to depart from his inert, worn body to find a better vehicle. Perhaps he ascended to join the winds that come in powerful, cold gusts from the north and as tender, warm zephyrs from the south. I would like to think of Harry as free to roam the vastness of the heavens amongst the stars, riding the wind as his chariot. That same wind that forever stirs these seas and sands and people of Provincetown.

Daniel Bernstein
12 August, 1960

A number of other tributes to the Poet of the Dunes from readers of The Advocate follow:—

Harry Kemp

There must be dunes in heaven.
One more mile, old bones!
Come, stick together now
For this last tramp through
summer.

Before the revel's done,
And life is rounded with a sleep,
There is a final step to take
Toward a new day's sun,
A crest which was not found
before.

Old bones, hold on
Before the sharp wind's sweep.

Bend and push: together now!
Be grass.
Come, bones, one last step,
Another last,
And so across the sand with
boyish heart,
Eyes open to the wind
That sweeps down from the crest.
Though now it whips old flesh
From a darkened sky,
Remember when the wind once
tagged along,
Journey-mate who pointed out
the way to tramp,
Sufficient for the day's discovery.
This last adventure holds the
greatest mystery:
It waits upon that hidden crest.

Come, bones, push!
Not yet time for rest.
There's the promise of the sun
To keep upon that crest.
One last step, and now another
last,
A thousand final steps
To gain that rise,
The one more mile to summer.

And here, at last the crest,
The step one gains alone.
Now rest, old bones, rest.
This dune is where the gulls come
When the last wind dies,
To give their flight
To a new day's rise,
To soar again
From a poet's mind and pen
Over the endless sea.

Let spill the sands
From outstretched hands.
A poet's pulse
Throbs with eternity.
There must be dunes in heaven.

A Friend

In Memoriam To the Poet of the Dunes 1882—1960

Harry Kemp is gone—
A man, a bard, a philosopher—
For long, shall we mourn,
This man, this bard, this philosopher.

He lived life fully, 'tis true—
(But how else would he have
garnered the data of the saga
of life?)

An avid thirst for knowledge;
An insatiable curiosity;
All things inspired him to seek
further and further—
God, new horizons, adventure,
truth, love, as we all seek;
Only to find that the simple life
and a modest simplicity are the
means and ends of living and
truth.

So Harry Kemp, a simple man at
heart, finally found it here.
Provincetown — (underneath its
facade of glamour, lustiness,
pretense and other variable
foibles of humanity)—
A simple town.

Here he will lie, forever comented
to simplicity.
God bless you, Harry, wherever
your spirit hovers—we all know
it must be here, in your be-
loved town—Provincetown.
Josephine C. Ford

Provincetown Group Carries Out Dune Poet's Final Wish In Greenwich Village



On September 25 some of Harry Kemp's ashes were scattered in front of the house where he once lived in Patchen Place, Greenwich Village, in New York City. Shown above on that occasion: left to right; Col. Richard Magee, Virginia Thoms Le Peer, Warren Wilson, Sunny Tasha, Arthur Snader and Captain Manny Zora.

Harry Kemp, while alive, expressed to many of his friends, his wishes regarding the disposition of his remains, recorded them on tape and wrote them in his will. On September 25 his desires were carried out.

After Labor Day half of his ashes were scattered over the sand dunes of the Province Lands in the vicinity of Peaked Hill Bar and on September 25 several of his friends from Provincetown gathered in New York, some making the trip from Provincetown and Boston, to scatter the remainder of his ashes near some of his favorite spots between 14th St. and Houston Street in New York's Greenwich Village.

Captain Manny Zora drove from Provincetown with Sunny Tasha

and Art Snader. Col. Richard Magee flew from Provincetown and Warren Wilson flew from Boston. Hal Fletcher drove in from Long Island. The gathering place was the home of Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Le Peer on Barrow Street, which is in the center of the area Harry knew so well. The date scheduled for distributing the ashes coincided with Virginia Le Peer's birthday, which helped make the occasion more light-hearted than it might otherwise have been.

Among those who gathered to pay tribute to a man they would never forget were: Sunny Tasha, Art Snader, Manny Zora of Provincetown; Col. Richard Magee of Truro; Mr. and Mrs. E. Martin and Richard Ayres of Wilmington, Delaware; Warren Wilson of Saugus, Mass.; Daniel Jahn and John

Carbone, who had done the music and dance for the production of Harry's play "Solomon's Song" this past season at the Provincetown Playhouse, and Mr. and Mrs. A. Waxman and Miss Monte Von Rosenberg of New York City. The Playhouse was represented by co-manager Virginia Thoms Le Peer, Hal Fletcher and William Maxwell. The latter flew in from the mid-West for the occasion.

To avoid gathering crowds of onlookers, only a small part of the group made the rounds of some of Harry Kemp's known haunts to scatter his remains: Patchen Place, where he once lived, the Provincetown Playhouse on McDougal Street, the Cherry Lane Theatre on Commerce Street and Sheridan Square.

Prior to this, on Sunday night, September 11, just at sunset, three