



Old Legs and Pebbles

Peter Lawlor

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With his fifth poetry book, *Old Legs and Pebbles*, Peter Lawlor celebrates his ninetieth year. A British Merchant Navy seaman in World War 2, he also saw service with the American Merchant Marine. Giving up the sea life, he settled in San Francisco, then to Sun Valley Idaho. It was a couple of years in Devon England, then to Santa Fe New Mexico. Feeling the urge of the sea it had to be an eventual move from the desert to Whidbey Island. He may not stop there. "There are many more poems to be written," he says. He balances a love of mountains with that of the sea and his varied career of mountaineering, fishing guiding, and ski instructing reflect in his poems. His seaman's cottage on Whidbey Island in Puget Sound is ideal for his mission. His recipe for longevity of mind and body: "Write a poem in the morning then go out and chop some wood." Frequent trips to his native New Zealand reflect also in his works. His sister Margaret in Auckland designs the covers of his books. An activist in her artistry, her concern for sustainability of the planet shows in her work. The leg theme of the cover, which also appears in odes and poems like "Legacy", stress that "leg" leads in the impetus of many of our motives. The pebbles theme in the poem "Pebbles" relate to the whale and the concern for its existence. The wave is the whitened bones. The Odes, which show the influence of Pablo Neruda, are a venture into free form that doesn't waste words in capturing the essence of the subject in the title. The moods of concern and nostalgia of the following lyrical poems move quickly into the joy and irreverence of Peter Lawlor's Tomfoolery. The whole is a medley of his daily poems which he likes to call the meat and veggies of a poet's plate.

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