Vexillaria

Kevin Harrington

In fond memory of many NAVA conferences

The halls where our oration rings,
are decked with flags, pervading things.
We hail these bunting anthems bright.
We sing their beauty, wave their might,
O flutt’ring icons in the sky,
connect us with the Deity.

Flags in words, and flags that dip,
flag equipment — finial, clip.
Flags of India, veiled Mysore,
flags in fiction, flags of war,
flags of nylon, bunting, silk,
the flag of Cyprus white as milk.

Flags Mauritian, fleurs-de-lis,
flags Tahitian, flags at sea,
books on flags, flag collectors,
flags of all the earthly sectors,
flags for stern, and flags for bow,
flags of Berne and Curaçao.

The biggest flags, the oldest flags,
(surely spoken of in Guinness).
Think Lepanto, Esperanto,
oriflamme of old St. Denis,
red flags, bled flags, flags of Texas,
May flags, gay flags, flags obsess us.
Flags forgotten, flags discarded,
captured flags, flags bombarded,
flags of Austurias, flags injurious,
banners armorial, arms pictorial,
flags for burning, flags for peace,
civic flags from Perth to Nice.

Naval ensigns and flags of trade,
burgees bright that never fade,
long gonfalons and longer pennants
rank flags — gen’rals and lieutenants,
flags of Hansa, flags of Sweden,
standards, wimpels, hero’s guidon.

Hoist and fly, and fimbriations,
provincial flags, flags of nations,
flags on ties, flags on cards,
all flags striped and multi-starr’d,
flags on cups, flags of race,
cups on flags, flags in space.

Old Glory and the Aztec eagle,
the Maple Leaf, Union regal,
the Tricolor and Dannebro’,
names of flags are studied too.
Rising Sun and Southern Crosses,
Flags that young Siena tosses.

Banneristics, semiotics,
One more ends this list exotic.
Vexillology, ’tis in part,
kin to heraldry, hist’ry, art.
But O Lord, for harm’ny’s sake,
Appoint us, Sir, a patron saint!