

My Grandfather

By: Ms. Watts

I have the honor of being the granddaughter of an award winning poet. My grandfather, John Ciardi, started writing poems in the 1960's to help my mother, Myra, learn how to read. He used grade level word lists to help him choose words he knew children would be able to read. Many children love his poems and they are found in many children's anthologies, or books of poems. He loved to make poems fun and funny so they would be enjoyable to children. He thought the words in a poem should "dance."

Although I never got to meet my grandfather, he died in 1986 before I was born; I am the only grandchild on that side of the family with a book dedicated to me. When his book, The Monster Den, was republished by my grandmother it was dedicated to me. He wrote lots of wonderful children's poems as well as other written works. He is most known for translating an Italian piece called Dante's Inferno. His translation is one of the most widely used translations of that piece today. He translated that piece to honor his Italian heritage.

Some of my favorite poems by him are; *The Reason for the Pelican*, *The Shark*, and *Summer Song*. Of course, I have lots of other favorites, too! He loved sharing his poems with children and I'm so glad that I get to pass that on through teaching children!



THE MONSTER DEN

OR LOOK WHAT HAPPENED AT
MY HOUSE - AND TO IT



JOHN CIARDI

DRAWINGS BY EDWARD GOREY