

A vertical photograph of a sunset over a mountain range. The sun is a small red dot on the horizon, with a bright orange and yellow glow. The sky is filled with dark, dramatic clouds. A small glider is visible in the upper middle part of the sky. The text is overlaid on the image in white.

Riding on the Wind

Haiku

Martin Beresford

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Haiku, senryu and some longer poems

by

Martin Beresford

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**To Masae,
with love**

夏草や兵どもが夢のあと

natsugusa ya tsuwamonodomo ga yume no ato

Summer grass
All that remains
Of the warriors' dreams

芭蕉 Basho

In these short poems (dare I call them "haiku"?) I have tried to capture a few haiku-like experiences, from childhood experiences in England during World War II, through my own army days, to more recent times living in Europe, Hong Kong, Japan and California. Generally, I have tried to conform to traditional haiku conventions regarding scanning, seasonal references, and the essentially Zen-like nature of the haiku experience; however, I fear that I have fallen short in many cases. The poems are grouped broadly according to the four seasons, with a separate section relating to World War II, and a few longer poems included at the end of the book. The latter were written nearly fifty years ago. They are a young man's poems, and touch on some of the fundamental issues underlying the deep poignancy that is expressed – albeit more obliquely – in some of the best haiku.

Despite the title and the cover pictures, this is not a book about hang gliding, though some of my most haiku-like experiences have indeed been associated with that marvelous sport. I am much indebted to my many hang gliding friends, in Japan and the USA, for their warm comradeship and support.

I am especially indebted to Jerry Kilbride, distinguished Haiku poet, for his encouragement, advice and friendship.