

## For a Summer Place

27 September 2005 ~ Paul Menard

*On reading Stanley Kunitz's "Route Six"*

Oh, for a summer place  
To which we had gone  
For, say, ten years at least

Anticipating our return  
As we watched the almond  
Burn on deep winter nights

To arrive in June with  
All our warm, growing memories,  
Open up and begin to set a few things out

Take up the project  
Laid aside in the woodshop  
Last October – a birdhouse or a little chair

To write again at the  
Simple desk in the night  
Sometimes until the dawn hovers in the east window

To have gone there long  
Enough to have gained  
Some Friends – harvest, cook, and have a dinner party

To run, hike, ride,  
And swim those familiar ways  
Notice, learn, and smell new things each trip out

To take the gourds grown  
There back to the house in town  
Make things of them as the year runs down

To leave some clothes  
Books and things there, to be  
Worn, read, and enjoyed nowhere else

To let the long evenings  
Linger on the front porch  
And hear the wild voices in the dark

To plant and grow and prune,  
Of course. Help a new corner  
Of the garden into splendor, radiance, and opulence

To listen to the water,  
Is it surf, stream, or lapping lake?  
Our loving lullaby each night

To migrate twice a year  
And shed the wrinkled brow,  
Bring to hand the tools of wholeheartedness.