

# Discovering Bob Cohen the poet

The Bethlehem Gadfly Arts, the May 7, 2020

🍷 *Latest in a series of posts on the Arts in Bethlehem* 🍷

*“If I should lose my language,  
That would be the end of me.”  
Bob Cohen*

**Bob Cohen, *Home at My Typewriter: Selected Poems,*  
Bethlehem:  
BAPL Books, 2018.**

So I attended Matt Wolf’s poetry reading the other week as part of the Bethlehem Area Public Library’s fine **online series** during this coronavirus era of our lives.

And then I went to buy a copy of Matt’s book as part of the **BAPL Books** series.

And found a book by Bob Cohen. (More on Matt later, I promise.)

I knew Bob Cohen.

Lots of us knew Bob Cohen (**1938-2016**): Peace Corps volunteer, a Dean at Lehigh, owner of a College Admissions small business, president of the Rotary Club, member of the Bethlehem Arts Council, BAPL board member, WDIY commentator and Board member, cabaret singer, actor.

That was Bob Cohen.

But I didn’t know the multi-talented Bob (if you don’t believe me, look **here** and **here** and **here**) as a poet.



Neither, apparently, did his wife Amy Miller Cohen, who describes in an introduction to this book finding among a “gold mine of his papers . . . several hundred poems.”

Several hundred secret poems! (Echoes of Emily Dickinson!)

And in this locally produced book you’ll find about a hundred of them selected by BAPL director Josh Berk.

It was hard to pick one to share here on Gadfly in the previous post. I had a dozen top picks. But I eventually decided on **“I Saw You Take the Cat’s Head.”**

A poem shouldn’t need somebody else’s analysis. It should stand on its own. And I hope you enjoyed it.

But let me say that I enjoyed Bob watching Amy, appreciating her domestic artistry, recognizing his own incapacity, and thankful to be with her. And he has nailed that haughty exiting cat dead on.

You’ll find much, much more enjoyable **in the book.**

*Library users will be familiar with plans for the **“Bob Cohen Room,”** with donations still appreciated for space renovation.*