Collective Memory

By Erikka O'Toole

1. Collective memory is the heart and soul of the community.
2. A handrail alongside a crumbling building.
3. Fragmented stories retold at family reunions.

5. Selective memory is the vibration of silence.
6. An undercurrent of secret societies.
7. Seasons washing away blood from a playground.
8. Crumpled local newspaper pages tender flames for warmth.

9. Tethered memory is the heart and soul of the community.
10. Fair weathered allegiance to the home team.
12. Segregated Sundays feel like home.

13. Delicate, fallible memory is the heart and soul of a community.
14. Past cradled beneath dirt and guarded by iron gates.
15. The catch breath between truth and the omitted.
16. Streets subliminally divided eternal.

17. A community’s heart and soul remembers.
19. The unexpected end of a sidewalk slab.
20. Forgiveness withheld being passed to generations.

21. Troost.
22. Touchdown Kansas City! We could go all the way down memory lane.
23. There but for the grace of God, the pulse of our collective, selective, tethered, delicate, fallible memory
24. Sings an excellent gospel called truce for Troost.

25. Yet, memory remains the heart and soul of the community and cognitive decline is not a probable diagnosis.