

eastword

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
WRITERS' FEDERATION OF NOVA SCOTIA

Portia White Prize Honours Sylvia Hamilton

Several years ago Sylvia Hamilton, camera in hand, was in the Red Room at Province House trying to capture the irrepressible George Elliott Clarke as he was awarded the inaugural Portia White Prize. She succeeded in the impossible and included the ebullient footage in her remarkable 2000 film *Portia White: Think On Me*.

On January 23, 2003, Dr. Sylvia Hamilton was back in the Red Room. A more appropriate, déjà-vu moment can't be imagined as Sylvia accepted the Province of Nova Scotia's highest recognition of artistic excellence and achievement — the Portia White Prize. Honouring the memory and example of Portia White, the prize acknowledged Sylvia's remarkable achievements and generosity.

Since the 1989 release of her first film, an inspiring 30-minute exploration of the lives of individuals faced with what she calls "the double whammy of being born black and female," Sylvia Hamilton has been making an indelible mark. *Black*

Mother, Black Daughter was seen at more than 40 film festivals around the world, and was followed by the similarly acclaimed *Speak It! From the Heart of Black Nova Scotia* (1993), *No More Secrets* (1999) and *Portia White: Think On Me* most recently.

The \$25,000 prize, which has previously honoured George Elliott Clarke, Georg Tintner, Gary Neill and Alistair MacLeod, is now awarded in two components: \$20,000 to the prize winner and \$5,000 to a protégé. Sylvia shared this portion between Peter Marsman and Shauntay Grant.

For those unable to applaud Sylvia on the day, she has kindly granted permission to the Federation to share her moving acceptance speech:



Let me begin by first thanking the elders of the many communities that make up Nova Scotia. None of us got here on our own and let us be mindful of this as we share this time today.

This is a very precious moment for me. I am truly grateful for this Award and am proud to be in the company of the amazing artists who have also received this recognition and, in some measure, to be in the company of Portia White, the

continued on page 2

WRITERS' FEDERATION OF NOVA SCOTIA
ISSN 1187 3531

1113 MARGINAL ROAD
HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA B3H 4P7
TEL: 902-423-8116
FAX: 902-422-0881
talk@writers.ns.ca
www.writers.ns.ca

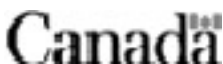
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Jane Buss
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT: Monika Sormova
EDITOR: Peggy Amirault

WFNS BOARD OF DIRECTORS
PRESIDENT: Mary Jane Copps
VICE-PRESIDENT: Douglas Arthur Brown

TREASURER: Sue Newhook
SECRETARY: Rachelle Richard
MEMBERS AT LARGE: Susan Cameron; Christy Ann Conlin; Sheldon Currie; Sylvia Hamilton; Kathleen Martin James; Laura Jolicoeur; Tonja Gunvaldsen Klaassen; Lezlie Lowe.

The Writers' Federation of Nova Scotia is a registered not-for-profit organization that operates with funds raised from membership fees, from fund-raising endeavours, corporate sponsorship, with operating support from the Government of Nova Scotia through the Culture Division, Department of Tourism and Culture, and with project assistance from Heritage Canada and the Canada Council for the Arts – all of whom we gratefully acknowledge for assisting to make the work of the WFNS possible. The WFNS is a member of the Atlantic Provinces Library Association, Access Copyright, the Canadian Children's Book Centre, the Canadian Copyright Institute, the Cultural Federations of Nova Scotia, the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY), the Nova Scotia Children's Literature Roundtable, and Moving Images Group. The opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the editor or of WFNS. Services and markets advertised or mentioned are not necessarily endorsed by WFNS. We reserve the right to edit manuscripts and letters. Copyright to bylined material remains with the writer and cannot be reprinted without the permission of the writer.

Typeset in Amethyst, an original type design by Jim Rimmer, New Westminster, B.C. Printed offset at Gaspereau Press, Kentville, N.S.



magnificent artist for whom it was named. I owe her my utmost gratitude for having cleared the pathway.

I extend my thanks to the Department of Tourism and Culture and to the Nova Scotia government for continuing this significant award.

I thank my Doctors — my nominators: Dr. George Clarke who would love to be here with us. I spoke to him a few days ago ("George, this is your old babysitter calling"), his voice near coming through the phone "Sylvia! Congratulations!" Dr. Linda Christansen-Ruffman and Dr. Dale Godsoe, both of whom are here to celebrate this moment. I am humbled by your care and your support.

I have a once-in-a-lifetime family, without whom I would not be able to do my work. I am blessed to have them in my life. Bev, Shani, my sisters Ada, Janet, my brother Wayne, my late parents and older brother.

And too, the friends, collaborators, fellow artistic travelers, who offer encouragement, an ear, food, a laugh, a hug.

When the City of Halifax and the province of Nova Scotia established the Portia White Trust (now the Nova Scotia Talent Trust) in 1944 to launch the career of Portia White, (she was sent off to New York in a white fox cape), a marker was set in the provincial and Canadian arts landscapes. This action recognized the necessity and the importance of the state's support and recognition of artists and their work. In 1996 when former Premier Dr. John Savage envisioned the Portia White Award, he again set a marker on behalf of the province in Nova Scotia's and Canada's cultural heritage. I thank Dr. Savage for his vision.

Portia White herself was immensely loyal to and proud of Canadian talent. She was interviewed by Ernest Buckler for *Saturday Night* magazine in 1948. He got an earful. They were discussing concerts in small towns. Buckler wondered why anyone in a small town would go to a concert. She told him people in the Maritimes were "eager and hungry" for good music.

Buckler: "And here an almost evangelical fervour staccatos her usual calm."

Portia: "Why should we grovel in the dust to American talent, when right here in Canada we have bigger and better voices, because we're farther north?" She continued, "I told them everywhere we went, there is plenty of Canadian talent which could give you just as good a show as we've done. But there's no outlet for Canadian artists, they can't live. Why can't their talent be organized and heard?"

Buckler: "She's got something there."

We are in very unsettled times. Sometimes I think that we have lost our way. But the arts are an integral part of our lives, and especially so in times like these. We look to artists to help us find our path, to make connections, to challenge us to be better. Often their dissenting voices and ideas may make us uncomfortable. Artists demand of us to think. When we do, we are reminded and re-assured of our humanity.

A recent study regarding the academic performance of school children found that those exposed to and who participated in artistic activities had improved overall performances in the classroom. Having spent a fair amount of time in classrooms over the years, I can personally speak to the curiosity, the interest and the excitement of young people when they have a chance to be engaged by art, and when they are exposed to art in its many forms and dimensions.

continued on page 3

Interestingly we have also been told of the benefits children derive from on-going physical activity.

My hope — that we would recognize and support these findings by solid, unstinting, support for programs for young people. They have been entrusted to us and we ignore that trust at our peril.

Nova Scotia, Nova Scotia
People elsewhere often ask where I come from.
I respond Nova Scotia. They say, but where are you
really from? And what about your grand parents,
your great grand parents

I'm Nova Scotian I say
As Nova Scotian
As the Mayflowers the early Black Refugee women
picked
As the evergreens from which they shaped wreaths
As the maple stripped bare for their market baskets

As the coal mined by Maurice Ruddick
As the salmon smoked by Willy Krauch

As tart, or as sweet as Annapolis Valley apples
As grand as Grand Pré sunsets
As steady as Sable Island horses
As reliable as Beechville blueberries

As Nova Scotian as . . .

Alberta based writer Myrna Kostash recently said that
“Where you stand is the place that will inform your
specificity. That’s how you will distinguish yourself from
global culture. Your imagination requires and demands
that you be from a particular place.” I know where I’m
come from and I won’t ever forget it.

I wish you peace.

I am pleased to present you with two fellow artists:

Shauntay Grant

Shauntay Grant is a multi-talented young Nova Scotian artist who is gaining growing recognition for her art. As a spoken word artist she blends the musicality of language with dramatic rhythms to deliver stream-of-consciousness poetic works that create an enveloping atmosphere of intensity and involvement for her audiences. Shauntay often draws upon her life experiences, combining these with her love of the arts to create her uniquely expressive music and poetry. She is passionately inspired by her African heritage; and this influence resonates in her work.

Shauntay holds a Bachelor of Music degree from Dalhousie University and is pursuing a degree in journalism at the University of King’s College. Shauntay is a gifted vocalist and has studied piano, cello and flute. She was just appointed musical director of the Nova Scotia Mass Choir. Her debut as Director was this past Saturday evening. She has written and recorded original works with the choir for radio and television.

In March 2001 she founded Word Iz Bond, a collective of energetic and talented young artists committed to the promotion of spoken word performance. Her original works of poetry and music have been featured locally on CKDU radio, and nationally on CBC Radio, CBC Television, and Vision TV. Shauntay Grant, a young woman to watch, and listen to.

Peter Marsman

Peter Marsman is a photographer who views the world as his canvas and uses the camera as his paintbrush to capture its beauty and complexity. He studied photography at the Nova Scotia Community College and honed his skills as a photographer with both of Halifax’s daily newspapers before opening his own studio three and a half years ago.

Peter has become known for his sensitive and creative treatment of subjects – whether it’s the cover shot for the *Black to Business* magazine, still photography for the Maroon Films Inc. production, *Portia White: Think On Me*, editorial photographs for Germany’s *Stern Magazine*, or the personally inspired photographs recently displayed at the Maritime Professional Photographers’ Annual Exhibition in Fredericton. His muses are James Van der Zee, the great photographer of the Harlem Renaissance, and Monty Zucker, a photographer who is world-renowned for his creativity and artistry.

Peter is working on two fronts to further immerse himself in the technology and psychology of his art. He makes an annual trip to Falmouth, Massachusetts, to study with some of North America’s finest photographers at the New England Institute of Professional Photography. He combines this training with studies towards a degree in psychology to assist him as he delves into the persona and personality of his subjects. Children, especially those in his family, provide him with inspiration for his portraiture. As a coach, teacher, and one-time single parent, Peter observed how decisions are made every day without consideration of children. This prompted him to use his camera to photograph them for a work-in-progress entitled *What About the Children?*. I await the completed work with great anticipation. ■

Pressing questions

by Douglas Arthur Brown

Cape Breton resident and WFNS Board vice-president, Douglas Arthur Brown is the author of the novel *A Deadly Harvest* and two children's books, *The Magic Compass* and *Archibald's Boo-boo* (all Solus Publishing). He is also the publisher and managing editor of *Pottersfield Portfolio*. A member of the Canadian Magazine Publisher's Association, he's been providing expert advice to publishing colleagues and writers in the CMPA newsletter, and has agreed to respond to *Eastword* queries as well. Please address your questions to Douglas at the address in our masthead.

Q Can you suggest the best place to research possible markets?

A Markets change all the time – magazines and book publishers go out of business, are acquired by other interests, mandates evolve, editorial slants change. I would suggest that you log-on to the WFNS website (www.writers.ns.ca) and check out their “markets” section. I'd also recommend that you check a writer's guide at a library and copy down potential market contacts and send a query letter to them. (Editor's note: Try the annual edition of *Writers Markets*, you can find them online at www.writersmarket.com)

Q I'm a Canadian ex-pat living in England. I'd like to write real-life quirky articles about daily life on this side of the Atlantic. Can you suggest magazines that might be interested in something like that? Maybe even as a column?

A A good place to start would be a newspaper published in your home community in Canada. I've noticed several local newspapers that print columns by “wandering sons and daughters” who have chosen to live elsewhere – marrying the experience of your culture with the adventures that arise when your culture meets the new one.

Q What are the best markets for humourous, quirky mystery stories?

A It's difficult to evaluate what you mean by humourous mysteries and quirky tales. You need to get on the 'net and search the mandates of magazines to find out what they will accept. Mysteries, humourous or otherwise, are mysteries. Therefore, contact mystery magazines and mystery writers associations and groups.



Quirky tales may be better suited to magazines that encourage “experimental” writing – whatever that means. In the end, once you have narrowed your search to potential markets, it will depend on the editors to decide if the material is suitable. If no one is publishing the kinds of stories you are writing, then perhaps a short-story collection is the answer. You would have to sell the idea of the collection to a book editor. In general, publishers are a conservative bunch and Canadian publishers are under-funded and must meet the bottom line. Some may shy away from anything that requires a “definition” to its readers.

Q I found a magazine that wants to publish my article. However, they asked me what I charge. What should I say? I don't want to ask more than they are willing to pay.

A I'd contact the magazine and ask what their standard payment scale is for an article. Most reputable magazines publish this information or make it available upon request. The exception would be the magazine which solicits an article by a specific writer, where payment is negotiable, based on the experience and reputation of the writer. There are several writing organizations and books available to assist you in determining your baseline. I would consult one or more of them. You can also determine your baseline by creating a formula for yourself. I came across this one a few years ago used by Silver Donald Cameron. If writing full-time is your business add up your expenses for the year and how much you want to earn. Then, divide that amount by the number of weeks you wish to work in a year. Then divide that number by the number of hours you wish to work in a week. This would determine your hourly rate. As a business, you should then add at least 15% to this rate. [Editor's note: Don't be afraid to ask an editor what they pay when they ask you what you charge. It is common for freelance writers to try to negotiate fees and rates with editors of general and special interest magazines.] ■

Reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic

by Joanne Merriam

Literary magazines: which ones are best? If you only have \$100 to spend this year, where should you invest it? Your answer depends on what you like to read, what you like to write, and what your wallet can bear.

If you're really scraping the barrel, take heart; quality isn't always expensive. Try *Vallum Magazine*, a new and still little-known poetry journal which has published Matt Robinson and Adrienne Ho, for \$16.50, or *PRISM international*, a prestigious journal of prose, poetry and drama which has published Mark Anthony Jarman and Kevin Kerr, for \$28.89 for two years.

For writers, at the heart of subscription decisions lie submission preferences. We often want to subscribe to the same magazines we'd like to publish us, so into our criteria list sneaks the other three Rs: rivalry, response time and remuneration.

Rivalry: Even if competition's not particularly your thing, entering contests can be a great way to subscribe. Many journals run annual contests to swell their subscription list and add a bit of zing to the proceedings. The best in Canada include *The Antigonish Review's* Great Blue Heron Poetry Contest (\$25 fee), *Event's* Creative Non-Fiction Contest (\$25), *Grain's* Short Grain Contest (\$25; considers dramatic monologue, postcard story, prose poem and creative non-fiction) and *Pottersfield Portfolio's* Compact Fiction/Short Poem contest (\$20). Entry fees include a one-year subscription, which, in the case of *Grain*, will save you a little money. If you're intending to subscribe to one of these magazines anyway, contests are a deal.

Response Time: Any magazine which takes less than four months to respond to submissions is something of an oddity these days, and should be encouraged. These include *Words* (2-12 weeks), *Glimmer Train* (up to 16 weeks) and *Partisan Review* (4 to 8 weeks). *Words* is little-known, but has published J.J. Steinfeld and Virgil Suarez, and has an interest in memoir. *Glimmer Train* has recently published Karen Munro and George Stolz, and has an interest in fiction, for which they pay handsomely. *Partisan Review* has recently published Sanford Pinsker and Edith Kurzweil, and has an interest in literary criticism.

Remuneration: Nothing beats the currency exchange for inflating payment, so if money's your primary concern, add American and British journals to your list. Stand-out American publications include *The Georgia Review*

(\$3/line or \$40/page), *Partisan Review* (\$50-100/poem and \$200/story) and *The Paris Review* (up to \$200/poem and \$1,000/story). Work originally published by these journals routinely appears in Scribner's annual *The Best American Poetry* anthologies. In England, my favourite, *Stand Magazine*, pays at least £20 per piece, and though subscriptions are a daunting £31, significantly cheaper rates are available to students and the unemployed.

As you can see, the exchange rate cuts both ways. Canadian stand-outs in this category include *The Capilano Review* (pays \$50-\$200), *The Fiddlehead* (about \$20/page) and *Descant* (\$100). Work appearing in these journals is frequently nominated for the prestigious Journey Prize, and they've all won multiple National Magazine Awards (along with *Event* and *Grain*) so you needn't worry about a mercenary sensibility sacrificing quality.

Both the public and the university library systems subscribe to several of these magazines, giving you the opportunity to read and select the journal that appeals most to you. And that \$100 per year? Careful planning should stretch it to four or five subscriptions per year, particularly if you subscribe for two years (which generally saves a lot per issue). That's more than a dozen book-sized anthologies, which is a great deal no matter which you choose.

Contact information

The Antigonish Review (pays in copies for poetry, \$50/story, up to \$200/article) PO Box 5000, St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish NS B2G 2W5. Subscriptions \$24. Web: www.antigonishreview.com

The Capilano Review (pays \$50-200; response time up to 4 months) 2055 Purcell Way, North Vancouver BC V7J 3H5. Subscriptions \$25, \$15/students and \$40/2yrs. Website: www.capcollege.bc.ca/about/publications/capilano-review/tcr/index.html

Descant (pays \$100; response time up to 6 months) PO Box 314, Station P, Toronto ON M5S 2S8. Subscriptions \$25 or \$40/2yrs. Website: www.descant.on.ca

Event (pays about \$22/page; response time 1 to 4 months) PO Box 2503, New Westminster BC V3L 5B2. Subscriptions \$22 (3 issues) or \$35 for two years. Web: <http://event.douglas.bc.ca>

continued on page 6

The Fiddlehead (pays about \$20/page; response time 1 to 6 months) Campus House, 11 Garland Ct, UNB PO Box 4400, Fredericton NB E3B 5A3. Subscriptions \$25. www.lib.unb.ca/Texts/Fiddlehead/

The Georgia Review (\$3/line or \$40/page; response time 6 to 12 weeks) University of Georgia, Athens GA 30602-9009 USA. Subscriptions US\$30 or US\$46 for two years. 1-800-542-3481. Website: www.uga.edu/garev/

Glimmer Train (pays \$500/story; response time up to 16 weeks) 710 SW Madison St, Ste 504, Portland OR 97205 USA. Subscriptions US\$32. Website: www.glimmertrain.com

Grain (pays \$40-175; response time 3 to 4 months) PO Box 67, Saskatoon SK S7K 3K1 Subscriptions \$27 or \$40/2yrs, plus GST. Website: www.grainmagazine.ca

The Paris Review (up to \$200/poem and \$1,000/story; response time 3 months) 541 E. 72 St, New York NY 10021 USA. Subscriptions a whopping US\$45. (760) 291-1553. Website: www.parisreview.com

Partisan Review (\$50-100/poem and \$200/story; responds in 4 to 8 weeks) 236 Bay State Road, Boston MA 02215 USA. Subscriptions US\$31. (617) 353-4260. Website: www.bu.edu/partisanreview/

Pottersfield Portfolio (pays \$10/page to \$50 max; response time up to 6 months) PO Box 40, Station A, Sydney NS B1P 6G9. Subscriptions \$17 or \$26/2yrs (2 issues/yr).

PRISM international (pays \$40/page of poetry and \$20/page of prose; response time 2 to 6 months) Creative Writing Program, UBC, Buch. E462 - 1866 Main Mall, Vancouver BC V6T 1Z1 Subscriptions \$19.26 or \$28.89/2yrs (check out their website and save \$2-3). Website: <http://prism.arts.ubc.ca/>

Stand Magazine (pays £20 and up; response time up to 6 months) School of English, Leeds University, Leeds LS2 9JT England. Subscription: £31 contact Worldwide Subscriptions, Unit 4, Gibbs Reed Farm, Ticehurst, E. Sussex TN5 7HE England. Website: www.people.vcu.edu/~dlatane/stand.html

Vallum Contemporary Poetry (pays small honorarium; response time 6 to 8 months) PO Box 48003, Montreal PQ H2V 4S8. Subscriptions \$16.50 (2 issues). Website: www.vallummag.com/

Words (pays in copies; response time 2-12 weeks) 14268 - 66 Ave., Surrey BC V3W 2B3. Subscriptions \$28. ■

Pressing news

UCCB Press

It seems almost two years have passed since Penny Marshall was returning calls to UCCB Press. So it was exciting to hear that Mike Hunter has been just been appointed Editor in Chief coordinating UCCB Press' publishing and marketing activities. Though things aren't up to speed yet, Mike writes that he hopes to have the web site accessible shortly – www.uccb.ca/press Established in 1974 with a mandate to foster the culture of Cape Breton in all its forms, UCCB Press has had a program that concentrated on materials of cultural and intellectual significance to Cape Breton Island. As the publishing arm of the University College of Cape Breton, the Press served the needs of the University College as well as the broader needs of the community. Mike Hunter may be reached at mike_hunter@uccb.ca

Jespersion Press has new owner & new address

Across the Cabot Strait in St. John's, Jespersen Press has a new owner, Debbie Hanlon, who is now accepting manuscript submissions of poetry, fiction (short stories and novel length) and non-fiction. She asks writers with work for consideration to query the press. In a cover letter, indicate the genre, intended audience and approximate length. A brief biography indicating your writing experience, as well as a synopsis and up to 3 chapters of the material should be sent with a self-addressed return envelope to their new address at 100 Water Street, PO Box 2188, St. John's, NL A1C 6E6 jespersen@breakwater.nf.net (709) 757-2216.

Stewart House closes

With the new year starting and the industry teetering yet again on edge of possible recovery (any editor would blueline as implausible a scenario that included Chapters, Indigo, Stoddart, General and amazon.com), there's news of more roller-coaster vertigo ahead with the announcement of Stewart House Publishing's bankruptcy. Unsecured creditors, with outstanding receivables stemming largely from distribution arrangements, include Quarry Press, Kids Can Press, Fitzhenry & Whiteside, and ECW Press not to mention massive debt to the bank (the only secured creditor) and printing companies. ■

Resolutions for successful writing

By Kim Scaravelli

Resolution Number 1: Rise with the sparrows. All the really big Canadian authors ... the ones who make money at it ... all six of them ... write for hours before allowing interruptions from the day.

Note to Self: Resolution will not apply to weekend mornings. Or any morning following a wine tasting or a girls' night out. Or Mondays because it's just impossible to get up early on a Monday and absolutely nothing creative has ever been accomplished on a Monday morning anyway.

Second Note to Self: Might want to putter downstairs before hitting the old keyboard ... just long enough to put the coffee on and take a peek at the morning paper. And eat breakfast, because eating a nutritious breakfast is number two on the "Get Healthy" Resolutions List this year.

Yet Another Note to Self: Make children's snacks while in the kitchen. Should also take out compost and throw in a load of laundry. Good to get a head start on these things.

Resolution Number 2: Begin quest for an agent. Again. All the really big Canadian authors ... the ones who make money at it ... all six of them ... have agents.

Note to Self: Buy subscription to *Quill & Quire* as source of leads.

Second Note to Self: Cancel cable and sell a minor organ through the Internet to cover cost of subscription.

Resolution Number 3: Read more. All the really big Canadian authors ... the ones who make money at it ... all six of them ... read voraciously

Note To Self: *People Magazine* does not count, except for the feature articles and perhaps the longer columns – the ones with more words than pictures. Also on the list of "don't counts" are: flyers (except for the really thick religious ones that have numbered pages), handouts from the children's teachers (except for ones on pink paper and ones that have DEAR PARENT spelled out in big, capital letters on the top), anything my husband leaves on the bathroom floor, and anything dug out of the pile in the doctor's waiting room.

Second Note To Self: Do not read in bed in case riveting plot results in late night which might, in turn, result in failure to comply with Resolution Number 1.

Resolution Number 4: When Resolution Numbers 1 through 3 have fallen to the wayside, do not despair. Go back to tried and true technique. Write in the middle of the night, when the children are asleep. Grab 15 minutes in the middle of the day (when no one is looking). Scrawl ideas on the backs of grocery lists and chequebooks, on receipts and used envelopes, on the palms of hands. And, on occasion, just don't write at all. Accept that life will pull you under now and then. Hold your breath and wait. Eventually — after all the errands and car pools, after the drudgery of earning a wage, after the trivial and the epic ... there will come a breathing space.

And when that space arrives, thoughts will swirl onto a page. They may be a bit disheveled, disorganized, grammatically ill-aligned. Not the words of the really big Canadian authors ... the ones who make money at it ... all six of them. And yet, resolve to cherish them. Take pride in having found both time and inspiration because, when all is said and done, that is the trick. The magician's secret all the "Big Ones" know about.

Writing. Real writing. The kind that cleans the soul. Writing is what happens in the precious moments in between the resolutions and the rules. ■

Paper Jam for lunch

There's a new theatre in Halifax, and it's happening at lunchtime. Out to Lunch Theatre offers a spicely alternative to Bud the Spud. The audience is invited to bring lunch, take in the show and be back at work, amused, refreshed and entertained in just under an hour.

Colleen Subasic's play *Paper Jam* will be the entrée to OLT's premier season, running from Valentine's Day to March 28. A romantic office comedy that celebrates the power of friendship, *Paper Jam* delves into the passions lurking just below the surface of the ordinary "office" relationship. Show time is 12:05 p.m. to 12:55 p.m. in the Khyber, Third Floor Turret Room, 1588 Barrington Street. Give yer Valentine a treat! ■

ReMembering ours

Don Linehan (1924–2003)

A long-time member of the Writers' Federation, Don Linehan died on January 7, 2003. Born in Singapore, Don was educated in Ireland but has lived in Nova Scotia since 1957. The father of seven children, Don was a gifted teacher, published poet and essayist, and much in demand on the public readings roster. He lived by the tidal stretch of the LaHave River and loved to canoe, fish trout, garden, raise Christmas trees, look at birds, look at art, act in plays, cogitate and meditate, pondering the relationship between humans and the "natural" world. Don won first prize for his poetry in the annual Atlantic Writing Competition, and placed with his writing for children.

Owl's Head Publishing released a collection of his poems, *Birds of Fire*, in 1986, and Pottersfield Press combined Don's prose celebration of Nova Scotia landscape with illustrations by artist Don Pentz in *The Mystery of Things* in 1989. The title is drawn from Don's deep roots in the theatre and his love of King Lear and the old befuddled king's last promise to Cordelia that they "will watch the goings-on of the world together, as if we were God's spies, and take upon ourselves the mystery of things." Spy on, Don. ■

Vita Rordam (1912–2003)

Danish-born writer Vita Rordam remarked on the occasion of her 90th birthday last April 24 that she had so many stories to tell that she would need at least another decade to get them all down but on New Year's Eve, she accepted another deadline. The fourth of five children born to celebrated Danish poet Valdemar Rordam and his wife, Margrethe, Vita arrived in Canada in 1953 living initially in a remote Cree community on Hudson's Bay, where she set her first memoir, *Winisk*, published in 1998.

Vita settled in Bridgewater, Nova Scotia in 1974 and won first prize for children's prose in the Atlantic Writing Competition for her manuscript which went on to be published as *Payuk and the Polar Bears* (Borealis, 1981). Indefatigable, Vita was in constant demand as a speaker and reader and had completed a 200,000 word manuscript that detailed her journey from Paris to Tehran in the 1930s, when she left the tiny Danish fishing village of Lundesborg to find a job in Paris as nanny to a French diplomat's family. 18-year old Vita accompanied the family's postings from Paris to Iran, by way of Stalin's Moscow, south to Tehran. She was contemplating a new memoir about her 50 years in Canada, even, as recently as December, considering the unthinkable – familiarising herself with computers. ■

Crafty words at the Fed

by Monika Sormova

Thing Feigned or Imagined:

The Craft in Fiction was

held at the Fed on

Saturday, January 25.

Juggling pens and papers

in one hand and coffee

cups in the other, 30

writers quickly filled the

room to hear Fred

Stenson's advice on

writing.

Being a writer for 30 years gives one enough time and opportunity to explore every nook and cranny of the craft. Add

12 published books, more than 130 films and videos, nominations for the Giller and Dublin IMPAC prizes. No wonder we ran out of registration space for Fred's workshop long before it took place.

Fred's presentation was not your regular lecture, but more a talk about a subject that he happens to know a lot about. While he focused on three main areas of fiction writing – specifically character, mood and motivation, and the spell of narrative – he answered questions on many other aspects of the process, addressed major problems in writing and offered a few tips on how to get "unstuck."

Almost half of the workshop was spent on character – "a driving force of a story." Characters, their creation, development and their roles in a narrative were discussed in the contexts of different points of view, voice, mood, motives, and story outline. Stenson also addressed common problems with characters and offered a few hints on what to do when "they don't behave like you want them to."

Satiated by a gourmet lunch of quiche, salad and desserts à la Buss, the writers returned to the workshop. A couple of quick exercises in description opened a discussion on mood and motivation, their place and their purpose in a story.

In the last part of the workshop, Fred discussed "the spell of narrative," the pros and cons of how to engage a reader in the world that writers create in their stories. Writing, for Stenson, is not an isolated process, but rather "a collaboration between the reader and the writer." "Know the effect that you have on the reader and make sure that this is the effect that you want," he said.

Over the past two years, Fred Stenson has been the director of the Banff Wired Writing Studio, providing online mentorship to writers. His guide to writing fiction, *Thing Feigned or Imagined: The Craft in Fiction*, was published by The Banff Centre Press in 2002. ■



2003 should be great year for film in NS

by Ron Foley MacDonald

After 2002's uncertainty, 2003 is starting off strongly. Film news is coming down the pike fast, with the strongest winter ever becoming a reality. For writers, as usual, it's a mixed bag; for crews, producers, suppliers and craftspeople, it's turning into a banner year even before it starts.

Ironically, the news across the country has not been good. Ontario's production scene is stagnant. More local productions have smaller budgets while American shoots will be about the same as last year. British Columbia has suffered a 40 percent decline. Saskatchewan has closed its only studio.

2002 saw the East Coast holding its own, with an unexpected surge through the fall and winter bringing things almost to 2001's record levels. The good news began to flood in over the holidays and into January. Halifax-based writer/director Thom Fitzgerald's latest film, *The Event*, was selected for the Sundance Festival, receiving maximum media coverage and crucial North American sales. Then Thom and the film headed off to Berlin to confirm European sales. Meanwhile, the writer/director continued his torrid pace by announcing his next film, *Three Needles*, would be shot in Halifax and Africa in March.

Mike Clattenburg's cult series *Trailer Park Boys*, which airs on Showcase TV, made a major mark with the announcement that the rock band Our Lady Peace would open each stop of its current tour with a half-hour live skit by the program's three principal actors. The exposure will bring a whole new audience to the show. With a third season in the can and another on the way, Clattenburg's low-budget series is threatening to become an international phenomenon.

If Nova Scotia had nothing else on its film slate, Thom Fitzgerald and Mike Clattenburg would represent a significant filmic force on their own. Once they're joined by the likes of Andrea Dorfman (*Parsely Days*), Scott Simpson (*Touch and Go*) and a host of other young up-and-comers, the future of the local industry looks good indeed.

But wait! There's more! In early February, Halifax producer Paul Kimball of Redstar Films announced that Bravo, the arts specialty network, had given him a license for a 13-part, half-hour series on emerging young classical artists to be shot in the late spring and early summer. Salter Street films got moving on two major projects: a stop-motion animated children's series called *Poco* and the long-awaited 4-hour dramatic miniseries *Shattered City* on the 1917 Halifax Explosion.

And then the Americans showed up early. *The Martha Stewart Story*, starring Cybill Shepherd, gets underway in February and March. And hot on her heels is Candace Bergen in a new film directed by *Saturday Night Fever* helmsman John Badham. Both will be shot in Halifax. All of this before April, the usual start of the film year on the East Coast.

With documentaries rolling from Eco-Nova (on shipwrecks), Arcadia Entertainment (on the impact of the song "Auld Lang Syne" and the Freemasons) and Topsail (Super Ships), there's no shortage of local activity.

The bad news: budgets continue to go down. Any writing tends to be done by harried producers, after the editors have cut the films to their allotted broadcast times.

The good news: all of this activity means we really do have a sustainable, vital industry here that will undoubtedly survive the ups and downs of a delicate-to-volatile funding situation. More and more of our own productions are market-driven; they're no longer dependent upon whimsical government cultural initiatives.

Content-free tax credits drive the industry rather than government content guidelines. With this new hands-off approach, the industry is free to follow its own path to the international stage. Ultimately, this will provide more room for writers. So even the bad news is good news. Go figure.

To top the whole thing off, the Academy Award nominations provided Salter Street with a nod for its provocative Michael Moore non-fiction feature *Bowling For Columbine*. The profile achieved by an Oscar nomination is priceless; producer Michael Donovan can probably finance his next five projects on the strength of this breakthrough.

And all of this before the snow melts. While it's possible that the rest of 2003 could be a bust, it's not that likely. With Wayne Grigsby's 4-hour Trudeau prequel set for late summer and fall (and it's going to be shot simultaneously in English and French, making it the equivalent of eight hours or four movies-of-the-week), this year is looking bright indeed. ■

Top 10 reasons and one congratulations

by Mary Jane Copps

The Fed's annual Gala has become my "Ode to Spring," made more poignant this year by its arrival two days after the Vernal Equinox. But just in case you haven't marked March 22 on your calendar, or have yet to attend a Gala at all, here's why you should be there:

10 It's warm and cozy. Okay, admittedly this reason wouldn't make the talk show circuit, but in a winter filled with snow plow battles and extreme oil bills, I think it's worth mentioning.

9 The food is great. Rallied by the creative and scrumptious leadership of Tyne Brown, volunteers bring the most colourful, delightful and unique treats ever to gather at an evening event.

8 Wine and beer will be served – I mean, it is a party after all.

7 You can tap into the grapevine of other artistic communities. Representatives from the world of film, theatre and publishing will give us a peek at the new and fabulous.

6 This year we will also celebrate International Poetry Day (which is Friday, March 21). Some of our most entertaining bards will add a spark to the Gala with their inspired words.

5 Our host for the evening is Sue Goyette! That means a room filled with an exciting, infectious energy and mounds of laughter.

4 You can shop! The Silent Auction is two, no three—hmmmm, possibly five long tables of incredible items. Everything from food baskets to framed paintings to weekend retreats. The bidding gets frenzied and all that competition serves to raise more money for WITS – Writers in the Schools.

3 In attendance will be: some people you've been wanting to see for months; some people you have been hoping to talk to; and some people you have been simply dying to meet.

2 The winners of our 26th annual Atlantic Writing Competition will be honoured. You will be part of an audience applauding those that captivated this year's



PHOTO BY DAVID L. POTTER

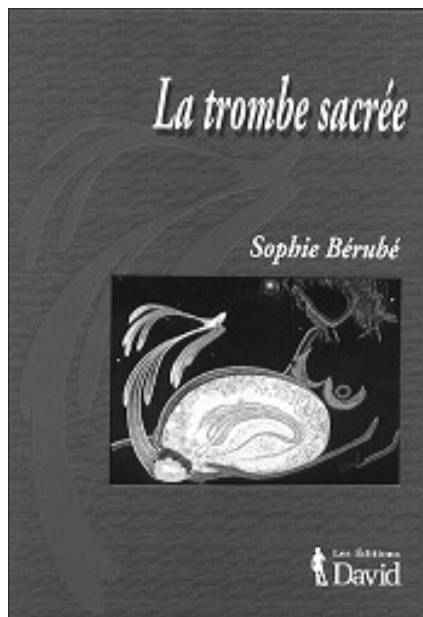
judges with their poetry, short stories, essays, writing for children and unpublished novels – and you'll enjoy listening to the work of the "First Place" writers.

1 And the number one reason to be there? (Drum roll, please.) To celebrate writers and writing of course!! You are a member of Canada's most active and exciting writers' federation. Make the most of it!!!

The Gala takes place at The Church (on the corner of North Street and Fuller Terrace in Halifax) starting at 7 pm. If you are willing and able to donate an item to the auction, or food for our evening buffet, please contact Monika Sormova at talk@writers.ns.ca or (902) 423-8116.

My one "congratulations" goes out to Sylvia Hamilton. One of the perks of being President is going to events such as the presentation of the Portia White Prize. It was thrilling to have the afternoon focus on Sylvia, a woman I know from her work on our Board and a person whom I consider a true inspiration. My admiration was only increased by her choice of protégés. Just a few days before, I had watched in awe as Shauntay Grant conducted Symphony Nova Scotia, and I am delighted that the work of photographer Peter Marsman will be brought to the attention of a larger audience. ■

ImPRESSed – The newest titles by WFNS members



La trombe sacrée

Sophie Bérubé

Les Éditions David, 2002, \$13 (sc)
ISBN 2-922109-79-8

La première manifestation. Le commencement. L'origine. Un long voyage qui nous tire, nous déchire, nous remplit, nous éblouit et dans lequel on s'embarque sans en connaître la destination. À l'image de l'accouchement qui nous amène d'un autre côté de nous-même dans une zone inconnue et indomptée, *La trombe sacrée* explore un univers mythique à la fois sauvage, ancien et familier.

Originaire de la ville de Québec, Sophie Bérubé vit en Nouvelle-Écosse avec son compagnon et leurs trois filles où elle se laisse inspirer par la magie et la beauté qui l'entourent. Son premier conte pour enfants, *Le chef-d'œuvre de Lombric*, a remporté le prix Lilla Stirling de la branche néo-écossaise de l'association des auteurs canadiens au printemps 2002. Elle a publié des poèmes dans diverses revues au Canada et à l'étranger.



Casting a Legend: The Story of the Lunenburg Foundry

Marika Finlay-de Monchy and Karin Cope

Nimbus Publishing, 2002 \$19.95 (sc)
ISBN 1-55109-409-6

Established in 1891, the Lunenburg Foundry, then a stove manufacturer, barely survived early financial losses, fire, and changes in ownership. In 1907, pharmacist J.J. Kinley and other local businessmen reorganized and rebuilt the company. It remains in existence today, a fertile mixture of old and new strengths, buildings, products, and people.

With the help of two unpublished memoirs, a variety of interviews, and photographic records contained in Foundry archives, *Casting a Legend* offers a detailed and personal account of the most fascinating episodes, processes, products, vessels, and characters to mark the long history of this well-known company and its hometown.

Writer and practicing psychoanalyst, Marika Finlay-deMonchy is the author of numerous books and articles on topics ranging from philosophy to the history of new technologies. She has recently completed two collections of short stories, *The Killing Ear* and *Herself at Sea*.

Karin Cope is a freelance writer, editor, and businesswoman living on the Eastern Shore. An award-winning poet, Karin has also written fiction and drama, as well as academic studies and non-fiction.



One More Step

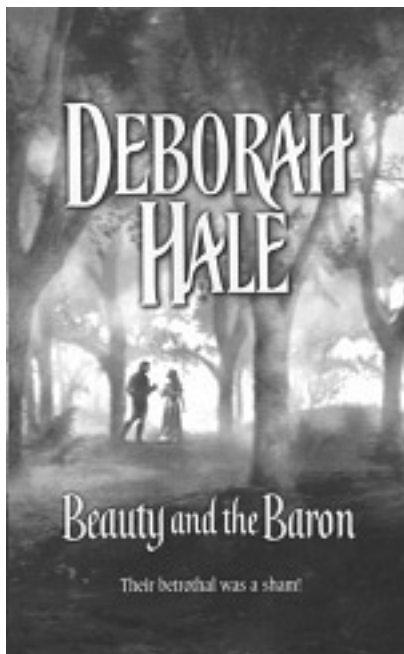
Sheree Fitch

Orca Soundings, 2002 \$9.95 (sc)
ISBN 1-55143-248-X

Fourteen-year-old Julian's parents separated when he was a baby and he is still angry and hurt. His mother has had relationships since – all of which ended disastrously – but this time it seems serious. Jean-Paul looks like he might be the real thing.

Julian is wary and critical as he comes to terms with the fact that he and his brother have to let down their defences and allow their mother to find happiness. On a road trip with his mother and her new beau, Julian finds that love – and happiness – come in many guises. In the end, he realizes that it is not blood that determines true family, but the willingness to stand together.

Sheree Fitch is a poet, educator, author of more than 14 books for children, and the recipient of many literary awards. She currently lives in Washington, D.C. and River John, NS. *One More Step* is her first novel for young adult readers.



The Beauty and the Baron

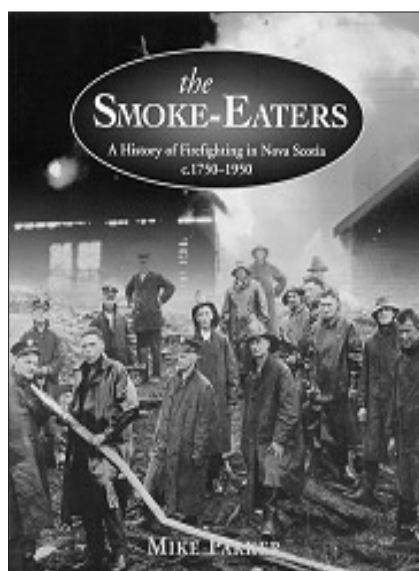
Deborah Hale

Harlequin Historical, 2003 \$6.25
ISBN 0-373-29255-4

Once the handsomest beau in England, Baron Lucius Daventry emerged from the horror of Waterloo with facial scars and an eye so sensitive to light that he must live a nocturnal life in the country. There his black mask and mysterious habits earn him the title "Lord Lucifer."

To brighten the last months of his dying grandfather, Lucius undertakes a pretended engagement with their beautiful neighbour, Angela Lacewood. Frightened by Lord Daventry's sinister reputation, Angela reluctantly accepts his proposal. Soon, she finds herself falling under the spell of his fierce intellect, wry wit and promise of rich sensuality. But can she find the courage to defeat his darkness and bring him back to life?

Beauty and the Baron is Deborah Hale's tenth novel for Harlequin Historical. A New Brunswick native, she now makes her home in Lower Sackville, Nova Scotia, with her husband and four children.



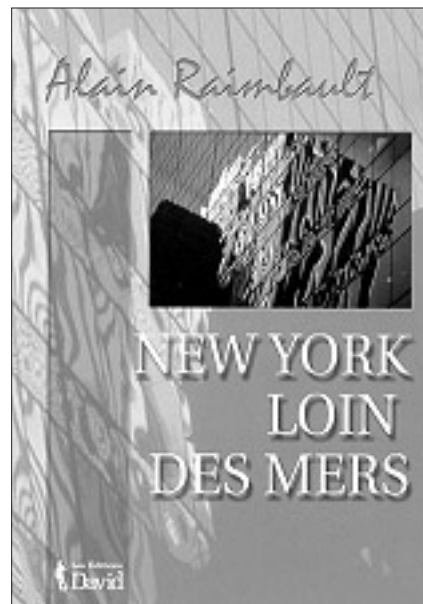
The Smoke-Eaters

Mike Parker

Nimbus, 2002 \$24.95
ISBN 1-55109-417-7

The Smoke-Eaters chronicles the great fires and disasters, the military firefighters, mine rescue corps, railroad and industry firemen, the women and Black firefighters who responded to the call. It includes more than 180 historic images – exhaustively researched in provincial and private archives – that provide a complete visual representation of unique and historic equipment, engine houses, apparatus and contrivances, and the firefighters who manned them. From the time of Halifax's founding in 1749 to the end of World War II, this is the definitive account of firefighting in Nova Scotia, the cradle of Canadian firefighting history.

One of Atlantic Canada's most prolific writers, Mike Parker's books celebrate an array of heritage topics. His publications include *Guide to the North Woods*, *Wood Chips & Beans*, *Running the Gauntlet*, and historic biographies of Digby, Lunenburg and Dartmouth.



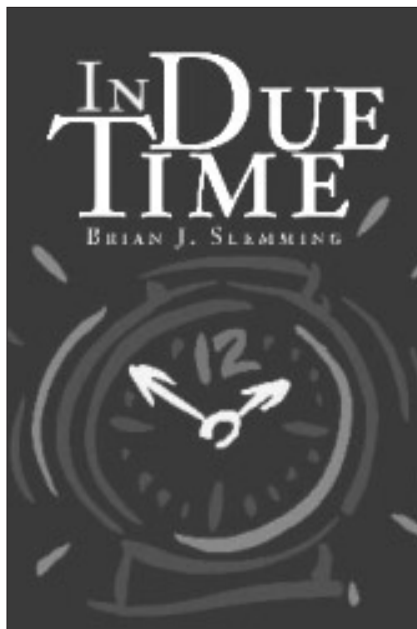
New York loin des mers

Alain Raimbault

Les Éditions David, 2002 \$10 (sc)
ISBN 2-922109-81-X

De la ville à l'excès, nous connaissons les peurs, les solitudes, les fulgurances. Espaces ouverts à toutes les célébrations, les cités improvisent des festivals de peaux unies, de fer et de friches, loin des reflets coupables des mers du sud. Les vagues, ici, sont de chaleur, et l'on vit un peu plus du désir de l'autre.

Alain Raimbault est né à Paris en 1966. Il s'installe au Canada, en Nouvelle-Écosse, en 1998. Il enseigne principalement le français à l'école francophone Rose des vents, dans la Vallée d'Annapolis. Il écrit de la poésie depuis toujours, et des romans pour la jeunesse depuis la naissance de sa fille en 1996.



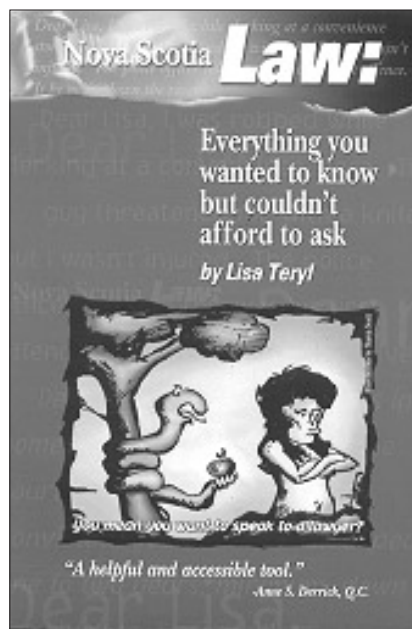
In Due Time

Brian Slemming

Writers Club Press, 2002 \$16.95
ISBN 0-595249140

Four years after delivering a guilty verdict against billionaire Stone Rivers for the murders of his wife and son, three members of the jury have vanished without a trace. The Columbus Police Department is stumped. Special Agent Casey Weldon is assigned to assist in the investigation in Ohio, but her first major case is not going well. During her first 36 hours on the case, her hotel reservation has been lost, she has overslept and has been shot at. Christopher Drue is investigating the trail in California and both agents are running out of time. As the bodies pile up in Columbus, fears need to be quelled. Is it time to make a deal? But with whom?

Brian Slemming is a first time novelist who lives in the tiny village of St. Andrews near Antigonish. His novel, *In Due Time*, may be ordered through Amazon.ca or through Barnes & Noble.



Nova Scotia Law: Everything you wanted to know but couldn't afford to ask

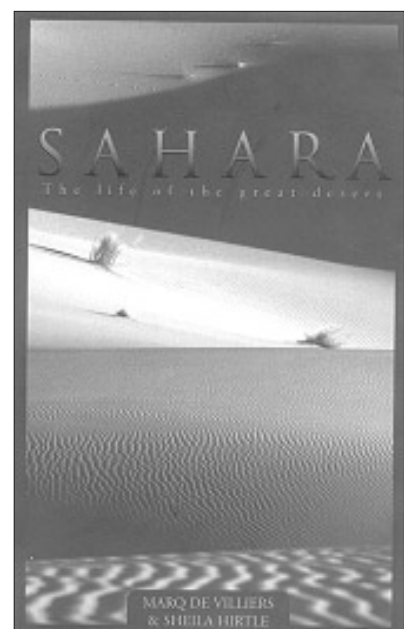
Lisa Teryl

Pottersfield Press, 2002 \$14.95 (sc)
ISBN 1-895900-53-0

Nova Scotia Law covers a wide range of topics such as how to deal with problem neighbours, who has to pay spousal support, and what to do when police lay criminal charges. The most commonly asked legal questions are taken from the author's seven years of practicing law and two years responding to questions from readers of her weekly column in the *Sunday Daily News*.

The author's firm, Teryl Scott Lawyers Inc., is a general practice with an emphasis on accident and injury law that Lisa founded with her brother Shawn Scott, who has provided cartoons for the book.

When not in the courtroom, Lisa Teryl teaches criminology at Saint Mary's University. She is the chair of New Start, a domestic violence intervention program for men, and volunteers her legal services for Coverdale, a non-profit organization helping women in the criminal courts. Lisa also has a black belt in Chito Ryu Karate and loves to sail.



Sahara: A Natural History

Marq de Villiers and Sheila Hirtle

McClelland & Stewart, 2003 \$34.99
ISBN 0-7710-2639-0

Marq de Villiers teams up with Sheila Hirtle to explore the history of the vast African desert. They describe the formation of the desert, the colourful creatures that inhabit it, and follow the footsteps of ancient and nomadic people who traveled through its past.

"... The book is part travel memoir, part history lesson and part archeological dig, bringing to life the stark landscape of earth's largest desert.... the authors' evocative blend of reportage and concise historical overview makes it a fine read for both armchair travelers and those interested in natural history." – *Publishers Weekly*

Marq de Villiers is the author of seven books, including the Governor-General's Award-winning *Water*. A veteran journalist, Marq has reported from Europe, the former Soviet Union and Africa.

Sheila Hirtle is a writer and researcher with a background in fine art, marketing and journalism. Her research on African art and music has provided background for many non-fiction books. Hirtle and de Villiers co-wrote *Into Africa: A Journey Through the Ancient Empires* (Key Porter Books, 1999).

Who's doing what?

■ **Racked:** members' words featured in the arresting abundance of journals, mags and e-signals heaped heavy on your editor's desk en route to the Fed Reference Library (open 9:30 to 4:30 Monday through Friday) for your adulation and approval: 'A Dark House', **Ian Colford**'s story of love's fault lines in *The Antigonish Review*; **Hilton McCully**'s short fiction was recently featured in Metro Food Bank's newsletter and his look at the history surrounding the Ship Building Museum, Ward's Brook, Cumberland County, graced the pages of the *Amherst Citizen*; **Carol Matthews** is marching with one of the most fascinating bands ever in *Saltsapes* – bird bands – offering rich histories and begging imponderable questions, while **Harry Bruce** continues to ponder from the Back Porch . . . and what better than his old car, Queenie?; it's not often that a book reviewer feels comfortable with "exquisite" as a central descriptive, so bless **Jodi DeLong** for her *Rural Delivery* approbation of *The Botanical Garden* by Roger Phillips and Martyn Rix (Firefly); and while there, take time to linger with **Gary Saunders** and his exquisite rumination on doves in 'Gift from the Sky'; **Betty Dobson** continues to amaze with her industry – her short story 'Severed Branches' appeared in *Toasted Cheese Online*, she placed third in *Sol-Magazine's* Another Diary contest and she placed two articles with *Atlantic Community Vision*; both writing from a parent's aching vantage, **Jill MacLean** and **Sue MacLeod** have soaring poems in the current issue of *Event*; **Ian Colford** and **Anne Simpson** are in reviewing mode in *The Antigonish Review*, Ian looking at Kate Sterns' gothic romance, *Down There by the Train* and Anne at Peter Sanger's exquisitely designed Gaspereau release *Spar: Words in Place*; 'The Clean Life' marks **Lorri Neilsen**'s poetic passage through living on the pages of *Grain magazine*; **Joyce Glasner** takes us on a slow, eye-popping ride on the Studio Rally in Visual Arts Nova Scotia Winter News (soon to be reincarnated as a more substantial *Cobalt*) ...

a glorious antidote to winter's monochrome, you can also accompany **Mary Jane Copps** as she views **Ken Ward**'s *The Dead Nows* art installation, delight in **Dan Walsh**'s rant about HRM's scrooge-like appreciation of the arts and learn all about **Jenni Blackmore**'s approach to ArtsSmarts . . . subscriptions are available at a federation near us for a mere \$15 . . . talk about arts smarts!; **Glen Hancock** keeps his eagle eye historically focused as a regular in *The Regional Magazine*; unearthing all the facts on the documentary series, *RIP: Great Cemeteries of the World*, in *Canadian Screenwriter*, has **Phil Moscovitch** pointing out the difficulties of creating a documentary when you can't interview the subjects; **Ray Pierce** looks at the winners of the inaugural Sobey's Art Award in the new *Arts Atlantic*; **Thea Atkinson** flashed in the first quarter edition of *Vestal Review* and slipped an article into the summer issue of *Brady* magazine;

■ **Chalking up the frequent flyer points:** **Budge Wilson** is spending spring on the road with a full week of readings in Prince Edward Island, featured appearances at children's literature conferences in Lennoxville, Quebec, and Toronto to help fly the Red Maples, as well as library readings in Liverpool and Lunenburg; **Harry Thurston** is on five city tour to promote *Island of the Blessed: The Secrets of Egypt's Everlasting Oasis* (Doubleday Canada) which looks at Egyptian history from ancient to modern; **Sue Goyette** braved the January gales north of the 401 at York University to read from *The True Names of Birds* for the Canadian Writers in Person series . . . her year is jam-packed with travel to the Northrop Frye Festival in Moncton in April, a teaching stint at Sage Hill in August, and an appearance at the Moose Jaw Festival of Words in July, where she'll be in the company of **Sue MacLeod**, Halifax's Poet Laureate reading from her newly minted collection.

■ **En route to the launch pad:** Gaspereau Press has announced an April release for *Six Mats and One Year*, **Alison Smith**'s second collection of poetry; *Ode to Newfoundland*, scheduled for March by Tundra, will feature a combination of Fogo Islander **Geoff Butler**'s joyful painting with intriguing lore and facts about his native province in this tribute to the Rock's beloved anthem; **Maxine Trotter** weighs in for Scholastic's Dear Canada series with a look at the populating of New France, *Alone in an Untamed Land: The Filles du Roi Diary of Helene St. Onge*; May's the auspicious month attached to the release of *Late in a Slow Time*, a new collection of poems by **Carole Langille** from Mansfield Press; **Kathleen Martin-James** is having fun adding the gentle, slow-moving *Manatee* to her wildly successful, fast-moving nature series published by Lerner; giving new meaning to prolific, **Lesley Choyce** is looking forward to the May release of *Tranquility* (Dundurn Press), his lyrical telling of 80-year-old Sylvia's fight for survival when the NS government decides to shut down her island community's ferry service; breathing down Lesley's shirt collar, **Richard Cumyn** has another new novel this May, *The View from Tamischeira*, which takes us on a 19th-century train ride through the Caucasus Mountains in the company of a cast which includes Archibald Lampman; following on his prize winning success with *Water*, **Marq de Villiers** has teamed up with longtime collaborator, Sheila Hirtle, to write *Sahara* due out from M&S this March; new out from Le Loup de Goutière press in Québec is the newest collection of poems from **Martine Jacquot**, *Points de repère sur palimpseste usé*. Martine has also just completed an adventure story for young readers, *Le secret de l'île*, which has been released by Chenelière/McGraw-Hill; a forced flight from civil war brought **Felekech Metaferia Woldehana** from Ethiopia to Dartmouth 10 years ago . . . today the eldest of her six children has graduated top of his class in engineering, and Felekech is about to

continued on page 15

Who's doing what – continued

launch her first book, *Sparkle: The Lucky Girl of Emperor Haile Salassie* (Trafford); borrowing the name from a well known market in downtown Fredricton, Lynn Coady will be celebrating her debut as editor this May with *Victory Meat: New Fiction from Atlantic Canada*, (Anchor Canada) – work by **Carol Bruneau** and **Christy Ann Conlin** will be rubbing shoulders with that of Michael Crumme, Lisa Moore, Michael Winter and others, offering testament to the searing, potent and unflinching writing that is Atlantic Canadian today.

■ **Heard on the airwaves:** **Debby Dobson** was sharing snow-shoeing serenity from the Annapolis Valley dykelands on Bill Richardson's eponymous CBC afternoon delight, and **Sue Newhook** was barely containing the smoke escaping her ears as she excoriated a country that includes citizens whose perceptions of fellow countryfolk include those 'wee Newfie leprechauns'.

■ **Bob Kroll** has just finished writing and directing *Transforming the Marsh*, a film documentary focusing on the Acadians extraordinary reclamation of hundreds of hectares of marsh meadow. Bob has previously looked at the Acadian legacy, writing and directing a dramatic re-enactment of the Expulsion for Heritage Canada, and has only recently returned from Florida and Texas where RFD-TV, a US public tv digital channel, commissioned him to write and direct a documentary about the *Making of Champion Horses*.

■ **Resource Link**, Canada's pre-eminent journal connecting classrooms and libraries with Canadian books and learning resources has looked back over the year and culled The Year's Best 2002, citing *Full Moon Rising* by **Joanne Taylor** illustrated by **Susan Tooke** (Tundra), *Fragments: Family Stories* by **Budge Wilson** (Penguin), and *Ahmed et le nid de sable* – *L'univers des pluviers siffleur* by **Kristin Domm** (Nimbus).

■ **David Weagle** has two articles – 'A Writer's Fear' and 'Attend Writing Conferences' – appearing in the brand-new 13th edition of *The Canadian Writers' Guide*, now available in better bookstores near you.

■ *Dropped Threads 2*, edited by Carol Shields and Marjorie Anderson, continues in the same tradition as the first volume, celebrating women's voices as they break the silences they keep. The only Maritime voice in this collection of beautifully crafted, fresh and original pieces is by **Mary Jane Copps** with 'In My Mother's Arms'. Published by Vintage Canada, *Dropped Threads 2*, will be available in bookstores in April.

■ **Steve Vernon's** about to be anthologized: 'The Woman Who Danced on the Prairies' will be included in Red Deer Press's *Open Space: New Canadian Fantastic Fiction*, and Double Diamond Press has bought his Aztec horror story 'Papercut' for inclusion in the soon-to-be-released *Scriptures of the Damned*.

■ The winners of the 9th annual TWUC short prose competition have been announced. With 23 writers reading 240 submissions, the final choices were left to Ann Ireland, Alan Cumyn and **Lesley Choyce**. Janice McCachen is \$2,500 richer for 'Vertigo and the Sex Queen', her very first submission of anything to anyone anywhere! Eleven finalists were also cited including **Donna-Lyne MacArthur**, Bridgewater for 'This Island Heart' and **Ami McKay**, Canning, for 'Illumination.'

■ When she's not coping with four kids at home with the flu, **Deborah Hale** is up to her perfumed wrists meeting deadlines! You may have seen her on *Global Noon* just before Valentine's Day talking romance with Duane Lowe, highlighting the release of her latest historical romance, *Lady Lyte's Little Secret*; but you'll certainly see her on the bookstands this spring and this year. Late last November, she signed a 3-book contract with Harlequin Historical. Those perfumed wrists are bonny with final revisions on the first, a medieval story

titled *The Last Champion*; and work is progressing on the second which will take place in Victorian times in Scotland. As if this weren't enough, she also agreed just after Christmas to a 2-book contract for Harlequin's new fantasy imprint. Hers will be the fourth in the new series which will feature fantasy stories with female heroes and romantic subplots. Keeping up? She's also working on another online serial to go live on www.eharlequin.com in May. Bravo Deb!

■ It's the reel deal! **Lesley Choyce's** most recent novel, *Cold Clear Morning* (Beach Holme Publishing, 2002) has been optioned by Avanti Films of Vancouver. While Lesley was on the west coast promoting the book, a copy found its way to Avanti director Tony Papa. The production company is best known for its international documentaries shot in Peru and Cambodia. Frank Borg has been contracted for the screenplay.

■ They're affectionately referred to as the "tree awards". We have our own Hackmatack (larch) Award, Ontario has the Silver Birch (aimed at readers in grades 4 to 6), Red Maple (grades 7 to 9), Golden Oak (adults) . . . and now . . . the Blue Spruce aimed at grades 1 through 3. **Joanne Taylor's** recently released debut picture book, *Full Moon Rising*, gloriously illustrated by **Susan Tooke**, has just been nominated for this newly minted, children's choice book award. Tundra has already put the book into a second printing, and it's just been announced that Susan Tooke is the inaugural recipient of the Lilian Shepherd Memorial Award for excellence in illustration.

■ **Hattie Perry's** launch of the second volume of *Soldiers of the King* went "without a hitch" and sales were brisk as the books were whisked off to become Christmas presents. Hattie's currently at work on 300 years of Barrington's history, a project that's been tucked into her keyboard for a while, tentatively titled *Peeking into the Past*.

continued on page 16

■ **In the limelight:** Sue Goyette tried on stand up comedy, and won, for the annual Venus Envy Bursary Society fundraiser, She's Funny That Way, early in February. The fund supports women in need who wish to further their education. Further down the road, the same weekend, **Donna Morrissey** was hosting the annual Two Planks and a Passion 10th annual Passion Art Auction. On March 8 at the Bauer Theatre in Antigonish, the Playwright's Cabaret - 2003 Playwrights in Performance is including **Virginia Hayden's** 'Barb and Her Voices' in their evening of new work. Actor Pauline Liengme will be performing this comic, definitely adult-rated monologue. And working behind the scenes for Mermaid Theatre in Windsor, designing a brand new international logo, was **Laura Jolicoeur** . . . Meanwhile, **Catherine Banks** has been sending her work across the country: *Bone Cage* was recently awarded Special Merit in the BC Playwriting Competition and will be read as part of Script-Lab's Off the Page reading series in Toronto this spring.

■ Dalhousie University has been hosting an innovative artist in residence as part of their Medical Humanities Program for a number of years now. Currently in residence is writer/storyteller **Linda Clarke** who during her time at Dal has been involved in presentations to the public, workshops with medical students and working with nurses. She's currently working with artist Renée Forrestall on a project to commemorate surviving veterans of World War 1.

■ **Barbara Whitby** has just received a copy of *Sea of Voices, Isle of Story: A WIWA Anthology of the Best Contemporary Writing*, a handsomely designed collection that includes her story 'Voyage of Discovery'.

■ **Shelley Cameron-McCarron** is glorying in the light of burning the candle at both ends: she's just finished updating

Fodor's 2004 NS, NB and PEI Travel Guide with her knowledge of Cape Breton and northeastern NS; written three articles for *Coastal Discovery Guide*; a story on spirits, wines and brews produced in this region for *Saltscapes Travel Guide*, West Jet is including her feature on Halifax as a destination in their *Airlines* magazine and she's just concluded an article on a Cape Breton hiking trail and her mom for the April edition of *Fifty Plus*. In her day job, the newsletter she writes for St. FX has just won bronze in the Council for Advancement and Support of Education publications award.

New Members

The Directors, members and staff of WFNS are delighted to extend the warmest welcome, or welcome back, to the following member writers:

Margaret Angus, Dartmouth
Blanca Baquero, Canning
Jane Broweleit, Halifax
Betty Calder, Lower Sackville
Anthony Cooper, Halifax
Sue Coueslan, Halifax
Aviva Cowan, Lower Sackville
Stéphane Dagenais, Halifax
Cynthia Daly, Fall River
Tabatha Garvock, Berwick
Alyson Gayton, Nine Mile River
Joyce Grant-Smith, Granville Ferry
Laurel Hamilton, Joggins
Leslie Hennen, Dartmouth

Karen Kelloway, Halifax
Tracy Leal, Head of Chezzetcook
Debra Leighton, Dartmouth
Cliff Mader, Sydney
Germaine MacDonald, Shubenacadie
Heather MacNeil, Stellarton
Michael McClare, Bridgewater
Sue Mills, Halifax
Boris Raymond, Halifax
Heather Sinclair, New Glasgow
William R. Sweetling, Dartmouth
Felekech Woldehana, Dartmouth
Catherine Whalen, Nine Mile River
Mary Wood, Halifax

Poets face off

Five Maritime poets went full contact for CBC's Poetry Face-Off at the end of February as Round One of a national competition. Deirdre Kessler, Richard Lemm and Shauna McCabe of PEI and Nova Scotia's **Andrew Steeves** and Shauntay Grant were the participating verbal pugilists. Each was commissioned to write a poem on the theme of "escape". Information Morning host Don Connolly officiated, complete with boxing ring and bell. The audience cast votes for their favourite poem.

CBC Radio held 12 live events across the country involving 60 poets. On April 7, the 12 finalists will compete in Round Two of the Poetry Face-Off, heard on Sounds Like Canada at 10 a.m. on CBC Radio One. Listeners from across the country will be asked to vote for their favorite poem by calling a 1-800 number, or by going to www.artscanada.cbc.ca/faceoff. The overall winner will be announced on Sounds Like Canada on Monday, April 14 at 10 a.m.

This is the second year for CBC's Poetry Face-Off. This year, CBC Radio and ArtsCanada.cbc.ca are joined by CBC Television Arts & Entertainment making the initiative a tri-media event. Through the participation of CBC Artspots, the finalists' poems will be used on at least one of several Arts & Entertainment programs, as well as on CBC's arts portal on the web, ArtsCanada.cbc.ca. The Maritime commissions will also be featured on Connections which can be heard on Saturday, March 22 at 11 a.m. on CBC Radio Two and on Sunday, March 23 at 4 p.m. on CBC Radio One. ■

The Digest

Booker T. Beagle, best of show

Halifax Regional Library has won a coveted and perhaps the most prestigious, recognition accorded by the American Library Association – the John Cotton Dana Award. From its beginning in 1946 the JCDA has observed the strictest of standards in recognizing libraries that have produced a public relations program that can be demonstrated to have helped the library achieve its long term goals and objectives. Nine were presented this year, 7 to US libraries in Las Vegas, St. Paul (Minn), Sarasota, Baltimore, Norwich (NY), Flint (Michigan), and Lancaster (PA). Toronto Public Library was cited for a performing arts lecture series that contributed to the city's literary and cultural life; and HRM Library was praised for the redesign of the Summer Reading Program.

"Libraries have been doing reading clubs forever," said Regional Services Manager Linda Hodgins. "I remember my first one here in 1978, and in a way they had become what they'd been every year . . . good but . . . so we took a long organized look at it all." Departing from past practice that had librarians programming and PR people promoting, the whole team sat around the table together. And what a team! Linda Hodgins was joined by librarians Karen Dahl (School-age Services) and Heather MacKenzie (Pre-school Services) as well as Communications and Marketing Manager Denis Cunningham and his team members Terri Fraser and Cynthia Gatto. Just sitting down together meant that ideas, different points of views and varied observations began ricocheting around the table. What had worked? What were the objectives? Who were they trying to reach?

A vibrant, animated approach emerged from the team dynamic. Booker T. Beagle, the computer savvy, skateboarding dog began tugging at the literacy leashes of smart, technologically sophisticated, urban 9 to 11 year olds . . . as well as their parents, because this age group depends on taller people to get them to the library. Parents were also quickly able to corroborate studies that have found that kids who keep reading over the summer maintain or improve their reading levels.

Fantastic plans (literally) for this summer's program are evolving. A series of five fantasy characters, each imbued with a different strength and part of the larger Book of Knowledge (the only other remaining copy was recently destroyed by the monster, Oblivion) will encourage Harry Potter/*Lord of the Rings* readers to achieve their reading goals, collect character cards and participate in online storytelling with their taller people.

John Cotton Dana (1856-1929) was a key figure in an era where progressive politics found willing innovators in progressive librarianship. Dana believed that libraries could and should play a leading role in realizing the democratic culture and egalitarian society. This was a revolutionary position in the 19th century when libraries were warehouses where books were hoarded and guarded jealously. Dana ended the closed stack system so readers could go right in to the shelves and choose their own books. He extended library hours, welcomed children (unthinkable) with open arms and appropriately sized furniture, and started providing useful information to citizens – maps, bus schedules, school and voting district lists. He urged librarians to better understand their institutions from the patron's perspective. Congratulations and thank you HRM Library for looking at this community with 20-20, 9-to-11-year-old eyes. ■

Birthday treat of Moons & Mermaids

The feather in the cap of Mermaid's 30th anniversary season is a new adaptation of **Laura Jolicoeur's** *Moons & Mermaids* (Nimbus/Art Gallery of Nova Scotia). The book began as a story for Laura's three children and incorporates striking verbal and visual images that shift shape through a dream sequence. Although Laura's whimsical images were originally executed in her favoured medium – ceramic tile – they offer infinite possibilities to the designers for this theatrical translation. Jim Morrow, Mermaid's Artistic Director, will design the production with contributions from Composer-in-Residence Steven Naylor and the theatre's talented in-house production team. The production will be seen throughout this region from the end of April to June, with a special appearance at the Museum of Civilization as part of Ottawa's Children's Festival from June 5 through 8. ■

Shelley Wallace juggles MIG

Well known across the country as a member of the acclaimed physical theatre troupe, *Jest in Time*, Shelley Wallace has agreed to hang up her mime sneakers and focus her considerable energies providing management to Moving Images Group.

MIG is the umbrella of all Nova Scotia organizations whose members work in film, television and the electronic media (your membership in WFNS automatically extends you membership privileges with MIG). Since 1990, MIG has been organizing and providing support and professional development opportunities for those who work in the film and television industry in Atlantic Canada.

As Executive Director, Shelley has been working with MIG member organizations to finalize a program of winter and spring workshops and intensives ranging from the Hot Popcorn series to screenwriting to pitching to microphone techniques. Details are available on line at www.movingimagesgroup.ca ■

More Digest

Freedom to Read Week – Relevant in 2003?

February 23 - March 1, 2003

A variety of reasons are cited by nice people to ban books and reading materials. Phil Legere, Principal at Dartmouth High School, is currently responding to a completely independent student newspaper, *The Zine*, with “Any publication connected with Dartmouth High School has to have some kind of scrutiny by school authorities.”

The paper is written, produced and financed – outside of school hours – by Mike Landry, Paul McLeod and Keegan Kam, 17-year-olds in Grade 12, who all hold part-time jobs and make high grades. The newspaper’s publisher, Mike’s dad Brian Landry, is standing by the team: “My wife and I tell the boys not to be vindictive and don’t pick on people. Just write what you think is right.”

Last spring, the Federation’s phones rang off the hook as the Tri-County School Board entertained a challenge to the inclusion of *To Kill a Mockingbird* on a list of books approved for reading in Nova Scotia schools. The discussion sparked was animated, passionate and exciting. Rather than removing the book from the shelves, the School Board undertook to expand library holdings to be more inclusive of the larger issues.

Currently libraries throughout the province are maintaining a watching brief on their community access computers. Members of the public are regularly using the technology to surf sexually explicit websites. With 200 Internet terminals currently available and another 200 to be added this summer, Halifax Regional Library has developed very thoughtful Internet access policies which state: “The Library neither censors access to materials nor protects users from information they find offensive. The Library is a public place used by people of diverse background and ages. There are sites on the Internet inappropriate for viewing in a public setting.”

Last April, the WFNS Board added its voice to journalists who condemned the reduced diversity of opinion in local newspapers caused by CanWest Global Communications’ demand that all its newspapers – including the *National Post* – carry identical editorials written by the corporation’s head office in Winnipeg.

Our freedom to read in a country that by world standards is a free one must never be taken for granted . . . not even in 2003. Erupting controversies may make it easier to remove a book from the shelves, to install software that filters potentially unpleasant materials, and

to employ well-meaning strategies to suppress dissent. However, the health of a democracy can’t be measured by voter turnout (apparently 100% of the people voted in the last election in Iraq), but by the liveliness of the debate that can be sustained within the democracy, the debate that informs our free choices. The livelier the debate, the more robust the society. ■

Don Sedgwick comes from away

Don Sedgwick, who has been the Program Coordinator of the Book and Magazine Publishing Program at Centennial College, Toronto, will relocate to Nova Scotia. Don will be moving to a farm here with his wife Shaun Bradley, former Canadian Manda Group General Manager. There’s already some talk that the Centennial College publishing program may find an extension in the Maritimes, possibly in concert with the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design.

Don has worked in publishing for 24 years and has been the vice-president and publisher of Doubleday Canada, Scholastic Canada, and Seal Paperback Books. He also worked for six years at McClelland & Stewart. His articles have been published in more than a dozen magazines and newspapers. Don has taught publishing professionals at Ryerson Polytechnic University, Simon Fraser University, and the Banff Centre for the Arts.

Don will retain his connection with the Transatlantic Literary Agency, which was founded in 1993 by David and Lynn Bennett and incorporated two years later as Canada’s first literary agency specialising exclusively in children’s books. Sedgwick joined the company as an agent and partner in 1998, expanding their list to include adult non-fiction and fiction authors. ■

\$10,000 prize for stage play

UBC’s \$10,000 Creative Writing Residency Prize in Stage Play: March 31 is the deadline for an unproduced, unpublished full-length stage play. The prize includes a one-month residency at the University of British Columbia. While on campus the winning playwright will mentor Creative Writing students, work with theatre students and faculty on the development of the play for performance, and deliver the Stage Play Residency Lecture. The winning play will be published by *PRISM international*. For details visit: www.creativewriting.ubc.ca/events/resprize ■

BusStop

by Jane Buss, WFNS Executive Director

Monika asked the other day, "What do you mean, Jane, with this 'on my soapbox' expression?" Laughing, I sketched in details of London's Hyde Park cranks who, to this day, carry their own soapbox stages to be better seen as they launch into their rants decrying or promoting all manner of opinions and causes. I allowed as how it was my natural habitat and that there were likely to be many sightings ahead as we progress to a provincial election.

"Art and culture can strengthen a community's social fabric, contribute to its economy and enrich life-long learning," said Culture Minister Rodney MacDonald in a speech late last year. But do Minister MacDonald's actions reflect these words? In 1990, the Province of Nova Scotia invested \$70,722 in operating funds for WFNS. The handy-dandy Bank of Canada inflation rate calculator informs me that that same investment today would be \$90,551.30. Minister MacDonald's 2003 investment? \$61,000.

According to statistics which appear on the Saskatchewan Arts Board website (www.artsboard.sk.ca), Nova Scotia sets the benchmark for provincial per capita investment in culture at \$1.35 per Nova Scotian. Even Newfoundland's ahead of us at \$1.37, with Saskatchewan in the middle at \$3.74 and Québec leading the way at \$7.75. If you compare the number of hours that libraries are open to the public in Canada's major cities, Halifax leads the way with the fewest hours. Writers who participate in writers-in-the-school programs in other jurisdictions are recompensed at twice the rate of Nova Scotia's WITS, with the Federation raising 65% of the available budget independently. Last year, the Province declined to invest in any of our publishers. In the same year, Manitoba, with a similarly sized economy, invested \$395,000 in book and magazine publishing in their province.

On Wednesday, March 22, 2002, representatives of the Nova Scotia government, including lawyers and security guards, descended on the Halifax office of the Nova Scotia Arts Council. They secured the front door; Executive Director Tim Leary was summarily dismissed and the rest of the staff were informed that the arts council was being dismantled. A year later, the Minister is still unable to announce the names of a new Culture "Partnership" Board that he has created and which is directly responsible to the Minister.

It's a fact that the culture sector in Nova Scotia is creating jobs more quickly than any other sector in the

provincial economy . . . indeed, at a faster rate than in any other province in the country. It's also a fact that culture's direct effect on the GDP of Nova Scotia is greater than the effect of fishing, trapping, logging and forestry combined. As candidates come to your door, asking for your vote, ask whether they agree that cultural development is an important aspect of Nova Scotia's social and economic development. Ask whether they support increased/restored investment in culture. Ask whether they will support a more adequate investment in our libraries. Ask about the book they're currently reading.

Stepping off the high moral ground of this soapbox before my nose begins to bleed, it's time to remind you of the approaching April 30 deadline for Writers' Council applications. Members who have been professionally published or produced (plays, film, etc.) may apply for Writers' Council accreditation once annually. If you're already a Council member, you need never apply again. Members of the Council are able to participate in the Writers-in-the-Schools program; are accorded their own webpage at WFNS's site; and hold 10 of the 12 seats on the Federation Board. If you wish to apply, simply send a letter to the Standards Committee, WFNS with a complete writing cv by the April 30 deadline. ■

The Wallace Stegner Grant for the Arts 2003

The grant consists of \$500 and one month free residency in the Wallace Stegner House in Eastend, Saskatchewan. Applicants must be published Canadian writers able to spend October 2003 in residence at the Stegner House. (The month may be negotiable.) Conditions of the grant require that the writer give two readings and/or workshops in the Eastend school and one reading to a local group of young people or children. Send applications to The Eastend Arts Council, Bursary Committee, Box 415, Eastend SK S0N 0T0 by May 1. Include a résumé, a 10-page sample of work, a statement as to why the applicant wants to come to Eastend, and 2 literary references. The winner will be announced in June. Direct inquiries to sharon.noble@sk.sympatico.ca or to (306) 295-3810 or (306) 295-3670. Details are on their website (www.dinocountry/stegner_grant.html). ■

Spring tune-ups – Workshops at the Fed

Writing into the Core of Experience with Maureen Hynes

When: Saturday, March 29, 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Cost: \$40 WFNS members/\$50 non-members (light lunch provided)

This 3-hour workshop will give participants an opportunity to explore the techniques and power of life writing, which is the art of giving voice to one's own experiences and perceptions, and using them as a springboard to the written word, in a variety of genres. With examples from her own and other writers' work, Maureen Hynes will guide you through several steps – both reflective and interactive – that will help you define an experiential starting point, explore its force, and write a short treatment of it during the session. Such subjects as travel, family and childhood experiences, the significance of feeling different from others, and intense experiences like the death of a friend or family member are common starting points, as are explorations of aspects of our identity.

What shape will your work take? Poets, fiction and non-fiction writers will all benefit from this approach, even though workshop examples will be primarily taken from poetry. An openness to experimenting is required for this workshop, and it's recommended, but not necessary, to bring a few significant photographs as back-up inspiration for the writing we will do during the session. Finally, there will also be some discussion of longer-term supports to keep you writing.

Maureen Hynes is the winner of the 1995 Gerald Lampert Award for best first collection of poetry, awarded annually by the League of Canadian Poets. Her other publications include a collection of poetry, *Harm's Way* (Brick Books, 2001), and a memoir *Letters from China* (Women's Press, 1981). She was the co-editor of *We Make the Air: The Poetry of Lina Chartrand*. Hynes was Writer-in-Residence at UPEI in 2002, and she has worked for years as Coordinator of the School of Labour at Toronto's George Brown College. ■

Finishing Touches:

Making Your Short Story or Novel the Best It Can Be with Carol Bruneau

When: Wednesdays, April 9 through May 7 – 7 to 9 p.m., Saturday, May 10, 2 to 4 p.m.

Cost: \$135 WFNS members/\$150 non-members (easy payment terms negotiable)

You've got that second or third or fourth draft, and feel close to submitting it. The competition is fierce, so it helps if your short story or novel is as polished (irresistible) as you can make it. This 6-week course offered by novelist Carol Bruneau is a methodical, yet insightful, checklist of things to consider before you pop that envelope into the mail.

Sessions will help you revisit stories you think/hope aren't far from being finished. Topics include whether the story's structure, voice, point of view, and pacing are the most effective; whether characters, plot and dialogue are consistently convincing; when detail contributes and when it bogs down. Above all, we will be considering The Reader/Editor here and exploring how to turn an almost-finished piece of work into something a reader won't want to put down.

Carol Bruneau's critically-acclaimed fiction has received national attention. She's the author of two short story collections, *Depth Rapture* and *After Angel Mill* (a finalist for the Dartmouth Book Awards), and a novel, *Purple for Sky* (published as *A Purple Thread for Sky* in the United States) which won the Raddall Prize and Dartmouth Book Award in 2001. George Elliot Clarke praises Bruneau's work for its "bold-face confidence" and says her "lethally strong and lethally true" stories read like "Munro maritimized by Richards." *The Globe and Mail* called Bruneau "a first-class storyteller who uses words magically." Carol worked as a photo editor and reporter/rewriter with the Canadian Press in Toronto before moving back to her native Halifax a decade ago. She holds an M.A. in Journalism from the University of Western Ontario, and a B.A. and M.A. in English from Dalhousie University. ■

Cross-Training with Alf Silver

When: Saturday, May 3, 2003, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Cost: \$35 WFNS members/\$45 non-members

Novels, stage plays, radio dramas, songs, film and television scripts – what's the difference? Alf Silver has worked in all of these forms, sometimes adapting the same story from one form to another. The workshop will travel from one form to another, using practical examples and necessarily subjective observations, focusing on the ways some ideas have to be altered from one form to another, and the reasons why some ideas can only be communicated in a novel or a song but not both.

The *Winnipeg Free Press* once said of Alf Silver, "His output is massive; he is also a master of many forms, moving from one to another as easily as a bird changes branches." Alf has been a playwright, an actor, novelist and a songwriter. He grew up in various places across the Canadian prairies. A former playwright in residence at the Manitoba Theatre Centre, he was a member of the Playwrights' Union of Canada's negotiating team for the first standard contract with the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres; helped develop Manitoba's Playwright Development Program; and was a founding member of the Manitoba Association of Playwrights. His novels include the *Red River Trilogy*, *Acadia* (which won the Thomas Raddall Fiction Prize), *The Haunting of Maddie Prue* and, most recently, *Three Hills Home* (Nimbus). He has written radio plays for the CBC – *Clean Sweep* for The Mystery Project, *Vanishing Point*, *Different Drummer*, *Cranks*, *Rebel Angels of Song*, and *Stereo Morning*. ■

Markets, etc.

Remember that you have access to the Wonderful World of the Web and the Internet through your friendly, neighbourhood library. The library is a wonderful place – it not only has books but also Public Access Computers which patrons may use to surf the waters of the Internet to their hearts' content.

Appearance of a market or contest in this column does not imply an endorsement by WFNS.

■ **Beyond the Pale: Dramatic writing from First Nations writers and writers of colour:** a revised and updated 2nd ed edited by Yvette Nolan is planned. Deadline May 15. Monologues (500 words), scenes (1,000 words including stage directions). Each monologue & scene must have a set-up, text which introduces each piece. No more than 3 submissions in each category. Submissions may be original (written specifically for this publication), or excerpted from work already produced or published. Send by email (ynolan@interlog.ca) or by mail to Beyond the Pale, Playwrights Canada Press, 54 Wolseley St., Toronto ON M5T 1A5. Full name and all contact information must be on each submission. SASE for return of manuscript. Email submissions will not receive an acknowledgement. (From CanPlay)

■ **The Korean Canadian Women's Anthology:** 1505 - 666 Spadina Ave., Toronto ON M5S 2J7. Deadline March 31. "The anthology aims to acknowledge the histories and help shape the future of Korean-Canadian women and, in doing so, to create a space to share and grow." Submit a short summary of your work or work-in-progress, a brief bio, mailing address, phone, and email address to

kcwa@hotmail.com or to the above address.

■ **Open Space: New Canadian Fantastic Fiction:** an anthology edited by Claude Lalumière to be published by The Bakka Collection/Red Deer Press. Deadline April 3. Pays \$100-\$300 on acceptance. New fiction only. For details visit their website (<http://lostpages.net/openspace.html>)

■ **Milieu Press:** A new press for women writers in Canada (www.milieupress.com). Their first annual portfolio anthology will feature selections from works-in-progress by emerging and established women writers of poetry, creative non-fiction and lyric prose. Send 10-25 pages of cutting edge work.

■ **Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine:** 475 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016 (www.themysteryplace.com/eqmm/) Welcomes new and established writers. Publishes every kind of mystery short story: the psychological suspense tale, the deductive puzzle, the private eye case, the gamut of crime and detection from the realistic (including the policeman's lot and stories of police procedure) to the more imaginative (including "locked rooms" and "impossible crimes"). Hard-boiled stories as well as "cozies." Not interested in explicit sex or violence. Does not want true detective or crime stories. Especially happy to review first stories by authors who have never before published fiction professionally. First-story submissions should be addressed to EQMM's Department of First Stories. Looks for strong writing, an original and exciting plot, and professional craftsmanship. "Almost any story that involves crime or the threat of

crime comes within our purview. ... EQMM has a distinctive tone and style and you can only get a sense of whether your work will suit us by reading an issue." Sample copy available for \$5. Length: prefers 2,500 to 8,000 words, occasionally up to 12,000 words, features one or two short novels (up to 20,000 words) each year, although these spaces are usually reserved for established writers. Considers shorter stories, including minute mysteries of as little as 250 words. Pays US 5 to 8¢/word, sometimes higher for established authors. Does not accept stories previously published in the US. Response time: up to 3 months. Writers' guidelines on website.

■ **Elbow Creek:** (www.elbowcreek.com) An e-zine focusing on the American West, primarily the 1800s. Features fiction, poetry and articles about the American West during the golden age of the cowboy. Story length from 1,500 words to 10,000. Pays \$20/story, article or poem. Writers' guidelines on website.

■ **GORP (Great Outdoor Recreation Pages):** (www.gorp.com) (Email: editorial@gorp.com) GORP.com, 22 W. 19th Street, 8th Floor, New York, NY 10011. The Web's core resource for information on outdoor recreation and adventure travel. Always looking for professional writers and photographers. Especially interested in articles from established writers that are available for reprint. Mention in your query if you have corresponding photos or artwork for which you have the rights. Detailed writers' guidelines. Interested in: activities; regional attractions; regional roundups (a summary of the adventure opportunities in or near major cities or destina-

continued on page 22

tions, will consider summaries of weekend getaways centered around a specific city); off-the-beaten-track adventures; conservation (feature stories about issues that affect outdoor enthusiasts, including environmentally oriented adventures from around the world, and updates on ongoing environmental efforts); gear (accessible and informative reviews on the gear that makes the outdoor lifestyle possible). Buys non-exclusive e-rights to all material, and wants to keep it on their site for as long as they deem necessary. (You are quite free to sell the material elsewhere, however.) Payment is scaled to story length and subject matter. Tries to respond within 2 months but due to the volume of submissions, not all queries will be answered.

■ **GoNomad.com**

(www.gonomad.com) An alternative travel guide with features, directories and lots of information on travel. "We publish articles, photos and travelogues aimed at providing information on alternative travel, volunteering, eco-tourism, responsible travel." Buys one-time electronic rights and permanent archive rights. Accepts reprints (pays \$25) if they've run in other newspapers. Needs: Practical articles on alternative travel and unique destinations. Guides, especially written by locals, to intriguing places around the world. Photos crucial, publishes galleries and also include sound clips (mp3s). "We want articles that inspire, provide good information, and are written in our style. Feel free to query or submit articles to us by email. We are open to your ideas and will work with you to get it just right." Length up to 1,000 words. Pays \$25-50 for features if accompanied by photos.

■ **Night Train:** 85 Orchard Street, Somerville, MA 02144 USA (www.nighttrainmagazine.com) This print magazine debuted September 2002 featuring the best stories by the best known and unknown writers. Pay up to \$100 US. Accepts email submissions. Detailed guidelines on web site. Welcomes submissions of flash fiction, short fiction, self-contained novel excerpts, or creative non-fiction in traditional or experimental styles. Does not consider poetry, criticism or book reviews at this time. Response time: about a month. Simultaneous and multiple submissions accepted.

■ **Poet's Canvas:**

(www.poetscanvas.org) (Email: poetscanvas@hotmail.com) A quarterly ezine that publishes innovative, quality poetry and prose, original artwork, literary articles and essays. Verse of any style and theme will be considered, also micro fiction and short stories. Encourages both new and established artists to share their best work. Previously published work may be considered. Simultaneous submissions not accepted. Send no more than 7 poems per submission, and no more than 1 selection of prose/micro fiction. Artwork may be sent in jpg format, or provide a link to artist's webpage. Payment varies: regular contributors \$10/poem; new voice \$40 for set of 3 poems; featured artist: \$25 per poem or \$150 for an exclusive feature (by invitation only); for micro fiction or short story 2¢/word up to 2000 words and 1¢/word if over 2,000 words. Accepts email submissions. Detailed writers' guidelines on website.

■ **Adbusters:** Media Foundation, 1243 West 7th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V6H 1B7 Phone: 604.736.9401 Fax: 604.737.6021 Email: editor@adbusters.org Editor: Kalle Lasn. (<http://adbusters.org>). "Adbusters is dedicated to reinventing the outdated paradigms of our consumer culture and building a brave new understanding of living. We relish all truly political materials, whether they be scholarly probes into the decline of civilization, environmental forays into the forests, sci-fi carpet rides into cyberspace, or humorous spoofs about commercial culture. More than anything, we seek compelling ideas that further the critical perspective and offer activist solutions. Our language is culture jamming: the new activism. Our audience is global. With subscribers in 40 countries, our circulation is fast approaching 100,000. We are neither left nor right, but straight ahead. Many of our readers are serious activists on the academic, entrepreneurial, environmental and communications fronts. We welcome editorial queries and submissions for: Battle of the Mind – short newsy pieces about the politics of our mental environment; News From the Front – activist news from around the world; Endgames – short pieces assessing the state of our physical environment. We also welcome feature articles, op-ed pieces, short fiction (up to 2,000 words) and poetry. Submissions will not be returned. We do our best to respond to all inquiries, but be aware that we are sometimes inundated. If you have not heard back from us after 4-6 weeks, please assume that we will not be able to use your idea or submission.

continued on page 23

■ **Harper's Magazine:** 666 Broadway, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10012 will neither consider nor return unsolicited nonfiction manuscripts that have not been preceded by a written query. Will consider unsolicited fiction. Unsolicited poetry will not be considered or returned. No queries or manuscripts will be considered unless they are accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope (use US stamps).

■ **The Atlantic Monthly:** considers unsolicited manuscripts, either fiction or nonfiction. Guidelines on website (www.theatlantic.com) then click on "contact us". Poetry Guidelines: "The editors read with interest and attention every poem submitted to the magazine and, quite simply, we publish those that seem to us to be the best. Our interest is in the broadest possible range of work: traditional forms and free verse, the meditative lyric and the 'light' or comic poem, the work of the famous and the work of the unknown. We have long been committed to the discovery of new poets. Our one limitation is length; we are unable to publish very long poems, and authors should consult back issues of the magazine for precedents." Send 2 to 6 unpublished poems to the attention of Peter Davison, Poetry Editor, and include a self-addressed envelope with sufficient postage for return of the manuscript. Contributors living outside the US should include international reply coupons. Will not consider simultaneous submissions or poems that have been previously published, even in small, private editions. Responds in 2 to 6 weeks. Pays on acceptance. Poems and manuscripts should be sent to: The Atlantic Monthly, 77 North Washington Street, Boston, MA 02114.

Party Pieces in Antigonish

Playwrights Cabaret – March 8

Looking for respite from the endless snow and winter winds? Why not head for Antigonish and revel in a cabaret at the Bauer Theatre on the campus of St Francis Xavier University on Saturday, March 8, 7 p.m.

Twelve playwrights will be featured in Party Pieces at The Playwright in Performance Cabaret, a special fundraising event for PARC (Playwrights Atlantic Resource Centre) hosted by Gay Hauser. Playwrights include:

Catherine Banks	Robert Chafe	Nate Crawford
Marguerite MacNeil	Virginia Hayden	Charlie Rhindress
Pam Calabrese MacLean	Adele Meagan	Natasha MacLellan
Margie Carmichael	Pam Stevenson	Ersleine Smith

Other performers include Pauline Liengme, David MacLellan and Darcy Lindzon

"IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU, ISN'T IT?" will be a highlight of the evening. The audience will have the opportunity to bid on the chance to have a play written about them by special guest playwright Mary Colin Chisholm. The 10-minute play will be written, rehearsed and performed within the space of 2 hours.

Admission is by donation at the door. Sponsors for the evening's festivities are The Royal Bank of Guysborough, B and P Consultants, The Playwrights Guild of Canada, MacLean Brothers Woodworking, Marco's Hair Design, Antigonish Aesthetics, and The Sunshine Cafe,

The evening begins at 7 p.m. with Happy Hour in the Lounge and the cabaret begins at 8.

New Play Reading Series March 7–9

The cabaret is part of the New Play Reading Series sponsored by Festival Antigonish over the weekend of March 7 to 9. The New Play Reading Series will feature staged readings by five PARC member playwrights on Friday night (March 7) and Saturday during the day (March 8), winding up with the Cabaret on Saturday night.

Scripts being read as part of the series are:

Voices Carry by Andrea Dymond
Cradle by Joanne Miller
Apartmental by Mary Colin Chisholm
Millie's Turn by Larry Lamey
Faithless by Yvette Nolan ■

Ga Ga Gala – March 22!

You know when it's so cold in the Maritimes that the ski hills shut down, that you need a reason to celebrate. WFNS has the perfect answer – the Gala Celebration of Writers and Writing. It's the warmest place to rub shoulders with other writers, have some fun, make outrageous bids on any manner of literary nonsense assembled on the Silly Silent Auction of Literate Lunacy Table, catch up on all the gossip, celebrate new writing voices, get out of the house . . . YES . . . get out of the house! So . . .

The Gala Celebration 2003 will take place at **The Church, 5657 North Street (corner of Fuller Terrace) in Halifax on Saturday, March 22 , 7:30 p.m.** We're hoping March will have transcended its leonine roots and be heading in lambish direction. Some sumptuous nibbles, cheap and cheerful cash bar, inventive madcap decorations to highlight brief readings by our winning writers are all in the works. Special guest poets will be helping us celebrate International Poetry Day. The movers and shakers of the writing community will all be contributing to the evening's hot air. And we'd like to invite your input.

Every year we try to assemble a cornucopia of offerings on our Silent Auction Table that will tickle your subtle literary fancies. Every penny we can earn, we can invest in our fabulously underfunded Writers in the Schools (WITS) program. Past Auction hits have included "Beer with Budge followed by Répas à la Alan"; Alistair MacLeod's sweaty old writing cap; Pierre Berton's bow tie . . . Do you have inspired ideas of offerings too titillating to be



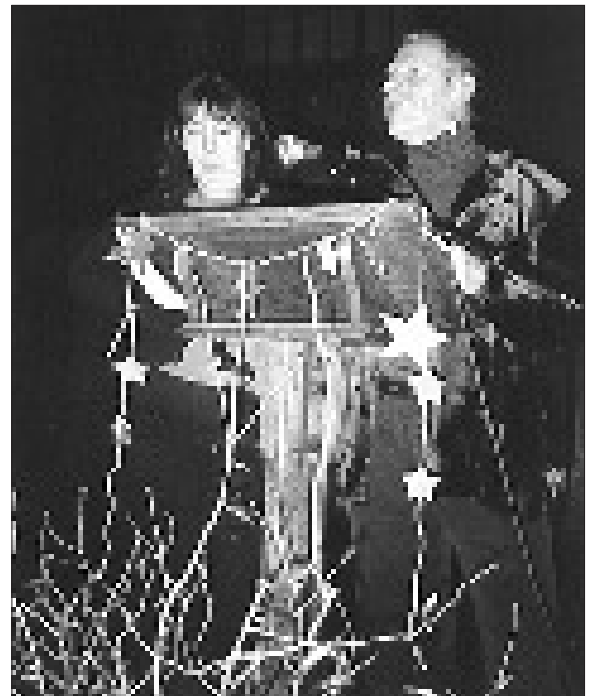
PREP FOR A TABLE JAM – SILENT AUCTION STYLE, GALA 2002

resisted? Does your second cousin-twice-removed have a castle on the Rhine that she'd be willing to offer for a week long writer's retreat? No suggestion or offering is too fanciful. Give us an e, or call the office with suggestions.

The Gala Committee is also welcoming any offers of help on the following work parties: Auction Table Preparation, Food Committee, Decorating Committee, Welcome, and CleanUp Gang. None is a long time commitment, and all are guaranteed to be entertaining. Your stalwart office team looks forward to hearing from you. Jane and Monika Stalwart, WFNS, (902) 423-8116. ■



THE HOT JAM GALA 2002



HOT JAMMERS, SUE GOYETTE AND KEN WARD, GALA 2001