

eastword

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
WRITERS' FEDERATION OF NOVA SCOTIA

Recently elected

Ideally a Board of Directors is made up of individuals who bring an array of skills, talents and expertise to the task of governing the organization. This Federation has always endeavoured to ensure that all genres of writing are represented; that different parts of the province, backgrounds and outlooks are well reflected. Over the years, WFNS has prospered with the guidance of members who have served, usually for a full four-year tour of duty, concerned only that the Federation thrive and be healthy. A new Board was unanimously endorsed at the Annual General Meeting early in June – talk about ideal! *Eastword* asked that the Directors take a moment to introduce themselves on these pages, and share some of their reflections on the Fed.

Douglas Arthur Brown has agreed to serve as the Federation's President for the coming year. Like many of our members, Douglas's baptism into the Writers' Fed was through the annual Atlantic Writing Competition, where he placed second in the Novel category. For the past 10 years, Douglas has worked to promote writing in Cape Breton – partnering with Ma Fed for three years to produce Write of Way, a weekend festival of writing workshops and readings, and recently participating as an instructor in our popular Rural Writes program. He uses the hours he spends driving to and from Halifax to attend board meetings to plot his next story or novel. Douglas is the author of three books – *The Magic Compass* (now in its third printing), *Archibald's Boo-boo* and the novel *A Deadly Harvest*. He was also publisher and managing editor of *Pottersfield Portfolio* until it passed away from unnatural causes (or perhaps lack of government support is not unnatural in our sector?) last year. When not writing, he spends his time trying to figure out Jane Buss's recipes for home preserves – a task he believes, should he be successful, will make him a rich man one day.



DOUGLAS ARTHUR BROWN

Vice-presidential laurels have been taken up by **Lezlie Lowe**, a freelance writer, broadcaster and researcher. At the Fed's Board table since 2002, she's our representative at Word on the Street. Lezlie has worked as a writer and editor at the Halifax weekly *The Coast* since 1995. She has written for publications such as *Flare*, *Atlantic Books Today*, *Rev* and *Visual Arts Nova Scotia* magazine. She is a columnist for *2* magazine and *The Coast* and has contributed to CBC Radio's *OutFront*, *Information Morning*, *Main Street*, *Definitely Not the Opera*, *The Arts Tonight*, and as a regular Friday panel member on *Sounds Like Canada*. Lezlie has worked as the principle researcher on documentary films for Life Network, the Independent Film Channel and Bravo. In 2004, Lezlie received a regional Radio-Television News Directors Association of Canada honourable mention for a CBC commentary piece on George W. Bush. So far, Mr. Bush hasn't called to respond.

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WRITERS' FEDERATION OF NOVA SCOTIA
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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: Susan Mersereau
STUDENT WHIZ: Kirk O'Connell
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Sandra Phinney

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 NOVA SCOTIA
Tourism, Culture and Heritage

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 Canada Council
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du Canada

Recently elected – continued from page 1

Poet, scholar, storyteller, world wanderer **Marilyn Iwama** has agreed to bring her prodigious listening talents to the role of Board Secretary. Of her writing self, she says, "It's the only one that takes me out of all my other selves. The one that stops the clutter of tapes forever running in my head. The closest I'll ever be to a Glace Bay miner, tunneling down to the bowels." And of the Fed?: "Who knew just past the corner of Marginal and Terminal could be central as a heartbeat? Being on the Board makes me feel like an adult. In all the ways that (mostly) don't hurt."

Treasurer **Kathleen Martin** welcomes the prospect of helping to mind the pennies entrusted to assist writers to grow and prosper. A non-fiction children's writer and the Regional Officer for the Canadian Children's Book Centre, Kathleen recently concluded her observations on being a non-fiction writer in *Children's Book News*: "One of the best parts of my job, in addition to the peace that comes from the writing once it is begun, is meeting the readers. I love visiting classrooms of children and seeing the delight on their faces when they get to say 'ectotherm' in high, squeaky voices, and 'omnivore' in low, deep voices and know not just the joy of the sounds of the words, but also of knowing how they describe their world. I love that what I write gives them facts – things they can count on, things that not only spark their imaginations, but also answer their questions and help them to become experts – give them the chance to say, 'Mummy, you might not know this, but . . .'"

Fresh faces in this year's Board lineup are **Carol Bruneau** and **Sandra Phinney**. Carol's written two collections of short fiction and two novels. A native Haligonian, she's worked as a journalist and photo editor, and most recently, as a teacher of writing. Her affiliation with WFNS began 12 years ago when she entered the Atlantic Writing Competition and won second prize in the writing for children category. Though that piece still languishes in a drawer, it marked the beginning of her devotion to writing. Since, she has gone on to win the Thomas Raddall Atlantic Fiction Prize and the Dartmouth Book Award and to share her (compulsive) love of crafting stories with new writers. Besides working as a mentor in the Fed's Mentoring Program, she has taught at Nova Scotia Community College, Mount Saint Vincent and Acadia Universities, the Community of Writers, and at the Fed itself. Presently on the part-time faculty of NSCAD University, she continues to teach writing while mothering three teenage sons and working on another, always another, novel.

Sandra Phinney writes from her perch on the Tusket River down Yarmouth way. She's developed a freelance business that keeps her hopping (and learning). Sandra is a prolific writer and especially loves to celebrate the lives of Atlantic Canadians in magazines, books, videos and trade journals. In between deadlines, she tries to snatch some time to dabble in poetry and fiction. She's always believed that the Fed is the best thing that ever happened to writers in Atlantic Canada. Serving on the Board strikes her as a daunting (and humbling) proposition but she's ready to leap in.

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Allan Lynch is completing his term as Past President and responded to *Eastword's* gentle probing: "I've spent, ahem, several decades writing about other people and telling their stories. I find writing about myself akin to peeing when people are listening – it's a bit intimidating. Do you go for modesty or come across as the poster boy for Egotism? The thumbnail CV is that I am a non-fiction writer, writing mostly about travel: business and the business of travel. However, I don't totally limit myself to that. I try to marry my love of history and the quirky into my queries and work. So far it has worked. I believe you can have a career writing in Nova Scotia, though, frankly, it becomes harder and harder to do unless you can also develop strong relationships with editors and publishers outside the region. Having written that, I don't want you to think I'm a negative person. My basic philosophy is to believe in yourself and never miss an opportunity to promote yourself and your work."

Sue Newhook is also completing her four-year term this season and writes: "When I was a kid, several grownups (not, I hasten to note, my ever-supportive mom) told me, 'No one can make a living as a writer.' Hah. Words and scripts and videotape and stories and teaching – it's all writing, all thinking and talking and writing about writing. My friends get sick of hearing me say, 'Have I mentioned how much I love my life?' The Fed is a community of people (especially the Office Goddesses) who have been a support and an outlet for me, since the first time I walked through the door. Have I mentioned how much I love the Fed?"

Susan Cameron, Lorri Neilsen Glenn, Shauntay Grant and Phil Moscovitch are also continuing with their terms in the coming season. As they're zooming about the country with the onset of summer, writing, giving readings and meeting other more lucrative deadlines, *Eastword* will conclude this round-up in the fall when this ideal Board meets again. ■

New faces at the Fed



PHOTO BY PEGGY AMIRALTI

SUSAN MERSEREAU

June 1 marked the advent of a new team at WFNS. After four years, Monika Sormova, bid us fond adieus to explore different horizons. The Federation is delighted to welcome Susan Mersereau as the new Executive Assistant.

Susan was born in Saint John, New Brunswick, moved to Dartmouth at 14 and now considers Halifax her home. With more than 100 applications for this position, Susan shone. It wasn't until she was comfortably installed, that it became clear this wasn't Susan's first brush with the Writers' Federation. Back in 1992-93, Susan, then a Grade 9 student at Eric Graves Junior High, was invited to participate with a group of promising writers who were working with Jenni Blackmore and Writers in the Schools for an extended period of time to explore and develop their writing.

Her love of language, writing and reading piqued, Susan went on to complete a BA in English Literature at Dalhousie, followed by an MA at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. During university studies, she most delighted in poring over William Blake's illuminated books and in sending embarrassing fan mail to J.M. Coetzee. Her other great devotion is to Halifax's

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independent music scene. She volunteered for several years with CKDU, both as host of the music programs *Indie Afternoon* and *The Mountain Low* and as a member of the board of directors. She also spent a year dealing Blackjack and Texas Hold 'em Poker, an experience which may someday prove the raw material for a few stories of her own.



KIRK O'CONNELL

A similar avalanche of applications arrived indicating an interest in filling the Fed's summer student position, and the winner is Kirk O'Connell. He's from Glace Bay, has a twin brother, two little brothers and a mother who all still live in Glace Bay. Kirk studied computing at Acadia University for three years but left the big lights of Wolfville to come to the big lights of Halifax to continue his education in engineering at Dalhousie. Kirk is an Aries, likes boxing, politics, the occasional funny noise, long walks on the beach, and bananas. If you have a computer-related issue, he is more than willing to help. ■

Markets

■ **Poetry:** 1030 North Clark St., Suite 420, Chicago, IL 60610 (www.poetrymagazine.org) Monthly journal founded in 1912 "... no special manuscript needs and no special requirements as to form or genre: we examine in turn all work received and accept that which seems best." Does not accept previously published work, including online publication. No simultaneous submissions. Send up to 4 poems. Responds within 8 weeks. SASE required or self-addressed envelope with validated international reply coupons. Pays on publication, \$6/line (minimum payment of \$150), and \$150 per page of prose. All prose pieces are commissioned, but considers queries if accompanied by SASE. Writers guidelines on website.

■ **Poets & Writers Magazine:** 72 Spring Street, New York, NY 10012 (www.pw.org/mag) A bimonthly trade publication for writers of poetry, fiction, and creative non-fiction. Does not publish original fiction, poetry or book reviews. Accepts e-mail queries (editor@pw.org). Buys first North American serial rights, pays on publication. Editorial content divided into four sections: News & Trends (brief articles, 500-1,200 words keeping readers up to date on pertinent information in the writing and publishing industries); The Literary Life (1,500- to 2,000-word essays on the more contemplative aspects of writing, ranging from creative process to the art of reading); The Practical Writer (advice and how-to articles offering nuts and bolts info about the business of creative writing, 1,500-2,000 words); Features (profiles of and interviews with contemporary writers who reflect the rich diversity of current American literature, 2,000-3,000 words; also pieces that provide in-depth looks at subjects of interest to creative writers, e.g. small presses, regional writing, the distinctions of genre). Guidelines and past issues on website.

■ **The Atlantic Monthly:** (www.theatlantic.com) 77 North Washington Street, Boston, MA 02114. This iconic magazine also publishes poetry. Send 2 to 6 unpublished poems: attention David Barber, Poetry Editor, include a self-addressed envelope with sufficient postage for return of the manuscript. Contributors outside the U.S. should include international reply coupons. No simultaneous submissions or previously published poems, even in small, private editions. Responds in 2 to 6 weeks. Pays on acceptance. Does not accept poetry submissions via email or fax. Guidelines say: "The editors of *The Atlantic Monthly* 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." (Writers guidelines on website – click on "contact us" in the left column.)

Finding good material close to home

by George Burden

As a physician with a busy family practice in Elmsdale, Nova Scotia, I'm often asked where I find time to write. I usually answer that while many doctors golf to relax, writing serves this end for me. Since the late 1980s, I had published many newspaper and magazine articles on a variety of subjects, but somehow I kept drifting back to topics with a medical-history motif. These stories provided the basis for the book *Amazing Medical Stories*, which Goose Lane Editions published last year.

The general public seems to have a fascination with all things medical, and I resolved to put together a collection of stories that would entertain as well as inform. To this end I contacted an acquaintance, a nurse named Dorothy Grant, who had been publishing similar articles. At first she seemed skeptical, but we carefully combed our past articles, to which – fortunately – we had sold only first publication rights. I selected 11 pieces and Dorothy chose nine to put together 20 stories packed with action, romance and sometimes the downright bizarre. All of these had a tie-in to our home province of Nova Scotia.

So, you might ask, what could have happened of medical interest in Nova Scotia? Well, for starters, Alexander Graham Bell did groundbreaking medical research in the province. The world's largest baby (23 pounds) was born to Nova Scotia's 7-foot-11-inch Anna Swan. British Major General Robert Ross, the only general ever to occupy Washington, D.C., is buried in Halifax, his death a 200-year-old forensic mystery. Finally, Halifax's key role in retrieving the victims of the *Titanic* was one reason the *Titanic* Historical Society put *Amazing Medical Stories* near the top of its reading list.

Despite the steep odds of getting a book published these days, I believed in my material and was undaunted. I used a writers' reference book to carefully select a half-dozen Canadian presses that published this type of material. From five I received no reply, but Laurel Boone at Goose Lane Editions expressed great interest in the book's concept. After revisions, some further research and much hunting for old photos, we ended up with our 20 stories in a glossy and professional-looking paperback format. While the advances were unlikely to allow us to retire, we had the satisfaction of having one of the publisher's most successful book launches.

Perhaps Lady Luck granted me a few favours, but I'm a firm believer that you make your own luck. To research my stories, I spent a lot of time rummaging around museums and archives. Also, it's a lot easier to write about something you know. In my case, my medical background gave me a unique perspective from which to judge and expand material. In many cases, I was able to add my own theories or even come up with new slants on old topics.

Secondly, I learned that to write a book you should choose a topic or genre in which you are avidly interested. Your enthusiasm will show both in pitching a book to prospective publishers and in your writing.

Finally, recruiting a compatible co-author with similar interests can provide a writer with support that can see you through the rough spots.

For writers of non-fiction books, let me reiterate that it's best to write about something you know. If you have credentials in that area, so much the better. It lends credence to your writing. If you're a plumber, I'm sure there's a book of "Amazing Plumbing Stories" out there to be written. Every occupation has a mass of lore and history the general public would find fascinating. If you're already publishing articles along these lines, *never*, ever sell all rights.

Being an expert is no guarantee of success. Most academic writers cultivate a dry, overly esoteric style of writing, which is unappealing to the general public. I prefer to tell a story and use a more personal voice while still relaying the facts.

Finally, you don't have to live in New York, Paris or Bangkok to find tons of information for an interesting work of non-fiction. Moose Pasture, Manitoba, probably has enough material to fill a couple of books! ■

(This article originally appeared in *The Writer*, June 2005.)

Gardening with Jodi in PEI

Discover the delights of gardens and writing about them from Jodi DeLong. The 12-acre New Glasgow Country Gardens in central Prince Edward Island is the site of this day-long writing workshop, Saturday, July 23. Jodi DeLong is a freelance writer and a compulsive gardener. Her gardening columns appear in *The Chronicle Herald*, *Saltscapes* and the *Atlantic Cooperator* and she is a regular contributor on garden-related topics in publications across Canada and the U.S. Registration is \$50 and pre-registration is necessary. For information visit www.gotocreativeconnections.com (click on "writers workshops") or phone 902-569-3913, 902-566-9748 or contact Debbie Gamble-Arsenault at dgamble@isn.net ■

ScreenScene heats up Canadian drama finally recovers

by Ron Foley Macdonald.

For Halifax's residents and visitors, 2005 is the year the motion picture production scene took over. From February onward, crews have been in the streets filming practically everything in sight.

In fact, 2005 may just be the province's biggest year ever for film shoots. With the boost from enhanced provincial tax credits announced in March and the delayed fall-out from last summer's successful trade mission to Los Angeles, the scene here is approaching capacity. So much so that Nova Scotia Film Development C.E.O. Ann MacKenzie suggested that some work is being pushed to the autumn to avoid maxing out the industry. This, of course, is music to the ears of the film craftspeople who endured thin years between 2001 and 2004; what's even more encouraging is just how much of this activity is our own indigenous work.

While the media is understandably infatuated with big Hollywood names such as Kathy Bates and Billy Bob Thornton – even Halifax downtown weekly *The Coast* can't help but gush about Rob Lowe, in town to film a six-hour series entitled *Beach Girls* – it is heartening to know that at least one-third of all this frenzied motion picture activity consists of stories set in Nova Scotia, concerning Nova Scotians.

For local writers, this is a sign of the robust health of the industry. It reveals that, yes, there is something of a market for our stories. A brief listing tells the tale. In May, the low-budget feature *A Bug and A Bag of Weed* got underway. In June and July, the *Trailer Park Boys* feature film will be shooting. And in July, August and September, the *TP Boys*' sixth television season will be shot.

Already in the can and ready to hit the international Film Festival Circuit are two other Nova Scotia feature dramas. Dan MacIvor and Amnon Buchbinder's *Whole New Thing* – shot in the depth of winter in January and February – is complete and ready to be unspooled on 35mm projectors the world over. Similarly, Thom Fitzgerald's long-awaited opus *Three Needles* – with a cast so large and stellar Otto Preminger or David Lean would be envious – is nearing final completion. With at least one feature documentary by William D. MacGillivray (on Nova Scotia's award-winning author Alistair MacLeod) also heading for theatres, this is unquestionably one of the

busiest times in Nova Scotia's rich and enduring cinematic history.

A look at the larger Canadian picture offers even more hope. This year broadcasters finally shook off the lure of cheap, reality-TV programming to reconfirm their commitment to making genuine Canuck drama. While docu-tainment will still be the mainstay of all those lifestyle channels, Global and CTV networks announced considerable new slates of drama, including substantial series and signature TV movies.

Even the CBC took up the challenge by laying out a plan that stakes out a veritable flood of new dramatic programming. The turnaround has led the Writers' Guild of Canada to proclaim that the terrible drought in original drama – sparked by the landmark 1999 C.R.T.C. decision where low-budget reality TV could gain the same Can-Con [Canadian content] points as full-fledged drama – is now over.

While there are still a few potholes in the road to all this greater glory, there's no question that the industry is in full expansionary mode. This is the very point where writers experienced in other formats and genres should be seeking out those all-important contacts in the film and television industry. The Atlantic Film Festival, September 15-24 – with its industry programs and co-production sessions – is the ideal place to to dip those writerly toes in the now very warm waters of motion picture production.

The A.F.F. will be celebrating its 25th Anniversary in 2005, so the welcome mat will be out for practically everybody. That means that many of those very broadcasters I've mentioned – who just made those hefty commitments to original Canadian drama – will most likely have representatives at the Festival. (For information on the Atlantic Film Festival visit its website: www.atlanticfilm.com)

Writers who want to get their foot in the door should start planning for September now. There's been no better time in the last half-decade.

Meanwhile see if you can negotiate your way through the thicket of film shoots that dot Halifax's streets. And try not to gawk too much at Billy Bob Thornton, Rob Lowe or Tom Selleck. ■

imPRESSed — the newest titles by WFNS members



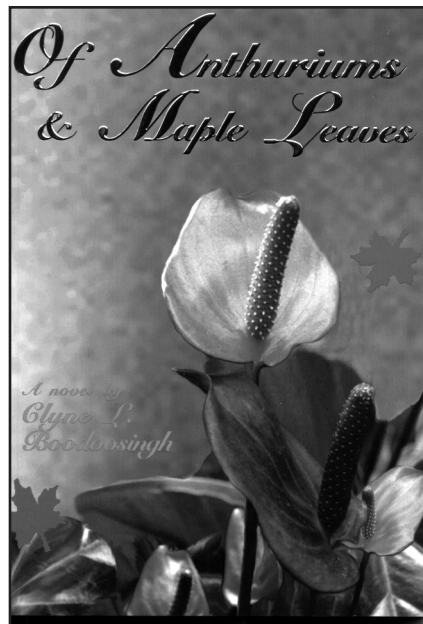
The Hermit of Gully Lake

Joan Baxter

Pottersfield Press, 2005, \$15.95
ISBN 1-895900-70-0

The Hermit of Gully Lake is a thought-provoking, intimate and respectful look at the life and times of American-born, Nova Scotia-raised Willard Kitchener MacDonald (1916-2003), better known as the Hermit of Gully Lake. For 60 years, MacDonald endured hardship and extreme isolation, living as a recluse in a cave-like shelter six feet by nine feet in the deep woods wilderness of northern Nova Scotia.

Joan Baxter is an award-winning Nova Scotian author who has written extensively about Africa. She is now living in northern Nova Scotia where she has turned her attention to this incredible story of a man of enormous strength and character who became a legend. She is back home after two decades of living in and reporting from Africa for the B.B.C. World Service and Associated Press. Her most recent book, *A Serious Pair of Shoes* (Pottersfield Press) won the Evelyn Richardson Award.



Of Anthuriums and Maple Leaves

Clyne L. Boodoosingh

Self published with Community Books,
Lockport, N.S., 1999
ISBN 1-89649615-6

This book is a story of humble birth, adversity, fighting the odds, a wise and wonderful woman, sorrow and suffering, and rebirth and renewal. The novel begins with the birth of Albert Johnson and his early years, followed by his survival and teaching career in Trinidad and his marriage to Laura Gordon, the heroine of the story. When the family moves to Canada in the early 1960s, they settle in Fundyville, Nova Scotia, where the rest of the narrative is played out. *Of Anthuriums and Maples Leaves* is about one family's struggles and successes in the Caribbean and Canada.

Clyne Lincoln Boodoosingh is a retired school teacher. Born in Tunapuna, Trinidad, he was educated at Mount Allison University, the University of Toronto, and Cambridge University. Emigrating to Canada in 1963, he settled with his family in Digby, Nova Scotia, where he taught history and multi-cultural studies. This is his first book.



Captain Cannonball

Richard Charlton

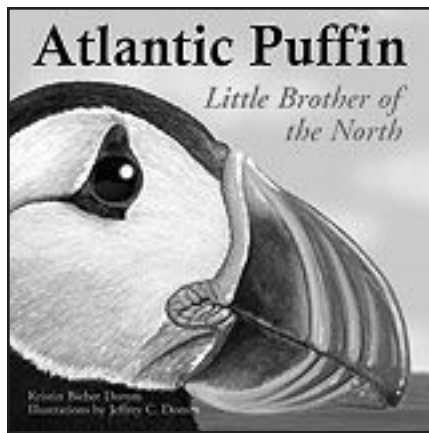
illustrated by Audrey Matheson

Little Fishes Publishing (Self published),
2003, ISBN 0-9689333-2-7

In the third Kippernickker adventure, the Kippernickker kids find a bottle with a message in it, from Cuthbert the cabin boy who is prisoner on *The Mandrake*, a pirate ship. The Kippernickkers use their adventure key, and once again go through the trapdoor hidden in the thick vines of their garden. They soon find themselves face to face with the horrible Captain Cannonball. But how do they rescue Cuthbert?

Richard Charlton lives in Dartmouth, NS. A professional electrical engineer, he created the Kippernickker stories for his grandchildren in California who asked for the stories so often he finally had to write them all down.

Audrey Matheson makes her home in Bracebridge, Ontario, and is an accomplished artist in pen and ink, oils and acrylic.



Atlantic Puffin: Little Brother of the North

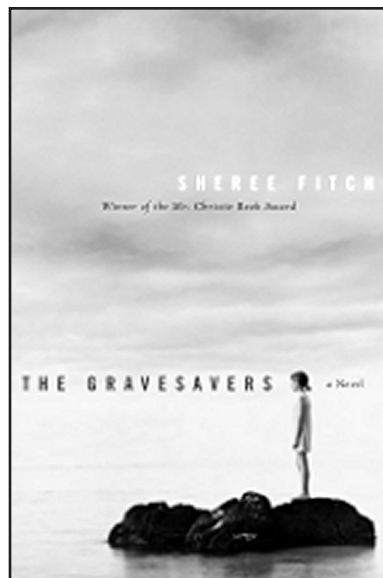
Kristin Bieber Domm
illustrations by Jeff Domm

Nimbus Publishing, 2005, \$8.95
ISBN 1-551095-18-1

Atlantic Puffin: Little Brother of the North, is a 700-word non-fiction story in the first person about the Atlantic puffin. The book includes information about habitat, breeding cycles, eating and nesting habits, caring for young, enemies, and more. The gorgeous illustrations, by Jeff Domm, portray these fascinating birds in various settings – in their burrows, underwater, flying in the sky, and nesting. Kristin test-read early versions of the manuscript to school children, and she and Jeff visited Newfoundland to observe the puffins firsthand at Cape Bonavista and Elliston.

Kristin Bieber Domm has been a teacher for more than 20 years. She is the author of *Ahmed and the Nest of Sand*, included in the annual Canadian Children's Book Centre Our Choice catalogue. She currently teaches English as a Second Language with the Halifax Regional School Board.

Jeff Domm is a wildlife illustrator with 20 book titles and many awards to his credit. Director of the Nova Scotia Wildlife Society, Jeff has been teaching at NSCADU for the past 10 years. He paints from his studio in Cow Bay.



The Gravesavers

Sheree Fitch

Doubleday Canada, 2005, \$16.95
ISBN 0-385-66073-1

In the wake of a family tragedy, 12-year-old Minn Hotchkiss is sent to spend the summer with her sour grandmother in a tiny seaside town in Nova Scotia. Almost as soon as she arrives, Minn discovers the skull of a human child on the beach. She is swiftly caught up in a mystery that reaches back more than a century, to the aftermath of the most tragic shipwreck in Maritime history before *Titanic*.

Over the course of this extraordinary summer, Minn will discover romance with a boy who turns out to be much more than he seems, and learn that the grandmother she resented is more curious, dedicated, and surprising than she had ever guessed. She might even meet a world-famous rock star! By summer's end, Minn will solve a ghostly mystery and, most importantly, finally be able to give up the terrible secret she has kept locked in her heart.

Sheree Fitch is the bestselling author of numerous books for children, as well as a poet and storyteller. She lives in Washington, D.C., with her husband.



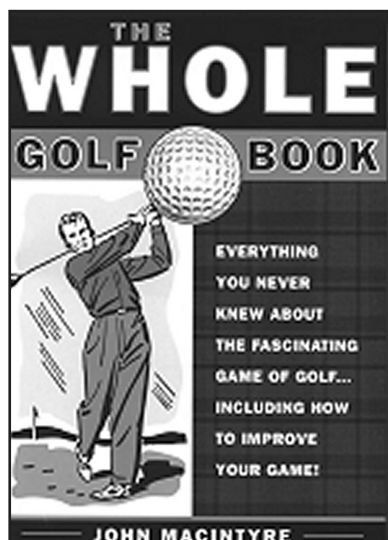
The Destined Queen

Deborah Hale

Luna Books, August 2005, \$16.95
ISBN 0-373-80243-9

Maura Woodbury thought her duty would be done once she woke the Waiting King, who legend claimed would rescue her country in its darkest hour. Now she discovers her task has barely begun, with greater perils looming ahead. For Rath, once a notorious outlaw, has no superhuman skills, magical weapons or enchanted army with which to overthrow the Hanish invaders. Yet somehow he and Maura are expected to make an impossible legend come true.

Deborah Hale lives in Lower Sackville with her knight in shining armor and their four children, who are currently under a growth spell. She has published a dozen novels with Harlequin Historicals.



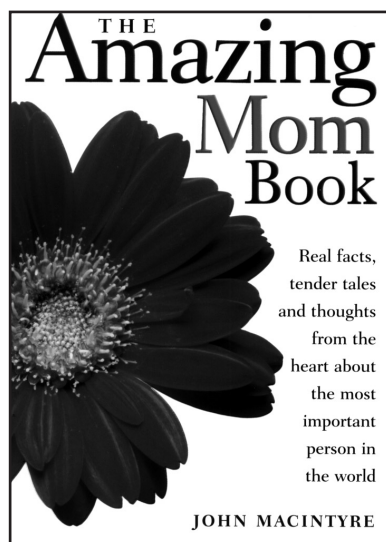
The Whole Golf Book

John MacIntyre

Sourcebooks, Inc., 2005, \$13.95
ISBN 1-4022-0354-3

Just over a century ago, golf was largely unknown outside the borders of the United Kingdom. Today, the globe is dotted with more than 32,000 courses being played by upwards of 57 million players. From Greenland to Australia, from China to the U.S. and South America, people are playing golf more than ever before. This book celebrates the game of golf and those who helped make it what it is today, including profiles of golf greats like Jack Nicklaus and Walter Hagen, as well as caddies like Bruce Edwards and course designers like Donald Ross and Robert Trent Jones.

John MacIntyre is a prolific freelance writer and former magazine editor whose work has appeared in magazines and journals across North America and Europe. His golf statistics column appears in *Travel and Leisure*, *Golf*, and *Tee to Green*. On good days, he shoots in the 90's.



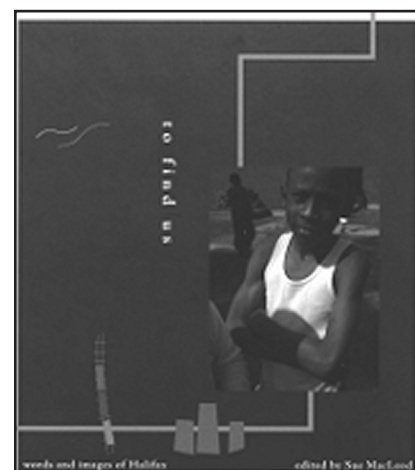
The Amazing Mom Book

John MacIntyre

Sourcebooks, Inc., 2005, \$13.95
ISBN 1-4022-0355-1

We all have a mother. She sees in us all that we are and all that we are capable of being. She is our greatest champion. Our mother has seen us through runny noses and fad haircuts and she still declares us beautiful. She knows we flunked chemistry (three years running) and still assures us of our brilliance. Where we see our failings, mom sees only our boundless potential. Mom's indelible imprint shapes the adults and parents we become. This book is meant to celebrate you, mom. It recognizes your sacrifices, demonstrates your devotion and is in awe of your love.

John MacIntyre lives with his family in Nova Scotia.



To Find Us:

Words and Images of Halifax

Edited by Sue MacLeod

Self published with Halifax Regional Municipality, 2004, \$21.95
ISBN 0-9687262-3-2

This book begins and closes with the unfolding of a cormorant's wings. In between, it alights at points both famous and unknown in the rural/urban mix that is amalgamated Halifax. Smoke unfurls from the Tufts Cove stacks. A wedding spy lurks in the Public Gardens. An art student confronts a city's tragic past. A church burns. A crowd forms. A trucker eats a solitary lunch in an Enfield diner.

The authors and photographers are as diverse as the work they create – poetry ranging from haiku to free verse to spoken word, and photography from contemplative to journalistic to interpretive. Halifax emerges in the pages of this book as a place of contrasts – coastal vistas and downtown streets, war ships and peace demonstrations, a contemporary city that will never shake its past.

Sue MacLeod lives a bookish life in Halifax – she's written two collections of poems and works part-time in the public library. Sue served as Poet Laureate of Halifax Regional Municipality from 2001-05: this anthology is her legacy project.



From the Red House to the Poorhouse

Hilton McCully

Capers Aweigh Press, 2005, \$20
ISBN 1-896007-09-0

From the Red House to the Poorhouse is Hilton McCully's completed works, in chapbook format. The poetry and prose in this book include four languages (five, if you count what McCully describes as "Pidgin French"): English, French, Scottish Gaelic, and Lowland Scots.

Hilton McCully, son of Cap'n Andy and Emma Crossman McCully, was born at the present site of the Greville Bay Shipbuilding Museum at Ward's Brook, Cumberland County. He is a retired teacher, who attended Brookville, Parsboro and Port Greville schools, Mt. Allison and St. Mary's Universities.



Brave Jack and the Unicorn

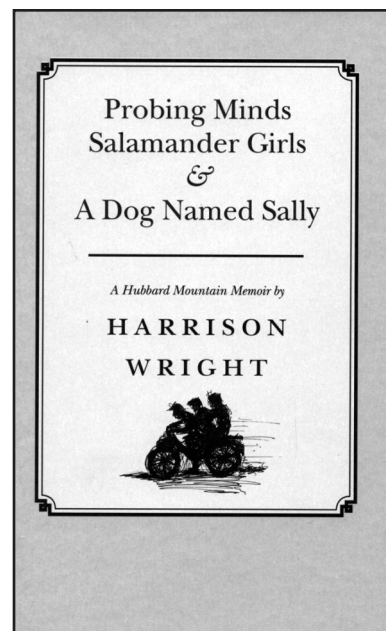
Janet McNaughton
illustrated by Susan Tooke

Tundra Books, 2005, \$22.99
ISBN 0-88776-677-3

Neither handsome nor clever, Jack – the youngest of three brothers – causes his widowed mother much concern. Convinced he is nothing but a fool, the family treats him like a servant. When his brothers go off to seek their fortunes and don't return, Jack's mother sends him to find them. Along the way he performs good deeds for hapless creatures and unfortunate people, who repay his kindness in magical ways.

Janet McNaughton has lived most of her adult life in St. John's, Newfoundland, where she completed both a master's and a doctoral degree in folklore. Her books for children and young adults have received numerous awards. *Brave Jack and the Unicorn* is her first picture book.

Artist Susan Tooke now lives in Halifax, where she works in portraiture, landscapes, murals, and photographic montages. Her artwork has been exhibited across North America and in three other children's picture books: *A Seaside Alphabet* by Donna Grassby, *A Fiddle for Angus* by Budge Wilson, and *Full Moon Rising* by Joanne Taylor – all from Tundra.



Probing Minds, Salamander Girls and a Dog Named Sally

Harrison Wright

Gaspereau Press, 2005, \$27.95
ISBN 1-55447-005-6

Probing Minds is a treatise on living well and a coming-of-age memoir set against the well-worn landscape of Nova Scotia's agricultural region. The collection is comprised of 16 narratives. At 26, Wright has learned a thing or two, but has not lost touch with the best of his earlier exploits. He relives a day spent building an aerial shortcut across a deep gully, the joy of digging a hole for the sake of a hole, and the kinds of adventures that emerge naturally on a farm: spring burning, engine fires and near misses with tractors. Alongside are sobering encounters with nesting pheasants and leopard frogs, and silent afternoons spent tilling fields; experiences that centre him in the natural world.

Harrison Wright was born in Pereaux, Nova Scotia, and raised on his family's farm. He has a diverse background in engineering, physics and English. He currently works as an apple researcher at the Kentville Research Station, though he can often be found tilling his family's fields in the lee of the North Mountain.

Executive Director's report to the AGM 2005

by Jane Buss

WFNS will be celebrating a 30th birthday this fall. This is my 14th report to the Annual General Meeting. When the Search Committee was offering me this position, almost half a Federation's age ago, Ken Ward sought some assurance, given my exceedingly mobile freelance career to that point, that I could offer the Board some guarantee that I'd stay. . . at least a couple of years! . . .

It's been an exciting run. We've grown from 167 to 700-plus members. The highlight of 1992 was our first Gala held at City Centre Atlantic. It lasted almost six hours. We were doing our first Silly Silent Auction and hadn't quite worked out all the glitches; and the reverberations of the room were echo chamber standard. This winter's worst and a conflagration of bikers put pause to our annual March Gala, but we shall return. Never again in March. After a brief hiatus, our Gala will return to honour the winners of the 30th annual Atlantic Writing Competition in September 2006. Just before Word on the Street – you'll be able to come celebrate with your family of writers on the Saturday and with the whole province on Sunday.

Fifteen years ago, we administered only one prize for published books – The Evelyn Richardson Award, worth \$800. This spring, we chaired the Atlantic Book Festival and Awards where 11 prizes (worth \$23,900) were bestowed, where Poet Laureate Sue MacLeod passed her inaugural laurels to Lorri Nielsen Glenn, and where Carol McDougall was recognized for her contribution to this community with the Read to Me program. The first week of the festival saw 24 children's writers on the road in four provinces leading up to the Hackmatack Children's Choice Awards, and the second week saw 28 writers on the road, doing signings, readings, interviews and panel discussions.

Fifteen years ago, our Writers in the Schools (WITS) budget was \$6,800. This year we allocated \$40,000 worth of visits in a stunning five hours and ten minutes. We can't begin to meet the demand and many of our traditional funding sources have fled. Maritime Life is no more; Clearwater has had a difficult year and though still with us, in a smaller way; and the Royal Bank had placed a five-year time frame on their five-year-old contribution. Our appeals to the Department of Education have met with lots of moral support sans cash . . . but we shall soldier on, and will fine tune WITS in the coming season. Visits will be booked directly by the office; no school will be permitted more than three full day subsidized bookings; and rates to writers will rise from \$100/half day to \$115 and travel from 22 cents/km. to 25.

Fifteen years ago, we were huddled in a warren of cramped cubicles at Sport Nova Scotia. The move to our 1113 Marginal Road location five years ago, finally provided us with a room of our own, and is it ever a busy place. Where once we had to content ourselves with two-hour workshop sessions in a borrowed space at Alderney Library, today we offer

four cycles of ongoing 8-week workshops in everything from poetry to freelancing, scriptwriting, fiction, writing for children, romance, and creative writing basics. We've seen such growth in participants' work that we were able to progress to the next stage of development – mentoring. This fall we shall be offering our fifth mentorship program.

Fifteen years ago, there was no internet. Oh, we were communicating (it's bred in the bone): Peggy Amirault was churning out our beloved *Eastword* (thanks for the long run, Peg) but it wasn't until 1995 that Richard Cumyn said he'd like to contribute to the Fed, and his gift was the start of our web presence (www.writers.ns.ca). Today, it has grown so large we've had to transfer it to the Chebucto mainframe. The Fed has been transformed by computer technology – weekly notes from Ma Fed, downloading more than 70 e-mails every morning, designing flyers and brochures, hosting individual webpages for our Writers' Council members, all our own in-house bookkeeping. It's a busy, busy place.

In fact, the only thing that's diminished in the past 15 years is the support we receive from the Province of Nova Scotia. If the province had kept pace with inflation, their 1990 investment of \$72,000 would now be \$98,400. Their current investment is \$61,000. However, they are very even handed in their approach to our community. Everyone has been cut or frozen: we're simply not on the political agenda. Shortly after the recent budget was released, with a 15% cut to Culture's programming budget, we called the Liberal and New Democratic parties to lodge our concern. Despite leaving several messages, we still haven't heard back. Rather than be disheartened, it behooves us to take this as a challenge. We need to focus our energies, use our wits and natural appeal and attractiveness to remind Nova Scotia that arts and culture are part of health, part of education, part of tourism, part of innovative thinking, part of the future . . . and that few of us aspire to speak Gaelic or stepdance full-time. WFNS has always welcomed a challenge: here's the biggest one yet.

Your Federation owes much to those who volunteer. Susan Kerslake is the soul of the Fed. There are those of you who cook, who contribute to the Silent Auction, who read and read and read, those who advise, those who donate to our various funds, those who send notes of encouragement and those who serve on our many committees and boards. Laura Jolicoeur has served on your Board for the last three years and is finishing her term as Treasurer; Rachelle Richard has been a Director for four years and a marvellous Secretary; Mary Jane Copps has lit all our fires for the past five years. She's called you rounding up auction donations, to encourage you to serve on the Board or on a specific project. And many days, she's just called to encourage. She's like that, and we shall miss her. Thank you all, and welcome to our new Directors who will be most ably led by Douglas Arthur Brown. Vive la WFNS! ■

Minutes of the AGM - June 4, 2005

1. There being a quorum of WFNS members, more than half of whom were Writers' Council members, and there also being a quorum of Directors at WFNS, 1113 Marginal Road, Halifax, President Allan Lynch called the meeting to order at noon noting the strong turn out and welcoming members who had travelled from as far away as Judique and Tatamagouche.

2. Approval of the Agenda: Moved/Seconded/Carried to approve the Agenda (Ariel Harper/Carol Bruneau)

3. Approval of the Minutes: M/S/C to approve the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of June 19, 2004 as circulated in the July/August 2004 *Eastword* (Judith Meyrick/Mary Jane Copps).

4. Business arising: None.

5. President's Report: Allan Lynch detailed the triumphs and tumult of the past year and thanked his colleagues on the Board of Directors for their thoughtful support of the Federation and of him at the conclusion of his term as Federation President. He noted that he was in his own estimation one of a tribe of writers who writes for a living and would like it to be a very nice living indeed, that dictatorship is his inclination but that he'd enjoyed being entertained, mitigated, supported and modified by his colleagues at the Board table. Directors retiring from the Board (Laura Jolicoeur and Rachelle Richard) were thanked and extolled to the heavens for their many kindnesses to the Federation. Allan extended particular thanks to Mary Jane Copps who has served the Federation enthusiastically, creatively, unstintingly, and with great wisdom and generosity, serving as Vice-president, President and Past President. Noting that she will be missed, Allan was drowned in the applause the membership accorded Mary Jane Copps M/S/C that the President's Report be accepted (Allan Lynch/Peggy Amirault)

6. Treasurer's Report: In the absence of treasurer Laura Jolicoeur, Jane Buss presented the Audited Financial Statements for the year ended March 31, 2005. Despite a continued funding freeze from the Province of Nova Scotia, it's been a good year at the Writers' Federation with our long-term investments holding their own in a difficult market, and our earned revenue growing in the areas of membership fees and workshops. Fundraising has been slowed with the less robust corporate community in this region and the temporary loss of our Gala this year. On the expense side, the Board approved a raise to our Executive Director that has been phased in over the past two years and for our Executive Assistant in the current fiscal year. Funding to retain our part-time staffer, Sue Goyette, came from Canadian Heritage as part of their

support to Atlantic Book Festival 2005. WFNS is in very stable condition indeed, and I should like to recommend that the AGM approve these statements. M/S/C that the audited financial report be approved and that Michael Sutherland be reappointed auditor to the Federation for the 2004/5 fiscal year and that he be commended for the excellent service he offers WFNS (Sue Newhook/Andrea Johnston). M/S/C that there be no change in dues in the coming year: i.e., \$40 annual membership/\$20 student membership. (Douglas Arthur Brown/Peggy Amirault)

7. Writers' Council: Allan Lynch presented the report of the Standards Committee which had been unanimously adopted by the WFNS Board. Nineteen writers made application to the Standards Committee for this year's April 30 deadline. The Standards Committee recommended to the Board that the following writers be invited to join Writers' Council, and the Board has approved their admission: Michael Bawtree, Wolfville; Joan Baxter, Tatamagouche; Soren Bondrup-Neilsen, Port Williams; Joanthan Campbell, Berwick; Richard Charlton, Dartmouth; Ian Colford, Halifax; Lesley Crewe, Homeville; Philip Dinn, Halifax; Jeffrey Domm, Cow Bay; Krista V. Johansen, Sackville; Genevieve Lehr, Bayside; Josh MacDonald, Halifax; Virginia MacIsaac, Judique; Janet McNaughton, St. John's; Len Rich, River Hebert; Catherine Safer, Dartmouth; Carol Sinclair, Country Harbour; Andy Smith, Glenwood; and Harrison Wright, Canning.

8. Executive Director's Report: see page 11. M/S/C (Mary Jane Copps/Allan Lynch)

9. Nominating Committee Report: Mary Jane Copps reported for the Nominating Committee. The Committee proposed the following slate of Directors for the coming year: Allan Lynch, Past President; Douglas Arthur Brown, President; Lezlie Lowe, Vice-president; Marilyn Iwama Secretary; Kathleen Martin James, Treasurer; Susan Cameron; Lorri Neilsen Glenn; Shauntay Grant; Philip Moscovitch; Sue Newhook; Sandra Phinney; and Carol Bruneau. Allan Lynch called three times for further nominations from the floor. There being none, he declared the slate and named officers elected.

10. Other Business: Mary Jane invited the membership to remain at the conclusion of the AGM to hear the members of the Board read, and asked Jane if she would open the gift presented by the Board. Jane was very moved with the image of a dancing mother earth figure in brilliant earth tones.

11. Adjournment: There being no further business, and lots of splendid food weighing down a lavish table, Budge Wilson moved that the Annual General Meeting be adjourned. ■

Who's doing what

■ **Racked** – members' work in the mad miscellany of journals, magazines, billets doux and e-notes that stand in tottering towers in the Fed's Library (open Monday though Friday, 9:30 to 4:30, for your penchant and pleasure): **matt robinson** keeps limber and fit with two poems in *The Antigoniish Review* where you'll also find "Doves," a new story from **Carol Bruneau**; the spring issue of *The Fiddlehead* marks its 60th anniversary and is the contest issue where **Jeanette Lynes** was honoured with a mention for "From The Journals of Beatrix Potter"; Jeanette also opens the spring edition of *Grain* with four fresh-forged poems; **Shauntay Grant** is everywhere: including weekly in *HFX*, the entertainment guide in *The Daily News* each Thursday; **George Burden**'s article 'Romancing the Rails' appeared in *The Medical Post* and was voted the best Canadian travel destination article of 2004 by the Travel Media Association of Canada (TMAC); a recent story by **Renée Hartlieb** will appear in *The New Quarterly*; *Canadian Stories* featured a recent essay from **Melissa Bossy** entitled "Shanook."

■ Five years have whirled past as **Andrew Safer** has continued to work with, and develop, the Youth in Care Newsletter Project. In late April, the fifth glossy issue of *The Voice* was unveiled. A lot of effort went into its production by the youth in care and former youth in care living in group homes, foster homes and independent living situations. Eighteen contributed to the newsletter and 14 stuck right through to the end, all teenagers from 15 to 19 plus a 20-year old who keeps coming back! Andrew

was flying high to be invited to be Special Guest Speaker at this year's Children's Aid AGM.

■ **Pam MacLean** was *Between the Covers* on CBC Radio in May, with her story "Dream Diner" on a special series of short fantastical fiction, flash fiction and poetry, hosted by Nalo Hopkinson.

■ **Carol Sinclair** will be Artistic Associate at Ship's Company Theatre in Parrsboro for 2005-06. Ship's has commissioned her to write "Ferry Tales." It's, well, all about ships. Carol will be acting in the third show of the company's summer season, *Shatter* by Trina Davies, from August 18 to September 18.

■ **Vicki Grant** is on a roll: her first Orca release, *The Puppet Wrangler*, has been nominated for the 2005 Canadian Library Association Young Adult Canadian Book of the Year, for the 2005 Silver Birch and the 2006 Hackmatack Award as well as listed as The Year's Best by Resource Links, VOYA, and the Ontario Library Association. In May, *Quid Pro Quo* was launched to an SRO crowd in Halifax and reviews that would make any writer's heart sing.

■ **H.M. Scott Smith's** *The Historic Churches of Prince Edward Island*, has proven so successful that it's gone into a second edition from SSP Publications with even more material than the first printing.

■ Cole Harbour Library was the setting for a multi-media reading by **Soren Bondrup-Nielsen** from *Winter on Diamond*, his autobiographic account of a winter spent deep in the Temagami

Wilderness in northeastern Ontario 25 years ago.

■ Violinist Celeste Jankowski was working on a project with Harrietsfield Elementary School and needed a script. She commissioned one from **Binnie Brennan** and more than 800 people at the Cohn Auditorium were spellbound at the outcome.

■ What do you call a gathering of outdoor writers – a bracing? an ether? In any event, it happened recently in Peterborough, Ontario, as the Outdoor Writers of Canada congregated for their annual conference and bestowal of awards for excellence. **Don MacLean** was recognized with a third prize for his book *Discover Nova Scotia Sportfishing* (Nimbus) and a second for his storytelling prowess with the story, 'Big Game Blues,' which appeared in *Western Sportsman*.

■ **Donna D'Amour** attended this year's Atlantic Journalism Association Conference in Fredericton. Not only was she able to attend excellent workshops with Sally Armstrong (a former editor at *Chatelaine*, *Canadian Living* and *Homemakers* and author of *Veiled Threat: The Hidden Power of the Women of Afghanistan* [Penguin]) and CBC's Ira Basen, she also walked away as winner of an Atlantic Journalism Gold Award for Atlantic Magazine Article for a piece she did for *Saltscapes*. The winning feature was 'Our Changing Coastline', co-written by Donna, John DeMont, Russell Wangersky, and Barbara and Jack MacAndrew.

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■ That would be Doctor **Wayne Curtis**, thank you very much. At St. Thomas University's recent convocation, Wayne Curtis shared the stage with 497 students and fellow honorary recipients, Roméo Dallaire, and Bernard and Diane Lord. Author of nine books, Wayne has been writer-in-residence at Berton House and at the Institute of Superior Arts in Cuba. His articles have appeared in countless magazines and he is a member of the Atlantic Salmon Hall of Fame. *Eastern Woods & Water's* spring issue was highlighted with Wayne spending a day on the Renous.

■ **Joanne Merriam**, now relocated with her new husband to Tennessee, continues to stay in touch with Ma Fed electronically and reports that online journal *Thunder Sandwich* is reprinting two of her poems which originally appeared in Canadian literary journals. Another online journal, *Southern Gothic*, will be publishing her first horror short story, "Nobody's That Good All the Time" in their premier issue.

■ *Defense de Fumer* was back on stage at Live Bait Theatre in Sackville, NB in May. Originally written by **Carol Sinclair** during her residency with Dalhousie's Medical Humanities Program, the play features 28 characters (all played by Carol) who smoke. Since it premiered, *Defense de Fumer* has travelled from the Chateau Laurier in Ottawa to public schools in Nunavut.

■ Reading from her recently released first novel, *Bishop's Road*, **Catherine Safer** was fêted by Chapters, appearing at their MicMac Mall, Dartmouth, location, as well

as at the Bayers Lake Centre in Halifax. But the bigger fête took place when Catherine learned that *Bishop's Road* has been shortlisted for the Amazon.ca/Books in Canada First Novel Award. Shortlist judge W.P. Kinsella winnowed the 2004 Canadian debut list to a shortlist of five which, in addition to Catherine's Killick Press release, included *Skinny* by Ibi Kaslik, *Some Great Thing* by Colin McAdam, *Sunday Afternoon* by David Elías and *What's Remembered* by Colin McAdam. The winner will be announced this fall.

■ The Pictou Library Poetry Reading Series celebrated poetry month with a lively evening at Carver's Coffeehouse featuring **Anne Simpson** and **Shauntay Grant**.

■ The League of Canadian Poets has shortlisted **Geoffrey Cook** for the Gerald Lampert Memorial Award for his first poetry collection, *Postscripts* (Signal Editions).

■ And Peewack, as the Periodical Writers' Association of Canada or PWAC is affectionately known, has just recognized **Sandra Phinney** with their first annual Regional Volunteer Award for Atlantic Canada. Sandra was cited for her "tireless dedication to encouraging new and experienced freelance writers, and for her generous volunteerism with PWAC."

■ Three generations crowded into the Pictou County farm house where **Mary Ellen Ashman** grew up, a place filled with the whispers of ancestors long buried. Telling ghost stories became more than a hobby, and has been transformed into an e-book, *The Sorcerer's Mark* by Ellen Ashe, released by New Concepts Publishing in May.

■ Many of you will have enjoyed **John MacIntyre's** regular columns of "Interesting Facts" in *The Chronicle Herald*. John has used his encyclopedic knowledge to great effect, just releasing two books from Sourcebooks in Illinois – *The Whole Golf Book* is a romp through one of our most popular sports with profiles and fun facts; *The Amazing Mom Book* is a compendium of real facts, tender tales and thoughts from the heart of one of life's leading ladies.

■ Gaspereau's fall list is always something to anticipate. This season includes *A Ship Portrait* from **Harry Thurston**. A tribute to the life and art of John O'Brien, a 19th-century painter of ships, Harry has created a "novella in verse" that touches on the collision of old and new world, and on the interdependence of shipping and the arts. Gaspereau has also redesigned and is issuing a new edition reprint of **Susan Haley's** *The Complaints Department*, her fifth novel initially released in 2000.

■ **Catherine Banks'** one-woman show, *Bitter Rose* was first produced at the LSPU Hall in Newfoundland in 1999 and the following year at the Neptune Studio. Last year, *Bitter Rose* was taped by Creative Atlantic for the BRAVO! Singular Series and was aired early this June.

■ **Mark Finnan** was in town for the Celtic Feis in June. He regaled crowds gathered at Historic Properties with tales of Scottish-born poet Sir William Alexander, who gave Nova Scotia her name, flag and first European settlement.

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■ **Tony and Donna D'Amour** were reading from Tony's collection of 37 family stories, *The Runaway and Other Stories*, at Petit de Grat, Sydney and North Sydney libraries in June. Their reading was expanded to share tips with audience members interested in collecting their own family history and stories.

■ The Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History observed International Oceans Day in June with an illustrated talk from **Marq de Villiers** and **Sheila Hirtle** that focused on their Richardson Award-winning book, *A Dune Adrift: The Strange Origins and Curious History of Sable Island*.

■ **Anne MacMaster** was recognized recently by the Nova Scotia branch of the Canadian Authors' Association. The Pictou-based writer drove into Halifax early in June to receive the Marianna Dempster Award for her first book, *Ross and the Big Happening*, which Anne recently self-published with Community Books, the extraordinary company managed by **Kathleen Tudor**, who is also publisher of Roseway Books.

■ When **Stephanie Domet** headed up the road a couple of years ago to brave Winnipeg winters and become part of the prairie team behind the delightful insanity that is CBC's *DNTO (Definitely Not The Opera)*, she sat right down and wrote herself a novel in the space of five days. It was cold. Though on reflection, she decided parts of it were exactly what you could expect of something written under such conditions, parts of it were actually good enough to be read to a jam-packed audience at Economy Shoe Shop . . . which she did on June 14.

■ **Michael Bawtree**, author of *Joe Howe to the Rescue* (Nimbus), has received the 2005 Lilla Sterling Award. It's given by the Nova Scotia Branch of the Canadian Author's Association. The winning book is chosen for its contribution to Canadian children's literature ages nine and up.

New Members

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

Michelle Bolivar-Porter, Pleasantville
George DeMings, New Glasgow
Cassie Devine, Lantry
Jeff Domm, Cow Bay
Paul Erickson, Halifax
Shawn Harmon, Dartmouth
Donna Hutchinson, Pugwash
Krista Johansen, Sackville, NB
Andrea Johnston, Halifax
Allison Maher, Aylesford
Inga Nomm, Mahone Bay
Jeffrey Roy, Halifax
Frances Smith-McCarley, Halifax
Malcolm Wallace, Saint John, NB
Linda Yates, Meagher's Grant ■

PEI writing workshops

The Island Writers' Association of PEI will host several full-day writing workshops: July 23 – Garden Writing; August 13 – Steps Along the Road to Self-Publishing; and September 23-25 Revved Up For Romance. For all the details contact Debbie Gamble-Arsenault at 902-569-3913 (dgamble@isn.net) or Julie V. Watson at 902-566-9748 (creative@pei.sympatico.ca) or visit www.gotocreativeconnections.com. (If you don't have a computer or Internet access, the public library has Public Access Computers.) ■

Contests

■ **2005 Prairie Fire Press – McNally Robinson Writing Contests:** Prairie Fire Press, 423-100 Arthur Street, Winnipeg, MB, R3B 1H3. (www.prairiefire.mb.ca) 3 contests. Deadline: November 30. **Bliss Carman Poetry Award** (1-3 poems per entry, maximum 150 lines). **Short Fiction** (one story per entry, maximum 15,000 words). **Creative Non-Fiction** (one article per entry, maximum 5,000 words) 1st prize \$1,000, 2nd prize \$500, 3rd prize \$250, in all categories. Entry fee \$27 (per category). This entitles you or your designate to a one-year (4 issue) subscription to *Prairie Fire*. Make cheque or money order payable to Prairie Fire and enclose with your entry. Blind judging. Name must not appear on ms. Entries not returned. Each piece must be original, unpublished, not submitted elsewhere for publication or broadcast, nor entered simultaneously in any other contest or competition for which it is also eligible to win a prize.

Markets

■ **Tradewind Books:** A small international publishing house with its main office in Vancouver, BC, seeks new writers of fiction for young people. Picture book manuscripts should be sent to our Canadian address and should be accompanied by a SASE. Send sample chapters only of novels for young readers, accompanied by a plot summary and a chapter by chapter outline. Query before sending electronic submissions. Send submissions to: Tradewind Books, 202-1807 Maritime Mews, Granville Island, Vancouver BC V6H 3W7 Canada. For more information, visit their website (www.tradewindbooks.com/).

Read by Sea – River John, July 23

Read by the Sea – the delightful one-day literary festival on the shores of the Northumberland Strait – is back for another year, scheduled for Saturday, July 23. Herménégilde Chiasson, Lesley Choyce, Kristin Bieber Domm, Beatrice MacNeil, and Michael Winter will be the featured writers for the day.

Bring a lawn chair and head for the gazebo in the arboreal gardens at the River John Canadian Legion Hall. After the readings, authors are available for book signing and more chat. The relaxed atmosphere extends into the smoked pork chop barbecue where authors and festival-goers mingle over a meal. The evening closes with “Your Turn” – an open bar/open mike cabaret-style event where writers from all over are encouraged to strut their stuff.

River John is easy to find – it’s on the Sunrise Trail, Highway 6, between Pictou and Tatamagouche. It’s 50 kilometres west of New Glasgow, about 150 kilometres north of Halifax, and about 120 kilometres east of Amherst. To find the Canadian Legion Hall in River John, turn off Route 6 at the flashing yellow light. The River John Co-op will be on your right. Follow the River John Station Road for just over a kilometre and you will see the Legion on your left. There’s parking in the lot.

9:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. WordPlay for Kids! There will be two reading stages for kids. For younger children Kristin Bieber Domm and Beatrice MacNeil will read from their picture books. For older kids aged 12-15 Lesley Choyce will read from his latest award winning novel, *Shoulder the Sky*.

After the readings all will be reunited for a snack and a writing and drawing workshop. In this way they work with others close to their age but also within the wider group as was once done in the one-room schoolhouses. The morning will end with the fabulously popular “I’m Write Here!” kids’ open mike where youngsters from preschoolers to teens read their own work.

2 p.m. The Main Event: Bring a chair and settle in for an afternoon of readings from Herménégilde Chiasson, Beatrice MacNeil, and Michael Winter at the River John Legion Memorial Garden. A brief interview with each writer will follow their reading.

5 p.m. Feast Your Ears For \$12 you can enjoy a delicious barbecue dinner – a smoked pork chop, salads, roll, and strawberry shortcake. Dinner tickets are available at the River John Library, through hazel.f@ns.sympatico.ca, or at the readings.

6:30 p.m. Your Turn The location for Read by the Sea’s open microphone session is to be announced. There are eight spots. Names will be chosen by lottery that night. Ten minutes is your limit.

Herménégilde Chiasson is a modern Acadian poet who counterbalances a folkloric view of Acadia with a contemporary viewpoint. His poetry is spare, visceral and evocative of the struggle to be Acadian in the modern world. He is also a celebrated playwright, printmaker, photographer, documentary film maker, director, set designer, and painter with more than 40 published books of art, drama and poetry including *To Die in Scoudouc* (1974), *Actions* (2000), and *Available Light* (2002). Chiasson is the recipient of several important honors for his writing, among them the Chevalier de l’Ordre Français des Arts et Lettres and the Governor General’s Award for poetry in 1999 for *Conversations*. In August 2003 he was appointed the Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick for his seminal role in the development of Acadian culture.

Lesley Choyce is a prolific writer with more than 50 books in his résumé. He’ll be reading from his award-winning book *Shoulder the Sky*.

Kristin Bieber Domm is the author of *Ahmed and the Nest of Sand* and *The Hatchling’s Journey: A Blanding’s Turtle Story*. She’ll be reading from her latest picture book *Atlantic Puffin: Little Brother of the North*.

Beatrice MacNeil is the author of 10 plays, two children’s books, a short story collection and a novel. Her books include *There’s a Mouse in the House of Miss Crouse*, *The Moonlight Skater*, and *Butterflies Dance in the Dark*.

Michael Winter brings a modern voice from a corner of Atlantic Canada steeped in tradition. Contemporary urban St. John’s was the setting for Michael’s early fiction. His new novel *The Big Why* pushes the tradition/modernity clash back a century with New York artist Rockwell Kent posing the big questions in Brigus, Newfoundland in 1914. Michael Winter was born in England and grew up in Newfoundland. He now divides his time between St. John’s and Toronto. He is the author of *This All Happened* that won the Winterset Award and was nominated for the Rogers Writers’ Trust Fiction Prize. He has published two short-story collections, *Creaking in Their Skins* and *One Last Good Look*. ■