

# east word

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE  
WRITERS' FEDERATION OF NOVA SCOTIA

## Spring Sizzles with Atlantic Book Festival 2008

25 Books, 4 Provinces, 1 Festival, May 6 to 15!

The shortlists have been announced. The Thomas Head Raddall Atlantic Fiction Prize has increased to \$15,000. The Book Festival website ([www.writers.ns.ca/bookfest08](http://www.writers.ns.ca/bookfest08)) is packed with readings, signings, workshops and the complete details of the nominated authors and books for Atlantic Book Festival 2008. Take a magical mystery murder tour of Halifax with Steven Laffoley ... a workshop with imaginary characters with Sheree Fitch ... a Gala Soirée at FRED in Halifax with readings and interviews ... celebrations in Sydney, Truro, Pugwash ... join us for the not-to-be-missed Atlantic Book Awards Ceremony on Monday May 12, 4 p.m. at Alderney Landing in Dartmouth. This year's nominees are:

### Thomas Head Raddall Atlantic Fiction Prize

Don Hannah, *Ragged Islands*, Knopf Canada  
Bernice Morgan, *Cloud of Bone*, Knopf Canada  
David Adams Richards, *The Lost Highway*, Doubleday Canada

### Evelyn Richardson Prize for Non-fiction

Marq de Villiers, *Witch in the Wind: The True Story of the Legendary Bluenose*, Thomas Allen Publishers  
Stewart Donovan, *The Forgotten World of R.J. MacSween: A Life*, Cape Breton University Press  
Steven Laffoley, *Hunting Halifax: In Search of History, Mystery and Murder*, Pottersfield Press

### Atlantic Poetry Prize

Don Domanski, *All Our Wonder Unavenged*, Brick Books  
George Murray, *The Rush to Here*, Nightwood Editions  
Anne Simpson, *Quick*, McClelland & Stewart



At the 2007 Book Awards – Ami McKay winner of the Booksellers Choice Award for *The Birth House* (Knopf), and Atlantic Poetry Prize nominees Mary Dalton for *Red Ledger* (Véhicule) and Steve McOrmand who won the award for *Primer on the Hereafter* (Wolsack and Wynn).



Linda Little won both the Dartmouth Book Award for Fiction and the Thomas Head Raddall Atlantic Fiction Prize in 2007 for her novel *Scotch River* (Penguin).



WRITERS' FEDERATION OF NOVA SCOTIA

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Canada Council  
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## Dartmouth Book Award for Fiction

Carol Bruneau, *Glass Voices*, Cormorant Books

David Doucette, *North of Smokey*, Cape Breton University Press

Beatrice MacNeil, *Where White Horses Gallop*, Key Porter Books

## Dartmouth Book Award for Non-Fiction

Marq de Villiers, *Witch in the Wind: The True Story of the Legendary Bluenose*, Thomas Allen Publishers

Stewart Donovan, *The Forgotten World of R.J. MacSween: A Life*, Cape Breton University Press

A.J.B. Johnston, *Endgame 1758: The Promise, the Glory and the Despair of Louisbourg's Last Decade*, Cape Breton University Press

## Margaret and John Savage First Book Award

Fred Armstrong, *Happiness of Fish*, Jespersen Publishing

Stephanie Domet, *Homing: the whole story (from the inside out)*, Invisible Publishing

Bob Mersereau, *The Top100 Canadian Albums*, Goose Lane Editions

## Lillian Shepherd Memorial Award for Excellence in Illustration

Nancy Keating, *A Puppy Story* (Susan Pynn, author), Tuckamore Books

Eric Orchard, *A Forest For Christmas* (Michael Harris, author), Nimbus Publishing

Richard Rudnicki, *Gracie, The Public Gardens Duck* (Judith Meyrick, author), Nimbus Publishing

## Atlantic Publishers Marketing Association Best Published Book Award

*Beaverbrook: A Shattered Legacy*, by Jacques Poitras, Goose Lane Editions

*Gracie The Public Gardens Duck*, by Judith Meyrick; illustrated by Richard Rudnicki, Nimbus Publishing

*Miller Brittain: When the Stars Threw Down Their Spears*, by Tom Smart, Goose Lane Editions

## Atlantic Independent Booksellers' Choice Award

Steven Laffoley, *Hunting Halifax: In Search of History, Mystery and Murder*, Pottersfield Press

Jacques Poitras, *Beaverbrook: A Shattered Legacy*, Goose Lane Editions

Harvey Sawler, *Twenty-first Century Irvings*, Nimbus Publishing

## Ann Connor Brimer Children's Literature Prize

K.V. Johansen, *Nightwalker: The Warlocks of Talverdin*, Orca

Valerie Sherrard, *Speechless*, Dundurn Group

Alice Walsh, *A Sky Black with Crows*, Red Deer Press ■

# Schedule of Events Atlantic Book Festival 2008

(Dates and times are subject to change. Visit [www.writers.ns.ca/bookfest08](http://www.writers.ns.ca/bookfest08) for up-to-the-minute details and additions.)

## Tuesday May 6

10 am PRESENTATION – Richard Rudnicki, illustrator, with *Gracie, the Public Gardens Duck* at Cole Harbour Library.

7-9 pm BOOK LAUNCH – Poet Brian Bartlett with *The Watchmaker's Table* at Spring Garden Library, Halifax.

## Wednesday May 7

10 am PRESENTATION – Eric Orchard, illustrator, with *A Forest for Christmas* at Bedford Library, Bedford.

7 pm READING – Carol Bruneau with *Glass Voices* at Alderney Library, Dartmouth.

7 pm LAUNCH – Steve Vernon with *Wicked Woods* at Fredericton Public Library, Fredericton, NB.

7 pm LAUNCH – Ken Smith with *History of Disaster* at Bathurst Book Gallery, 145 Main Street, Bathurst, NB.

## Thursday May 8

Noon READING & DISCUSSION – Stephanie Domet with *Homing* and Robbie MacGregor, publisher Invisible Books. First books – writing them, publishing them at Spring Garden Road Library, Halifax.

7 pm Harvey Sawler with *Twenty-first Century Irvings* at Keshen-Goodman Library, Halifax.

7 pm READING – Marq de Villiers, Beatrice MacNeil, Susan Zettell at McConnell Memorial Library, 50 Falmouth St., Sydney.

7 pm LAUNCH – Shauntay Grant and illustrator Susan Tooke with *Up Home* at Nelson Whynder School, 979 North Preston Road, North Preston.

## Friday May 9

11 am SIGNING – Marq de Villiers at Cole's, Sydney.

7 pm READING – Don Domanski, George Murray, Anne Simpson, Herménégilde Chiasson, Study Lounge, Ward Chipman Building, UNBSJ, Saint John, NB.

7 pm READING – Marq de Villiers with *Witch in the Wind* at Thomas More Church Hall, Pugwash.

## Saturday May 10

11 to 3 WORKSHOP SHORTS! – a day of exploration and writing workshops with Sheree Fitch, Stephens Gerrard Malone, Shandi Mitchell and Philip Moscovitch at WFNS. To register call WFNS at 902-423-8116.

11:30 to 12:30 SIGNING – David Adams Richards at Frog Hollow Books, Halifax.

11:30 am & 1:30 pm READING – Judith Meyrick with *Gracie, the Public Gardens Duck*, Horticulural Hall, Halifax Public Gardens.

2 pm WORKSHOP – David Adams Richards at Spring Garden Road Library, Halifax, sponsored by the Writers' Trust of Canada.

3:30 pm READING – Don Domanski and George Murray, Confederation Centre Library, Charlottetown, PEI, with PEI Writers' Guild.

7 pm GALA BOOKFEST READING AT FRED, 2606 Agricola, Halifax, with David Adams Richards, Stephanie Domet, Steven Laffoley, Stewart Donovan, moderated by Sue Goyette.

8:30 pm BOOK LAUNCH – Anne Emery launches *Barrington Street Blues* at Bearly's, 1269 Barrington St. Halifax.

## Sunday, May 11

12-2 SIGNING – David Adams Richards at Chapters, Dartmouth.

2 pm Magical Mystery Murder Tour with Steven Laffoley, *Hunting Halifax*.

3-5 pm SIGNING – David Adams Richards at Chapters, Halifax.

## Monday, May 12

9-2 Halifax Grammar School hosts K.V. Johansen, Alice Walsh and Lesley Choyce.

9 am Cobequid Consolidated Elementary in Old Barns (near Truro) hosts illustrators Nancy Keating, Eric Orchard and Richard Rudnicki.

4-6 pm Atlantic Book Awards Ceremony at Alderney Theatre, Dartmouth. RSVP: [bookfest@writers.ns.ca](mailto:bookfest@writers.ns.ca)

## Tuesday, May 13

10 am READING – K.V. Johansen with *Nightwalker* at Alderney Library, Dartmouth

2 pm READING – Don Hannah with *Ragged Islands* at Alderney Library, Dartmouth

7 pm READING – Bernice Morgan with *Cloud of Bone* at Keshen-Goodman Library, Halifax.

## Thursday, May 15

7 pm READING – Stephanie Domet with *Homing* at Keshen-Goodman Library, Halifax.

7 pm LAUNCH – Lawrence Coady with *The Lost Canoe* at Downhome Shoppe & Gallery, 303 Water St., St. John's, NL.

7 pm READING – Marq de Villiers, Bernice Morgan, George Murray at The Studio, 272 Water Street, St. John's, NL, hosted by the Writers Alliance of Newfoundland and Labrador. ■

# Shorts! – A day of Book Festival quickies – May 10 at WFNS

**Cost:** Single workshop \$25 (WFNS members)/\$35 (non-members)

Two workshops with a light lunch included \$45 (WFNS members)/\$55 (non-members)

## Writing for Screen

An hour and a half with Shandi Mitchell and the VCR

11 to 12:30 – What do *ET*, *Remains of the Day*, *SpiderMan*, *Shine* and *Little Miss Sunshine* have in common? Can a screenplay really set up the entire world of a film in the first five minutes? How do you say “I love you, I want you” without saying the words? Or break a character’s heart with one line of dialogue? Or capture the rapture and chaos of music without a sound? Bring popcorn for this visual tour of screenwriting.

Shandi Mitchell is an award-winning writer/director who is always looking for that film moment that grabs the heart and makes the jaw drop in awe.

## Writing the Sex Scene

An hour and a half with Stephens Gerard Malone

11 to 12:30 – Does describing gymnastics under the sheets make your pulse race – and not in a good way? When your hero drizzles chocolate over your heroine’s naughty bits, does it read like Ikea instructions? Let’s face it, writing about sex is hard! Those risqué passages you don’t want Mom to read can be anathema to most writers. So what’s better? Jackie Collins or Jane Austen? What to leave on, what to take off? Lights on, or fade to black?

Stephens Gerard Malone doesn’t claim to be an expert, but in three novels he’s covered voyeurism, sex on mountains, in abattoirs and concentration camps. He can still blush. Bring a sense of humour.

## Imaginary Playmates & Other Characters

An hour and a half with Sheree Fitch

1:15 to 2:45 – Do you see dead people? Talk to yourself while walking down the street? This is a Good Thing for a writer. Some call them invisible friends, or imaginary playmates. If you’re a writer, you get to call them characters. This is a workshop session for adults that focuses on character: do we find them, or do they find us? Can we find a method to the madness once a character comes to life? Developing character? What

exactly does that mean? What happens when a character takes up residency in your life? Is it a character worth listening to? What makes a truly memorable character?

Through a series of guided writing exercises focused on character, Sheree Fitch will encourage you to talk and write about as many imaginary playmates as can be conjured in the time available. She’ll share tidbits about characters Cinnamon Elizabeth Hotchkiss (*The Gravesavers*), and Mercy Beth Fanjoy (*Kiss the Joy as It Flies* – forthcoming in July from Vagrant). Bring markers, glue stick, an old magazine, a scrapbook. Also, a short passage of dialogue you think excellent.

Sheree Fitch is a writer, speaker and educator who thinks the phrase “she’s a strange character” is a huge compliment.



## Get What You Need: The Interview

An hour and a half with Philip Moscovitch

1:15 to 2:45 – Nothing can bring on a case of the jitters like having to interview someone. You may only have one chance to get the information you need. This session will consider the following interviewing questions and techniques: approaches to advance research and pre-interviews; setting yourself and your subject at ease. Interviewing in person, on the phone or electronically; getting the quotes you want; deciding when a question is worth asking; the power of the simple and direct question; creative listening and the power of silence. This workshop is designed for storytellers of all kinds who conduct interviews – journalists, documentary filmmakers or writers researching subjects for longer works.

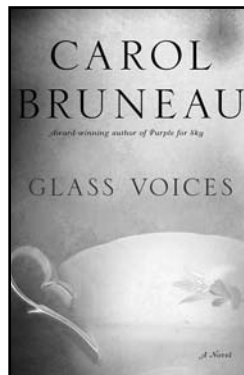
Philip Moscovitch is a freelance writer and broadcaster who has interviewed hundreds of people, including musicians, filmmakers, private eyes, activists, prisoners, and an NHL hockey legend. He loves to immerse himself in new worlds through the people he talks to. ■



## Nominated for the 20th annual Dartmouth Book Award for Fiction

**Carol Bruneau**  
**Glass Voices**  
**Cormorant Books \$22.95**  
**ISBN 978-1-897151-12-9**

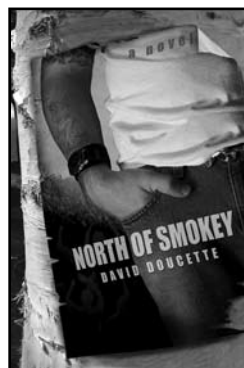
When giving up is not an option, what enables a person to go on after suffering great loss? 71 year-old Lucie Caines's husband suffers a severe stroke that makes her re-examine her complicated relationship with the man she has both loved and loathed. From 1917, when their first home is destroyed in the Halifax Explosion and Lucy loses her first child, to the social tumult of the 60s, *Glass Voices* twists through time. There's bootlegging, illegal fishing, pickles bubbling on the stove, men landing on the moon and, as Lucy examines her past, she changes her present. Her ability to cope with tragedy, her quiet strength – despite the pain and sorrow – is inspiring.



Carol Bruneau is the author of the novels *Berth* and *Purple For Sky*, which won both the Dartmouth Book Award for Fiction and the Thomas Head Raddall Atlantic Fiction Prize (2000). Her two collections of short stories, *Depth Rapture* and *After the Angel Mill*, were published by Cormorant Books. She is currently on the faculty of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, where she teaches writing. She lives in Halifax with her husband and three sons.

**David Doucette**  
**North of Smokey**  
**Cape Breton University Press \$24.95**  
**ISBN 978-1-897009-23-9**

The Curtis kids “slunk through life as half-starved coyotes,” three boys and silent daughter Grace, in a small cold, wood-frame house perched between ocean and mountain in a remote Cape Breton Depression-era community. Frank, the youngest, has to try harder, learn faster, stretch further: a near-fatal hunting accident

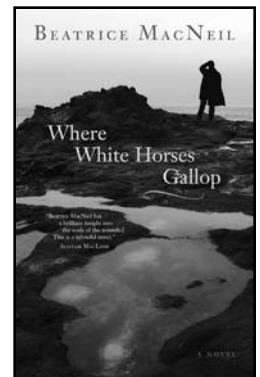


in adolescence highlights Frank's inner and outer strengths. Fate, and Frank's fortitude, propel him from the shadows of his rural home to the spotlight of the world stage, and, eventually, back home to Ingonish.

Born and raised in Ingonish, David Doucette holds degrees in Arts and Education from St. Francis Xavier and Saint Mary's Universities. He has lived and taught in Taiwan, Japan and Singapore. His short stories have appeared in magazines in Canada and abroad, and he won the Dartmouth Book Award for Fiction for his first novel, *Strong at the Broken Places*, in 2002.

**Beatrice MacNeil**  
**Where White Horses Gallop**  
**Key Porter Books \$32.95**  
**ISBN 978-1-55263-915-3**

It is 1939. England has declared war on Germany, and Canada will march beside her. Soon the lives of five friends living in rugged, pristine Cape Breton will be changed forever. Fiddler Benny Doucet, prospective med student Calum MacPherson, and fisherman Hector MacDonald all enlist. But Calum's handicapped brother Hamish is stuck at home, while Alex MacGregor, in love with the postmistress, hides in his mother's attic. The fate of these devoted friends, during and after the war, hinges on forces beyond their control in this lyrical, vibrant novel.



Beatrice MacNeil is the author of the novel *Butterflies Dance in the Dark*, and the story collection, *The Moonlight Skater*, both winners of the Dartmouth Book Award for Fiction. Her picture book, *There is a Mouse in the House of Miss Crouse*, won the Marianna Dempster Award. She has written 10 plays – four have won awards and two have been adapted for CBC Radio. She is the recipient of the Tic Butler Award for her outstanding contribution to Cape Breton writing and culture, and is the founder of Cape Breton's Reading Ceilidhs. She lives in Cape Breton.



## Nominated for the 20th annual Atlantic Independent Booksellers' Choice Award

**Steven Laffoley**

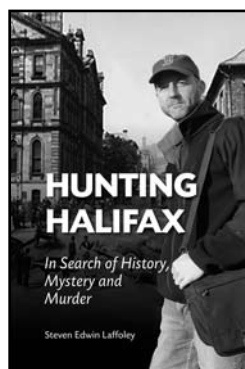
**Hunting Halifax: In Search of History, Mystery and Murder**

**Pottersfield Press \$19.95**

**ISBN 978-1-895900-93-4**

*Hunting Halifax* begins in an old cemetery with Steven Laffoley pondering a black hole in Halifax history, a stretch between 1843 and 1857. This was a time of tectonic shift between the agrarian and the industrial ages that had resonance for an author at the shift between industrial and digital ages. Had ghosts from this earlier historic black hole affected the present day? As his investigation of a 150-year-old murder and mystery unfolds, Steven discovers the ghosts of the past haunt the present in unexpected ways.

Steven Edwin Laffoley has worked as a bookstore manager, a curriculum writer, a university professor, a school principal, and a dues-paying member of the Teamsters delivering beer in south Boston. A compulsive freelance writer, columnist, and broadcaster, Steven has written dozens of articles and essays for online magazines and newspapers, as well as for CBC Radio. His last book was *Mr. Bush, Angus and Me: Notes of an American-Canadian in the Age of Unreason*. He lives with his wife and daughter in Halifax.



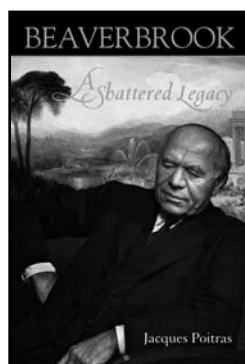
**Jacques Poitras**

**Beaverbrook: A Shattered Legacy**

**Goose Lane Editions \$35**

**ISBN 978-0-86492-497-1**

The very public battle over the ownership of millions of dollars worth of paintings at Fredericton's Beaverbrook Art Gallery has all the makings of best-selling pulp fiction – money, aristocracy, sex, family laundry and court intrigue. It's a story that might have appeared on the front pages published by press baron Max Aitken, Lord Beaverbrook. Jacques Poitras explores the intertwined history of the Aitken family and the Beaverbrook Gallery in Fredericton, New Brunswick. *A Shattered Legacy* underscores the sea-change that has occurred since the gallery's founding, when Beaverbrook could command obedience and obsequiousness from his fellow New Brunswickers, and today, when heirs joust with an independent and proud public institution.



Jacques Poitras has been CBC Radio's provincial affairs reporter in New Brunswick since 2000. He has written numerous award-winning feature documentaries and has appeared on Radio-Canada, National Public Radio, and the BBC. His first book was the critically acclaimed *The Right Fight: Bernard Lord and the Conservative Dilemma*. He lives near Fredericton.

**Harvey Sawler**

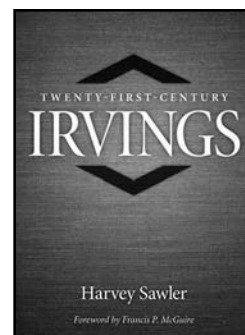
**Twenty-first Century Irvings**

**Nimbus Publishing \$22.95**

**ISBN 978-1-551096087**

*Twenty-first Century Irvings* explores the modern family business, the powerful players behind its continuing success, and the myths that are spread about the wealthy Irving empire. Harvey Sawler exposes the truths behind the myths, and predicts the transformation of the family, in similar fashion to the Rockefeller and the Morgan families, from industrialists to philanthropists. A business story, a family story, and a Maritime story, this is a book that will fascinate all who are affected by the Irving empire.

Harvey Sawler began his career as a writer and journalist with newspapers in Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick, then worked in public relations, marketing and tourism. He is a regular contributor to *Progress* and *Saltscape* magazines and is the author of five books, including *The Beer Bandit Caper* and *On the Road with Dutch Mason*. Harvey exists today in a virtual office – highways, airports, and hotels – but is partially rooted in Halifax.



## Nominated for the 31st annual Evelyn Richardson Prize for Non-fiction

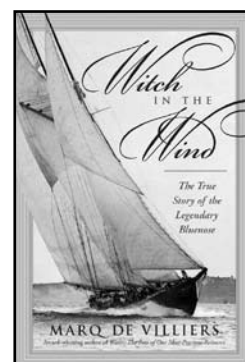
**Marq de Villiers**

**Witch in the Wind: The True Story of the Legendary Bluenose**

**Thomas Allen Publishers \$36.95**

**ISBN 978-0-88762-224-3**

*Witch in the Wind* is a fascinating journey into the backstory of a remarkable vessel. The *Bluenose* was a superb boat, skippered by a skilled sailor at a time flush with some of the most accomplished sailors in the world. Marq de Villiers explores everything from the behind-the-scenes drama of her construction, to her hardscrabble existence as a fishing vessel, to her breathtaking



paces at a time when a shift was happening and a way of life, fast disappearing.

Born in South Africa, Marq de Villiers is a veteran Canadian journalist and the author of eight books, including *Windswept: The Story of Wind and Weather*, and *Water: The Fate of Our Most Precious Resource* (winner of the Governor General's Award for Non-Fiction), and has co-written with Sheila Hirtle, *Into Africa: A Journey Through the Ancient Empires*, and *A Dune Adrift: The Strange Origins and Curious History of Sable Island*, which won the Evelyn Richardson Award in 2005.

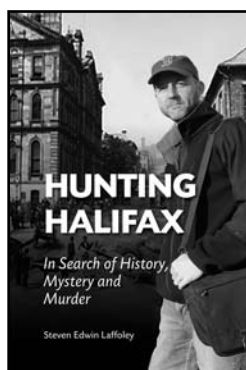
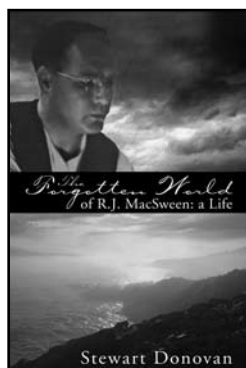
**Stewart Donovan**  
**The Forgotten World of R.J. MacSween: A Life**  
**Cape Breton University Press \$23.95**  
**ISBN 978-1-879009-11-6**

Born of Gaelic-speaking Scots living on the shores of the Bras d'Or Lake in Cape Breton, R.J. (Roderick Joseph) MacSween grew up in poverty and hardship. He was ordained a Roman Catholic priest and recruited to teach at St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, where he established the first creative writing course in a Canadian university. He founded *The Antigonish Review*, and influenced the careers of such writers as Alistair MacLeod, Sheldon Currie and Linden MacIntyre, as well as thousands of students. *The Forgotten World* is a literary biography that examines the life and work of this relatively unknown, enigmatic and gifted man.

Stewart Donovan was born in Ingonish in the highlands of Cape Breton Island. He studied at St. Francis Xavier University under R.J. MacSween, then did his MA at the University of Ottawa and completed his graduate studies in Ireland. For the past 23 years he has been a professor of Literature and Film at St. Thomas University in Fredericton, New Brunswick, where he founded both the Irish Studies Program and *The Nashuaak Review*, which he continues to edit.

**Steven Laffoley**  
**Hunting Halifax:**  
**In Search of History, Mystery and Murder**  
**Pottersfield Press \$19.95**  
**ISBN 978-1-895900-93-4**

Also nominated for the Atlantic Independent Booksellers' Choice Award. (See page 5)



**Nominated for the 6th annual Lillian Shepherd Memorial Award for Excellence in Illustration**

**Nancy Keating**  
**A Puppy Story**  
**Susan Pynn, author**  
**Tuckamore Books \$11.95**  
**ISBN 978-1-897174-18-0**

Laura Lou promises Mom and Dad that if she can have a puppy, he will have perfect manners. Oops ... chubby and cuddly, he's puddling on the floor. Puppy likes snacking on houseplants, splashing out of the tub and sliding down the hall. Laura Lou knows it's up to her. Together, they learn how to change a little bundle of eager invention into a perfectly mannered member of the family ... well, almost.

Nancy Keating grew up in Conception Bay South, and now lives with her husband and three children in Portugal Cove, Newfoundland. She's been working as a commercial artist for more than two decades. A self-taught artist, she particularly enjoys illustrating children's books, which have included Carmelita McGrath's *The Dog Next Year*, *The Saltbox Sweater* by Janet McNaughton and *Only for the Weekend* by Elaine Dicks.



**Eric Orchard**  
**A Forest for Christmas**  
**Michael Harris, author**  
**Nimbus Publishing \$19.95**  
**ISBN 978-155109-589-9**

Emily believes in magic – the magic of the moon, of the animals she talks to, and of her lovely old town, Lunenburg. She also believes in the magic of the Friendly Forest, but she's worried that it might not be enough to stop the owner of the new whatzit factory from chopping down the trees she loves so much. Will all the forest's animals, a little stardust and a lot of courage be enough to save the Friendly Forest, just in time for Christmas?

Eric Orchard grew up in a small Nova Scotia town with plenty of time to read and dream. In his late teens, Eric began publishing his own fairy-tale-themed comic books. He attended the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design where he studied painting and art history, graduating in 2006. This is Eric's first picture book. He has also illustrated *Anything But Hank* by Zachery Wells and *Rachel Lebowitz* (Biblioasis). Eric lives in Halifax.



**Richard Rudnicki**  
**Gracie, The Public Gardens Duck**  
**Judith Meyrick, author**  
**Nimbus Publishing \$16.95**  
**ISBN 978-1-55109-605-6**

Gracie has an idyllic life in Halifax's Public Gardens. What delicious treats to savour from visitors to the park – muffins, popcorn, peanut butter sandwiches. Gracie loves the attention, the visitors, but especially the food. Suddenly, her favourite people stop bringing treats. Why won't they share their lunch? Aren't they worried she'll starve? Despite her best efforts, Gracie is reduced to ... well ... duck food. And despite herself ... she starts to enjoy it. *Gracie, The Public Gardens Duck* is the funny and sweet saga of one hungry duck in search of supper.



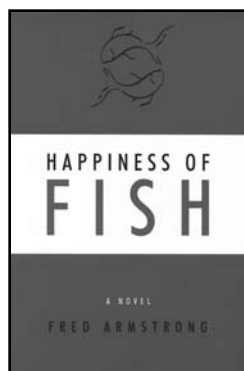
Richard Rudnicki began drawing at a very young age, went on to study fine art and graphic design and, as an idealistic youth, became a resident artist with CUSO. A short time later he started a graphic design firm, which grew into a successful company. In 1994 he sold his business to return to drawing and painting, becoming a full-time visual artist. Richard lives in Halifax.

## **Nominated for the 6th annual Margaret and John Savage First Book Award**

**Fred Armstrong**  
**Happiness of Fish**  
**Jespersion Publishing \$19.95**  
**ISBN 978-1-89437-725-6**

On a snowy winter night, Gerry Adamson hides from his family in a laid-up sailboat. Pushing 60, holed-up with a laptop, he's trying to make a novel from thirty-odd years of compromises and betrayals that have seen him progress from youthful erratic passion to late-middle-aged dithering. He's making one last effort to have it mean something.

Fred Armstrong has more than 30 years' experience in journalism and light entertainment, writing for print, radio, and television. Born in Ottawa in 1947, he emigrated to Newfoundland in 1972 and has written for *The Daily News*, CBC, and Newcap Broadcasting. When he qualified for one of the first Writers' Alliance of Newfoundland & Labrador mentorships in 2004 (mentored by local writer and musician Ed Kavanagh), Fred cut back on journalistic work to complete his first novel. *Happiness of Fish* is that novel.



**Stephanie Domet**  
**Homing: the whole story (from the inside out)**  
**Invisible Publishing \$15**  
**ISBN 978-0-9782185-0-8**

Leah is haunted. By the things she's done, by the things she should have done, and by the ghost of her brother. She has to learn to let go of the past if she, or her brother, are ever going to move on. A funny, urban love story, *Homing* is about a woman who's grown afraid of the outdoors, a ghost that's lost its way, a musician who's trying to find his, and Sandy and Harold, a pair of homing pigeons that help bring it all back home.



Stephanie Domet is a writer-broadcaster who lives in Halifax. You may have heard her on CBC Radio, read her work in the Halifax *Daily News*, *The Coast*, or *Halifax Magazine*, or seen her in the 2005 Atlantic Fringe Festival performing her one-woman show, *Cogswell*, or at the Atlantic Film Festival, appearing in a film of the same name. She has worked as a mall mascot, in a balloon factory, as a graveyard-shift pastry chef and in many, many diners and bookstores. She vastly prefers writing books to just about anything else she's done.

**Bob Mersereau**  
**The Top 100 Canadian Albums**  
**Goose Lane Editions \$35**  
**ISBN 978-0-86492-500-8**

From a nation that invented Trivial Pursuit and is renowned for inveterate list-making, *The Top 100 Canadian Albums* was a book that needed to be written. Polling more than 500 musicians, music industry insiders and journalists, Bob Mersereau has assembled a list that is sure to spark more than a few hundred debates among aficionados. The book features cover reproductions and descriptions for each of the albums that made the list as well as documentary photographs, interviews and fascinating facts. Did you know that Randy Bachman tried to get Trooper to change the name of their 1978 hit to 'Raise a Little Howl' because of his religious beliefs? And the top album? Time to buy this book.



Bob Mersereau is a music columnist and long-time arts reporter of the East Coast music scene for CBC Radio, CBC Television, and the *Telegraph-Journal* in New Brunswick. He's been a frequent guest on such CBC programs as *Morningside* and *Sounds like Canada*.



## Nominated for the 18th annual Ann Connor Brimer Award for Children's Literature

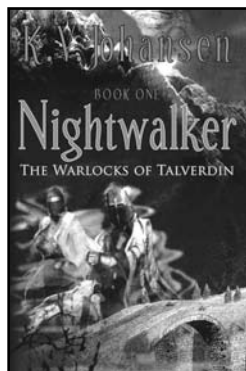
**K.V. Johansen**

**Nightwalker: The Warlocks of Talverdin**

**Orca \$9.95**

**ISBN 978-155143-481-0**

After his guardian dies, Maurey is reduced from student to unpaid servant at his school and is taunted because of his black hair and eyes which make him look as if he were related to Nightwalkers, the sorcerers who once inhabited the island. When it's discovered he is indeed a descendent of Nightwalkers, he's sentenced to be burned alive. Rescued by a young baroness, they set out on a dangerous journey to the hidden kingdom of Talverdin. If he and Annot are to survive and prevent the destruction of the last refuge of the Nightwalkers, Maurey will have to call on human and inhuman skills he never knew he possessed, and win the trust of both sides of his family.



"If there is one book that has shaped what I think a book should do and what literature should be," medieval scholar K.V. Johansen says, "it is *The Lord of the Rings*." Like Tolkien, she is thorough in her research, a rich reward for readers. Johansen lives in a bit of another world herself. She grows exotic trees indoors – a Tasmanian blue gum that reached 10 feet and California redwoods. She shares her home in Sackville, New Brunswick, with a large dog named Pippin and several enormous goldfish.

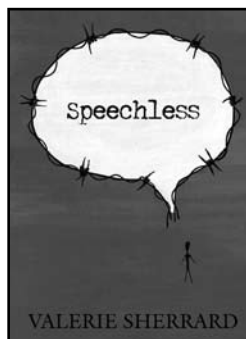
**Valerie Sherrard**

**Speechless**

**Dundurn Group \$12.99**

**ISBN 978-1-55002-701-3**

"No one pays much attention to you if you don't have much to say, so there was no way I could have predicted what would happen when I stopped talking altogether." When his teacher announces it's time for the yearly class speeches, Griffin Maxwell starts to sweat. His past experience with it was humiliating and there's no way he can go through that again. So Griffin's best friend, Bryan, comes up with a solution – one that's so simple it has to work. But neither boy can predict the bizarre chain of events about to unfold. From squaring off with the school bully to reading a teacher's private letters, Griffin Maxwell faces things he had never imagined,



and all without saying a word.

Born in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, Valerie (Russell) Sherrard lived in various parts of the country before settling in New Brunswick. Writing for young adults comes naturally to the executive director of a group home for adolescents, and former foster parent of 70 teenagers. Sherrard's interests are varied, ranging from home decorating to watching boxing with her husband, Brent. Their family home is a converted funeral parlour, although the only odd noises heard there come from their eccentric pet, Tom the Cat.

**Alice Walsh**

**A Sky Black with Crows**

**Red Deer Press \$12.95**

**ISBN 088995-368-6**

Katie Andrew goes with her family each summer to fish the Labrador waters. When her father is lost at sea, Katie's mother refuses to leave the outport and waits for him to return even when all hope is lost. Soon the entire family falls ill, and her mother dies. Katie awakens after her illness in the orphanage run by the Grenfell Mission. She is devastated by the disappearance of her youngest sister, who has been adopted. *A Sky Black with*



*Crows* follows Katie through a series of events that are as vital to her search for her sister as they are insightful of the history of the Atlantic region at a time when Canada was about to make its early mark on the world.

Alice Walsh was born in northern Newfoundland and lives today in Lower Sackville, NS. Her work has appeared in newspapers, magazines and literary journals. Her published work includes five children's books. She has been frequently cited for Children's Book Centre Our Choice designation and has been nominated twice for the Hackmatack Award. In 2005, her book *Pomiuk: Prince of the North* won the Ann Connor Brimer Award.

## Nominated for the 5th annual Best Atlantic Published Book Award

**Judith Meyrick**

**Gracie, The Public Gardens Duck**

**Richard Rudnicki, illustrator**

**Nimbus Publishing \$16.95**

**ISBN 978-1-55109-605-6**

Also for the Lillian Shepherd Memorial Award for Excellence in Illustration. (See page 7)

Judith Meyrick has lived and worked in Halifax for many years. She has just returned from two years in her native New Zealand where she worked for the NZ Master Games in

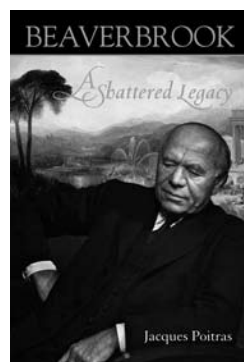
Wanganui. She is a freelance writer and discovered her passion for children's literature only in recent years. *Gracie, The Public Gardens Duck* is her first published children's book.

Nimbus Publishing is the largest English-language publisher east of Toronto. Nimbus produces more than 30 new titles a year on a range of subjects relevant to the Atlantic Provinces – children's picture books and fiction, literary non-fiction, social and cultural history, nature photography, current events, biography, sports, and cultural issues. In 2005, Nimbus introduced a new fiction imprint called Vagrant Press.



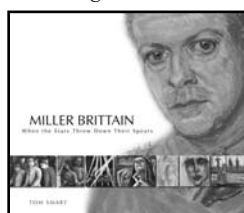
**Jacques Poitras**  
**Beaverbrook: A Shattered Legacy**  
**Goose Lane Editions \$35**  
**ISBN 978-0-86492-497-1**

Also nominated for an Atlantic Independent Booksellers' Choice Award. (See page 6)



**Tom Smart**  
**Miller Brittain: When the Stars Threw Down Their Spears**  
**Goose Lane Editions \$65**  
**ISBN 978-0-86492-483-4**

Miller Gore Brittain (1912-1968) had an unerring sense of structure and composition. In the early 1930s, at the Art Students' League in New York, he experienced the pivotal moment in American art: the shift from traditional to abstract expressionism. When he returned to Canada, the Group of Seven still defined Canadian art, and he burst upon the scene with emotion-filled drawings and paintings of the human form. Later, combining figures and abstraction, he explored the limits of the body and the borderlands of sanity to express the depths of despair and the heights of ecstasy. World War II interrupted Brittain's career and on his bombing missions he carried William Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience* with him. Blake's poems, particularly 'The Tyger,' proved a pervasive motif of Brittain's later work.



Tom Smart is the newly appointed Executive Director and CEO of the McMichael Canadian Collection. He was previously Director of Collections and Exhibitions at the Frick Art and Historical Center, Pittsburgh; Acting Director of the Winnipeg Art Gallery, and curator of the Beaverbrook Art Gallery. He is the author of many books on Canadian art, including *Alex*

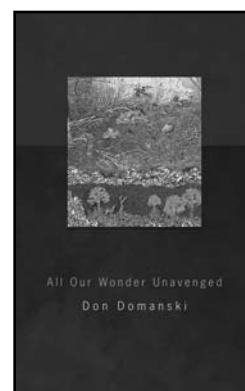
*Colville: Return* and the award-winning *The Art of Mary Pratt: The Substance of Light*.

Goose Lane Editions is based in Fredericton, New Brunswick. As Canada's oldest independent publisher (now more than 50 years old), Goose Lane successfully combines a regional heart with a national profile to introduce readers to fresh perspectives on age-old ideas and new writing by some of the region's and the country's best authors.

## Nominated for the 11th annual Atlantic Poetry Prize

**Don Domanski**  
**All Our Wonder Unavenged**  
**Brick Books \$18**  
**ISBN 978-1-894078-58-6**

*All Our Wonder Unavenged* was written over a seven year period, and continues Don Domanski's exploration of the ordinary and the extraordinary, and the ways in which they illuminate each other, transforming through unexpected contexts. Don is a poet of the holiness of subtleties, a master of mindfulness and being. His writing is a form of osmosis, spirit seeping through the details of each poem, creating a marvel of metaphysics and language distilled to purest energy. Living in the moment here is synonymous with being the moment, a transformation that is stunning to inhabit. *All Our Wonder Unavenged* won the Governor General's Award for Poetry last year.



Born in 1950 in Sydney and raised on Cape Breton Island, Don's first collection, *The Cape Breton Book of the Dead*, was published by House of Anansi Press in 1978. Two of his collections have previously been nominated for the GG's Award: *Wolf Ladder* (Coach House, 1991) and *Stations of the Left Hand* (Coach House, 1994). He has been published internationally in Czech, Portuguese and Spanish. Don, who makes his home in Halifax, has participated several times in WFNS's mentorship program, and is currently a writer in electronic residence with the Banff Centre.

**George Murray**  
**The Rush to Here**  
**Nightwood Editions \$16.95**  
**ISBN 978-0-88971-229-4**

Combining what he calls "thought-rhyme" with the structured sonnet form, George Murray's philosophical curiosity and hardnosed intelligence emerge to create an off-kilter eye that somehow manages to be dead on target. As though looking out a window outside of which the entire world is passing by, *The Rush to Here* darts through the absurdity of daily life to organize

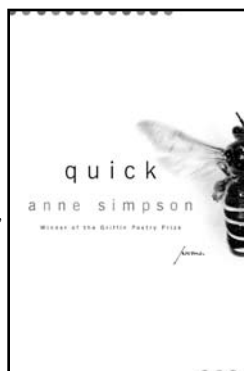
the mess and contradictions of modern society. Relentlessly honest, elegant in form and language, *The Rush to Here* is an intimidating, eerie, but ultimately hopeful collection that sets Murray apart as a voice for our time.

George Murray's three previous books of poetry include *The Hunter* (McClelland & Stewart, 2003) and *The Cottage Builder's Letter* (M&S, 2001). His poems, fiction and criticism have appeared in publications in Canada, the US, the UK, Australia, and Europe. He won the 2003 New York Festival's Radio and Television Gold Medal for Best Writing for his broadcast poem "Anniversary: A Personal Inventory" and has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize. He is the editor and publisher of the popular literary website Bookninja.com and a contributing editor for several literary magazines, including *Canadian Notes and Queries* and *The Drunken Boat*. He lives in St. John's, Newfoundland.

**Anne Simpson**  
**Quick**  
**McClelland & Stewart \$17.99**  
**ISBN 978-0771080913**

The human body is a world. How it contains all that it does, how it is altered, and how it is transformed after death are the concerns of *Quick*, a new collection of poetry from one of Canada's most exciting poets. From the shock of a near-fatal car accident to a meditation on the body as one world within other, larger worlds, the book becomes an anatomy in itself.

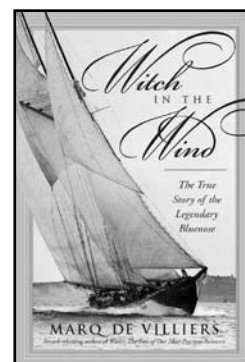
Winner of the prestigious Journey Prize for short fiction, Anne Simpson is the author of two other books of poetry, *Light Falls Through You*, winner of the Gerald Lampert Memorial Award and the Atlantic Poetry Prize; and *Loop*, winner of the Griffin Poetry Prize and a finalist for the Governor General's Award for Poetry. Her fiction includes *Canterbury Beach*, which was shortlisted for the Raddall Atlantic Fiction Award, and *Falling*, which has just been released by McClelland & Stewart. Anne, who has also been nominated for a Pushcart Prize, is the driving force behind the Great Blue Heron Summer Writing Workshop. She lives with her family in Antigonish.



## Nominated for the 20th annual Dartmouth Book Award for Non-Fiction

**Marq de Villiers**  
**Witch in the Wind: The True Story of the Legendary Bluenose**  
**Thomas Allen Publishers \$36.95**  
**ISBN 978-0-88762-224-3**

Also nominated for the Evelyn Richardson Prize for Non-fiction. (See page 6)



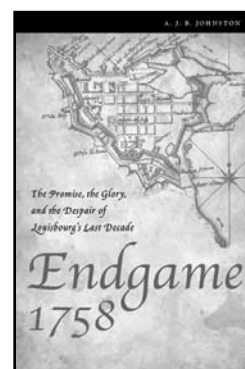
**Stewart Donovan**  
**The Forgotten World of R.J. MacSween: A Life**  
**Cape Breton University Press \$23.95**  
**ISBN 978-1-879009-11-6**

Also been nominated for an Evelyn Richardson Prize for Non-fiction Award. (See page 7)



**A.J.B. Johnston**  
**Endgame 1758: The Promise, the Glory and the Despair of Louisbourg's Last Decade**  
**Cape Breton University Press \$26.95**  
**ISBN 978-1-897009-20-8**

The story of what happened at the fortified town of Louisbourg between 1749 and 1758 is one of the great dramas of the history of Canada, indeed of North America. The French stronghold on Cape Breton Island, strategically situated near the entrance to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, was a major possession in the quest for empire. The dramatic military and social history of this short-lived and significant fortress, seaport, and community, and the citizens who made it their home, are woven together in A.J.B. Johnston's gripping biography of the colony's final decade, presented from both French and British perspectives. *Endgame 1758* is a tale of two empires in collision on the shores of Atlantic Canada, where rival European visions of predominance clashed headlong with each other and with the region's Aboriginal peoples. The magnitude of the struggle and of its uncertain outcome coloured the lives of Louisbourg's inhabitants and the



nearly 30,000 combatants arrayed against it. How and why the French colony ended the way it did is a little-known and compelling story.

A.J.B. (John) Johnston is an author and historian with many articles and 11 published books that look at the histories of Louisbourg, Cape Breton, Acadia and Nova Scotia. A Halifax resident, he is a historian with Parks Canada.

## Nominated for the 18th annual Thomas Head Raddall Atlantic Fiction Prize

**Don Hannah**  
**Ragged Islands**  
**Knopf Canada \$32.95**  
**ISBN 978-0-676-97791-2**

It's September 11, 2001: Susan Ann Robert's 85th birthday. She lies dying in a Toronto hospital swathed in restraints of catheters, diapers and tethers when suddenly she's on the dirt road leading to her childhood home in New Brunswick, fretting at the mystery of why she – among all her siblings – was given away as a child. Accompanied by her long lost dog, Sally, she continues along old roads, visiting the lost houses of her memory and fragments of the individuals who peopled her life. A simple life lived, as mundane and as heroic as are all our lives.

Don Hannah was born in Shediac, New Brunswick, and now lives in Toronto and on the South Shore of Nova Scotia. His novels, *The Wise and Foolish Virgins* and *Ragged Islands* are published by Knopf Canada. His plays include *The Wedding Script* (Chalmers Award), *Rubber Dolly*, *Running Far Back*, *The Wooden Hill* (AT&T OnStage Award), and *Fathers and Sons*. He has been writer in residence at the Tarragon Theatre, the Canadian Stage Company, the University of New Brunswick, and for the Yukon Public Library Service. He has written two musicals with singer/songwriter David Sereda, *Love Jive and Siren Song*, both of which premiered at Tarragon Theatre. *Facing South*, his opera with composer Linda Catlin Smith, premiered at the 2003 World Stage Festival. As a dramaturge, he has worked at the Playwrights Atlantic Resource Centre (PARC), the National Theatre School, and the Vancouver Playwrights Theatre Centre. He is currently on the faculty of the Banff PlayRites Colony.

**Bernice Morgan**  
**Cloud of Bone**  
**Knopf Canada \$34.95**  
**ISBN 978-0-676-97938-1**

What do wild Kyle Holloway, shell-shocked deserter of the Second World War, Shanawadithit, last surviving Beothuk, and anthropologist Judith Muir have in common? *Cloud of Bone* and Bernice Morgan: a book and an author who reinter the

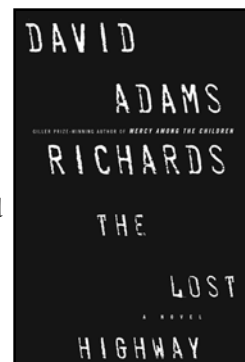
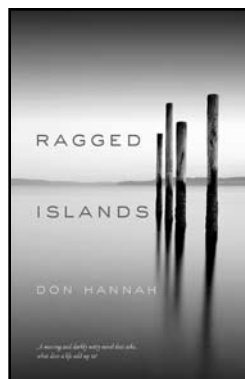
shadows and bones of lost innocence and past brutalities, laying them to rest through a mesmerizing tale and a vivid remembering of forgotten histories.

Bernice Morgan was born in Newfoundland and has lived there all her life – a place that fills her imagination, exhilarates her and drives her to despair. Her parents, Sadie Vincent of Cape Island, Bonavista Bay, and William Vardy of Random Island, Trinity Bay, came into St. John's during the Depression. Stories about the outposts they left behind provided the background for her novels, *Random Passage* and *Waiting for Time*. Wartime St. John's is echoed in her third book, *Topography of Love*, and in the opening of *Cloud of Bone*. Her short stories have been widely anthologized, and CBC-TV presented a mini-series based on her first two novels. *Waiting for Time* won the Thomas Head Raddall Atlantic Fiction Prize in 1994; and the Newfoundland & Labrador Arts Council proclaimed Morgan "Artist of the Year" in 1996.

**David Adams Richards**  
**The Lost Highway**  
**Doubleday Canada \$34.95**  
**ISBN 978-0-385-66496-7**

A suspenseful morality-tale of greed, betrayal and murder, *The Lost Highway* tells the story of orphan Alex Chapman who is adopted by his great-uncle Jim, with whom he feuds for most of his adult life. An awkward child, he is cast out by family, friends, Minnie, the woman he loves, the seminary in which he seeks faith and solace, the university in which he teaches. His great-uncle's unknowing purchase of a winning \$13 million lottery ticket and Alex's determination that he'll not live to enjoy it set readers on a pell-mell, tumultuous ride, a page-turner of life and death.

David Adams Richards is the author of the novels *The Friends of Meager Fortune*, *River of the Brokenhearted*, and *Mercy Among the Children*, which won the Giller Prize and was nominated for the Governor General's and the Trillium Awards. He is the author of the celebrated Miramichi trilogy: *Nights Below Station Street*, winner of the Governor General's Award; *Evening Snow Will Bring Such Peace*, winner of the Canadian Authors' Association Award; and *For Those Who Hunt the Wounded Down*, winner of the Raddall Award. His novel *The Bay of Love and Sorrows* has been made into a feature film. Already this year, David has seen the release of two new books: *Lord Beaverbrook* (Penguin) and *Playing the Inside Out* (GooseLane Editions). ■



# Who's doing what –

■ **Racked** – members work appearing in the magnificent miscellany of journals, mags and e-signals ... crossing your editor's desk into the Fed Reference Library (open 9:30 to 4:30 Monday through Friday for your consummate consumption): while exploring family roots, **Brian Bartlett** 'found' two new poems which appear in *The Antigoniish Review* 152 where **Carole Langille** unveils a short story, "What the Gods Give Mortals"; **Sandra Phinney** has been covering linoleum lately ... no she's not remodelling. Her story about Martine Vermeulen's fine art linoleum collages is featured in the current issue of *Saltscapes*, as are **Jodi DeLong's** timely pruning tips and contemplation of solar energy, and **Donna D'Amour's** thoughts on green renovation ... all lined up before **Darcy Rhyno** signs off with an interview with hockey legend Willie O'Ree; *Readers' Digest* is publishing a new magazine – *Best Health* – and Philip Moscovitch's article 'Just a Quirk?' is featured in the debut issue; the latest short story from **Elaine McCluskey**, 'I Visited the Grand Canyon', merits a trip to the newsstand to buy the Fall issue of *Room*; 'Mincing Words' is **Eleanor Beaton's** excoriation of "plastic prose" in *Atlantic Business Magazine*. She points to e-mails, ads, speeches, brochures and press releases rife with slovenly language and exhorts that we declare verbal imprecision our enemy ... you go, girl!; *Tower Poetry* and *The Ranfurly Review* (Scotland) feature recent poems from **Richard Provencher**, and *Stories for Children Magazine* recently ran a story, "The Friendship Club", which he co-wrote with this wife Esther; *Qwerty* and *The Puritan* (Ottawa)

both boast recent stories from **Ryan Turner**; *FATE* magazine features an article, "The Phantom Ship of Chaleur Bay" by storyteller **Steve Vernon**; **Heddy Johannesen** has a series of online publications at [www.witchvox.com](http://www.witchvox.com).

■ **Recently launched** – The oval table in the middle of the Cape Breton Centre for Craft and Design was set with a 3-foot cake cunningly crafted by Allegro Catering as a replica of the cover of **Douglas Arthur Brown's** latest release, *Quintet* (Key Porter). Champagne flowed and Peggy McAdam had trouble keeping up with sales for the crowd of more than a hundred, all eager to have their copies personally autographed at this mid-March banishing of winter. In the week leading up to the launch, CBC Radio Cape Breton's Wendy Bergfeldt highlighted the release on *MainStreet* with daily readings by Douglas in advance of a one-on-one interview on launch day; the Special Collections Reading Room at Dalhousie University's Killam Library was the perfect venue for the launch of **Ian Colford's** first collection of short stories, *Evidence*. Published by Porcupine's Quill with a cover featuring a Gordon MacDonald painting (Leaving Saint John), *Evidence* draws on Ian's travels to Greece, Portugal, Turkey and Italy and is unified by a single narrator; *The New Layman's Almanac*, poems from **Jacob McArthur Mooney**, published by McClelland & Stewart, was released at the end of March to great critical hoopla. Jake, as he was known when WFNS was graced with his presence in our mentorship program in 2004, is now living in

Mississauga finishing up a Creative Writing degree at the University of Guelph. He is the poetry editor at *ThievesJargon.com* and the founder of *The Facebook Review*. Jake was born in 1983. It was the year of the boar and he's been having a rambunctious time launching his debut collection; **Johanna Skibsrud's** debut poetry collection, *Late Nights With Wild Cowboys* (Gaspereau Press), was feted with readings in Toronto – at Clinton's, the Gladstone Hotel, Soma Restaurant and Lounge, and Ben McNally Books – and in Hamilton at the SkyDragon Centre. Born in Scotsburn, Johanna currently lives in Toronto where she's working with the Canadian Scholars Press; **Jeanne Ripley**, who joined forces with Joanne Chilton to create *Wings to Fly* launched this collection of poetry and fine art photography among friends at the Economy Shoe Shop; dynamo **Alain Raimbault** has just welcomed the release of his novel, *Confidence à l'aveugle* from Hurtubise ... one week before he welcomed his latest chapter book for 10 to 12 year olds, *Capitaine Popaul* (caméléon); **Harry Thurston's** lyrical essay on the elemental nature of salmon rivers provides a counterpoint to photographer Thaddeus Holownia's images of the mercurial habitat of the Atlantic salmon in *Silver Ghost*, a limited edition release from Gaspereau Press; Sagor's Books on the banks of the LaHave in beautiful downtown Bridgewater was the perfect home to the crowd that recently launched **Joanne Jefferson's** *Lightning and Blackberries* (Nimbus).

continued on page 14

■ **Signed, sealed, about to be delivered** – *Charged* is **Carol Moreira**'s first-born YA novel, scheduled for delivery from Lorimer this month; *Barrington Street Blues* is **Anne Emery**'s third mystery in the Collins-Burke Series and will be launched, eponymously enough, at Bearly's, 1269 Barrington Street on May 10 at 8:30 p.m.; *Submarine Outlaw* by **Philip Roy** won last year's Atlantic Writing Competition in the YA Category and is almost on the shelves from Ronsdale Press. Though Philip's temporarily in Upper Canada, he'll be on the Halifax waterfront this summer, complete with a six-foot model submarine and lots of copies of the book for sale and signing; **Mary Alice Downie** has been working with her partner and husband, John on *Alison's Ghosts*, about to be released by Lorimer. This YA novel tells the story of Alison, who is held captive by the powers of a mysterious pipe bowl belonging to a Mi'kmaq shaman; *Loyalist Layabouts and Dancing Beggars: The Rapid Rise and Faster Fall of Shelburne, Nova Scotia 1783-1792* (Doubleday) is **Stephen Kimber**'s second novel, which will be released this month with a celebration set for the Osprey Arts Centre in Shelburne on June 6. In addition to a reading by Stephen, the Prince of Wales Historic Dancers, will be performing; **Carole Langille** is getting ready to welcome a collection of her short stories: *When I Always Wanted Something* will be published by Mercury Press this fall; **Steve Vernon** has just signed a contract for his third Nimbus ghost story collection.

■ **Kudos and break out the bubbly** – **Anne Simpson** has been nominated for the Pat Lowther Memorial Award for her recent poetry collection *Quick* (McClelland & Stewart, 2007).

Administered by the League of Canadian Poets and honouring one of Canada's most vital and visionary poets, the Lowther winner will be announced at the LCP Poetry Fest and Conference in St. John's on June 21; The Atlantic Journalism Association has announced the shortlist for their 2007 Awards, which will be presented in Halifax on May 3. Both **Stephen Kimber** and **Lezlie Lowe** have earned nominations in the Feature Writing – Print category for features that appeared in *The Coast*: Lezlie for 'Chasing Amy' and Stephen for 'The Prophet in Clayton Park'. **Eleanor Beaton** is nominated in the Atlantic Magazine – Best Profile Article for 'What's Up Mickey?' which appeared in *Atlantic Business Magazine*; **Elaine McCluskey** earned herself an honourable mention for her unpublished novel, "The Houdini", in WFNB's David Adams Richards Prize category for unpublished manuscript; *A Place out of Time* (Great Plains), **Alf Silver**'s conclusion to his Red River stories, has been short-listed for the Manitoba Historical Society's Margaret McWilliams Award; **Russell Colman**, a graduate of two Rural Writes sessions led by **Douglas Arthur Brown**, has just been shortlisted for the UK Debut Dagger Award for 'Desert Storm'. The Crime Writers Association's DDA, which honours previously unpublished writers, is a £500 prize complete with overnight stay at a top London hotel and a ticket to the awards ceremony. The Dagger Awards have been instrumental in launching the careers of a number of notable crime writers including Louise Penny; **Steven Mayoff** was a semi-finalist in this year's Amazon Breakthrough Novel competition for his novel *Destinations and Departures*; The 2008 Days Inns Award for

best family travel article went to **George Burden** for a feature he wrote for *The Medical Post*, titled "Marking a Milestone in Montreal." George made it a family affair, divvying up the prize between his 19 year-old (the thermal vest with Days Inn logo), and his niece and stepdaughter (\$1,000 cheque so they could travel to Florida to visit the grandparents). George kept the plaque; **Keir Lowther** (mentored last year by **William Kowalski**) was shortlisted in the CBC Literary Awards for his story "Dirty Bird", an honour he shared with **Elizabeth Peirce** for her story, "The End of the Last Ice Age". **E. Alex Pierce** earned a nomination for her poem, "Two Houses."

■ **Elizabeth Venart**, who was mentored by **Kelly Cooper** in 2005-06, has won the 2008 Winston Collins/*Descant* Prize for Best Canadian Poem. In their citation, judges Douglas Glove and Lisa Moore commented: "'On the Day I Cut Cabbage' is a gorgeous poem that begins with a humble domestic moment in the garden then cuts with the grace of a single sickle stroke to metaphor and history and the future. Eons pass, empires rise, the sands bury and lay waste, stories are written and unwritten until there is no one left to write. A magnificent, imaginative jeu d'esprit, a riff, the whole human trajectory in a few lines."

■ It's been a particularly devastating winter for fire departments in Nova Scotia. **Philip Moscovitch**'s documentary on the challenges facing volunteer fire departments, which aired on CBC-Radio One's *Maritime Magazine*, was a timely and provocative look at the people and the problems so valiantly faced.



■ *Claire's Race* is the most recent addition to **Nancy Wilcox-Richards'** growing list of publications, which include the beloved "Farmer Joe" picture books. Claire is Nancy's neighbour. She has epilepsy; Nancy felt compelled to tell her story. Because of her condition, Claire's vision is limited, her leg is usually supported with a brace and she has no use of her left arm but ... Claire signed up for her school's cross-country team. Claire finished the race and to find out how she did, you'll need to read Nancy's book. All royalties are being donated to the Epilepsy Association of Nova Scotia

■ Though she's been painting for months in preparation, Susan Tooke is also hammering the keys for her first foray with writing. Both streams of creativity will converge this fall with the release of *B is for Bluenose, A Nova Scotia Alphabet* to be published by Sleeping Bear Press. Susan will also be participating in the excitement that is TD Canadian Children's Book Week in November.

■ March found **John (A.J.B.) Johnston** in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, at a conference on the "Ohio Country" to talk about what was going on in Atlantic Canada circa 1758, the subject of his recent award-nominated book *Endgame 1758: The Promise, the Glory and the Despair of Louisbourg's Last Decade*, which in the US is published by the University of Nebraska Press and in Canada by Cape Breton University Press.

■ Though she's almost too busy working on the third book of her Warlocks series to take note, **K.V. (Krista) Johansen** is delighted that *Treason in Esuy: The Warlock of Talverdin, Book Two*, is now in the stores. Last year VOYA (Voice of

Youth Advocates) selected the first book, *Nightwalker*, for their annual list of the year's Best Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror. *Nightwalker* was named to the Ontario Library Association's 2007 "Best Bets" for children, nominated for the 2008 Saskatchewan Children's Choice Willow Awards, and is currently shortlisted for the Ann Connor Brimer Award.

■ The ScotiaBank Conference Theatre at St. Mary's University was packed to the rafters mid-afternoon to hear **Marq de Villiers** read from and talk about his recently revised and updated book, *Water: The Fate of Our Most Precious Resource*, which won the Governor General's Award in 1999. The event celebrated the 30th anniversary of the partnership between the university and Halifax Public Libraries, which welcomes the general public to audit a panoply of university lectures within the library's facilities.

■ **Stephen Davidson** has been invited to give a presentation during the summer on the first Loyalist refugee ship to arrive in New Brunswick in 1783. He's also developed a feature on the subject which is slated to appear in the August/September issue of *The Beaver*.

■ The Kings County Museum has mounted a new exhibition on Children's Literature – Tell Me A Story: Inspiring Kings County Authors and Illustrators. The show will include **Joyce Barkhouse**, **Holly Carr**, **Murray Barkhouse**, **Michael Bawtree**, **Jan Coates**, **Pam Hickman**, **Ron and Sandra Lightburn**, and **Allison Mahar**, among others, and will run to August 15 at the museum at 37 Cornwallis Street in Kentville.

■ *Telling Our Own Story: Mi'kmaq Governance Past, Present and Future* was staged at the Ramada Park Plaza in Dartmouth in mid-March. Drawing together a large cadre of youths and elders, the gathering explored traditional Mi'kmaq government practices through the life experiences of elders and storytellers. **Daniel Paul**, writer of *We Were Not the Savages* (Fernwood Publishing), talked about the history of the Indian Act and was delighted to tell the story of a pair of youngsters who stopped by his booktable in the lobby. "One picked up a copy of my book and told his buddy, 'I read this book, it's one of the best that was ever written.' It was awesome. It made me feel so proud! To hear that truly made my day!"

■ **Cross Training:** Though words provide the connective tissue with WFNS, writers **Norene Smiley** and **Diane Wile Brumm** have joined forces with Shannon Bell (designer of our Book Awards posters and brochures for the past half dozen years) to explore – through image – the bonds between Mother Nature and human nature. Their exhibit at the Craig Gallery, Dartmouth (from April 30 through May 25) will show the familiar in unfamiliar ways. Poet **Rose Adams** is also painting with her recent work on display at Secord Gallery in Halifax until May 10. She's exploring a variety of media to play with the gradual fading of memory.

■ Ship's Company Theatre in Parrsboro is adapting *A Ship Portrait* (Gaspereau), a novella-in-verse by **Harry Thurston**, as a play. The book, which was nominated for the Atlantic Poetry Prize, is a tribute to the life and art of John O'Brien, a 19th century painter of ships. Production is expected to coincide

with a Tall Ships Tour in 2009.

■ After a winter posting as playwright in residence at the National Theatre School in Montreal, **Don Hannah** is again in residency, spending the spring at the Banff Centre's renowned playwrights colony.

■ The Frye Festival in Moncton is remarkable Bilingual. Run by volunteers Supported by one of the liveliest communities in the Maritimes. This year many WFNSers participated in this glorious celebration that fosters the discovery and enjoyment of reading including **Ami McKay, Andy Wainwright, Budge Wilson, Don Hannah** and **Katia Canciani**.

■ *Oops ... mea culpa:* **Sandra Dunn** recently wrote: "It was great to see the blurb about the CBC Poetry Face-off in Who's Doing What. CBC had my name in at first as Susan Dunn from Sydney but 'tis moi. Susan is my daughter-in-law and usually we are interchangeable, but she doesn't do the poetry thing." Eastword is proud to announce that it was **Sandra Dunn** who was declared winner of the Sydney pugilistic poetry play-off! Bravo!

### New Members

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

Loretta Balderson, New Glasgow  
Gigi Bauer, West Porters Lake  
Mary Lou Kersey Brown, New Glasgow  
Joyce Caines, Yellowknife, NWT  
Scott Campbell, Kentville, NS  
Lori Errington, Halifax  
Scott Fotheringham, Halifax  
Mark Haverstock, Dartmouth

Andria Hill-Lehr, Wolfville  
Bruce Holmes, Halifax  
Jeanne Joyce-Stone, Lower Sackville  
Elaine Laberge, Halifax  
Verna Mingo, Murray Siding  
David Muise, Grand Lake  
Colleen Murphy-Jones, Halifax  
Pam Robertson, Lower Sackville  
Stephanie Robertson, Lower Sackville  
Jo-Ann van Vulpen, Scotsburn  
Rita Wilson, Pictou ■

### ReMEMBERing Ours

#### Richard Perkyns (1932-2008)

The Federation bids a fond farewell to one of our long-term members, and extends sincerest condolences to his wife, Dorothy, and members of his family.

Richard, who earned his Ph.D. at King's College, University of London, emigrated to Canada in 1969 to assume a post as professor and drama specialist in the English Department at Saint Mary's University, Halifax. He taught at SMU from 1969 to 1998. He worked extensively in Halifax community theatre, directing and/or performing in plays for Saint Mary's University Drama Society, Theatre Arts Guild, and Pier One Theatre. A founding member of Halifax Independent Theatre, he directed three of that company's major productions.

In recent years, since retiring and relocating to Blandford, he has directed two productions at Chester Playhouse, *Just Between Ourselves* (April 2003); and his own adaptation of *Rachel's Revolution* (October 2004), Dorothy's award-winning novel.

A member of the Federation since the 1970s, Richard will always be remembered for his gentle and generous ways.

## AGM Ahead!

Noon. Saturday, June 7 at the Writers' Federation. The Federation's Annual General Meeting concludes our programming season ... and what a year! WITS, the Gala at Alderney Landing, Word on the Street, workshops, the tables groaning with food at our Open Houses in Cape Breton and Halifax, the Pictou-Antigonish Writer Residency, so much growth in our library this year that we've just doubled the shelving! The Fed's AGM does indeed spend at least a half an hour dealing with all the "official" business that must be completed to keep The-Powers-That-Be beaming, but it's more a picnic than a bored meeting.

In the official business department, please be served notice that the WFNS Board has approved a motion to present the AGM with a proposed constitutional amendment. It concerns a clarification of bylaw 42.1 (c) of our constitution, concerning Writers' Council membership which currently reads: "That the applicant is a full member in good standing of The Writers' Union of Canada, the League of Canadian Poets, the Playwrights Union of Canada, the Professional Writers Association of Canada, the Writers' Guild, the Canadian Association of Journalists, or CANSCAIP (the Canadian Society of Children's Authors, Illustrators and Performers);". The Board's proposed revision adds the following clause: "provided that the criteria for full membership in such organizations equals the criteria specified above in clauses 42.1 (a) and (b)."

The conclusion of the business portion of our annual meeting gives way to sharing at the potluck table, catching up with friends and applauding a number of the writers who have participated in this year's mentorship program. The more the merrier, and the member who crosses the threshold to create quorum will win a special prize ... so call or e-mail the Fed to RSVP and tell us what you'd like to bring to the picnic. ■

## imPRESSed — new titles by WFNS members



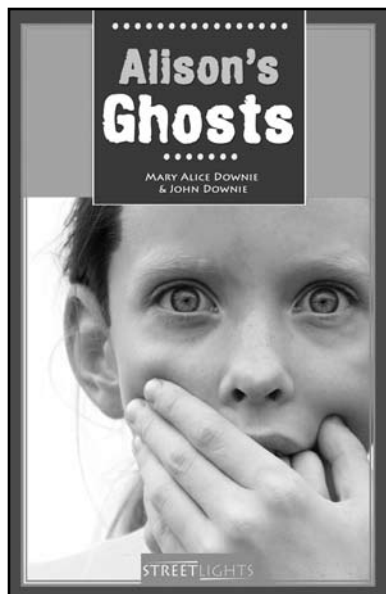
### The Watchmaker's Table

Brian Bartlett

Goose Lane Editions, 2008, \$18.95  
ISBN: 978-0-86492-508-4

This book of unassumingly daring poems is Brian Bartlett's most personal yet most historical collection, filled with the lives of his family, neighbours, and ancestors. Bartlett finds poetry in crossword puzzles, an island's flotsam and jetsam, and his son's discovery of newborn spiders. A meditation on time, the book includes a watch's wanderings, apocalyptic visions of a stark future, and an address to Time itself. Wrestling with the years as if he were both Jacob and the angel, Bartlett presents a startling evocation of time's dominion and of human mutability.

Brian Bartlett is the author of five collections and four chapbooks of poems, including the 2004 Atlantic Poetry Prize winner, *Wanting the Day: Selected Poems*. He has also edited *Don McKay: Essays on his Works* (Guernica, 2005) and *Earthly Pages: The Poetry of Don Domanski* (Wilfred Laurier UP, 2006). He teaches at Saint Mary's University in Halifax.



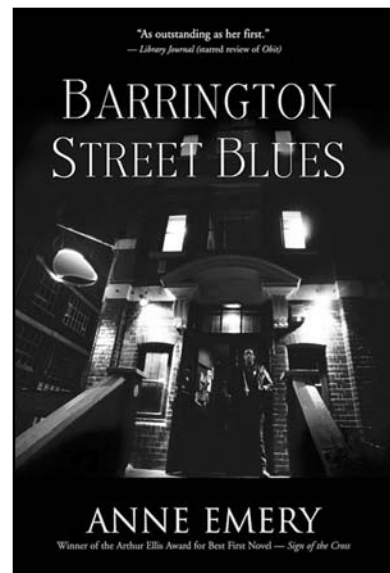
### Alison's Ghosts

Mary Alice Downie and John Downie

Lorimer, 2008, \$8.95  
ISBN 978-0808603108

Alison is held captive by the powers of a mysterious pipe bowl belonging to a Mi'kmaq shaman. The bowl takes her back in time where she forms friendships with troubled ghosts. She must uncover the history of the pipe before she is consumed by the grim fate of the pipe's beholders.

Mary Alice Downie is a pioneering children's author of historical fiction, folktales and picture books, and is the co-editor of the Amelia Frances Howard-Gibbon award-winning book *The Wind Has Wings*. Mary Alice and husband John Downie also co-authored *Honour Bound* and *Danger in Disguise*. They live in Kingston, Ontario.



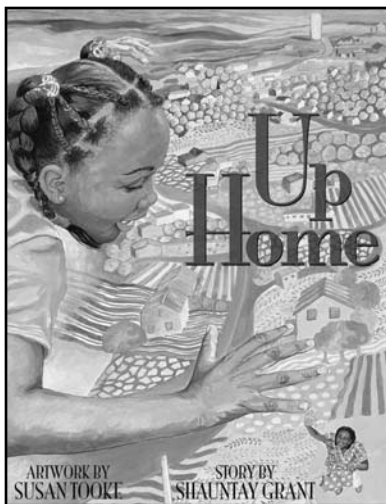
### Barrington Street Blues

Anne Emery

ECW Press, 2008, \$24.95  
ISBN 978- 1550228137

A rich man and a poor man are found dead of gunshot wounds outside a seedy bar on Barrington Street in Halifax. The police declare it a murder-suicide, but bluesman/lawyer Monty Collins – hired to represent the victims' families – suspects it's a double murder. The case gets complicated when police link the gun to the suspicious death of a high-flying lawyer named Dice Campbell. Helped by his friend Father Brennan Burke, and hindered by his femme fatale law partner Felicia Morgan, Monty explores the dark side of Halifax society.

Anne Emery is also the author of *Sign of the Cross* and *Obit*. *Sign of the Cross* won the Crime Writers of Canada's Arthur Ellis Award for Best First Novel. She is a graduate of Dalhousie Law School and has worked as a lawyer, legal affairs reporter, and researcher. She lives in Halifax with her husband and daughter.



### Up Home

Shauntay Grant

illustrated by Susan Tooke

Nimbus, 2008, \$19.95

ISBN 978-1551096605

This touching poem portrays the Nova Scotian community of Preston. Short, staccato lines, musicality and the use of real, spoken language, and Susan Tooke's breathtaking illustrations using real models from the community, combine in a sensory experience that is sure to wow readers of all ages. Grant's memories of growing up reflect a magical place where landscape, food, history and, most of all, people come together in a community filled with love and beauty.

Shauntay Grant is a writer, journalist, and spoken-word performer with roots in North Preston. Her poetry and music have been featured on CBC Radio, CBC TV, and Vision TV. She is the host of CBC Radio-Two's *All the Best*. She lives in Halifax.

Susan Tooke is an award-winning artist whose work has been exhibited across North America. She has illustrated numerous books for children, including *Free as the Wind*, *A Fiddle for Angus* and *Brave Jack and the Unicorn*. She lives in Halifax.



### The Terrible, Horrible, Smelly Pirate

Jackie Halsey and Carrie Muller

illustrated by Eric Orchard

Nimbus, 2008, \$10.95

ISBN 1551096552

Set in the misty waters of Halifax Harbour, this fun read-aloud pirate story follows the adventures of a terrible, horrible, smelly pirate named Sydney and his friend Parrot Polly. After answering a riddle set by a tricky mermaid, they dig for treasure on McNab's Island. Children will enjoy the anticipation as the chest is raised to the surface, and the surprise as its unexpected contents are revealed.

Carrie Muller grew up in Cape Breton and now lives in Dartmouth, where she is employed at Halifax Public Libraries as a library assistant.

Jacqueline Halsey is a writer, artist, and avid reader. Her book, *Peggy's Letters*, was nominated for three children's choice book awards: Hackmatack, Rocky Mountain and Silver Birch. She works as a programmer in the youth services department of Alderney Gate Library. She lives in Beaverbank.

Eric Orchard attended NSCAD where he studied painting and art history. His first picture books, *A Forest for Christmas* and *Anything But Hank* were released in 2007.



### It's Moving Day

Pamela Hickman

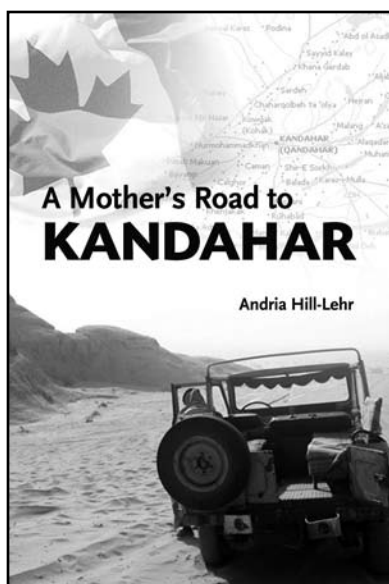
illustrated by Geraldo Valerio

Kids Can Press, 2008, \$17.95

ISBN 978-1554530748

Tucked away beneath a big tree on the edge of a field lies a home – a small burrow – for many. Each season, a different creature makes its home there and then moves on, making room for the next occupant. After a long winter's sleep, the woodchuck relocates to another burrow, but its former home is not left vacant for long. A cottontail rabbit raises her family there. After the kits have all hopped away, a salamander takes refuge in the same safe place. Through this engaging and informative introduction to woodland animals in their habitat, young readers will delight in learning about natural science as it is integrated into an inviting picture book.

Pamela Hickman, a biologist, is the author of more than 30 books about nature and wildlife, including *Turtle Rescue* and *Animals Hibernating*. She worked for many years as an education coordinator for the Federation of Ontario Naturalists. Pamela lives in Canning.



### A Mother's Road to Kandahar

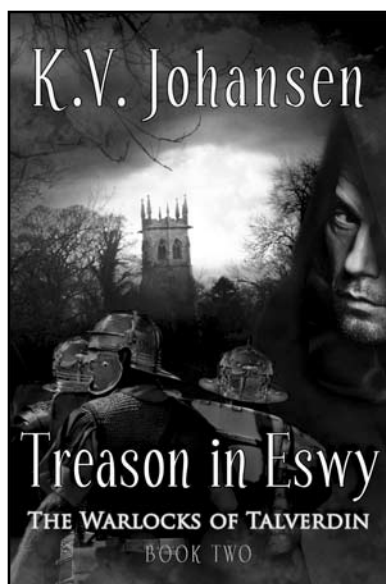
Andria Hill-Lehr

Pottersfield Press, 2008, \$15.95  
ISBN 1895900964

Andria Hill-Lehr writes about her son's decision to join Cadets, then Reserves, and his deployment to Afghanistan in 2006. She explains what inspired her to become a peace activist. Her son's path inspired Hill-Lehr to scrutinize Canada's military culture and the influence of the American armed forces.

Hill-Lehr also examines the practices used by Canada's Armed Forces to cultivate children as young as 12 to become future recruitment prospects or loyal supporters of the military through schools, co-op education programs, military displays, advertising and marketing, and video games. She hopes those who read this book will think critically about the proclaimed virtue of military programs for youth, and that Canadians will challenge Canada's military policies.

Andria Hill-Lehr lives in Wolfville. Andria's first book was *Mona Parsons: From privilege to prison, from Nova Scotia to Nazi Europe* (Nimbus, 2000).



### Treason in Eswy:

The Warlocks of Talverdin, Book Two

K.V. Johansen

Orca, 2008, \$9.95  
ISBN 978-1551438887

The murder of Eleanor's brother leaves her the sole heir to the crown of Eswy, a pawn in the struggle for power between different religious and political alliances. With her father a prisoner, Eleanor flees her mother's schemes to marry her off and finds herself hunted through the wilderness, facing treachery on all sides. Maurey, the hero of *Nightwalker*, and his friend, the Fen witch and warrior Korby, are summoned back from a mission overseas to find and protect the princess. While the two human kingdoms of the island are threatened with tyranny and Talverdin itself with annihilation, Maurey and Eleanor struggle to unravel the plots that threaten the princess's life and the peace of the three kingdoms.

K.V. Johansen is the author of numerous YA books, including *Nightwalker*, the first book of this series. She lives in Sackville, New Brunswick.



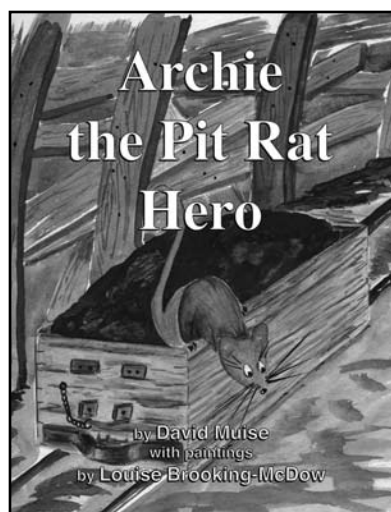
### I Still Have a Suitcase in Berlin

Stephens Gerard Malone

Random House, 2008, \$32.95  
ISBN 978-0679313410

In 1932, Michael Renner arrives in Berlin to care for his elderly grandmother. Entranced by a city that is surging in spirit, and buoyed after years of depression by the rising tide of National Socialism, Michael never goes home. He marries and becomes a father, even works for his father-in-law, auctioning the property of persecuted Jews. While his family and friends reassure Michael that the cruelties of nationalization are a necessity, he strays. Berlin's legendary sexual underworld proves too irresistible an intrigue and solace – as does his unrequited love for a promiscuous and difficult little man he meets in those mad cabarets, whose masochistic theatre can only mimic the spiraling violence on the streets above.

Stephens Gerard Malone has been a mortgage clerk in Calgary, a silver-service waiter in New Zealand, an envelope stuffer in Toronto and a sex-advice columnist. His first novel, *Miss Elva*, was a finalist for the Dartmouth Book Award.



### Archie The Pit Rat Hero

David Muise

illustrated by Louise Brooking-McDow

Breton Books, 2007, \$12.95

ISBN 978-1895415971

*Archie* is a story of friendship between a miner and a heroic little pit rat. Based on the stories miners tell about rats in the coal mines, how they fed the rats and had them for company. David Muise, a miner's son, tells the story of a pit rat whose friendship with Milton the Miner made him a hero when Milton got into trouble.

Using the background of Cape Breton coal mines, illustrator Louise Brooking-McDow brings Archie's underground world alive. David Muise lives in Grand Lake and this is his first book.



### Confidence à l'aveugle

Alain Raimbault

Hurtubise HMH, 2008, \$22.95

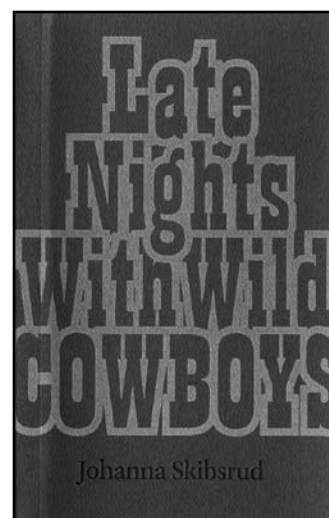
ISBN 978-2-89647-083-9

Alain écrit un roman du roman pour pallier son tourment. Pour faire faux-bond au temps et aux événements. Il crée une belle librairie Anglaise et en tombe complètement amoureux. Lorsqu'il apprend, un mois après le début de sa narration, qu'une prise d'otages a lieu au musée de l'Ermitage à St-Petersbourg, il est sûr qu'elle s'y trouve. La belle lui avait dit qu'elle s'y rendait pour étudier le russe. Sur un coup de tête, il décide d'aller la sauver. L'expérience est tragique. Son sort, funeste.

De retour aux pays, le héros à la triste figure braque sa narration sur le passé et nous ouvre les portes de son intimité sans retenue. Il nous fait découvrir les origines du mal dont il souffre: la folie de sa femme, sa honte et son impuissance, son mariage malheureux et ses déconvenues sexuelles ont bel et bien fait de lui un être imprévisible.

Quand le picaresque rencontre le quotidien... Quand un auteur en quête de lui-même fait l'ultime confiance.

Originaire de la France, Alain Raimbault vit en Nouvelle-Écosse depuis neuf ans.



### Late Nights With Wild Cowboys

Johanna Skibsrud

Gaspereau Press, 2008, \$10.95

ISBN 978-1554470528

Johanna Skibsrud's debut poetry collection makes inquiries into that peculiar phenomenon of being alive in the world, opening wide moments of uncertainty in the search for a sense of inner resolve that resembles the outer calm of trees and neighbours. At each step testing the waters of her own words, Skibsrud turns her reality over in search of constants.

The title chapter is a series of takes on the Western genre, its character profiles, sweeping landscapes and the hyperbolic adventures to be had within. Whether based in Nova Scotia, Montana or Arizona, Skibsrud colours the facts with fantastical elements, transforming stories into ballads and road trips into cowboy-studded escapades.

Johanna Skibsrud's poetry has appeared in various journals, including *The Antigone Review*, *Prism International*, *Lichen* and *Exile*. Originally from Scotsburn, Nova Scotia, she currently lives in Toronto where she works for the Canadian Scholars Press.



## Censorship battle masks huge media changes

by Ron Foley Macdonald.

The question of censorship has arisen again in Canada's motion picture production community with the introduction of the Federal Government's Bill C-10. With an excess of righteous indignation, everyone from Sarah Polley to Daniel MacIvor are huffing and puffing about the sanctity of artist's uninhibited vision. And on the other side, Christian and right-wing groups are weighing in with their opinions. Reporters and editors love it, of course; issues appear black and white. There's lots of juicy outrage on all sides.

Whether it's a real censorship issue is harder to discern. It's really a dispute over whether taxpayers should foot the bill for films and television they're not likely to see anyway. No one is saying that filmmakers can't make the films they want to make. Rather, it's about whether the public should continue paying for them if they're not necessarily in the public interest.

Now that's a far more delicate issue, and hardly black and white. While the artistic community is embroiled in all this fofoforall, a much more significant series of moves is going in front of the nation's broadcast and media regulator, the CRTC.

It follows in the wake of a massive reorganization of the media that started last year when the CITY-TV/Chum Empire and Alliance Atlantic were swallowed up in huge merger and acquisition deals headed by BCE (owners of CTV and *The Globe and Mail*) and the Asper empire (owners of *The National Post* and Global TV). Last fall the entire film distribution system also changed, with new players such as Maximum and Entertainment One taking over from companies such as Odeon and Thinkfilm. In Canada's media world, it's almost a completely new landscape, though many of the personnel have remained, albeit with different titles.

Now, even more profound seismic media shifts are swirling around the CRTC. First off, there are heated hearings between the cable carriers (led by Rogers and Shaw) and the broadcasters CTV and Global.

In what seemed, initially, to be a petty dispute over paying for local TV signals when they are delivered by cable, the argument is picking up steam. A senior CTV official has warned if the cable companies don't pay for these signals that they've been getting for free, all local news will be in danger.

What would seem to be an unthinkable claim is

actually very real indeed. Local news – once the jewel in every local station's crown, and often the only remaining element of local production – is now a losing proposition in a world that is witnessing the Internet eating away at traditional models of newspapers and broadcasting.

A case in point is CBS News south of the border. CBS has announced it will outsource its news to CNN, laying off 160 staff in 13 cities, which amounts to three-quarters of its 27 stations.

Global TV here in Halifax has already axed most of its Maritime contingent. With the collapse of the *Daily News*, that means there's almost as many media professionals looking for work in the Halifax area as there are in the recent CBS layoff in the States.

Considering that CTV and Global only commission a handful of documentaries now from the Atlantic region – which usually play in ghost time slots at 4 p.m. on Sunday afternoons – the commitment to local programming is going to hit new lows whether or not the cable providers and broadcasters work out their dispute. Local programming looks like it's going the way of the dodo, period.

There is also a sweeping CRTC review that will undoubtedly free the cable providers of those onerous provisions to produce local cable programming. Cable Access Channel 10, it's been good to know ya.

With increased centralization becoming the mantra amongst broadcasters, the once flourishing regional media movement of the 1980s and 90s is looking like a museum exhibit curio.

Once upon a time, the CRTC would grant a new broadcast network initiative, such as CBC Newsworld, on the fact that it would establish regional anchors in Halifax and Calgary. Well, Newsworld's Halifax offices were gutted years ago. Just last month they pulled out of Calgary. The CRTC didn't blink. Newsworld is now centralized in Toronto.

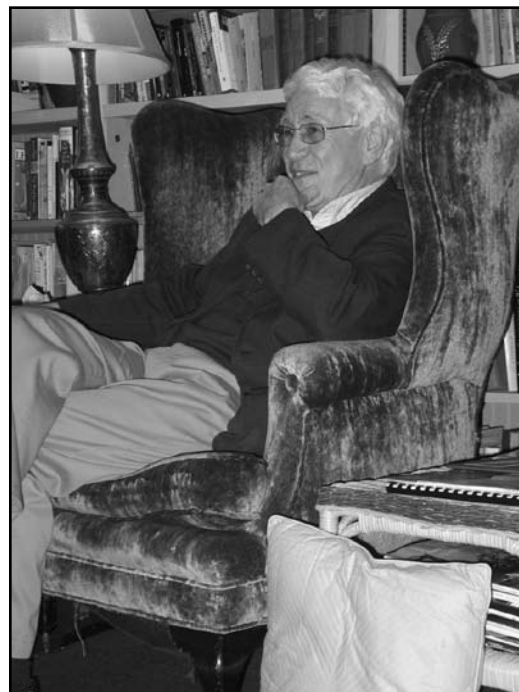
Compared to this gigantic media meltdown, the nitpicking battle between artists and pro-censorship adherents gets small, pretty fast. The entire media universe is convulsing, and ultimately whether you can access government funding or tax credits will pale against a monolithic, ruthlessly centralized system that will only respond to the biggest players and loudest voices. Makes for good sound bites, though. ■

## The fun in fundraising!

by Mary Jane Copps



From left to right Carol Johnstone, Deirdre Dwyer, Carol McDougall, Alan Wilson and Ian Colford.



Silver Donald Cameron

Thirty-four curious souls braved the rabbit warren-like streets of Armdale to attend the inaugural Jane's Moveable Feast, each contributing to a successful fundraiser (\$1,885) and, more importantly, to a delightful, inspirational evening.

The idea for the Moveable Feast came from the WFNS board, which wanted to create a way for our thriving writers' community to give back to our long-standing matriarch, Jane Buss. In addition to being brilliant and efficient, Jane possesses a unique combination of tenacity and generosity that continually nurtures the Federation and its individual members. What better way to say thanks to Jane than getting together to "nurture" her retirement fund?

The Feast is based on the French concept of "salon", where literary types would gather to increase their knowledge through readings and conversation. The name, "moveable feast" is borrowed from Ernest

Hemingway's memoirs about his years in Paris as part of a circle of American writers. Our modern-day version combined sandwiches, a hot curry soup, wine and beer with musings on writing by special guests Silver Donald Cameron and Don Aker.

When they were speaking, Don and Silver Donald were honoured with a rapt and awed silence, but this was difficult to maintain. Both of them are extremely funny – they just can't help themselves. So the evening filled with the sweet sound of shared, joyous laughter, a sound so perfectly compatible with both writers and fundraising.

There's no doubt we've chanced upon a wonderful way to be together. Thanks to everyone who attended and those who helped make it happen. This year's second Feast is being guided into existence by Lezlie Lowe and set for Saturday, June 21, from 1 to 4 p.m. More details will be appearing in

your inbox in the next few weeks. Anyone wanting to buy a ticket for this event (\$15), or simply be on the Feast's e-mail list, can send a note to me at [mjcopps@eastlink.ca](mailto:mjcopps@eastlink.ca) or call me at (902) 404-3290 or 1-877-404-3290. We are also looking for future hosts, so if it appeals to you to fill your home with the humour and raucous conversation of fellow writers, do let us know.

And on another fundraising note, Word on the Street has organized its Spring Raffle. The prize? Why books of course! A basket of more than 40 books will be delivered to the winner – everything from picture books to novels to memoirs. In fact, the bounty is so great I do believe you could have all your Christmas shopping completed if yours is the winning ticket. That would be fun! Tickets sell for \$2 each or three for \$5. You can contact me directly or call the WOTS office at 423-7399 and a board member will return your call. ■

# Yadda, Yadda ... Yaddo!

by Ian Colford

At first it seems unlikely. There has to be a catch. You look around and think, "This can't be real. There can't actually be a place as wonderful as this." But there is, and, incredibly, it doesn't take long to adjust to a totally supportive environment where the only reason to get up in the morning is to practice your art.

I arrived in Saratoga Springs, New York, late in the afternoon of February 26, during a heavy snowfall, after a seven-hour train ride south from Montreal. The next morning I took a taxi out to the snow-covered Yaddo artists' community, which occupies 20 or so buildings – most constructed early in the last century – situated on a forested 400-acre estate a few minutes east of town.

Upon turning off Union Street and proceeding along the narrow, twisting driveway leading to the Yaddo mansion and office, a sensation swept through me that was at once liberating and quietly disconcerting. I was about to tread upon the grounds where many of my favourite writers had resided while creating seminal twentieth-century texts. What would distinguish my three weeks at Yaddo? Would I live up to the standards that had been set by the likes of John Cheever and Carson McCullers? But at Yaddo, as I discovered, any pressure to fulfill expectations – realistic or otherwise – is entirely self-imposed. The atmosphere is casual. The only thing asked of residents is that they make the best possible use of their time.

Once the official part of my greeting was concluded and my things safely stowed in East House Lower, where I would be living and working for the next three weeks,

I was given a tour of the remaining buildings and grounds, and shown the dining room, where for breakfast and dinner I would congregate with the other artists who were in residence. (Regrettably, my tour did not include the mansion, which is not used during the winter.) After this, I was left to my own devices. I immediately returned to my "studio"



in East House and resumed work on my novel manuscript.

I quickly settled into the routine of life at Yaddo. Breakfast at 8 a.m. (eggs any style prepared on the spot, cereal, fruit, coffee, tea), return to East House with my lunch (sandwich, salad, fruit, cake or cookie, carrot sticks, tea in a thermos), write all day, then at 6:30, back to the main building for dinner (Yaddo employs a chef and the meals are exquisite and dazzling). Afterward I was free to either return to my room for more writing, or socialize with some of my fellow residents, a group that included writers of fiction and

non-fiction, visual artists working in a variety of media, and a composer, each of whom would have made a stimulating companion under almost any circumstances.

And then, quite suddenly it seemed, the three weeks were done and I was back on the train, heading north, taking with me a clutch of positive impressions, along with a novel manuscript more than 130 pages heavier than it had been three weeks earlier.

I had been aware of Yaddo ever since I began studying John Cheever, more than 30 years ago. Why had I not applied before? Timing, perhaps, along with a suspicion that, as an American institution, Yaddo would not be interested in an obscure writer from

Atlantic Canada. But, as I learned, it doesn't matter where you're from. At Yaddo, it's the work that counts. Check out the Yaddo website ([www.yaddo.org](http://www.yaddo.org)). If you're looking for solitude, time, and a quiet space in which to indulge your art, Yaddo might be the place for you. ■



# Summer is simmering

## Win a trip to Sable Island & support Read by the Sea

*Read by the Sea* will be back in River John on July 19 – rain or shine – to celebrate a ninth season of the most bucolic, seaside celebration of writing imaginable. This year the ‘adult’ stage will feature Camilla Gibb, Don McKay, Cynthia Thayer and Danny MacIvor, while the children get to play with Raquel Rivera, Susan Tooke and Budge Wilson.

The day will begin with WordPlay, the children’s portion of the Read by the Sea picnic. Raquel Rivera will present her books, both text and illustration, that highlight the lives of Inuit artists; Susan Tooke will hold forth at the Picture Book venue and Budge Wilson will be on Anne Shirley’s home turf as she reads from *Before Green Gables* on the Chapter Book Stage.

The afternoon will start in the gardens behind the Legion Hall with Camilla Gibb’s *Sweetness in the Belly*. Playwright and filmmaker, Cape Breton native Danny MacIvor will read from a work in progress, with Don McKay contributing his recent poetry, and Pictou County-raised novelist Cynthia Thayer reading from her third novel, *A Brief Lunacy*.

Read by the Sea organizers are fundraising with a once in a lifetime opportunity to visit Sable Island! Each winning ticket – at the dream price of \$50 – will take two people to Sable Island for a day on August 25, cover a hotel at the Hilton Garden Airport Hotel at the Halifax airport the night before, include a guided walking tour of the island and a gourmet picnic. Only 350 tickets are being offered. Winners will have the opportunity to explore independently within the permissible areas of the nature reserve ... and you’ll be back in Halifax by early evening. To reserve your ticket, contact [suleah@pchg.net](mailto:suleah@pchg.net) and for more information, visit [www.readbythesea.ca](http://www.readbythesea.ca) or [www.GreenHorseSociety.com](http://www.GreenHorseSociety.com). ■

## The Great Blue Heron Writing Workshop July 1-5 at St. FX

Mid-level writers are invited to engage in small-group sessions in one of four categories: fiction, playwriting, poetry, or magazine writing and creative non-fiction. Facilitators are Michael Crummey (fiction), Madeleine Thien (fiction), Daniel MacIvor (playwriting), Anne Compton (poetry) and Bob Bancroft (magazine writing and creative non-fiction). For information, visit: [www.stfx.ca/workshops/gbheron](http://www.stfx.ca/workshops/gbheron) E-mail Brenda Riley: [briley@stfx.ca](mailto:briley@stfx.ca) or phone (902) 867-4532. ■

## Transformational Journal Writing with Dianne Morrow in July on PEI

July 7-11 (six hours per day, Monday to Friday), PEI School of the Arts, Gulf Shore School in North Rustico. Registration fee is \$250 for the 30 hours. For information go to [www.peischoolofthearts.com](http://www.peischoolofthearts.com) or contact Dianne at [dianne.morrow@rogers.com](mailto:dianne.morrow@rogers.com). Using the journal/diary as a basic tool, 4 basic writing devices (catharsis, description, free intuitive writing, and reflection) and 7 special techniques (lists, portraits, map of consciousness, guided imagery, altered point of view, unsent letter, and dialogue) will be explored and how those writing devices and techniques can transform your journal entries into other forms of writing such as memoir, poetry, fiction, non-fiction, plays. ■

## Travel Writing for Print and Media, May 17-19 at Freeport, NS

A Travel Writing Workshop, May 17-19 at Summer Solstice Bed & Breakfast in Freeport, Long Island, NS, led by award-winning travel writer Bruce Bishop and writer Deborah Tobin.

You don’t have to be a world traveler to benefit from this workshop. There are travel writing opportunities all around you. This workshop is geared to novice and experienced writers and travelers and includes a weekend of fine food and wine, great company and a chance to share writing and travel stories in a relaxed, fun atmosphere. The fees include accommodation, although one can register without accommodation: Option 1 – Just workshop sessions & lunches \$200; Option 2 – Workshop sessions, B&B accommodations, meals \$450; Option 3 – Workshop sessions, hostel accommodations and meals \$300.

Full details at [www.summersolstice.ca](http://www.summersolstice.ca) or contact Deborah Tobin at [deb.tobin@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:deb.tobin@ns.sympatico.ca) or (902) 839-2170

Bruce Bishop has had an extensive career in travel writing. For more biographical information, go to [www.brucebishop.com](http://www.brucebishop.com). Deborah Tobin, who is best known for her conservation work with right whales, is the author of two children’s books. ■

## Markets can be found in the weekly E-notes from Ma Fed

With all the richness of the Atlantic Book Festival, we’ve run outta room for Markets ... but weekly E-notes from Ma Fed will make up the difference until the next issue of *Eastword*. ■