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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE  
WRITERS' FEDERATION OF NOVA SCOTIA

# word

## And the Winners ... Atlantic BookFest 08 Dazzled!



BookFest in Saint John at Lorenzo Readings. Poets, left to right are Don Domanski, Anne Simpson, Herménégilde Chiasson (sometime Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick), Anne Compton (host) and George Murray.

After a week brimming with Book Festival events across all four Atlantic provinces, including readings, signings, writing workshops, murder mystery tours and more, the nominees for the ninth annual Atlantic Book Awards convened at the Alderney Landing Theatre in Dartmouth. The air was electric with anticipation as copies of the 25 shortlisted books were snatched up from booksellers in the lobby. Ten different book prizes were awarded plus the Mayor's Awards for Illustration and for Cultural Achievement in Literature.

CBC-Radio One host Don Connolly opened the ceremony with panache and continued to charm the audience as he presided over the awards. HRM Mayor Peter Kelly took to the stage and presented the **Mayor's Award for Cultural Achievement in Literature** to publishing up-and-comer **Robbie MacGregor**, co-publisher at Invisible

Publishing, an ambitious company founded in 2007 and based in Halifax and Montreal, whose books have already garnered national praise. The **Mayor's Award for Excellence in Book Illustration** went to **Len Wagg** for his photographic portraits of Nova Scotia's most beautiful – and often secret – natural treasures in *Wild Nova Scotia* (text by Bob Bancroft, Nimbus).

The recipient of numerous awards throughout his fascinating career, **Marq de Villiers** swept up both the **Evelyn Richardson Prize for Non-fiction** and the **Dartmouth Book Award for Non-fiction** for his unique account of Nova Scotia's most famous and beloved sailing vessel, *The Witch in the Wind: The True Story of the Legendary Bluenose* (Thomas Allen). Stewart Donovan had also been nominated for the Richardson and Dartmouth prizes for *The Forgotten World of R.J. MacSween: A Life* (CUB Press).

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K.V. Johansen, winner of the Ann Connor Brimer Award

Also nominated for the Richardson was Steven Laffoley for *Hunting Halifax: In Search of History, Mystery and Murder* (Pottersfield). The final nominee for the Dartmouth prize was A.J.B. Johnston for *Endgame 1758: The Promise, the Glory and the Despair of Louisbourg's Last Decade* (CBU Press).

**Beatrice MacNeil** received the **Dartmouth Book Award for Fiction** (sponsored by Jarislowsky-Fraser) for her tale of three Cape Breton sons serving in World War II, and the family members who await their return, *Where White Horses Gallop* (Key Porter Books). The other nominees were David Doucette for *North of Smokey* (CBU Press) and Carol Bruneau for *Glass Voices* (Cormorant).

The 20th annual **Booksellers' Choice Award** went to New Brunswick author **Jacques Poitras** for *Beaverbrook: A Shattered Legacy* (Goose Lane), a book of investigative journalism with characters and a plot so thrilling it's hard to believe it's not fiction. The other shortlisted titles were Steven Laffoley's *Hunting Halifax: In Search of History, Mystery and Murder* (Pottersfield) and Harvey Sawler's *Twenty-first Century Irvings* (Nimbus). Poitras was invited on stage a second time, with his publisher, Susanne Alexander of **Goose Lane Editions**, to accept the prize for **Best Atlantic Published Book**, sponsored by Friesen's Corporation and Hignell Book Printing. The runners-up were Nimbus Publishing for *Gracie, The Public Gardens Duck*, written by Judith Meyrick and illustrated by Richard Rudnicki; and Goose Lane Editions for *Miller Brittain: When the Stars Threw Down Their Spears* by Tom Smart.

Prolific New Brunswick writer **K.V. Johansen** received the **Ann Connor Brimer Award for Children's Literature** for her enchanting YA novel, *Nightwalker: The Warlocks of Talverdin* (Orca), the first book in a new series. The award was presented by Ann's sister, Sara Smith. Also nominated were Valerie Sherrard for *Speechless* (Dundurn) and Alice Walsh for *A Sky Black with Crows* (Red Deer).

Carolyn Gillis presented the **Lillian Shepherd Memorial Award for Illustration** to **Richard Rudnicki** for his delightful depiction of Judith Meyrick's story of one duck's quest for a good meal, *Gracie, The Public Garden's Duck* (Nimbus). Also shortlisted were Eric Orchard for *A Forest for Christmas* (Nimbus) and Nancy Keating for *A Puppy Story* (Tuckamore).

Presented by Mary Jane Copps, President of WFNS, the **Atlantic Poetry Prize** went to **Don Domanski** for his Governor General's Award-winning masterwork, *All Our Wonders Unavenged* (Brick). George Murray's *The Rush to Here* (Nightwood) and Anne Simpson's *Quick* (McClelland & Stewart) were also nominated.

The **Margaret and John Savage First Book Award** went to **Stephanie Domet** for *Homing: the whole story (from the inside out)* (Invisible Publishing), a tale that could only be based in Halifax – of love, grief, and the potential for healing that comes from the sometimes surprising interconnections of lovers, friends and neighbours. Also nominated were Fred Armstrong of Newfoundland for *Happiness of Fish* (Jespersion) and New Brunswick's Bob Mersereau for *The Top 100 Canadian Albums* (Goose Lane).

The show wrapped up with the **Thomas Head Raddall Atlantic Fiction Prize**, now worth \$15,000, awarded to **Don Hannah** for his beautiful story of one woman's unusual journey home, *Ragged Islands* (Knopf). The ever-charismatic and award-winning author, Donna Morrissey, presented, and the Award's patron, Tom Raddall II was in attendance. Bernice Morgan's *Cloud of Bone* (Knopf) and David Adams Richards' *The Lost Highway* (Doubleday) had also been short-listed for this year's prize. ■

## Book Tour de Force Evangelism

by Steve Vernon



I must have hit the big time. Nimbus asked me to tour New Brunswick to publicize my latest ghost story collection *Wicked Woods: Ghost Stories from Old New Brunswick*. (insert blatant plug here)

I made a mental note to write a collection of Hawaiian ghost stories next year.

Then I arranged my transportation. After a bit of research I discovered the train doesn't run to Fredericton anymore. I settled on the bus. I could have insisted on a plane but the bus suited me fine. I would travel to Fredericton, talk at a school, appear at a bookstore and launch my book at the public library. Then in Saint John I would take part in the Canterbury Tales Book Festival.

I got to Fredericton and hunted up the Westminster Bookstore. I stayed at the Fredericton Inn, which on the map looked to be handy to downtown. It was further than I would have liked but close to the local Chapters bookstore. I dropped into Chapters and signed their books.

For those of you who are taking notes – here's a big one. Do your homework and find out where all the local bookstores are. Visit them and introduce yourself. You are your best sales rep and it's easier for a bookstore owner to order your book if they connect it with a real live author. Or that's the theory.

The first person I met in Fredericton said, "Hey, you're that guy on *Live at Five*." I decided that was a good omen. Perhaps it was a bad omen, if you figure folks who watch television don't have time to read ghost story collections. I decided to call it lucky. Always look on the bright side.

I picked up a few extra launch posters at the public library and posterd

the town. Some might argue this was the library's job, not mine. However, I planned to walk around Fredericton anyway and it didn't hurt to tag a few public bulletin boards. I was there to sell books. A little publicity went a long way. I continued my advance through the local bookstores and nearly got lost in a wonderfully long tunnel of a used bookstore called The Owl's Nest.

I kept an eye out for local indie bookstores and handed out bookmarks. Kim at Westminster's then drove me to the Nashwaaksis Middle School. Here I presented a short storytelling workshop and told a few ghost stories to three grade eight classes. The folks at the school were excited to have me visit.

The Fredericton launch was a solid success. There were two dozen folks in the audience and a few more drifted in, following the foghorn of my voice. Westminster's sold a dozen or so copies of *Wicked Woods*. I signed a few copies people brought with them, as well.

The next morning Kim drove me to Saint John. I checked into the bed and breakfast and prowled the streets with an eye for bookstores. I stopped into a few and passed more bookmarks. The woman who ran the United Bookstore said she was just getting set to put in her Nimbus order for the upcoming tourist season and would be pleased to order a few copies of *Wicked Woods*. A small shop in the local mall had two copies of my earlier collection, *Haunted Harbours: Ghost Stories from Old Nova Scotia*, (insert second blatant plug) and were also interested in ordering *Wicked Woods*. I hunted up the University bookstore, but their copies were already at the Festival. I also stopped at the mall Coles and signed my copies.

I read and took part on a panel on breaking into publication. They assumed I knew what I was doing. More fool them. I handed out bookmarks, exchanged business cards, shook a few babies and kissed a few hands. Nimbus arranged a television/radio appearance with Rogers Network. That lead to another radio interview from a disc jockey who heard the Rogers interview. There's your final tip. Work the media. Your book has your name on it and you want readers to know that it's out there.

And above all else, have fun. Hawaii is always waiting if you play your cards right. ■

## The Quick and the Dead in Port Medway

It's a unique opportunity. Port Medway Readers' Festival is presenting the lively in support of work at the Old Port Medway Cemetery, a municipal heritage property. And you couldn't start much livelier than **Philip Slayton** on July 12. Slayton, a retired lawyer and legal academic, sparked fierce controversy among his former colleagues with the release of *Lawyers Gone Bad: Money, Sex and Madness in Canada's Legal Profession*. The book, which was followed up with a *Maclean's* article, titled "Lawyers are Rats," has been hotly debated ever since. Bernice Morgan, fresh from winning the Downhome Fiction Award for her compelling novel *Cloud of Bone*, will read July 26; and the Festival will close on August 9 with George Elliott Clarke, award-winning poet, playwright and librettist. All readings will take place at 7 p.m. in The Old Meeting House in Port Medway and be followed with a party in the firehall. Tickets are \$12, and Festival sponsorships are available for a minimum gift of \$150. Tickets are available at Sagor's Books in Bridgewater and in South Shore Libraries. For information visit [www.portmedwayreadersfestival.com](http://www.portmedwayreadersfestival.com) ■

## On Hold at the Library

By 1993 the bedraggled, little, weather-ravaged Memorial Library on Spring Garden Road in Halifax was operating at three times the capacity it was designed to accommodate when it opened in 1951. When the temperature exceeds 25 degrees, the hvac system ceases to work and staff must close the space until the mercury drops. The stacks are uncomfortably tight and you have to be nimble enough to suck your toes to get at the books in the children's collection.

In February, the HRM public was invited to a public forum to discuss a new central library. Although consultants presented a glittering chocolate box of recent North American and international library innovations, it appeared that neither budget nor land had been committed for a new library – rather frustrating, given that citizens had engaged in a lengthy navel-gazing session to inform the development of a new central library as recently as 1999 ... only to have City Hall, the Province and the Library Board fail to unite to support the vision with either budget or property.

Recently, another public meeting was called. Library CEO Judith Hare announced plans for a new central library that would be bright, accessible, energy-efficient, twice as large, and include a 250-seat auditorium, meeting rooms, a café, as well as open to the public seven days a week, as contrasted to the current six. Sounds wonderful. There is, however, still no firm commitment on either budget or property. The concept will be presented to Halifax Regional Council on June 24. How long can we put such an important central resource of democracy and citizenship ... and plain old communal fun ... on hold? ■



# Markets, etc.

*The Writers' Federation of Nova Scotia does not necessarily endorse the markets or competitions listed here. Please make every effort to check any market or competition before submitting material. Read several issues of the magazine first. Publishers usually sell single, sample copies and back issues and writers' guidelines are often on a magazine's website. Your local library has public access computers. And one place to look for markets is Places for Writers – [www.placesforwriters.com](http://www.placesforwriters.com) – a website maintained by Canadian writer Barbara Fletcher.*

## ■ Tesseract Thirteen, Chilling Tales of the Great White

**North:** Edge Science Fiction and Fantasy Publishing is looking for submissions for its latest anthology which will feature Dark Fantasy and Horror genre short fiction or poetry, 5,000 words or less. Deadline is October 31 post-mark. Address, essential formatting and complete submission details are available at [www.edgewebsite.com/books/tess13/t13-guidelines.html](http://www.edgewebsite.com/books/tess13/t13-guidelines.html). The anthology will arrive on shelves in trade paperback form, in August 2009. And as always, the anthology is open to Canadians, landed immigrants, long-time residents, and expatriates. Co-editors are Nancy Kilpatrick and David Morrell.

■ **Rubicon Press:** ([www.rubiconpress.org](http://www.rubiconpress.org)) publishes chapbooks and broadsides of extraordinary poetry from authors in Canada and around the world. Looking for work that resonates; poetry that is more than just excellence of technique and use of multiple forms – poetry that moves, inspires and affects.”

■ **Chicken Soup for the Soul:** ([www.chickensoup.com](http://www.chickensoup.com)) If you're a fan of the Chicken Soup series check out their website for a list of current book topics ([www.chickensoup.com/form.asp?cid=possible\\_books](http://www.chickensoup.com/form.asp?cid=possible_books)) and deadlines. Eg. Cancer Stories deadline September 1; Stories about resolutions, August 31 deadline; Stories about stay at home moms, deadline September 1.

■ **Zahir, A Journal of Speculative Fiction:** 315 S. Coast Hwy 101, Suite U8, Encinitas, CA 92024. ([www.zahirtales.com](http://www.zahirtales.com)) Looking for well-crafted speculative fiction up to 6,000 words – science fiction, fantasy, surrealism, magical realism, “or something unclassifiable that we haven't thought of yet. Most of the stories we choose lean toward the literary end of the spectrum.” Advises reading a couple of recent issues or the sample stories online. Pays \$10 and 2 contributor's copies.

■ **Bateau:** POB 2335, Amherst MA 01004 ([www.bateaupress.org](http://www.bateaupress.org)) A letterpress literary magazine publishing poetry, flash fiction (up to 500 words), playlets (excerpts acceptable, up to 1,500), mini reviews (react to anything in the creative realm, up to 500 words), black and white comics/graphic narratives (4 pages max), and illustrations (black and white or 2-colour).

■ **Smithsonian:** ([www.smithsonianmag.com](http://www.smithsonianmag.com)) covers history, science, nature, the arts, travel, world culture, and technology. General writers guidelines and department descriptions and guidelines on website (click on contact us). The Last Page is a monthly column that aims at humor, 550 to 700 words and pays between \$1,000 to \$1,500 (for this department send

entire manuscript on spec). Only accepts proposals through its Web submission form on its site. Various departments are open to freelancers: Phenomena & Curiosities (1,000 to 1,500-word stories on science and nature, may focus on a quirky natural history observation, the implications of a recent scientific discovery, or a fascinating ongoing research project, etc.); Points of Interest (1,250 to 1,750 words focusing on Americana, particularly unusual places and events, topics are varied and may be current or historical, stories based on historical events should have a peg and include recent interviews); Presence of Mind (1,200 to 2,000 words, an occasional department featuring reported essays that advance a distinct argument or point of view.

■ **Anvil Press:** ([www.anvilpress.com](http://www.anvilpress.com)) a Canadian literary publisher interested in contemporary, progressive literature in all genres. Publishes 8 to 10 titles a year. Not interested in seeing formulaic genre novels: Sci-Fi, Horror, Romance etc.

■ **COSMOS, The Science of Everything:** ([www.cosmosmagazine.com](http://www.cosmosmagazine.com)) An Australian bimonthly magazine that covers science from several angles – art, design, travel, interviews, humour, history and opinion. Welcomes pitches and approaches from professional writers, illustrators and photographers worldwide. Also interested in science fiction short stories (2,000 to 4,000 words). Detailed guidelines on website (click on “contact us” and then look for box on right side of screen entitled Want to be a Contributor and follow the directions).

■ **Lachance Publishing:** ([www.lachancepublishing.com](http://www.lachancepublishing.com)) Looking for inspiring, true stories of literary merit by individuals personally touched by the Iraq War for an upcoming volume of its acclaimed *Voices Of* series of anthologies. *Voices Of* books feature uplifting and informative stories by individuals touched by serious life challenges. Pays for accepted submissions. Proceeds from the sale of *Voices Of* books fund The Healing Project, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to providing support, community and information to those touched by major illness ([www.thehealingproject.org](http://www.thehealingproject.org)).

■ **AJN, The American Journal of Nursing:** seeks poems and short personal essays on experiences related to health and health care for its *Art of Nursing and Reflections* departments. Authors need not be health professionals. Original perspectives and clear, unsentimental writing are preferred. \$150 honorarium paid upon publication. Guidelines available at [www.editorialmanager.com/ajnn](http://www.editorialmanager.com/ajnn).

■ **Ars Medica: A Journal of Medicine, the Arts and Humanities:** ([www.ars-medica.ca](http://www.ars-medica.ca)) A Canadian medical literary magazine looking for fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, and artwork dealing with illness, the body, healing, and the culture of medicine. The biannual literary journal "explores the interface between the arts and medicine, and examines what makes medicine an art. [It] allows a place for dialogue, meaning making, and the representation of experiences of the body, health, wellness, and encounters with the medical system." Content includes narratives from patients and health care workers, medical history,

fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, and visual art.

■ **CHEST, the Journal of the American College of Chest Physicians:** According to *Poets & Writers*, Chest invites submissions of up to 3 previously unpublished, quality poems, maximum 40 lines, on subjects of some medical relevance. CHEST, with a subscriber base of 22,000, began this new poetry section in January 2008. E-mail submissions to [poetrychest@aol.com](mailto:poetrychest@aol.com). (*Eastword's* editor couldn't find any mention of this on Chest's website, but was sufficiently intrigued to include it here.)

■ **Fiction International:** ([www.fictioninternational.com](http://www.fictioninternational.com)) "Reads fiction, non-fiction and indeterminate prose between September 1 and December 15 of each year." Submissions received before or after those dates will be returned. Only accepts manuscripts reflecting the current issue's theme.

■ **The King's English:** ([www.thekingsenglish.org](http://www.thekingsenglish.org)) An online literary mag looking for long fiction and personal essays. 3-time winner of the Million Writers Award for Best Publisher of Novella-Length Fiction. Has published Pushcart nominees and work selected for *Dzanc Books' Best of the Web 2007* anthology. Electronic submissions only. Guidelines on website. Pays \$20/story or essay, \$10/review, and \$10/poem (maximum of \$20/poet per issue).

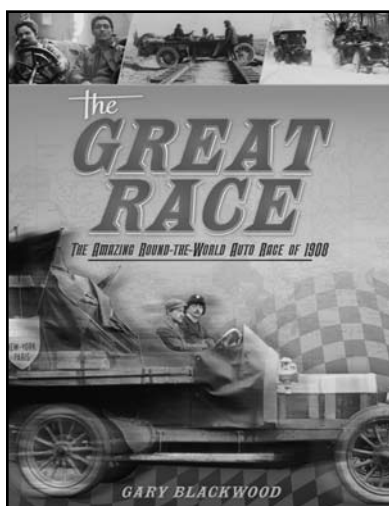
## Contests

■ **The Malahat Review 2008 Creative Non-Fiction Prize:** University of Victoria, PO Box 1700 Station CSC, Victoria BC V8W 2Y2 (<http://malahatreview.ca>) Deadline August 1. Entry fee \$35. Between 2,000 and 3,000 words. No restrictions as to subject matter or approach, entries may be personal essay, memoir, cultural criticism, nature writing or literary journalism. One prize of \$500 plus payment at the rate of \$40/printed page on publication.

■ **The Writers' Union of Canada:** ([www.writersunion.ca](http://www.writersunion.ca)) **Short Prose Competition for Developing Writers:** Deadline November 3. Prize \$2,500. Entry fee \$25. Open to writers unpublished in book format in any genre. Nonfiction and fiction prose; up to 2500 words, English language. Not previously published in any format.

■ **The Fiddlehead:** The Fiddlehead Contest, Campus House, 11 Garland Court, UNB PO Box 4400, Fredericton NB, E3B 5A3 ([www.lib.unb.ca/Texts/Fiddlehead](http://www.lib.unb.ca/Texts/Fiddlehead)) Check its website for complete details. Entry fee \$30. **Ralph Gustafson Prize for Best Poem**, \$1,000 first prize, \$500 each for 2 runners-up (one entry is up to 3 poems with no more than 100 lines per poem). **Best Story** \$1,000 first prize, \$500 each for 2 runners-up (one entry is a short story of up to 25 pages). Deadline December 1 postmark. Detailed submission guidelines on website. The winning entries will be published in the Spring 2009 issue of *The Fiddlehead* (No. 239) and on its web site. The winning authors will be paid for publication in addition to their prizes.

## imPRESSed — new titles by WFNS members



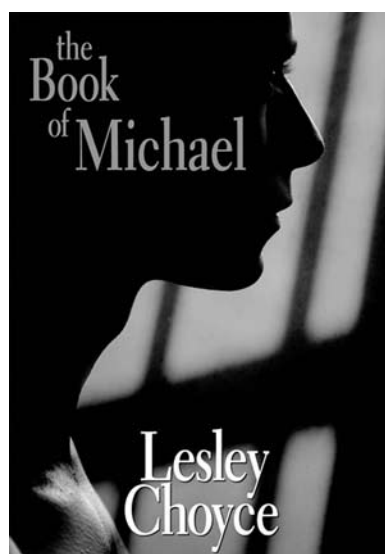
**The Great Race:**  
The Amazing Round-the-World Auto Race of 1908

Gary Blackwood

Abrams Books, 2008, \$19.95  
ISBN 978-0810994898

In February 1908, six cars from four countries gathered in Times Square for the pistol shot that began the first around-the-world automobile race. Gas-powered cars hadn't been around very long and roads were non-existent as this group of hardy pioneers set out to drive from New York to Paris, hoping to cross the ice of the Bering Strait along the way.

Gary Blackwood is the acclaimed author of many children's books, including *The Shakespeare Stealer* and *Shakespeare's Scribe*. His accolades are many and include an American Library Association Notable Children's Book and a School Library Journal Best Book. He lives in Tatamagouche.



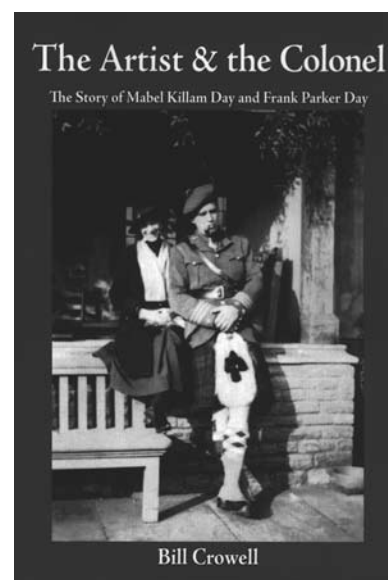
**The Book of Michael**

Lesley Choyce

Red Deer Press, 2008, \$12.95  
ISBN 978-0-88995-417-5

Michael Grove was 16 when he was convicted for the murder of Lisa Conroy, the girlfriend he loved very much. The circumstances surrounding her final hours attract considerable media attention, especially because Michael and Lisa had sex just prior to her death. A public outcry against light penalties for young offenders ensures Michael is tried as an adult; he receives a harsh and severe penalty. Six months into his imprisonment, the true murderer confesses. Michael is released but quickly finds that the stigma of imprisonment and the (wrongful) rap for murder is not an easy thing to escape out on the streets.

Lesley Choyce is the award-winning author of over 65 books dealing with topics ranging from skateboarding to racism and environmental issues.



**The Artist & the Colonel:**

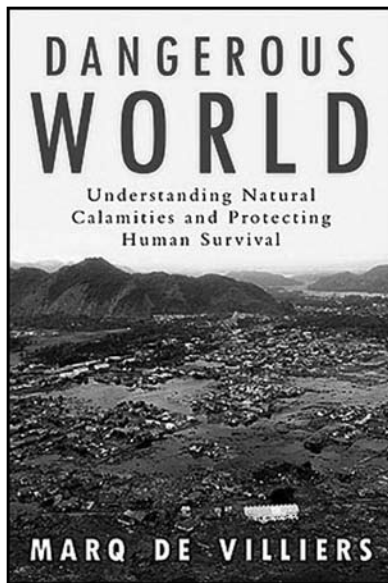
Mabel Killam Day and Frank Parker Day

Bill Crowell

Glen Margaret Publishing, 2008, \$24.95  
ISBN 978-1-897462-03-4

The artist, Mabel Killam Day, made her name as a Canadian painter, and her popularity continues to grow. The Colonel, Frank Parker Day, was a celebrated Canadian novelist (his novel, *Rockbound*, published in 1929, was chosen by the CBC as their best read of 2007). He was also a Rhodes scholar, Colonel of the Cape Breton Highlanders and a college president in the USA. This book chronicles the couple's struggles to make a living with their art, and their many accomplishments.

Mabel Killam Day encouraged Bill Crowell to study art and Frank Parker Day knew him as an infantry veteran and urged him towards teaching and writing. Bill Crowell's previous books include *Atlantic Treasure Troves*, *The Raccoon Sporrán*, and *The Best of Times, The Worst of Times*.



### Dangerous World

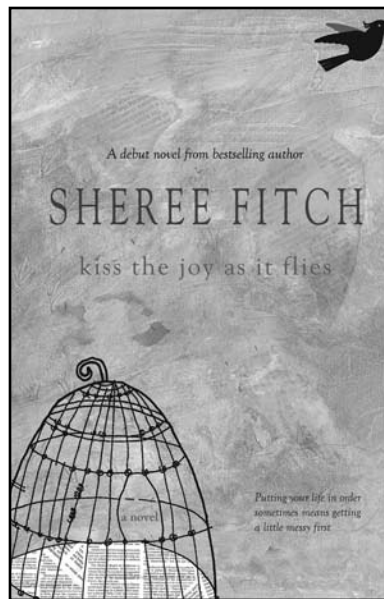
Marq de Villiers

Penguin, 2008, \$35.00

ISBN 978-0670065684

Tsunami, earthquake, volcano, hurricane, pandemic – are these and other natural calamities more probable and more frequent than they were? Are things getting worse? If so, what can we do about it? Are the boundaries between natural and human-caused calamities blurring? Are we ourselves part of the problem? In *Dangerous World*, de Villiers examines these questions in a time when we truly need to understand the dangers that we face.

Born in South Africa, Marq de Villiers is the author of nine books on exploration, history, politics, travel, and environmental issues, including *Water: The Fate of Our Most Precious Resource*, which won the 1999 Governor General's Award for Non-fiction. He lives in Port Medway.



### Kiss the Joy as it Flies

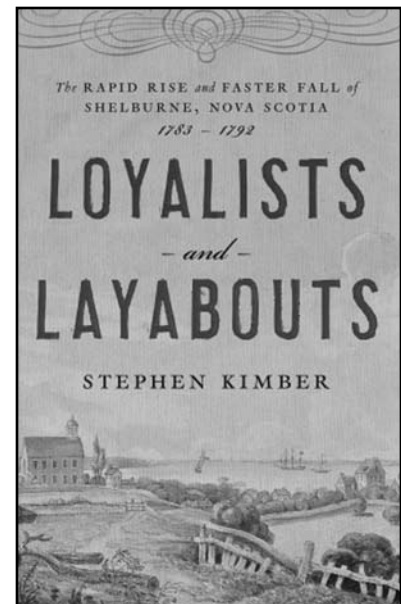
Sheree Fitch

Nimbus, 2008, \$19.95

ISBN 9781551096537

Panic-stricken by the news that she needs exploratory surgery, 48-year-old Mercy Beth Fanjoy drafts a monumental To Do list and sets about putting her messy life in order. She's determined to finally uncover the identity of her secret admirer; reconnect with long-lost friend and rival Teeny Gaudet; and, most importantly, get her hands on the note her father left before committing suicide all those years ago. Between fits of weeping and laughter, ranting and bliss, Mercy must contemplate the meaning of life in the face of her own death. In a week filled with the riot of an entire life, nothing turns out the way she'd expected.

Sheree Fitch is an award-winning writer, speaker, and educator and the author of 23 books in a variety of genres. *Kiss the Joy as it Flies* is Fitch's first novel for an adult audience.



### Loyalists and Layabouts:

The Rapid Rise and Faster Fall of Shelburne, Nova Scotia, 1783-1792

Stephen Kimber

Random House, 2008, \$34.95

ISBN 978-0-385-66172-0

The few hundred Loyalists who gathered at Roubalet's Tavern in New York on Saturday, November 16, 1782, shared a vision of the future intended to sustain them through the nightmare of the present. Abandoned by the king to whom they had promised their loyalty, unwelcome in the land that had so recently been theirs, they had no choice but to flee. Their dream was to build a new and improved New York City on the rocky shores of Roseway Bay, on the south coast of Nova Scotia, beside one of the best harbours in the world. At first, it seemed as if their dream would come true. Within the decade, however, Shelburne was a wasteland of abandoned homes and shops.

Stephen Kimber is an award-winning writer, editor, and broadcaster. He is the author of one novel, *Reparations*, and five non-fiction books.





### Charged

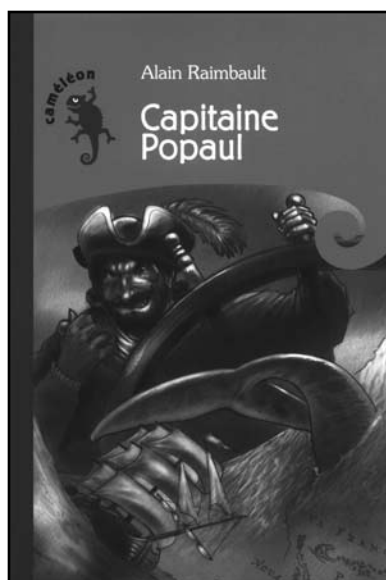
Carol Moreira

Lorimer, 2008, \$9.95

ISBN 978-1552770061

Craig is raising his little brother while his mother and her drug-dealing boyfriend ruin their lives. Manda's parents are teetering on the edge of divorce. How will Craig and Manda learn to let go of their anger and find the courage to move into adulthood when they see only flaws in their parents?

Carol Moreira, born in the UK, has worked as a journalist in Canada, England and Asia. For the past five years, Carol and her husband, Peter, have been living in St. Margaret's Bay with their children, Cat and Scott, and their dog, Nikki. Carol's articles have appeared in *The Halifax Chronicle-Herald*, *Halifax Magazine*, *Progress*, *Open to the World*, *The Globe and Mail*, the *Toronto Star*, the *South China Morning Post* (Hong Kong) and *The Telegraph* (U.K.).



### Capitaine Popaul

Alain Raimbault

Illustrateur, Jean-Paul Eid

Hurtubise HMH, 2008, \$9.95

ISBN 978-2-89647-069-3

Le narrateur, un jeune garçon, décide de nous faire part d'une fascinante découverte qu'il a faite dans le grenier de la maison. Il s'agit d'un cahier de bord de l'un de ses ancêtres, le chevalier des Gastéropodes, le second du Capitaine Popaul. En 1600, ce dernier avait convaincu le roi de France d'armer une flotte afin de découvrir un raccourci pour atteindre les Indes et d'en rapporter des richesses. Après une traversée très mouvementée, le projet échoue, mais la découverte de la tribu des Lurons, dans la région du Saguenay, offre une surprenante planche de salut à l'équipage. Avec humour, le narrateur se permet quelques commentaires ... Alors, quand l'histoire de la colonisation de la Nouvelle-France est revisitée, les interprétations les plus farfelues sont possibles!

Alain Raimbault vit en Nouvelle-Écosse depuis neuf ans. Depuis son arrivée au Canada, il enseigne à l'école Rose-des-Vents à Greenwood.



### Wings to Fly

Poetry by Jeanne Ripley

Photography by Joanne Chilton

\$24.95

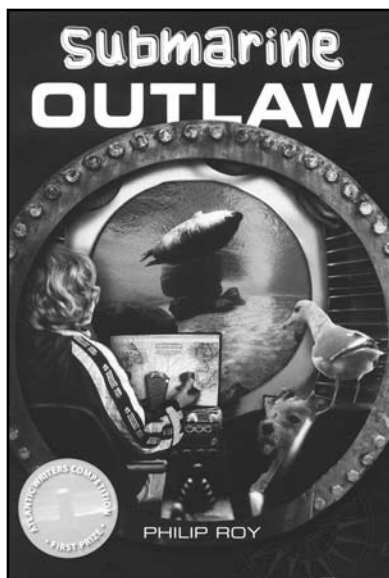
available through [djeanneripley.com](http://djeanneripley.com)

ISBN 978-0-9784816-0-5

*Wings to Fly*, a collection of 47 inspirational poems written to poetic black and white images, bound in a single soft cover book, gently opens your heart and frees your mind. The captivating photographs and companion words capture the magical within you.

D. Jeanne Ripley, who currently lives in Dartmouth, has always loved language and began writing poems and essays at the age of 15. Her work has appeared in several publications and poetry readings.

In the last 10 years, Joanne Chilton, born in Summerside, PEI, has made photography her main focus of creative expression, leading to several solo and group exhibitions internationally and features in several prominent magazines.



### The Submarine Outlaw

Philip Roy

Ronsdale Press, 2008

ISBN 978-1-55380-058-3

What happens when a fearless young explorer teams up with a junkyard genius and builds a submarine?

Going to sea with an unusual crew, a strangely intelligent seagull with attitude and a dog that nobody wanted, Alfred unwittingly becomes the "Submarine Outlaw" and discovers that the sea is a busy place. Escaping from the coastguard when he is mistaken for a Russian spy sub, rescuing a family on a sailboat in a storm, and running from thieves who are after the gold coins he has raised from the floor of Louisburg harbour – Alfred learns that a modern explorer must keep his wits about him as he sails on the high seas, or beneath them.

Born and raised in Antigonish, Philip Roy has five kids and two degrees in History. He's also written an adult novel and several picture book stories.



### Silver Ghost:

An Homage to the Atlantic Salmon  
Rivers of Eastern Canada

Photographs by Thaddeus Holownia;  
text by Harry Thurston

Anchorage Press, 2008,

\$150 limited edition

\$330 preferred edition

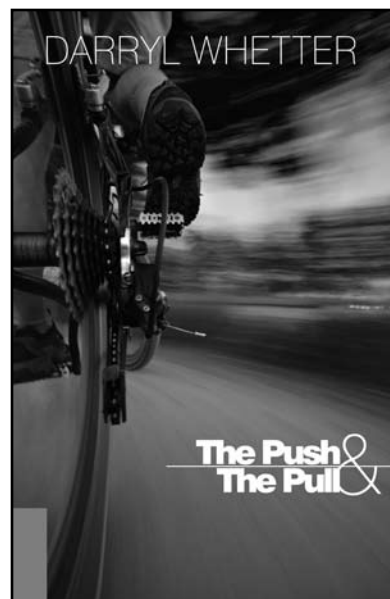
available from [www.anchoragepress.ca](http://www.anchoragepress.ca)

ISBN: N/A

*Silver Ghost* is a collaborative homage to the Atlantic salmon and its rivers. Holownia and Thurston have spent years exploring the intersection of the cultural and natural history of *Salmo salar* through photography and literary prose. The title evokes both the physical and spiritual nature of this most magnificent of game fish and its native rivers. It also refers to the medium of black and white photography used to fix the fleeting images of this elusive species and its mercurial habitat. Finally, the title alludes to the looming fate of the Atlantic salmon.

Thaddeus Holownia has travelled to the salmon rivers of eastern Canada, in all seasons. His images memorialize and celebrate the habitat of the Atlantic salmon: its geology, forests, pools and runs, as well as its cultural artifacts.

Born in Yarmouth and the award-winning author of many books, Harry Thurston has travelled widely as a freelance writer for many magazines, including *Audubon*, *Canadian Geographic*, *Harrowsmith* and *National Geographic*. He lives in Tidnish Bridge.



### The Push & The Pull

Darryl Whetter

Goose Lane editions, 2008, \$21.95

ISBN 978-0-86492-507-7

As Andrew Day embarks on a bicycle trip from Halifax to Kingston, his childhood home, the dual narratives of his life emerge: the slow, painful death of his father and the disappearance of Betty, who may be lost to him forever. He contemplates, too, the nature of desire. Andrew sloughs off his fears, material goods, and attachments. In episodes of intensifying violence, he leaves the highway and rides the back roads under the cover of night. By the time he arrives home, an epiphany greets him.

Darryl Whetter is the author of *A Sharp Tooth in the Fur*, named by *The Globe and Mail* as one of the top 100 books for 2003. His stories have appeared in *Best Canadian Stories '05*, *The Fiddlehead*, *Prism International*, *broken pencil*, *Zygote*, *Exile*, *The Danforth Review*, and *The New Quarterly*. He's a regular guest on CBC Radio's *Talking Books* and a contributor to *The Globe and Mail*, *Vancouver Sun*, *Toronto Star*, and *Halifax Chronicle Herald*.

# Who's doing what

■ **Racked** – members' work appearing in the plangent panoply of journals, mags and e-signals ... making themselves actual on your editor's desk as they head for the Fed Reference Library (open 9:30 to 4:30 Monday through Friday for your passionate perusal); if you don't know about *Rural Delivery*, a low-tech farm and country journal published monthly in Liverpool, you're in for a treat. Thumbnail sketches, newsprint paper and fine writing from the likes of **Frank Macdonald's** somnambulant musing on the significance of 'earth hour' or **Gary Saunders'** infinite creativity at transforming junque into year-round greenhouse; *LRC's* June issue includes "Counting Backwards", a new poem from **Anne Simpson** among an eclectic lineup of contributors from Bob Rae to John Doyle; **Philip Moscovitch** tells the story of a group of screenwriters crafting scripts about a SWAT team that has to make plans to kill someone while at the same time trying to save them, in his feature, "Flashpoint", in *Canadian Screenwriter*; the May issue of Ottawa-based *Ygadrasil*, a 20-year-old international journal, focuses on poetry by **Susan McMaster**; **Jodi DeLong** proves in *Saltscapes* that even the most geographically challenged can produce food. The answer? Container gardens; there's new fiction from **Heather Jessup** and new poetry from **Anne Simpson**, and an interview between the two, in *Prism international*; recent pieces from **Sara Jewell** have appeared in the *Toronto Star*, *Globe & Mail* and *The United Church Observer*; **Jodi DeLong** and **Sandra Phinney** hurtled around the region to contribute to *Saltscapes* annual *East Coast 2008 Travel*; three new poems from **Deirdre Dwyer** open

*The Antigoneish Review*, and are joined by "The Copper Wire," an excerpt from **John Wall Barger's** manuscript-in-progress, *Hummingbird*.

■ **Kudos and break open the bubbly!**

– *Free as the Wind: Saving the Horses of Sable Island* by Jamie Bastedo, illustrated by **Susan Tooke** is this year's Alberta Book Publishing Children's Book Award winner! Lesley Choyce's *The End of the World as We Know It* was also shortlisted; **Paul MacDougall** and co-writer Ken Chisholm, won best original play at the Elizabeth Boardmore One-Act Play Festival held at Cape Breton University; **Alf Silver** won the Manitoba Historical Society's coveted Margaret McWilliams Award

for his recent novel, *A Place Out of Time*; **Sandra Dunn** went on to the national CBC Poetry Face Off and placed second with her poem, "The Battleground"; the Helen Creighton Folklore Society awarded **Richard Rudnicki** a grant in support of his research for *The Unexpected Christmas*, which is based on a true story set in depression-era Oxford, NS; the 2008 Silver Birch Awards named *Pigboy* by **Vicki Grant** as an Honour Book. Vicki's *I.D.* has also been shortlisted for an Arthur Ellis Best Juvenile Award; **Janet McNaughton** took home the 2008 Bruneau Family Literature Award for *The Raintree Rebellion*. **Catherine Safer's** *What if Your Mom Made Raisin Buns?* (illustrated by Hilda Rose) was also



■ The Helen Creighton Room at Alderney Library in Dartmouth was festooned with enough fishing nets for a small fleet, a chest filled with gold coins and a crowd of bewhiskered pirates for the launch of *The Terrible Horrible Smelly Pirate* by **Carrie Muller** and **Jacqueline Halsey** with illustrations by Eric Orchard (Nimbus). Carrie led everyone in pirate song but no-one was more surprised than Jacqui when her grandchildren Quinn and Maegwin arrived in full pirate swagger ... all the way from Hong Kong! Looks like a picture book with legs, and indeed, Korean rights to the book have just been dragooned.

shortlisted; the Canadian Historical Association has named **A.J.B. (John) Johnston's** *Endgame 1758* as winner of the CLIO Award for Atlantic Canada; **Bev Pettersen's** manuscript, *In the Money*, was a finalist in the Novel with Strong Romantic Elements category of the 2008 Golden Heart Awards sponsored by the Romance Writers of America.

■ **Recently launched!** – full bike racks outside The Granite Brewery in Halifax and The Cameron Public House in Toronto attested to the crowds gathered to hear **Darryl Whetter** read from his novel about a solo bike trip through eastern Canada, *The Push & The Pull*, out from Goose Lane Editions in May; the launch itinerary was a race that started in River John, zoomed to Tatmagouche, caromed past Wentworth, Wallace and Pugwash elementary schools, with a rousing celebration at Sunrise Mercantile as **Gary Blackwood** launched his new book, *The Great Race: the Amazing Round-the-World Auto Race of 1908* (Abrams). A meticulously researched account of a trek that saw six automobiles from four countries set off from New York City, travelling west, to see which team would arrive in Paris first, Gary proves that truth is indeed stranger than fiction; As Shelburne celebrated the 225th anniversary of its Loyalist founding, **Stephen Kimber** was an honoured guest with the launch of his *Loyalists and Layabouts* (Doubleday), which chronicles the immigrant dream gone spectacularly wrong, telling how 15,000 Americans flowed into Shelburne in 1783 to build 'the envy of the American states' – only to see their aspirations ebb away like the Nova Scotia tide; rarely has the Program Room at Spring Garden Road Library been so full but the occasion was momentous as **Brian**

**Bartlett** marked the launch of his latest collection, *The Watchmaker's Table* (Goose Lane Editions), to warm applause from a standing-room crowd; folks gathered at Nelson Whynder Elementary School to celebrate the launch of *Up Home*, a stunning new picture book from Nimbus combining the talents of poet **Shauntay Grant** with the illustration of artist **Susan Tooke**. It was a glorious celebration of a momentous new picture book.

■ **Signed, sealed, about to be delivered!** – **Lesley Crewe** will hit the road this fall with stops in Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg, Vancouver and Halifax to do star turns for her latest novel from Vagrant – *Ava Comes Home*, the tell-all tale of famous L.A. actress Ava Harris, who comes home to Glace Bay; set for fall release by Leaf Press in BC is **Wanda Campbell's** newest collection of poetry, *Looking for Lucy*; **Donna Morrissey** is getting ready to hit the road this fall, criss-crossing the country from Toronto to Vancouver to Halifax to Kingston with her new book from Penguin, *What They Wanted*, which picks up 20 years after *Sylvanus Now*; **Elaine McCluskey's** first novel, *Going Fast*, is on the horizon from Goose Lane; Winnipeg-based Signature Editions is set for a fall release of *The Checkout Girl*, **Susan Zettell's** long awaited third book; **Hélène Boudreau's** debut YA novel is due out from Nimbus this fall. *Acadian Star* is a competition and the biggest thing ever to happen in Meg Gallant's small Cape Breton town, but hopes for a trip to Halifax are transformed by weird Tante Perle and, suddenly, it's not Cape Breton any more ... or is it?; **Shandi Mitchell's** first novel is progressing to publication with Penguin under the title *Under This Unbroken Sky*; **Richard Zurawski**

will return from a summer of research in Ukraine for the launch of his new book, *The Maritime Book of Climate Change*; **Harvey Sawler**, who has a nose for the story behind the story, as was evident in *Twenty-First Century Irvings*, is savouring another brew: *Last Canadian Beer: The Moosehead Story* will be released by Nimbus this fall and his look at the Olands is just as fascinating as his gander at the Irvings; just in time for the season when strange figures appear throughout the Annapolis Valley is *Pumpkin People*, **Sandra Lightburn's** newest picture book (Nimbus), a whimsical harvest story illustrated by her award-winning husband, **Ron Lightburn**; **Bruce Graham** began his broadcasting career on *Romper Room*, and sums up his 40-year journalism career in *Anchorman: My Life in Broadcasting*, due this fall from Pottersfield Press; **Carole MacDonald** is contributing the latest addition to Nimbus' Historic Past series with *Historic Glace Bay*, a book that's built on a mother lode of coal; MacIntyre Purcell is the publisher of 'The Book of Everything' series with over 100,000 copies sold. **Allan Lynch** is part of the launch of their newest series, contributing *Nova Scotia Book of Musts: The 101 Places Every Nova Scotian MUST See*.

■ **Susan Cameron** was on the road in May, with readings and book talks at the Confederation Centre Library in Charlottetown and at the Rotary Library in Summerside from her recent novel, *These Four Walls*.

■ From Windsor to Volgograd: **Martine Jacquot** was invited to speak this spring at four Russian universities where her books are being taught in both French and English in departments of literature, education, journalism, history and culture.

She was invited to speak on television and invited to the Duma in Moscow. She also made the short list in poetry for the 2008 CBC Literary Awards.

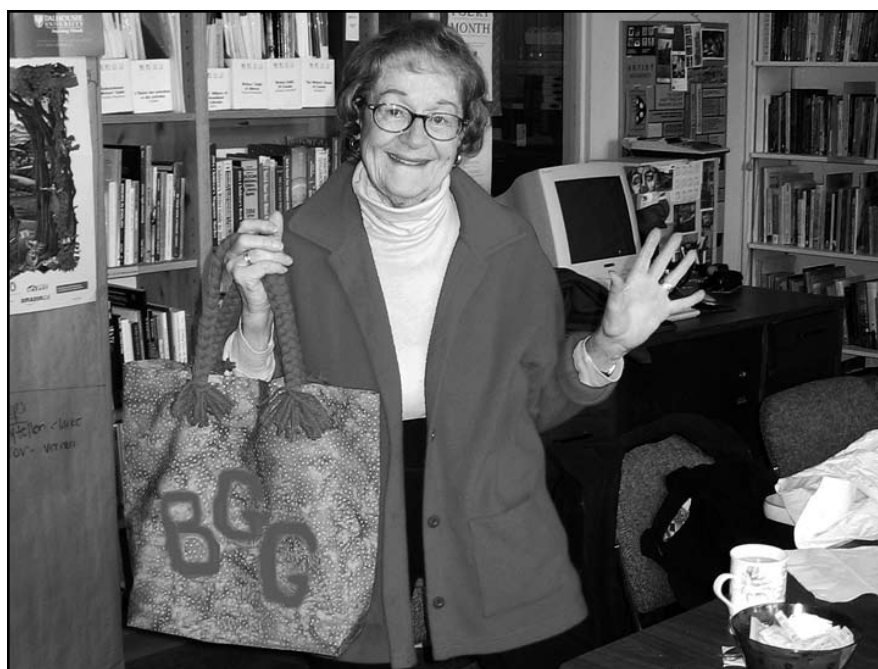
■ **Greg Cook** will help the Friends of Ernest Buckler with 100th birthday celebrations on July 18 and 19 in Annapolis, Bridgetown, Centrelea and Gibson Lake. Greg, who knew Buckler during the last 19 years of his life, is currently at work on a biography that he's titled *Voice of the Heart*. As we've reported in previous editions of *Eastword*, details of the weekend can be seen at [www.friendsofErnestBuckler.com](http://www.friendsofErnestBuckler.com)

■ And while you're in the Valley, nip in to reserve tickets at the Ross Creek Arts Centre. Two Planks and a Passion Theatre will stage **Ami McKay's** new play *Jerome: the Historical Spectacle* from August 1-17.

■ Moose Jaw, with its fabled rum-running caverns and 360-degree horizon, is home to the Saskatchewan Festival of Words which will have **Sheree Fitch** among the stellar line up celebrating its 11th anniversary this July.

■ Borealis Press and Editions David in Ottawa partnered to release a bilingual verse anthology which includes a recent haiku by **Alain Raimbault**. Alain's work has also been anthologized in *Textes choisis: Auteurs contemporains de la littérature canadienne*, released by Alberta Education.

■ This summer the Ottawa International Chamber Music Festival will feature "Late in a Slow Time", an orchestration by Chan Ka Nin of six of **Carole Langille's** poems.



■ **Budge Wilson** touched down for a nanosecond to celebrate her 81st birthday, but what a spring on the road *Before Green Gables!* Launch celebrations at the ROM in Toronto sequed into an Atlantic hop to London, where she bewitched the Book Witch, Anne Giles, who commented that meeting Budge at a London hotel during a whirlwind British publicity tour "was rather like meeting a long lost Canadian aunt, if only I had one." As the lengthy interview concluded with reflections on book covers, Giles noted Budge's book bag (created by daughter Andrea Wilson): "It's a beautiful green fabric, with BGG appliquéd in orange and the name Budge on the other. The handles are plaited in orange wool, and they are of course Anne's hair. It's the perfect Anne bag. Budge had expected the British to be so sophisticated that they wouldn't appreciate a hand sewn bag, but everyone has liked it."

■ **Andrew Safer** recently concluded his eighth season working hands-on with 20 teens with the release of *The Voice*. The youths in the Youth in Care Newsletter Project participate in a variety of journalism workshops and programs that make it possible for them to contribute their insights, experiences, humour, writings and drawings to the new edition of *The Voice*.

■ **Tracy Leal** saw her byline in *The Chronicle-Herald* in reward for her doing her bit to recycle books, "Treasures Waiting to Be Found" ... thereby undercutting her future royalties ... what has she done! You go green, girl.

■ Vagrant is assembling a new anthology for Christmas with a cornucopia of Atlantic writing including contributions from: **Barbara Townshend, Ruth Edgett, Kate Watson, Lisa Harrington, Penny Ferguson, Philip Moscovitch, Renée Hartleib, Russell Barton, Sarah Mian, Steve Vernon, Syr Ruus, Shelley Thompson, Elaine Ingalls Hogg, Darcy Rhyno, Heidi Jardine Stoddardt, Harry Thurston, Laura Best, Paul MacDougall, Rhian Calcott, Cyndthia d'Entremont, Daphne Greer and Phyllis Jardine.**

■ With mosquitoes reputed to be large as buffalo, it's great that



**Lorri Nielsen Glenn** will be in Saskatchewan this summer to offer an anodyne alternative by leading The Memory Weekend, a workshop on 'writing your life', as well as a session on Memoir as Creative Nonfiction, at St. Peter's College.

■ **H.M. Scott Smith**, who joined forces with Garvie Sampson to create a series of best selling golf guides, and is the writer of *The Historic Churches of Prince Edward Island*, among others, is currently working with Bob Connor to bring out *Sociable! The Elbow-Bender's Guide to Maritime Pubs*. Bet that was a research project!

## New Members

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

Margot Beck, Pictou  
Pamela Delaney, Wolfville  
Tony Edwards, Bedford  
Georgina Godfrey, Dartmouth  
Alyda Faber, Halifax  
Janette Fecteau, Georgeville  
Kim Fiske, Kingston  
Julie Glaser, Dartmouth  
Georgina Godfrey, Dartmouth  
Monica Graham, Scotsburn  
Corinne Hoebers, Calgary  
Kate Inglis, Chester Basin  
Anna-Lisa Jones, Bedford  
Zoe Lucas, Sable Island  
Julia McCarthy, Upper Kennetcook  
Charlotte McGill, Riverport  
Katie McNeill, Enfield  
Frederick Mundle, Campbellton  
Bev Pettersen, Upper Tantallon  
Jaqueline Warlow, Dartmouth  
Kim Welsman, Halifax  
Darryl Whetter, Advocate Harbour  
Sam Worthington, Halifax ■

# Minutes of the AGM – June 7, 2008

**1.** There being a quorum of WFNS members, at least 10 of whom who were Writers' Council members, and there also being a quorum of Directors at WFNS, 1113 Marginal Road, Halifax, President Mary Jane Copps called the meeting to order at noon.

**2. Approval of the Agenda:** Moved/Seconded/Carried to approve the Agenda (Joanne Yhard/Jamie Leck)

**3. Approval of the Minutes:** M/S/C to approve the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of June 2, 2007, as circulated in the July/August 2007 *Eastword* (Lezlie Lowe/Peggy Amirault).

**4. Business Arising:** None.

**5. President's Report** – Mary Jane Copps detailed the triumphs and tumult of the past year and thanked her colleagues on the Board of Directors for their thoughtful support of the Federation. She spoke of contributing to the livelihood of our broader community, extolling the eminent good sense of buying local, frequenting good independent bookstores to buy good independent writers who live within a navigable distance of our region, and buying often. She also highlighted the Moveable Feast, a new Board initiative, that welcomes all to come and listen to the musing of some of our most eminent writers on topics inter-related with our writing and writing life. Directors retiring from the Board (Lorri Nielsen Glenn, Jamie Leck and Philip Moscovitch) were thanked and extolled to the heavens for their many kindnesses to the Federation. M/S/C that the President's Report be accepted (Shirley Godfrey/Allan Lynch)

**6. Treasurer's Report** presented by Vice-president Stephens Gerard Malone (standing in for Treasurer Stephen Kimber on a book promotion on the South Shore)

You will all note from the financial statements made available that these are the result of review engagement, rather than a more formal audit. Increasing audit costs encouraged the Board to engage our long-time auditor on a review basis, with the outcome providing an accurate picture of our financial proceedings that appears to satisfy our major funders.

There have also been a number of changes required this year by the Canada Revenue Agency and Charities Canada. Since we started to build endowments to secure our prizes and our most critical programs, we have recorded our securities at cost. This year, the government requires that we indicate securities at 'fair market value', or what they would be worth were they to be sold today. This is clearly indicated in the Notes to the Financial Statement.

It's been another very solid year at WFNS. Income has increased almost 10% and is reflected in a similar increase in expense. While staffing and office costs are pretty much flat-lined, the increases in expense occur in the programming provided to members: the major changes in the past year have been support of a writer-in-residence at the Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library, an increase in readings and promotions during Atlantic Book Festival 2007 and in an expansion of our members' library.

And although it's been a very rocky year in the markets, our endowments are very conservatively invested as they are not funds that the Federation can touch, but are entrusted to fund our ongoing prizes and to provide for a more secure future for Nova Scotia writers. We continue to be deeply indebted to Tom Raddall who

continues to invest substantially in the Atlantic Fiction Prize. His \$27,000 gift of stock this year has been added to the endowment and has made it possible for the annual Raddall Prize to increase to \$15,000.

Our cheap and cheerful ways mean that at the end of our fiscal year with a budget in the neighbourhood of \$340,000, we continue in the black to the munificent tune of \$1,012.

WFNS is in very good fiscal health indeed and I should like to recommend that the AGM approve these statements. M/S/C that the reviewed financial report be approved (Judith Meyrick/Susan Kerslake). M/S/C that Mike Sutherland, CA be retained to conduct a review engagement for the Federation at the conclusion of the current fiscal year. (Lezlie Lowe/Sue Goyette). M/S/C that there be no change in dues in the coming year: i.e., \$40 annual membership/\$20 student membership. (Stephens Gerard Malone/Peggy Amirault).

**7. Writers' Council:** Lezlie Lowe presented the report of the Standards Committee which had been unanimously adopted by the WFNS Board. Thirty-five writers made application to the Standards Committee for this year's April 30 deadline. The Standards Committee recommended to the Board that the following writers be invited to join Writers' Council, and the Board has approved their admission:

Eleonore Beaton, Windsor; Chris Benjamin, Halifax; Erna Buffie, Halifax; Ian A. Cameron, Halifax; Devon Code-MacNeil, Montreal; Valerie Compton, Bedford; Alison Delory, Halifax; Deanna Foster, Halifax; Monica Graham, Scotsburn; Michelle Hebert Boyd, Halifax; Andria Hill-Lehr, Wolfville; Frances Jewel Dickson, Bridgewater; Brad Kelln, Windsor Junction; John C. Kennedy, North River; Veronica Leonard, Dartmouth; Carol Moreira, Glen Haven; David Muise, Grand Lake; Carrie Muller, Dartmouth; Rob North, Dartmouth; John Payzant, Lunenburg; Andi Rierden, Granville Ferry; Johanna Skibsrud, Scotsburn; Ray Smith, Mabou; Fara Spence, Dartmouth; Jon Tattrie, Halifax; Shelley Thompson, Antigonish; Susan Tooke, Halifax; Hetty van Gorp, Granville Ferry; Kate Watson, Dartmouth; Margo Wheaton, Dartmouth; Darryl Whetter, Advocate Harbour; Annett Wolf, Ross Ferry; Richard Zurawski, Halifax

**8. Executive Director's Report** – See pag 16. M/S/C (Mary Jane Copps/Phil Moscovitch)

**9. Nominating Committee Report** – Lezlie Lowe reported for the Nominating Committee. The Committee proposed the following slate of Directors for the coming year: Douglas Arthur Brown, Boulanderie; Mary Jane Copps (President), Halifax; Renée Hartleib (Secretary), Halifax; Stephen Kimber (Treasurer), Halifax; Christina McRae, Wolfville; Stephens Gerard Malone (Vice-president), Dartmouth; Shandi Mitchell, Halifax; Sandra Phinney, Yarmouth; Don Roy, Antigonish; Joanne Taylor, Halifax; Joanne Yhard, Bedford.

Mary Jarne Copps called three times for further nominations from the floor. There being none, she declared the slate and named officers elected.

## 9. Other Business

**9.1 Special Motion** presented by Sandra Phinney with prior notice given in *Eastword* (May/June 2008)

Background: WFNS's constitution was revised in 1994 to, among other things, make the requirements for Writers' Council membership crystal clear and unlikely to be open to interpretation or to grey areas. Currently the criteria for Writers' Council designation are:

42.1 a) That the applicant has had a prose book (fiction or non-fiction) or a book of poetry professionally published or a full-length play, or five one-act plays professionally produced or published, or broadcast by a national or regional network broadcast medium; or

b) That the applicant has had professionally published, broadcast, and/or anthologized articles, columns, reviews, features, fiction, radio or film scripts or an aggregate 30,000 words, or a body of poetry ruled professional by the Standards Committee; or

c) 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 Periodical Writers Association of Canada, the Writers Guild of Canada, the Canadian Association of Journalists, or CANSCAIP (Canadian Society of Children's Authors, Illustrators and Performers).

Point C was originally framed to recognize the fact that the membership requirements for any of these national professional associations was already more stringent than our simpler Writers' Council requirements. However, over the course of the past year, the WFNS Board has been looking at these membership criteria. Apparently the Periodical Writers (which has changed its name to the Professional Writers Association of Canada) has lessened membership criteria.

Therefore, on behalf of the WFNS Board I MOVE that PWAC's name in our constitution be amended to the Professional Writers Association of Canada and that we add this clause to the end of 42.1 c) "provided that the criteria for full membership in such organizations equals the criteria specified above in 42.1 (a) and (b). (M/S/C Phinney/Phil Moscovitch)

**9.2** Mary Jane thanked Sue Goyette, Susan Mersereau and Jane Buss with words and gifts for making the Federation as welcoming, useful and important as it is to the writers of the region and invited the membership to remain at the conclusion of the AGM to hear the baptismal reading of two of our new minted mentorship writers.

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

# Executive Director's Report to the AGM – Jane Buss

Though we always heave a great sigh of relief when the AGM is done, the occasion is a perfectly wrought, exquisitely devised collective time machine. An AGM provides a moment to look back at our memories of the year that just whizzed past, while cherishing fresh dreams for the year ahead.

Joan Payzant sent an e-mail this past week that illuminates the memory side. She was writing about a meeting held on May 10, 1975, that led to the founding of WFNS, and said, "I was working as a teacher/librarian at the time, and impatiently waiting for my first little book to come out from Lancelot Press in Windsor. I always wanted to be a writer but wasn't making much progress. I was feeling like a rank amateur at the meeting and didn't open my mouth ... and I still don't at meetings. But from that meeting, writers in Nova Scotia seemed to realize that one didn't have to live in Upper Canada to become a writer, and there was this wonderful explosion of talent leading to the blossoming we have today... a veritable renaissance in Nova Scotia writing."

There has been a growing groundswell in these parts that does today feel like a renaissance – great big books tumbling forth – *Before Green Gables*, *Up Home*, *Barrington Street Blues*, *I Still Have a Suitcase in Berlin*, *Quintet*, *Evidence*, *Falling*, more Martin Bridge, *Loyalists and Layabouts*, *Kiss the Joy as it Flies*, *In a Mist* ... just a very few of the titles that have been launched and acclaimed in the past few months. A decade ago, a contract consultation at the Fed was an unusual occurrence. Today, it's the unusual week when we don't vet a contract.

Since it was founded by the province's writers, Ma Fed has focused her vision on finding ways to support and sustain our working writers. Although there still are those who think poverty is somehow a writer's lot and that it would be a sin to taint the creative well with something so base

as money, WFNS continues to rage – as genteelly as local manners prescribe, or as Jane can manage – when schools, and other assorted hosts, invite you to volunteer to do what you do for a living.

Last year WITS put \$90,000 in our writers' pockets; workshops, \$11,500; mentorships, \$10,000; readings, another \$25,000; prizes, \$20,000; and we were able to invest another \$6,000 in helping the Pictou Antigonish Library system support a Writer-in-Residence. All investment that keep writers connected with our community and help to make it possible to live to write another day.

And though it will never be easy, our dreams kick in when the Fed imagines a future in Nova Scotia that accords our writers the same respect, recognition and support that is given to any fine doctor, inspiring teacher or gifted plumber in our community. Time to work, recompense for that work, and a permanent place in our personal address books.

How to encourage this? Well, we're going to build on our strengths. WITS is one. This year, Nova Scotia writers worked with about 42,000 kids in one-off situations. We're now working to create residencies where a WITS writer from the school's own community will return to the same class, once a week, for a full semester. Not only will we see the students' writing develop and grow, but the schools will come to know and value the presence of "their" writer in their community.

Our community libraries are another of our shared strengths, but with frozen funds and cut-backs, libraries in our province have ceased to be able to be a home to our living writers. WFNS is working to secure funding that will see writers from the libraries' community present programming in that library. In our immediate future, we're going to work to strengthen our grass roots connections and ties, knowing that

if our roots are healthy, the harvest will start taking care of itself.

And we're going to refocus our annual spring BookFest. Writing isn't a competitive sport, and there's nothing more demoralizing than to sit in an auditorium through an endless Award Ceremony to *not* win a prize. Next spring, we'll borrow from our old Writes of Spring format, and find a way simply to celebrate our winners and to share them with members through workshops, and with the province by means of a library tour.

Here today we have many to thank for making the furious activity of the Federation possible. Susan Kerslake has been volunteering since that meeting Joan Payzant remembered. Peggy Amirault has been cobbling together *Eastword* almost as long. Susan Mersereau is our kindness queen, patience personified and our resident web whiz. Lezlie Lowe has been minding the copyright fires and keeping the Fed on an even keel for five full years; Mary Jane Copps has spent the last herding one of the most committed Boards in the country. What would we do without our weekly words of lunatic hope and inspiration from Ma Fed, our own Sue Goyette? And so many more – our volunteers at the Gala, BookFest, the December Open Houses, Word on the Street, Hackmatack, *Eastword* mailings and our workshops and readings all over the province. None of this would be possible without the vibrant writing and enthusiastic participation of Nova Scotia writers. Thank you all and congratulations. ■