



Newfoundland Writers' Guild

P. O. Box 1133 - St. John's
Newfoundland and Labrador, A1C 5M5

The Page

April 2010

Editor: Elizabeth Tobin

Editorial

The Guild now has its own website, thanks to the generous volunteer efforts of Sheilah Roberts and John Lukins. So for the first time, the current issue of our newsletter, *The Page*, is being posted on the Web. We have continued the recent practice (based on past recommendations), of having several people work on *The Page*. Accordingly, this issue was put together by Lily Bursey, Sheilah Roberts, and myself, Elizabeth Tobin, with editorial assistance from Shelia Sullivan. Thank you also to Christina Moyer for her help with the final draft.

The Guild has concluded its celebration of Grace Butt's Centenary with *An Evening with Grace*, an insightful and moving play written and performed by Ruth Lawrence, at the MUN Reid Theatre on March 8. In the words of Ruth Lawrence, "Many, many thanks to Georgina Queller for her dedication, (and) support"

On a personal note, I received an unexpected offer of a replacement teaching position in Northern Quebec at the end of January. As a result, the past two months have been quite interesting and challenging, as well as very busy [teaching grade 7 English and Science]. Perhaps some new writings will emerge out of this somewhat large learning experience, "Up North."

Elizabeth Tobin

An Evening with Grace

On March 8, 2010 at the Reid Theatre at Memorial University, the Newfoundland Writers' Guild completed our yearlong celebration of the Centenary of Grace Hue Butt, playwright, poet and critic of the arts in Newfoundland and Labrador. Grace, a woman of many firsts, wrote the first full-length Newfoundland play, was a founder of our first theatre troop, the St. John's Players, was the first person to have a column with criticism of the arts and even the first woman to have a driver's license in the province. She won an international award for her play *The Road Through Melton* and had it performed at the Abbey Theatre in Dublin, Ireland. A mother of two and married to Bert Butt, she was active, along with her husband, in the discussions and debates about the future of Newfoundland that ended with Confederation with Canada in 1949.

Ruth Lawrence, wrote and performed *An Evening with Grace*. Essentially a one-woman show, Ruth was able to tell us a lot about Grace, her origins, hopes and aspirations as well as the personal tragedies that she was forced to deal with in her life. She showed us the universal struggle of a woman trying to fulfill her creative aspirations and her familial loves and obligations. Grace, who lived to be almost 95 dealt with blindness due to macular degeneration, the death of one daughter, and the struggle for mental health of her other daughter and one of her grand-children. She survived her husband and grew old under the personal care of Mary Brown. Mary also became her eyes and her literary secretary transcribing her journals for her. A founding member of the Canadian Authors' Association in Newfoundland and of its successor the Newfoundland Writers' Guild, Grace was a beacon whom our organization and our province can be justly proud.

We are hoping that the play will be a permanent written record of Grace Hue Butt and her role in the cultural history of Newfoundland. It may go on to have a life as a school play, and Rick Boland is in discussions with Donna Butt to have it or *The Road Through Melton* produced by Rising Tide Productions. We offer any help we can in achieving these ends. The Guild is extremely grateful to the Department of Canadian Heritage and the City of St. John's for their funding of *An Evening with Grace*. We wish to thank Ruth Lawrence, Rick Boland and John Moyes for their dedication and work in the production of this play; and we wish to acknowledge the many Guild volunteers who made all of this possible for without them there would be nothing.

Note: Our total income for the Play was \$8,321 consisting of \$6,700 from the Department of Canadian Heritage Building Communities through Arts and Heritage Program, \$750 from the City of John's and \$971 from ticket sales. Our total expenses were kept to \$8,322.74 thanks to the generosity of Ruth Lawrence, Rick Boland and John Moyes in reducing their claims on us.

Georgina Queller

Members News

Joan Scott and Roberta Buchanan were both presented with a Tribute Award by the MUN Pensioners' Association, in recognition of their post- retirement contributions to the university and the community, at a ceremony hosted by the Vice President of MUN, Kent Decker, at an elegant reception [with champagne] in the Senior Common Room. Joan was honoured for her speaking and writing on social justice issues, and her involvement with the Writers' Guild; Roberta for her co- authorship of the *Woman Who Mapped Labrador, the Life and Expedition Diary of Mina Hubbard*, and her initiation of the MUNPA Memoir Group [from the MUNPA Newsletter].

Bobbie Brennan is doing the Wilderness Poetry and Poetics course with Don MacKay at MUN every Wednesday night. The class studies a different poet each week- ranging from ancient Chinese to modern Canadian poets. In Bobbie's words, "Such a variety of ways to look at nature." Bobbie says that Wednesday is her favourite [although busy] day as her Holy Wednesday writing group also meets that day. So she is wiped [writed+wiped] out by 10:00pm!

Authors Bernice Morgan, Helen Porter, Trudy Morgan-Cole and Carmelita McGrath participated in a round table discussion: Working for a Living: Gender and Class in the Literature of Newfoundland and Labrador, held at the Ship in January. The event was hosted by members of MUN Blue Castle Group, Vicki Hallett and Sandra Boon. Dr. Phyliss Artiss was the facilitator for the discussion.

Lily Bursey's book, *Amy's Journey*, is scheduled to be published by Flanker Press in August or September 2010.

Grace Bavington and Roberta Buchanan are on the WANL Newsletter Committee. Look for their article on the Sparks Literary Festival in the spring issue of **Word**.

Esther Brown is writing a book about early Newfoundland and Labrador travel and would appreciate any stories you care to share: estherbrown@nf.sympatico.ca

Trudy Morgan-Cole's novel, *By the Rivers of Brooklyn* was featured as part of MUN Lifelong Learning's Newfoundland Book Club series on February 1, and will be the featured selection at the A.C. Hunter Library book club on Wednesday, May 5. Trudy will also be reading at the Writers at Woody Point festival in August 2010. Her next Biblical historical novel, *Lydia*, will be released by Review and Herald Publishing this spring.

Sheilah Roberts is finishing off the final touches of the second printing of her book *For Maids Who Brew and Bake*, to be published this spring. She also has a short story accepted for publication on Rattling Books Earlit series and a poem accepted for publication in a Womens Studies Magazine.

Jo Shawyer has had an essay published in the Association of Newfoundland and Labrador Archives Bulletin, Winter 2009/2010: *A Collection of Archives*.

Janice Wells is working on a commissioned book, The Newfoundland and Labrador Book of Musts - 101 places every Newfoundlander and Labradorian must see. Janice is open to receiving suggestions of out-of-the-way, little known places, especially in Labrador.
E-mail: janicew@nf.sympatico.ca

Bernice Morgan was one of the featured readers at *Spring Tides*, WANL'S new reading series held at the Ship on March 29.

Laura Morry Williams' children's book *The Adventures of Hinkley and Hankley*, with illustrations, will be published this spring. Laura was inspired to write this book while on a NWG Retreat at the White Sails Inn in Eastport.

Elizabeth Tobin participated in the Piper's Frith writing retreat [poetry section with Don Mackay] held at the Kilmory Resort in October. The retreat was organized by the Literary Arts Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Cathy Daley's poem, "Tight as a String" has been published in the current issue of The Antigonish Review.

Anne Galway is collecting stories about a unique feature in many old Newfoundland homes: the hole in the kitchen ceiling. In order to preserve those memories Anne will be having an anthology published later this year. If you have a story or a memory related to this topic you can send it to Anne at 64 Neptune Rd., St. John's, NL A1B 4J3 or to galwayja@nf.sympatico.ca.

Members News- 2010 Atlantic Book Awards& Festival (April 10 – 18)

Trudy Morgan-Cole's book *By the Rivers of Brooklyn* (Breakwater Books Ltd., 2009) has been short-listed for the Atlantic Publishers' Marketing Association, Best Atlantic-Published Book Award and Raoul R. Andersen's and John K. Crellin's book *Mi'sel Joe* (Flanker Press, 2009) has been nominated for the Democracy 250 Atlantic Book Award for Historical Writing.

Raoul and John Crellin (co-author) together with Mike Heffernan, author of *Rig: An Oral History of the Ocean Ranger Disaster* (Creative Publishing, 2009), participated in an oral history panel at the A.C. Hunter Library on April 13. This was one of the festival events held throughout the Atlantic Region in celebration of the 11th Atlantic writing and illustration awards.

A celebration of Atlantic Book Award-nominated Newfoundland authors hosted by Bernie Stapleton was held at Humphrey's Restaurant and Pub on April 12. Other Newfoundland authors nominated for various Atlantic awards in addition to Trudy and Raoul are Michael Crummy, *Galore* (Doubleday Canada), Greg Malone, *You Better Watch Out*, (Knopf Canada), Mike Heffernan, *Rig* (Creative Publishing), and Boulder Publications for *Birds of Newfoundland* and Scott Keating, illustrator of *What Colour is the Ocean* by Gary Collins and Maggie Rose Parsons, published by Flanker Books, 2009.

Inductees into the Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council Hall of Honour

The 2010 inductees into the Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council Hall of Honour were announced April 7. This award recognizes a person, group or organization that has made a distinguished lifetime contribution to the cultural life of Newfoundland and Labrador. The inductees for 2010 are the Labrador musical group **The Flummies**, and our own **Helen Fogwill Porter**. They will be officially inducted into the Hall of Honour at the Arts Awards Show and Gala on Saturday May 1st at the Lawrence O'Brien Arts Centre in Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

Congratulations Helen! In the words of Trudy Morgan-Cole "It could not go to a more deserving person".

Upcoming Events

Regular monthly workshops:

Thursday, April 15, 7:00 - 10:00 p.m., Sobeys, Howley Estates
Hosted by Georgina Queller and Helen Porter

Thursday, May 20, Sobeys, Howley Estates
Hosted by Esther Slaney Brown and Lillian Bouzane

July and August TBA

Designated workshops:

Due to the difficulty with getting enough material for designated workshops, the Board has decided to try something new this year based on the discussion held at the last Annual General Meeting. If you have material of a length that would normally be presented at a designated workshop, you may put out a call to members, asking for volunteers to read and critique your work. You may send your request to Shelia, sbsullivan@nl.rogers.com. We will continue to offer the 2 designated workshops in November and February as in the past but this will give us another option.

The Eastport Spring/Summer retreat is planned for June 25 - 27. Members wishing to book a room at the White Sails Inn should contact Georgina: gqueller@nl.rogers.com or (726-5016). Cabins are booked directly by calling Julia Squires at 677-3400. (Julia has recently undergone surgery - we wish her a very speedy recovery).

The Honours and Awards Brunch will be held on Sunday, April 25 (12 Noon) at Bally Haley Golf Club. The annual event celebrates the achievements of guild members over the past year. Georgina Queller in her usual role of doing "above and beyond," is looking after the event.

WordFest is again being planned for July/August. Members interested in serving on the planning committee are asked to contact Esther Brown: estherbrown@nf.sympatico.ca.

Flanker Press is planning a Christmas Anthology (guild and non-guild writings). Fiction or non-fiction stories should be submitted by May 31, 2010. Guild members are asked to forward their work in both electronic and hard copy format to Georgina: gqueller@nl.rogers.com and to: 7 Glavine St. St. John's, NL A1E 6E5.

Winterset in Summer 2010 will be held in Eastport on August 13 - 15. Tickets will go on sale in April. Sales are expected to be brisk this year, with featured authors such as Margaret Atwood. Program information is available at: www.wintersetinsummer.ca

Christmas Party 2010 (already!)

Yes, we are already looking ahead to Christmas 2010. Members interested in serving on the Christmas Party Planning Committee should contact Esther Brown: estherbrown@nf.sympatico.ca.

Still in the spirit of Christmas (past), we are including the winning poetry entries from last year's writing contest - eight line poems on the topic of Twilight. (Sheilah Roberts and Doreen Ayre were the judges).

The Second Time

The second time the Matthew came through the harbour
It was twilight.
Ten thousand people waited for her
The night was warm
But the lights which shone on her
Darkened her and diminished the people moving around on her deck
She rode high on the soft sea
There was no wind
Her sails hung
It could have been the first time
But it was five hundred years later

© Lillian Bouzane

Closing Time

The beauty of the faltering
Day
Flinging up piercing light, fiery orange, pinks
Pastels
Gentling the hills, rocks, ponds into still
Dusk
Sharpened sounds, dogs barking, doors slamming
Shut

Grace Bavington

Twilight

As the sun shines through my west window
I imagine your face
The light catches the gold in your eyes
And flashes against your teeth
I remember the evenings we sat in your van
And watched the rabbits eat crumbs -
The crumbs you had so lovingly placed on the grass
As night closes the day I think of you and watch the rabbits again

Laura Morry Williams

Esther Brown's story *The Adventures of a Paintbrush* was the winning prose entry.

The Page is the Guild newsletter and is distributed four times a year. It is a very brief summary of members' news and accomplishments and provides information concerning events.

NWG Board 2009-10

President Esther Slaney-Brown

Vice President Elizabeth Tobin

Treasurer Georgina Queller

Secretary Barb Hoben - Geraldine Flannigan in the summer

Communications Sheila Sullivan and Don Steele

Workshop Coordinator Cathy Daley