

NEWFOUNDLAND WRITERS' GUILD



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

THE PAGE

February 2004

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Happy New Year everybody! It's hard to believe that by the time you read this January will be more than half spent. The old year closed with tidings of great things happening in the publishing world for at least one of our members, Trudy Morgan-Cole, capping an already great year for Guild members. May 2004 be good for us all as well. On November 30th, 2003, we celebrated the 35th anniversary of the Newfoundland Writers' Guild and held our annual Honours and Awards Brunch at St. John's City Hall. Invited non-Guild guests were Mayor of St. John's, Andy Wells; Kevin Major representing the Arts and Letters competition; Debbie Hanlon from the Publishers' association; and Beth Ryan, President of WANL. Members being recognized for their achievements were Danette Dooley, for her freelance newspaper work; Janet McNaughton, for *An Earthly Knight*; Trudy Morgan-Cole for *Esther*; Marilyn Porter for academic research; and Violet Squires Ruelokke for *And This Is Called Love...*. The re-issuing of honorary member Paul O' Neill's book *The Oldest City* came too late for us to include his name in the awards list. So, next year's list has started already! Our Christmas party at the Longside Club went well, in spite of the fact I realized half-way through the night that I had forgotten to welcome everyone formally before we sat down to eat! Put it down to the fact that your

recycled president has been out of the loop for a while! The NWG executive elected at the Annual General Meeting, 27th October are Hilda Murray, President; Lillian Burse, vice-President; Violet Ruelokke, Secretary; Laura Williams, Treasurer; Kathleen Knowles, Publicity director/editor of The Page; Geraldine Rubia, and Esther Brown. Marilyn Porter, in the October 2003 issue of The Page, suggested that it be published on a fixed timetable with deadlines established well in advance. The executive agreed at its December meeting that there be four issues with deadlines two weeks before. Dates of publication will be 1 February; 1 May; 1 August and 1 November. Hope this brings everyone up to date on what is going on in the Guild. I want to thank you all for electing me your president. Georgina worked so tirelessly for NWG that I have enormous shoes to fill. I shall, however, soldier on and do my best. I pray that we all may have a happy, healthy, successful, peaceful 2004.

Hilda

MEMBERS' NEWS

Trudy Morgan-Cole is happy to report that she has received an offer from Penguin Books Canada for North American rights to her novel "A Violent Friendship, a historical novel about Esther Johnson and Jonathan Swift. Penguin expects to release the novel in the fall of 2005. Congratulations Trudy! Congratulations to **Esther Brown** for winning first prize in The Shoreline's Christmas Story Contest. Perhaps we'll be treated to a reading of "Midnight Visitor," a Christmas ghost story, at this year's Christmas party. **Laura Morry Williams** was the proud winner of last year's rejection slip contest. **Paul O'Neill** was the featured reader for the Writers' Alliance first monthly reading of the new year. His two -volume work, "The Story of St. John's," printed under the titles "The Oldest City" and "A Seaport Legacy," was

recently reissued in a single volume called “The Oldest City: The Story of St. John’s, Newfoundland.” **Annie Ferncase** wrote a profile on **Lillian Bouzane** for the November issue of the Writers’ Alliance publication WORD. This article was part of a series of profiles that Annie has been producing. She discusses Lillian’s novels and poetry and her thoughts on writing and the creative process. **Helen Porter’s** talk to the Wessex Society on the topic “Southside East – and Over” was cancelled due to weather and will be rescheduled for the fall. Helen has been invited to participate in a writers’ retreat in Spain from Feb. 3 – 29, 2004. What a great time to be out of our weather. For more information about this retreat you can contact Helen or write to the following address:

Fundacion Valparaiso

Abartato 836

Mojacar, Playa

04638 Almeira, Spain

e-mail: valparaiso@futurnet.es phone: 011-34950-472380

Jennifer Morgan, a multi-talented guild member, hosted an exhibit in the Pratt Gallery in Bay Roberts in December. Her exhibition, entitled “The House at Coley’s Point,” demonstrated examples of a variety of styles and media. The exhibition was especially enjoyable because it was held within the actual physical setting of the work, a Morgan family property in Coley’s Point. **Roberta Buchanan** and **Anne Hart** have been invited to give a seminar on Mina Hubbard, Labrador explorer, at the Humanities Centre, University of Toronto, in February.

READ ANY GOOD BOOKS LATELY? Send information about books you think members would be interested in reading. **Helen Porter** has suggested “The Meaning of Everything” by Simon Winchester. Quite a daring and comprehensive title!

EVENTS

On Wednesday Feb. 11 at 8 P.M. **Hilda Chaulk Murray** will be speaking at the Wessex Society. The meeting will take place at Hampton Hall, Marine Institute and the topic is: "Cows Don't Know It's Sunday." Hilda is also giving a course in February on Agricultural Life in St. John's. This is for the Life Long Learners of the Senior Resource Centre and will take place on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 10 to 12, beginning Feb. 10.

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

Tuesday, Feb. 17, 7:30 – regular workshop Dominion Store, Stavanger Drive
Sunday, March 21, 2 - 5 p.m. Designated Hilda Murray's, 19 First Street, Mount Pearl
Wednesday, April 14, 7:30 - Regular workshop Esther & Laura
Sunday, May 16, 2- 5 Regular workshop
June 18- 21 Eastport Retreat (Laura will book)
Sunday, July 18 Daylong workshop Kathy Knowles 104 Middle Cove Rd.
Sunday, Aug 15 or 22 Daylong workshop Melba Rabinowitz Portugal Cove
September (Weekend after Labour Day) Eastport Retreat (Laura will book)

For more information on workshops or retreats contact Hilda Murray: 368-5105;
themurrays_nf@yahoo

More on Trudy Morgan-Cole's recent success

Success doesn't happen overnight. Trudy has been writing ever since she can remember and she produced her first book at the age of six. At eighteen she entered a contest, won, and had the first of ten books published with a small inspirational publishing house. She then decided to pursue publication by a large mainstream publisher. She says: "There is this sense that getting published is an accomplishment that tests your mettle, and I felt I needed to do that in a wider sphere than I had done so far, although I'm sure my faith and spirituality will always inform whatever I write." In 1992 Trudy joined the Newfoundland Writers' Guild. She found it a wonderfully supportive place in which to grow as a writer, "sitting at the feet" of older, experienced writers. At this point she had also written two young-adult novels and was working on a fantasy novel. Her love of historical fiction led her, in April of 1996, to begin work on a novel about Jonathan Swift's relationship with Esther Johnson, the "Stella" of his poems. She worked on "A Violent Friendship" for three years and in 2000 it won first prize in the "unpublished novel" category of the Atlantic Writing Competition. The manuscript was rejected by two publishing houses before she sent it to Penguin. Several months later, having not heard anything and feeling very discouraged, she decided to hire an agent. With help from guild members, in the form of recommendations, she managed to gain representation by an agent who immediately urged Penguin to make a decision. Two months later the book was accepted. "Agents are well worth their fifteen percent...that's the lesson I've learned." Trudy says it seems like a very long road from writing to publication. "A Violent Friendship" won't appear until 2005. But in the meantime she has continued to write books for her inspirational publisher, taught, gone to university, done freelance writing and volunteer work, and given birth

and cared for two children. “I have a lot of energy and I need to have it focussed in many different directions or I get bored.” Heaven help us all if she ever gets bored! “The good news from Penguin this Christmas really has confirmed for me that it is worth having faith in your own work and pursuing the dream of getting published. It’s also confirmed for me that having a network of supportive and experienced writing friends like the Newfoundland Writers’ Guild is simply the greatest asset a writer can have.”

From the Editor

This is the first issue that I have edited and I welcome suggestions for future issues. Thanks to Marilyn and Georgina for their advice and computer expertise. The deadline for submissions will be the fifteenth of the month preceding each issue, but feel free to send along material any time. Our committee (**Helen Porter, Lori Savory, Melba Rabinowitz**, and myself) discussed the idea of asking members to take turns contributing a writing challenge. Each person’s turn would only come up every couple of years, so we hope members will give it a try. In discussion with members over the past month I have realized that people have different expectations from *The Page*. While some see it as it was originally intended, that is, a brief summary of events and information, others would like it to be a more comprehensive and formal publication requiring much more editorial work. Also, in transmitting issues electronically the format is sometimes changed and I was wondering what members would think of using the actual post-office type mail. The cost of this would be minimal but would mean raising fees for next year. This will be discussed at our next board meeting so if you have an opinion please communicate it to me to be included in the discussion. This is a bit off topic, but recently I watched the movie “Alex and Emma.” It’s a romantic comedy about a writer who has to write a book in one month or be killed by loan sharks, a sure cure for writer’s block if there ever was one. There’s no violence, sex, or foul language, but I enjoyed it anyway.

Thanks.

Kathy Knowles 437-6265 kknowles@stemnet.nf.ca

The Newfoundland Writers' Guild was established to help writers develop their writing skills in a workshop setting. It is open to writers at all levels. The guild holds monthly workshops and two annual writing retreats. For further information contact president, Hilda Chaulk Murray: themurrays_nf@yahoo.com 368-5105