



NEWFOUNDLAND WRITERS' GUILD

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

THE PAGE

February 2006

Lori Savory - Editor
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FROM THE BOARD:

At the Board meeting held on January 26, 2006, the Board discussed the following:

- Alternating workshop days: The current workshop schedule was intended to allow people who had commitments that prevented them from attending on weekday evenings/ Sunday afternoons, to attend at least some workshops, and also to accommodate those who dislike driving at night. It was felt that this schedule meets the needs of as many members as possible, and it was decided that we would maintain the status quo;
- The Rejection Slip Brunch: The issue of contests being included in eligibility for the Rejection Slip Brunch was discussed at length, and it was determined that for this year (2005) contests would be excluded. It was felt that contests should not be included because no notification is received that you have entered and/or that you have not been successful, therefore it would be impossible to verify the number of contests entered. The one exception will be entries for the Arts and Letters Awards: adjudication will be required for verification. If members feel that this issue merits further discussion it can be addressed at the AGM in October. Members should be prepared to discuss the matter in detail at that time. Lily Bursey has asked that anyone with rejection slips provide them to her immediately.
- Advertising in The Page: The Board determined advertisements in The Page would create significant difficulties and thus it was decided that we would not accept advertisements for inclusion. However, it was agreed that if members wished to bring printed advertisements/ flyers to workshops this would be permitted to the extent that it was not disruptive to the workshops.

EVENTS

Christmas Party

The Annual Guild Christmas Party was held on Saturday, December 10, 2005 at the Longside Club. After a lovely potluck supper, the winners of the Christmas Poetry Contest were announced by judges Roberta Buchanan and Gerry Rubia. (The entries are reproduced below) The theme was "Home" but the caveat was "no sentimentality". First place went to Lori Savory, second to Bobbi Brennan and third place to Melba Rabinowitz. Helen Fogwell Porter and Georgina Queller also read their contest entries. All entries are reproduced at the end of this newsletter.

As is the tradition, recitations were given by Helen Fogwell Porter, Jennifer Morgan and Lilly Bursey, and at the request of John Bursey, Roberta read an account of an isolated Christmas from the book *A Klondike Christmas* edited by Anne Tempelman-Kluit.

We then distributed the gifts and tested our knowledge of Newfoundland Literature with Danette's yearly contest. Bobbi Brennan and Lori Savory sang "Christmas In Newfoundland" written by Lori and accompanied by Bobbi on the guitar, after which we had a carol sing-a-long, thanks again to Bobbi and her guitar. A wonderful time was had by all.

Honours and Awards Brunch

On Sunday, November 27, 2005, the Newfoundland Writers' Guild held its annual Brunch in celebration of those members of the Guild who have been published during the year or have received some special award.

This year the buffet meal was catered by the staff of "The Bloomin' Teapot" in the Banquet Room at the Oxen Pond Botanic Gardens. All tables were filled and we were pleased to welcome Joan Clark, not a Guild member but a special friend and distinguished writer.

This year, at each setting was placed a souvenir bookmark, showing the names of those being honored and their books. They were: Roberta Buchanan, ***Mina Hubbard: the Woman Who Mapped Labrador***; Janet McNaughton, ***Brave Jack and the Unicorn***; and Paul O'Neill, ***No Need to Wear Rubbers***. A special certificate, prepared by Georgina Queller, was presented to each writer.

Joan Scott, who presented Roberta with her certificate, gave an interesting introduction to Roberta's book before the latter read an excerpt from it which made us all want to hear more.

Hilda Chaulk Murray introduced Paul and his book - his father James O'Neil's travel diary which details delightfully a two-month vacation in Europe in 1925. Everyone enjoyed Paul's reading from the book.

Janet was absent from the presentation because she is presently residing in Halifax. Her certificate was forwarded to her by post.

The following email was forwarded to President Lily Bursey by Paul O'Neill following the brunch:

Dear Lily

My sincere appreciation to you and the Guild for the Honours Award Winner certificate presented to me by the Newfoundland Writers' Guild at the luncheon

in the Botanical Gardens November 27, 2005. Not only was the luncheon itself enjoyable, and the awards presentation, but seeing so many very dear friends from my years with the Guild was extremely pleasurable. I cannot believe the number of years that have passed since we formed the organization but it is wonderful to see it still attracting members and doing what we, as founders, intended it to do. My thanks to you and all concerned.

Paul O'Neill

MEMBERS NEWS

Janet McNaughton's new young adult science fiction novel, **The Raintree Rebellion**, will be released by Harper Collins Canada in April. Her novel **An Earthly Knight** is now shortlisted for the inaugural Stellar Award, which is run by the BC Library Association and voted on by high school students across British Columbia.

Gerry Rubia's Haiku "**calm harbour**" has been published in **Prairie Sunset**, an International Haiku Anthology, which is published by Hamilton Haiku Press.

Trudy Morgan-Cole's book **The Violent Friendship of Esther Johnson** is being launched February 7, 2006 at the Anglican Cathedral Crypt, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.. Reviews in both the *Globe and Mail* and the *Quill and Quire* have been glowing. The book is dedicated to the Writer's Guild "my mentors, my community, my extended family of writers, with all my thanks."

Lara Mory Willams' book **Becoming Sarah**, is being launched at the Ferryland Arts Centre, Bernard Kavanagh Premises, Ferryland on Sunday, February 12, 2006 from 2:00 - 4:00 pm..

Gerry Rubia has been invited to participate in the **2006 CBC Poetry Face-Off**, which will take place on Monday, February 20, 2006 at 7:00 p.m.. The other participants are Sean Panting, Susan Rendell, Amy Snook and Robyn McGrath. The venue is to be announced. You can find out more at www.cbc.ca/poetryface-off.

Roberta Buchanan's book **Mina Hubbard: The Woman Who Mapped Labrador** has received several positive reviews, most notably Mark Callanan's review in *The Independent*, and Joan Sullivan's review in *The Current*. Roberta will be giving a talk about Mina Hubbard to the Natural History Society in February, 2006. Laurel Penney provided a supportive write-up of the poetry workshop Roberta gave at the WANL AGM in the most recent edition of *Word*.

Bernice Morgan's novel **Random Passage** was named the "Best Ever Newfoundland and Labrador Book" in the *Word from the Edge Forum's* online poll, which concluded on January 31, 2006.

The following members had poems published in the *Telegram* and the *Independent* :

- Lori Savory's poem "Home" was published in the December 10-17, 2005 edition of *The Independent*.

- Gerry Rubia's poem "Quidi Vidi Moments" was published in *The Telegram* in November 2005
- Bobbi Brennan's poem "Home" was published in *The Independent* in the December 18-24, 2005 edition.

OF INTEREST

POET LAUREATE CITY OF ST. JOHN'S CALL FOR NOMINATIONS:

St. John's City Council has created the position of Poet Laureate for the City of St. John's. The general public is asked to submit nominations for a Poet Laureate no later than February 27, 2006 at 4:00 to:

Kay Anonsen
 Arts and Cultural Development Coordinator
 Department of Economic Development, Tourism & Culture
 City of St. John's
 P. O. Box 908
 348 Water Street
 St. John's, NL A1C 5M2
kanonsen@stjohns.ca
 576-2563

They ask that you provide the name of the poet nominated, the reasons for the nomination (eg. awards, publications, etc.) with a list of the supporting documentation (books, reviews, awards, other) and attaching that documentation, and that you sign and date your nomination.

POETRY CONTEST ENTRIES:

Home (Her Own Mexican Equestrian) Helen Fogwell Porter

Brown-skinned, debonair
 he comes to her on horseback
 bearing gifts and wine

They drink and Dally
 fill her sturdy spouse appears
 The party's over

My Brother and My Neighbour

They are just two boys
 swaggering haplessly
 down a hilltop trail

one lugging the axe
 heavy on his shoulder
 borrowed green flannel plaid
 the other
 clad in gloves
 too big
 towing the prized tree.

No snow
covering blanket
yet
just dried grass
crumpled lambskill
in wait
for their long sleep.

Just boys
now chosen
to swing the axe
to fall a tree
on their own
without guides
only me
tending
to the picking.

I'm just a girl
striding behind
inhaling nature
dreaming
of silver strands of tinsel
laid one by one
over green boughs
carefully selected.

And it begins to fall
anointing our passage
cold
on our faces we look up
giggling

rejoicing
in the perfection of the day.

Home

Home, where I was born.
First school
Just cross the street and go through the passages.
Stay with your sister

One sunny autumn day,
Came home from school to Mums out of their kitchens

They are going home.
I feel at home.
And it is a Christmas Eve
that became
a Remembrance Day.

Helen Thoms-Walsh

Home

Floors shine from wax
and elbow grease; windows gleam
from vinegar and newspaper cleaning.
Knick knacks show their true colours
after a good dunking in water and Palmolive.
New candles cast elegant glances
at just polished furniture and
newly washed curtains, fresh from
the line and chilly air. Garlands of tinsel
and shining balls dangle from tree and
walls, windows and ceiling, catch
candle light, send it dappling
across the rooms. Boots and shoes
are not welcome here, in this
Christmas ready house, where scents
of cinnamon and cloves vie for
our attention. Soon turkey, salt meat,
pudding and trifle will tempt us,
find us weak, leave bellies full and fat,
as we loll away the afternoon wrapped in
family, memories and Christmas magic.

Bobbi Brennan

Out on the street talking about the declaration
Summer, picked blackberries into a cereal box.
Ran under trees
Sheltering from a Battle of Britain dogfight overhead
Ever a good girl, didn't spill my blackberries

Later school rivaled home
Transforming education, where hot water came out of the H taps.
Free, yet paid for in separations

Still later, I had to get independent, free, so I got married
The attraction? He had a job in Canada to go to, when I, a teacher, could
work anywhere

Newfoundland semi-solid precip.
Bloody paws hung cross coves like laundry
Joyful cold snow beauty,
The hills a sleeping woman, offer delight
Blueberries, partridgeberries
A Canadian foretold, she will not like it there
Made myself comfortable anyway - home

Joan Scott

261 LeMarchant Road

that's Muffer James's house
the hunter green one
with cream trim there
next to the fire hall
where Muffer recruited
boarders when Pop
died and Muffer
finished raising 8 of their 9

children in that house

her daughter, our mother,
eloped at 16 and had her own 3 daughters before
her 22nd birthday -
Muffer's 1st grandchildren

at Muffer James' house we
feasted on the Books of Knowledge
with it's fairy stories, poems

pictures of Saturn and Pluto, we
learned about the Milky Way
were thrilled by colour plates of
birds - exotic and domestic
yellow finches and brown sparrows
red cardinals and black crows

we sat on the long bench on
the inside of her kitchen table
muffer served us milky tea which
her daughter never would
we made sugar sandwiches
in her pantry put the milk and butter
in the back porch to stay cool
and there was always
“Pudding Muffer, Pudding Please”
rice, raisin, bread, tapioca,
cottage and egg custard every
pudding her Devon ancestors
handed down to her and her
Welsh husband demanded

after, Muffer would bring us into
her dining room put a coal
fire in the grate and play
Jesus loves me and
light a penny candle on her organ

my eyes still wander around
that room rest on the familiar...
the brass candle sticks, the picture
of Pop in World War I uniform
the tiny earthen milk jug all
on the mantlepiece, her bill and
paper-piled open secretary
and the iron rads we
were warned from sitting

on lest we “get the piles”

a love seat with no back
could be seen through french
doors to the living room
where the oak hardwood floor
was inlaid with mahogany accents
the love seat’s arms were
shiny walnut and the ‘seat’ was
covered in scratchy red pile
the lovers had to sit in opposite
directions on that seat ensuring
that no love making took place

maybe that’s why our parents eloped
at the little church in Topsail
had a secret honeymoon weekend
in a log cabin on the Placentia road then
snuck back home to Lemarchant Road
and Patrick Street until
the fruit of that weekend
began to bulge through

Muffer James’s house
was as much home as home
till I was 6 when we made
our pioneer move to Churchill Park
But there was always Shank’s mare
or the West Loup or the Belt Line
to take us across
LeMarchant Road on Sundays
to join Muffer James
on her front verandah
and watch passers-by
when knitting and auction 45s
were Wesleyan Sunday Sins

Georgina Queller

Home

115 Cochrane Street. It is home but it is not really.
I lived there fifty years ago, before the houses had street numbers
When the bench swing was attached 40 feet up in the Maple Trees
And Mrs. Guy still listened in on the party line.

The front bedroom had the only matching furniture in the house.
A bed, dresser and chest made of cherry wood, second hand.
A white George Washington bed spread graced the room

Along side an elegant braided rug made of rags by Mamma King.

A beautiful 30 inch, untouched bride doll in white lace
Hung on the bedroom wall, by the window, behind the bed
A Christmas gift from Tom, my brother, paid for a few dollars
At a time, working part-time after school at Mr. Muse's store.

At the end of the bed sat a cedar chest, a hope chest
Built from a kit in shop class by my brother, Jess and
Paid for by my mother from her meager salary at a shirt factory
A chest like the chest that all mothers wanted for their daughters.

The room was often used by cousins who came to find work.
Or Uncles/ Aunts from New York, Kansas or North Carolina
Sometimes, my friends and I, three or four, slept cross-wise
The George Washington bed spread carefully folded away.

It was a room of elegance, inspiration and hope, symbolic of
The possibilities, against a house with only two bedrooms
For a growing family of four children and the used fold out
Couch in the living room where I usually slept with my younger brother.

It became the room where I slept with my husband
Or my daughter, depending on who went home for a visit.
And the room where I slept in, in September, after my mom's funeral
And the room I will go home to in February, probably for the last time.

Melba Rabinowitz

Home

I headed home on the twenty-third
every year,
no matter where I was living.
This was her time to shine.
Months of planning -
Church window cookies, cherry cake,
shortbreads we cut out and
adorned with icing, sprinkles.
Weeks of cleaning evident,
the smell of paint,
the new carpet, or linoleum

or couch put in place.
We would decorate the tree,
Her and I.
She, sipping her annual lemon gin
and me indulging her tinsel addiction,
silver strands one at a time.
Each ornament had its story,
told as it took its place.
The clanking ladder
against the eave
as I passed strands of lights up to her.

Waking Christ
my sister and
opened our sto
even as grown
in flannel pyja
still digging fo
she had left us
Mouth waterin
aroma of roas
savory, onions
drifting into m

Now we potluc
take turns
in the civilized
so as to share
There is an ab
we work aroun
Christmas can
without her in

Lori Savory

WORKSHOPS

- February 26, 2006** 16 Princess Anne Place, St. John's - 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
hosted by Lily Bursey 726-0252) and Bobbi Brennan(368-1580)
- March 19, 2005** 16 Parliament Street, St. John's - 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. hosted
by Lori Savory (726-0498)
- April 26, 2006** Longside Club, 41 Shaw Street 7:30 p.m.
(Wednesday)
- May 24, 2006** Longside Club, 41 Shaw Street 7:30 p.m.
(Wednesday) Designated
- June 23-26, 2006** Eastport Retreat
- July (Date TBA)** Hosted by Kathy Knowles
- August (Date TBA)** Hosted by Melba Rabinowitz
- September 8-11, 2006** Eastport Retreat

HOME

Home was never where we lived.
Home was "out home"
It was even "out home" to those of
born there.
I went out home - twice.
The first time my mother visited frie
My father and I went to the graveya
The second time my father and I visited the
graveyard.

Lillian Bouzane

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