



## Newfoundland Writers' Guild

P. O. Box 1133 – St. John's

Newfoundland and Labrador, A1C 5M5

# *The Page*

October 2011

### **Editorial**

It is hard to believe that we are already into October. Where did the "summer" go? It seemed like we had just finished our June retreat at Eastport when we were making plans for our September retreat. As I write this on the first day of October, we are enjoying a balmy plus 20 degrees, and bare feet and short sleeves. So this is, perhaps appropriately, our summer/fall edition.

Since our last edition the Guild has had four retreats. The June and September retreats at Eastport continue to be well attended (particularly the June retreat), and the Friday night reading ( held during the June retreat this year) has become a regular part of our weekend.

The Guild's first FunFest retreat held at the Rotary Sunshine Camp in July resulted in a well- attended, relaxing day. (A good idea, Esther!) Roberta Buchanan's workshop on memoir writing and Don MacKay's poetry presentation were very well received by Guild members and guests. (We were pleased that Don chose to read Georgina Queller's poem "Hard Light" from *A Charm Against the Pain* anthology, as part of his presentation).

This year's August retreat was held at Laura Jackson's place in Flatrock - a lovely day in a lovely location.

A special thank you to Ellen Reid, Patricia O'Neill and Anne Galway for sharing their photographs of the retreats.

Our Annual General Meeting will be held at Sobey's, Howley Estates on October 19th, starting at 7:00 p.m. Board positions to be filled include: President, Vice-president, and three Members-at-large. We are hoping for a good turn- out for the meeting. As we say in French, "Venez nombreux."

Elizabeth Tobin

## Member News

**Ellen Reid** has started a "Haiku a Day" blog: <http://www.haikuhaday.blogspot.com>. She also had a haiku published on the Fisheries Broadcast website as part of their 60th Anniversary Celebration. Check out: <http://www.cbc.ca/fisheriesbroadcast/archives/>. Then go to March 4 entry: a-fan-of-the-broadcast-celebration-the-60th-anniversary-with-prose/. Ellen had a poem published in the May 2011 edition of Red River Review. It can be found at <http://www.redriverreview.com/>. Ellen's other writing group (The Wednesday Ship Poets) have published a Chapbook, ELEMENTAL (a rengaie in six voices) which is currently for sale at The Bookery on Signal Hill Rd. (Members of the Wednesday Ship Poets include: Cathy Daley, Cecilia Moloney, Maureen Dunne, Florence Sampson and Ellen Reid).

**Joan Scott** wrote, and at a demonstration on a very cold day, read a statement about why the campaign to expand the Canada Pension Plan as well as pensions in general, are critical to older women. Joan is also continuing her interest in French by taking a Wednesday evening French course (Debutant 2) at Le Centre des Grands Vents (French School).

**Judy Gibson** –“Hi NWG members. I've been trying to finish a book for about a year...and it will probably be another year before it's done. Wish me luck. Life is always busy with John's dialysis treatments and the special diet taking up a lot of time...and various tasks which he now can't do easily (not enough time or energy) so I've taken them on...shovelling in the winter, mowing the lawn in the summer, etc. so I find life is very busy. I hope I can finish this book and then get to others I'd far rather be working on.”

**Trudy Morgan-Cole** is happy to announce the release this spring of *Sunrise Hope*, her latest inspirational fiction from Review and Herald Publishing. *Sunrise Hope* will soon be available, as are Trudy's earlier books *Lydia* and *Daughters of Grace*, from the Religious Book and Bible House on Thorburn Road. Trudy's latest book, *That Forgetful Shore*, a historical novel set in early twentieth-century Newfoundland, was launched by Breakwater Books in September.

**Roberta Buchanan's** "Mina Hubbard's Diary: Public and Private Selves," was published in *Very Rough Country: Proceedings of the Labrador Explorations Symposium*, edited by Martha MacDonald, Labrador Institute of Memorial University, 2010, pp.71-80. This was reviewed by Robin McGrath in the Telegram (16 July 2011): "I particularly liked the piece by Roberta Buchanan, who looked at the original diaries and identified what Mina chose to leave out and why." Roberta also facilitated a workshop on memoir writing ("Writing Our Lives") at the Guild FunFest in July.

**Helen Fogwill Porter** -“Some of you already know about the feature article Bernice Morgan did on me for the spring issue of the Newfoundland Quarterly. It was a great honour to be profiled by Bernice, one of Canada's finest writers. My review of the audio edition of Cassie Brown's excellent and poignant *Death on the Ice*, published recently by Rattling Books, is in the Summer issue of the Newfoundland Quarterly” (page 58). Helen was one of the participants in the WordFest held at the Eastport Library during the June retreat. She recited her poem “The Place That Disappeared” which describes the South Side Rd East Community.

**Anne Galway** is pleased to announce the release this fall of her collection *Stories from the Hole in the Ceiling* from Flanker Press. Inspired by her memories of the things she saw and heard as a child while

peeping from her parents' bedroom into the kitchen through the hole in the ceiling, the anthology includes memories of nearly 100 people from well-known authors to many new voices. "To have such stories - articulate, moving, surprising and funny - gathered together in one volume is truly a work of art"- Helen Fogwill Porter. This is Anne's first book.

**Sheila Sullivan** read several of her poems at the Eastport Library reading in June.

**Kate Evans:** “-I have had a busy summer with my book. I thought that perhaps the Guild members would be interested in reading about some of the highlights and some of the things I have done to help market the book. As you know most of my summer is spent in Port Blandford so I went into the local store and the golf club and they both took books to sell and it worked out very well. I then went to the library in Clarenville and they were delighted to arrange a reading in October and suggested getting a set of books for book club use. This was also very successful. I had a wonderful evening in Clarenville with a fabulous group of women who are keen readers and full of questions. I hope to attend another book club in October and read there on the 15th. Winterset was great and apart from a blowout on the TCH on the way out, which resulted in a late arrival and missing the first event, I had a wonderful time and felt very privileged to have been asked to read and participate in the New Voices panel discussion. While at Winterset I spoke with Pat Parsons from the Gander Library and I hope to read there on Oct12th and go on to Fogo the following day to read there. I read at two other events in St. John's. One sponsored by Breakwater and Creative Books at The Fat Cat, and the other sponsored by Breakwater, at The Vault . In September I read at The Fisher's Loft in Port Rexton (reading and dinner series) to a very interesting group from away, and the next day headed to Halifax to read and be part of a panel at Word On The Street in Halifax. It was a bit rushed but good exposure. So that, together with lots of family and visitors, some good weather, some bad, has been my summer. I have also started on my next novel and worked hard at the Eastport Retreat to get it underway.

**Laura Morry Williams** read a selection of her poetry at the Eastport WordFest in June.

**The Shore Group**, Geraldine Flannigan, Esther Brown, Alison Melvin and Laura Morry Williams held their writing day at Alison's in Burnt Cove on Monday of last week. “We worked on our manuscripts and were not held back by hurricane Ophelia. We had another successful day.”

**Lillian Bouzanne** arranged to have the Guild plaque from the NL Arts Council placed in the MUN Archives. “In 2008 the Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council inducted the Guild into their Hall of Honour. For safe keeping the plaque given to the Guild at that time has been hung on the wall of Memorial University Archives. The Archives are now located on the third floor of the MUN Library [Q.E. II]. Suggest you check it out on your next visit.”

**Gerry Chafe Rubia** has moved back to St. John's and is now residing at Margaret's Manor on Bonaventure Ave. Her phone number is still the same: 738-3136.

And finally the latest news: **Ellen Reid** and **Sheila Sullivan** both won Bobble Head Ted (Blades) dolls from CBC Radio's On the Go. It's been reported that Sheila is taking hers to Radio City in New York. Ellen has already taken hers to the Ship Pub and the Anglican Cathedral Fall Fair. To see Ellen's pictures of Bobble Head Ted, go to [www.cbc.ca/onthego](http://www.cbc.ca/onthego) and click on The Adventures of Bobblehead Ted.

## **Webpage:**

The webpage has been up and running now for over a year. I've done my best to try to keep it updated, but without input, I don't often go in to make changes. Barb Hoben is now the assistant web person. Barb has all the knowledge and tools to post on the webpage and maintain it. She will be taking over in my absence and will be sharing the duties with me in the future. If there is anyone else out there with an interest in the webpage and webpage management, I would only be too happy to show them how it works and they can join our team. I think it is very important to keep a web presence. This is, after all, the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Sheilah Roberts

**Editors' Note:** A very big thank you to Sheilah for her on- going work in updating the Guild's Website.

## **Funfest 2011**

Funfest 2011 was created as an alternative to our WordFest activities. WordFest has proved in the past summers not to fulfill its original purpose of introducing our writers to the general public; however it was a great occasion to meet with our peers. Based on this information, the board felt we should provide some sort of gathering. We contacted our members and received favorable comments. Many felt it should be a day of fun and relaxation with some structure.

We contacted Rotary Park and were delighted to learn that the day would be rather inexpensive and the cost was easily absorbed by the Guild making it a special treat for our members. We gathered at noon for a picnic lunch and supper was one of our famous potlucks. As usual the food was delicious and plentiful. Many came for the entire day, others dropped in when convenient. Our members spent their free time catching up with old friends or strolling the beautiful grounds. One disappointment - our Newfoundland weather wasn't suitable for swimming, perhaps next year. One of the highlights of our day was the marvelous memoir workshop facilitated by our own Roberta Buchanan. From this workshop a number of us have decided to form a memoir workshop this fall. Roberta has agreed to help with the setup. New members welcomed, contact me at [estherbrown@nf.sympatico.ca](mailto:estherbrown@nf.sympatico.ca). Poet Don Mackay's presentation after supper was a lovely way to wind down the day. It certainly inspired us as to the value of research as Don spoke of the lengths he will go to learn about any subject he undertakes. His poetry readings also were delightful and well delivered. The Board has received huge feedback concerning our day and it would appear that a good time was had by all. Hopefully Funfest will become a new Guild tradition.

Esther Brown

## **Eastport Retreats and WordFest**

Sixteen Guild members enjoyed a productive week-end at the White Sails Inn and Cabins in June. Again this year, members participated in a Friday evening reading at the Eastport Library. This was our 4<sup>th</sup> joint "WordFest" with writers from the area. Eastport readers -Daisy Penny, Annie Lane and Joyce Powell each read a selection of their poetry, and Renee Vatcher read one of her stories. Guild members Shelia Sullivan and Laura Morry Williams read several poems and Helen Fogwill Porter did a recitation entitled "The Place that Disappeared." Kate Evans read from her novel *Where Old Ghosts Meet*.

Library volunteer, Alan Holman finished “Allan’s Walk for Books” at the library during the evening, raising a generous amount of money for the Library. The Guild made a donation to Allan’s walk, as well as donating a copy of Helen’s audio book- *Below the Bridge* to the Eastport Library. Readers and other member donated copies of their books, where available. An enjoyable addition to the program this year was the involvement of Mary MacNab’s violin students, Liam Hallett and Charlotte Butt, accompanied by Jane Ralph, who played their Kiwanis Festival music entries between readings. This year’s event was well- attended with standing room only- (We had five ladies in attendance who were visiting from the San Francisco area!) A reception was organized by the Eastport Library Board, following the readings.

The WordFest was co-ordinated by Mary MacNab from the Library and Guild member, Elizabeth Tobin. (Elizabeth was unable to attend at the last minute, and Esther Brown and Sheila Sullivan generously agreed to fill in.)

Eight members along with two guests (Heather Shea-visiting home from B.C. and Laura Jackson’s daughter, Willow) attended the September retreat.

The following collaborative poem was written by Guild members at the June retreat in response to Gerry’s request that we “write a poem.”

### **Eastport Without Gerry**

My eyes are wet, my throat is quinsy	GQueller
My knees are sore; my traitorous legs are flimsy	Laura Jackson
My funny bone is starved of stimulation	Joan Scott
Our Gerry has gone into hibernation	Sheila Sullivan
Oh where oh where has our Gerry gone	Patricia O’Neill
And the waves sigh “Where is our lady of Haiku?”	Roberta Buchanan
Golden Monarchs fly over Eastport unseen; do they still exist?	Don Steele
Our magnetic poems have gone the way of the Dodo	Laura Williams
There’s nothing left, not even a photo	Annie Ferncase, Lis Laverty
Gerry Chafe Rubia now resides in Paradise	
but she’s no angel!	Helen Fogwill Porter
Gerry your room cries out for you	

We miss your presence, we truly do.

Florence Edwards

Who is there to challenge us with poems constructed without a fuss?

Esther Brown

Verse is waiting for you

Quiet patient always true.

Joan McIntosh

### Up Coming Events

**The Annual General Meeting** will be held at Sobeys, Howley Estates on October 19th, starting at 7:00 p.m. Board positions to be filled include: President, Vice-president, and Members-at-large (3).

**The November Designated** workshop will be held on Thursday, Nov. 24 from 7-10pm at Sobeys, Howley Estates. Hosts TBA.

**The Guild Christmas Party** is planned for Saturday, Dec. 10 at St. Mark's Anglican Church Hall on Logy Bay Rd. Information on the Christmas Writing Contest is forthcoming. Last year's winners, Melba Rabinowitz and Kathy Knowles will be setting this year's contest.

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

The newsletter was put together by Lily Bursey, Sheila Sullivan, and Elizabeth Tobin.