



## Newfoundland Writers' Guild

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

# *The Page*

October 2010

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### **Editorial**

As we mentioned in the last issue, **The Page** is now being posted on the Guild's website. We have learned, however, that many members are not accessing the site and therefore not seeing the newsletter. As a result **The Page** will also be sent out to members by email. Sheilah Roberts continues to do a fine job of updating the website, so do go into the site if you are not already doing so. It is easily accessible by googling **NL Writers Guild**.

Again this year, the Guild had a successful WordFest - with the afternoon readings becoming part of the first ever Canada wide Culture Days. A special thanks to Sheila Sullivan, Chair of the WordFest committee, for her work in organizing an enjoyable and well attended event. The Guild continues to take part in a joint WordFest during the September Retreat in Eastport. This provides members with the enjoyable and enriching experience of hearing from writers in the Eastport area.

Long time Guild member Georgina Queller was presented with a Life Membership at the Awards Brunch. We would echo the words of Helen Porter in her tribute to Georgina, "...a richly- deserved Life Membership. We thank you so very much, Georgina, for all you've done."

The AGM will be held later this month. Two Board positions, Secretary and Treasurer, will need to be filled. We have not yet had any expressions of interest for the position of Treasurer. If anyone is interested in putting her/his name forward, please contact me at [eatobin19@yahoo.ca](mailto:eatobin19@yahoo.ca) or at 895-3339.

Elizabeth Tobin

### **WordFest 2010**

WordFest was held in partnership with Newman Wine Vaults, Provincial Historic Sites, on Sept. 26. This year's WordFest was part of the first ever Pan Canadian celebration of arts and culture, aptly named Culture Days. The Guild received funding support from City Hall for the event. Readers for the third annual WordFest were Ellen Reid, Cathy

Daley, Helen Porter, Janet McNaughton, Trudy Morgan-Cole, Gerry Rubia, Bernice Morgan, and Dylan Seaward. There was a large number of people in attendance, members and non-members. As usual a book table was available for the sale of members' books. Cathy Daley and Ellen Reid took care of the book table. Thanks to various local publishers, a number of books were given away as prizes. The refreshment table was laden with delicious cookies and cakes donated by Guild members.

The WordFest 2010 committee consisted of Don Steele, Esther Brown, Elizabeth Tobin, Raoul Andersen and Sheila Sullivan. In addition to the committee, Georgina Queller and Lily Bursey were very generous with their time.

A joint WordFest was held at the Eastport library during the September Retreat. In the end, we had only one of the anticipated three local readers. Peter Pickersgill from Salvage did a reading, with an accompanying illustration, from a recent newspaper column. (Peter is a visual artist as well as a writer). Roberta Buchanan read from her memoir "Come From Away." Bobbie Brennan, Elizabeth Tobin and Joan Scott each read a selection of poetry. Mary MacNab, who co-ordinated the event, referred to the library's on-going friendship with the Guild (e.g. donations of books, joint WordFests) saying that they had been adopted by the Guild! Refreshments were provided by the library following the readings.

### **Eastport Retreats**

Fourteen members (including a new member, Lis Laverty ) attended the June Retreat. The Saturday and Sunday workshops were enjoyable and the shared evening meals were excellent, as usual. A poetry contest on the topic "By the Sea" generated a good number of entries and three winners: (in no particular order) Florence Edwards, Laura Jackman and Lily Bursey. A small group of seven (including a first-time member, Helen White) attended the September Retreat. A joint WordFest [our 3<sup>rd</sup>] was held at the Eastport library on Friday evening. Again, we had two very interesting workshops followed by stimulating late night conversations! During the weekend, several Guild members visited two of last year's WordFest readers, Annie Lane and Daisy Penny from Salvage. We very much enjoyed visiting with the sisters and hearing some of their delightful poetry .

### **Member News**

**Roberta Buchanan** was one of the readers at Eastport Library in September; she read from her memoir "Come from Away."

An article, "Remembrance of Things Past: Starting a Memoir Group," will be in the Fall issue of WANL Word. Roberta will be giving a workshop on writing memoir at the WANL AGM in Grand Falls in November.

**Trudy Morgan-Cole** was honoured to be able to read from her novel *By the Rivers of Brooklyn* at the Writers at Woody Point festival in August. She will be visiting the English 3155: Newfoundland Literature class at Memorial University this semester, where *By the Rivers of Brooklyn* is on the reading list for the course. She is also pleased to announce that she has two new works of Biblical historical fiction released this year by

Review and Herald Publishing. Her novel *Lydia: A Story of Philippi* and her novella *That First Christmas: The Wise Men* are both available from amazon.com and other online sources while Trudy continues to work on finding a local distributor for them.

**Annamarie Beckel** recently participated in the Eastport Winterset in Summer Literary Festival as a panelist for the "Lost Voices" session with Bernice Morgan and Kevin Major, as well as moderator Marie Wadden. The session included a reading from her novel about the Beothuk, *All Gone Widdun*. The French translation of Annamarie's novel, *Silence of Stone*, has just been released *Les voix de l'île* by Guy Saint-Jean Editeur in Laval, QC.

**Hilda Chaulk Murray** gave a reading from her book *Of Boats on the Collar* at the Cape St Mary's Interpretation Centre on August 14. She also read from the new version of *More Than 50%* at the Newman Wine Vaults on August 19, as part of "Wine and Words" series sponsored by Flanker Press.

**Cathy Daley** had her poem "Intersections" accepted for publication by Descant Magazine.

**Geraldine (Gerry) Chafe Rubia** was at Chapters on the July 7 for the launch of the second edition of her book *A Poem in My Soup*, published by Flanker Press. This is a book of recipes, Newfoundland witticisms, and original works of poetry. Gerry also has an article on the haiku in the Autumn edition of WORD. [WANL Newsletter]

Please note: effective the end of October, Gerry will be moving to the Karwood Retirement Retreat, 39 Karwood Dr, Paradise.]

**Lily Bursey's** book, *Amy's Journey: A Young Girl's Struggle with TB*, is scheduled to be launched at Chapter's on Thursday, October 28 from 7-9 pm.

**Sheilah Roberts** gave a reading from the revised edition of her book, *For Maids Who Brew and Bake* at the Newman Wine Vaults in August. This was part of the "Wine and Words" series sponsored by Flanker Press.

**Bernice Morgan's** *Random Passage* was selected as No. 7 in the new book, *Atlantic Canada's 100 Greatest Books*.

**Helen Porter** was officially inducted into the Arts Council Hall of Honour at the Lawrence O'Brien Arts Centre in Happy Valley-Goose Bay on May 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Kate Evans'** launch of her book *Where Old Ghosts Meet* was held at Shamrock City, Water Street on September 14th, with a very large turn out of friends and fellow writers. Kate travelled to Ireland on September 20<sup>th</sup> [to October 3<sup>rd</sup>] as part of a provincial trade mission. In her email from Wexford, Kate said that her book had been very well received at all venues. Following her library readings, there were lively discussions about writing, books, and a lot of interest in Newfoundland. Kate was also

invited to read at the Irish Writers' Centre in Dublin for Culture Week. That was really special as her brother, who is an artist in Ireland, had a portrait of JP Dunleavy hanging there, so the clan was well represented that night. She also read at the Embassy where there were many publishers and festival people in attendance.

**Melba Rabinowitz's** article, "Handle with Extreme Care," was published in ABEONA, Newsletter of the Child and Youth Care Association Newfoundland and Labrador. Summer, 2010. Melba is a regular columnist for this newsletter and writes about the care and emotional well being of babies and toddlers. Melba also gave a presentation entitled *Nurturing Hidden Resilience in Families as well as Children*, at the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Provincial Child and Youth Care Conference held at the Battery Hotel on June 6.

An article featuring the organic farm owned by Melba and her husband was published in the September\ October edition of *Saltscapes* Magazine ["The Origin of the Organic Farm," pp 103-106]. The article was written by local writer, Alison Dyer. The Organic Farm also received the *Newfoundland and Labrador Environmental Award* in May of this year. The farm was nominated for the award by the Women's Institute.

Five Guild members were honoured for their achievements over the past year, at the Honours and Awards Brunch held at Bally Haley on April 25: **Raoul Anderson** (*Mi'sel Joe*), **Tina Chaulk** (*A Few Kinds of Wrong*), **Janet McNaughton** (*Dragon Seer*), **Trudy Morgan Cole** (*By the Rivers of Brooklyn*), and **Paul O'Neill** (*Fish for Dinner*).

**Georgina Queller** was awarded a Life Membership in the Guild at the Honours and Awards Brunch in April. Helen Porter's tribute to Georgina is included below.

### **Georgina Queller**

April 13/10 For April 25/10 by H.F. Porter

Georgina Olivera was born in St. John's 6 years before Newfoundland became the tenth province of Canada. The youngest of three sisters, Georgina was educated at Bishop Spencer College, Bishops College, Memorial University of Newfoundland, Sir George Williams University and the Nova Scotia Agricultural College in Truro. Somewhere along the way, in her political days, she married a nice American named Steve from whom she acquired the name Queller. She hung on to the name after their amicable divorce because his family was all but exterminated by the Nazi's during the second World War and will die out with him. And it's nice to be the only Queller in the telephone directory and even in the whole of Canada.

Georgina worked in agriculture for several years in Nova Scotia before returning to St. John's to work with the Department.

A voracious reader, Georgina always had, and has, a strong talent for creative writing and literary criticism. After she returned to Newfoundland and eventually joined my creative writing class at MUN I gained a good friend and writing colleague who enriched my life. The class Georgina joined was one of my most memorable; it was interesting and exciting to be with those students every week. Some excellent writing came from that class, much of it from Georgina herself. I particularly remember two of the short stories she passed in that year. One, a piece set in early 1950s rural Newfoundland, featured a little girl who died too young of a disease that is now curable. The other portrayed a lonely old man who spent a lot of his time at a downtown St. John's tavern, dreading going home to face the dark dreams that gripped him every night. As far as I know, neither of these stories was published. They should have been, but Georgina has always spent more time encouraging and supporting other writers than in pushing her own stuff.

Somewhere along the way, Georgina joined the Newfoundland Writers' Guild and became an extremely important part of that organization. It is difficult now to remember the Guild without Georgina. Apart from her years as president, treasurer and continuous service to the Guild, Georgina continues to be one of our most insightful critics and has helped many members with their manuscripts.

In the past several years Georgina has turned more and more to poetry, and has produced some exciting work. Just ask noted poet Enos Watts, who gave her one of the richest adjudications I've ever read.

Georgina was extremely busy throughout our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, and also played a crucial part in the production of the Guild's fourth anthology *A Charm Against the Pain*. She's still taking on more than her share. I'm thinking now about *A Touch of Grace*, an evening of dramatic readings honouring the work of Guild Life Member Grace Butt who died four years earlier. The event took place at the Arts and Culture Basement Theatre on March 8, 2009. This date, as well as being International Women's Day, also marked the centenary of Grace's birth on March 8, 1909. For this past March 8 the Guild commissioned and presented a one-woman play on Grace's life, written and presented by local actor Ruth Lawrence. Georgina was also deeply involved in this event at MUN's Reid Theatre.

It is our great pleasure to bestow on Georgina Queller a richly-deserved Life Membership. We thank you so very much, Georgina, for all you've done. Now we want to see more of your own prose and poetry in print.

### **Up Coming Events**

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING will be held on Thursday, October 21, 7 - 10 pm at Sobey's, Howley Estates. The meeting will be hosted by the Board. If you have any items to add to the agenda, please send them to Esther Slaney-Brown, [estherbrown@nf.sympatico.ca](mailto:estherbrown@nf.sympatico.ca) . Two Board positions, Secretary and Treasurer will be voted on at the meeting.

The November **Designated Workshop** will be held on Thursday, November 18, 7-10 pm at Sobey's, Howley Estates. Hosts: Bobbie Brennan and Guild member TBA.

Our **Christmas Party** is planned for Saturday, December 18, at the Retired Citizens Club, 10 Bennett Avenue. Information on the Christmas writing contest will be forthcoming. To put us in the spirit of Christmas (writing contest) we are including a poem written by Helen Porter for a previous Christmas contest. Many of us will recall shopping at Bowrings and enjoying the 'home cooking' at the Captain's Cabin.

From Auntie Crae's  
An English Sonnet

By Helen Fogwill Porter  
November 10, 2008

I stare across the street at Bowrings Store  
Its lights discreet, top windows dark and cold  
So different now from in the days of yore  
When shoppers thronged the building, young and old  
To search for treasures from its ample stock  
And then relax in Captain's Cabin Fold  
Where ladies served up meals around the clock  
Hot turkey, mashed potatoes, new and old  
And salt beef too, pease pudding smooth and proud  
Carrots and turnips, sometimes beet as well  
Has there ever been such a happy crowd?  
Each of them merry as a marriage bell  
Where are they now, this hearty carefree bunch?  
Trying to find a matching place to lunch.

**THE PAGE** is the Guild newsletter and is distributed four times a year. It is a brief summary of members' news and accomplishments and provides information concerning events.

The Newsletter was put together by Lily Bursey and Elizabeth Tobin with assistance from Sheila Sullivan and Sheilah Roberts.