



Writer's Connection

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 3

JULY/AUGUST 2003

Quinte Writer's Guild Newsletter

Editor: M. E. Wood

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962-3899

REMINDERS

- *Mark Your Calendar with these Upcoming Meeting Dates for the remainder of 2003:*
 - **September 2,**
 - **October 7,**
 - **November 4,**
- *Monthly Dues are \$3.*
- *Membership is \$15*

WHERE WE WRITERS MEET: WHARF STREET DEBATING CLUB 34 S. FRONT ST.

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Board & Executive

President:
 Pamela Stork
 pstork@hotmail.com

Vice President:
 Ruth Howard

Treasurer:
 Maureen Wood
 imagery@sympatico.ca

Recording Secretary:
 Angela McPherson
 somehulabaloo@yahoo.ca

House Manager:
 Susan Brannigan-Rampp
 rampp@sympatico.ca

Hello Guild Members!

It's that most wonderful time of the year again...back to school. I hope you all had an enjoyable and safe summer. Anyone do any writing? Perhaps you'll share it with us at the next meeting. Enjoy your last few weeks of summer folks!

Maureen

From Our President!

SEE YOU IN SEPTEMBER

No matter how old I become, or how far away from academia I may be, I always regard the day after Labour Day, rather than New Year's Day, as the true start of the New Year. Like many other young people, I always had two minds about the start of the school year. On the one hand, it meant the end of the seemingly endless, lazy, yet fun-filled summer. But on the other hand, it meant seeing old friends (in some years that really meant the boys!) and opening new books (in most years that excluded the math and physics texts!). Most of all, I remember all that blank paper. Notebooks just full of it, binders brimming with it!!! All blank and waiting to be filled with new ideas. I still feel that way about blank paper and hope you all do, too, especially now that we can truly fill it with ideas rather than the conjugations of a Latin verb! Here's to blank paper...and a Happy New Year.

Pam

—(QWG Member)

The medium is the message

I first arrived in Ontario in August of 2002. Arriving somewhere at night is an experience in itself. The place is new and you're relying on less used senses – the street signs and lights were different in themselves but they were about all I could see when being driven to a destination under cover of darkness. You smell; you taste the air; you listen. I lay in a strange bed and heard trucks, mammoth brothers of Lorries, their calls like discordant chords of an organ. I watched the soft breeze play the blinds like piano keys. I wondered.

Morning disclosed that I had been dropped straight into a globe of sweet summer sun. I put on a skirt and sandals. Faces radiated smiles at the season. Life was energetic – all was buzzing, from the electrical wires above down to the crickets below. On the water the sun sparkles glittered from every angle

The seasons change subtly here – when did the wind pick up? When did the blue skies start to collect little white clouds, a few at a time, so that we wouldn't notice? When does it become obvious? The trees are the real indicators, especially the trademark Maple. Ontario is famous for its fall. The trees fall into flame, the leaves become luminous. Autumn here does not seem a death until its very end. There's so much vitality in the volcanic dance of the trees. The animals too are energetic. They are not tricked by the colours and read the message well. Brown and black squirrels run across the dry grass, collecting. "It's going to be a long winter," someone says, "look at how busy they are."

Soon the business has a different form, from preparation to full blown migration. Ducks land on the now cobbled grey water, quacking a little comedy into the scene. Geese gather, pointing their direction out of town in a wobbly V.

The leaves are now a constantly rustling body; the wind shakes them, makes them shiver in the new cold. The sound whispers "winter" like a solemn secret. Soon they are whirled past our faces like dry brit-

tle rain. They crunch under our feet satisfactorily. The last ones cling desperately onto the ebony bones of the trees. People are still out and about, to be found in their front gardens, rake in hand. Rain is no more than occasional, but when it comes is a welcome distraction, is almost lively, the real raindrops running their races down the windowpane.

As anyone who lives here knows, this year bore a long winter. We don't want to discuss it too much, for maybe it was a sad one too, but as people are still saying – It was the longest winter we've had in a long time. Colours were replaced by shades of white, slushing repeatedly into greys and gritty browns. Spring saved us with its subtle intermission. Summer is now upon us; we have forgotten slow time. The medium. The medium is the message?

Tomorrow I leave Belleville. I need to get a watch for my trip, for catching buses and things. I haven't worn a watch in years. I think even if I get one I'll keep it in my pocket. Why? Do I dislike its bulkiness on my wrist, or what the weight represents? Everything measured in numbers, existing between beginning and end – Everything. Even the pure, powerful forces in nature are controlled by time. Only they accept it, don't attempt to reverse the process and control it. They – the grasses, the birds, the wind, the trees, the sea, the sun and moon – move through time instinctively, without question. And so I attempt to do so. I feel myself held physically within the process, spiritually, maybe I can be at one with the process. These slight changes, in alignment, that we do not consciously choose, that seem to pass unconsciously. These are the breaks and phases that Life arranges. The medium is the message.

Thank you, to all. I have felt privileged, and inspired, and comforted by all of you. I'm running the risk of sounding sentimental, you get the picture, I won't go on...

Clare

Member News

- **Maureen Wood** sold another article to What's Happening Magazine over the summer. She also placed an Honorable Mention with Sol Magazine's 2003 Poet Laureate Competition (<http://www.sol-magazine.com>).
- **Susan Brannigan-Rampp** recently returned from attending The Humber School for Writers (<http://www.humber.ca/creativeandperformingarts/writing/summerworkshop/>) Summer Workshop. She went to work on her young adult manuscript, *Outlet River Gold*. She was given so many valuable pointers by her workshop leader and author, Richard Scrimger. His work, *The Nose from Jupiter*, won the Mr. Christie Book award for excellence in children's writing. Susan heard stories about the writing life from faculty members, including Alastair MacLeod, Nino Ricci, Wayson Choy, John Metcalf, Paul Quarrington, Kim Moritsugu and Olive Senior. Isabel Huggan shared information about Humber's Creative Writing by Correspondence program (<http://www.humber.ca/creativeandperformingarts/writing/correspondence/>). Susan is now energized and inspired to work on refining her manuscript and highly recommends The Humber School for Writers for any aspiring writer.
- Congratulations to Quinte Writer's Guild Member **Angela McPherson** for winning one of the Runner Up positions in The Belleville Intelligencers "Quinte Stories" contest. The Belleville Intelligencer hosted "Quinte Stories" story contest for a second year. Angela entered at the end of June, for publication in the Canada Day issue of the Intelligencer. Stories for this contest are required to be about people or places in the Quinte area. First prize was \$200, and four runners-up each received \$100. Angela's story will appear in our next newsletter for those who didn't catch it.

"THE FIRST BOOK I EVER WROTE WAS THE BEST-SELLING BOOK OF THE YEAR, AND THE SECOND BOOK DROPPED DEAD. WHAT CAN YOU LEARN FROM THIS? ABSOLUTELY NOTHING. BUT IF YOU KEEP ON SUBMITTING AND NEVER GIVE UP, THE CHANCES ARE THAT SOMEDAY SOMEBODY WILL EVENTUALLY BUY YOUR WORK. UNLESS THEY DON'T."
— DAN GREENBURG, JOURNALIST AND HUMORIST

AN INVITATION FROM PEN CANADA BY R.D.ROY(QWG Member)

I didn't go looking for PEN, I simply stumbled onto it. Lucky stumble.

Searching the Internet for ways to connect with other writers I came upon the PEN Canada website. After reading the history and mission statement I paid my sixty bucks and joined. The decision took about four minutes. There really was no way I couldn't join.

We all worry and talk about the bad things that continue to happen in our world. We commiserate amongst ourselves about the insane and barbarous events that occur anew and unbridled each day. We talk, but what to do? Where to put our hands to work?

PEN INTERNATIONAL was formed some eighty years ago in England with the explicit purpose of giving writers the means to defend and help other writers who were being persecuted. Today PEN has twelve thousand members in ninety countries that monitor and assist over eight hundred persecuted writers. Writers who are jailed, tortured and killed for the 'crime' of speaking critically of their governments.

PEN works in many ways to support writers who do not enjoy the basic democratic right of Freedom of Speech. Presently PEN Canada is trying to build relationships between emerging Canadian writers, established writers, and writers who are in exile here in Canada. In this way PEN hopes to facilitate the integration of exiled writers into the Canadian literary community.

Another way in which an individual member, or group of members, can contribute is to become a Minder. A Minder's role is to write to imprisoned writers and the regime that has imprisoned them. This contact serves to encourage the victim and warn the jailer that the imprisoned cannot be 'disappeared' without the outside world knowing.

PEN, through the use of moral persuasion, brings pressure on the Canadian government to put human rights on bargaining tables around the world. Many well-known Canadian writers lend their names, and give their time, to PEN's efforts.

While at PEN Canada's general meeting in June I was struck by the number of 'big guns' who were present. Atwood was seated five chairs to my left. Michelle Berry occupied the seat in front of mine. Jane Urquhart was in the front row and David Cronenberg was to the right. John Ralston Saul was speaking from the podium, in his quiet and determined way, about how every Canadian writer, big or small, has a role to play in making things better. He wasn't addressing only the well known writers in the room. He made his appeal to every one of us.

I would like to extend PEN's invitation to my fellow writers at the Quinte Writers Guild. My goal is to have a number of local members work together as a collective 'Minder'. I am on PEN Canada's membership committee and will make myself available to answer your questions. (I've also gotten into the habit of carrying around application forms!)

With warm regards,
R.D. (Doug) Roy

Market of the Month

ROOM OF ONE'S OWN (The following info is from their website: <http://www.roommagazine.com>)

Room of One's Own was founded in 1975 by a group of women who wanted to provide an opportunity to showcase the work of emerging writers with that of established writers. For a time, Room of One's Own was the only Canadian literary journal for women writers.

The West Coast Feminist Literary Magazine publishing Society was created from this idea, and continues to operate as the Growing Room Collective, a volunteer group that publishes Room of One's Own. Former collective members have included award-winning author Gayla Reid, CBC broadcaster Eleanor Wahtel, and UBC press editor Jean Wilson.

Submission Guidelines:

The Room of One's Own editorial collective is always accepting new, previously unpublished submissions of fiction, poetry, and artwork by women. Our current response time is approximately 6 to 9 months.

For material published, we pay a small honorarium and two copies of the issue in which the work appears. All contributors receive a year's subscription to Room of One's Own. We purchase First North American Serial Rights, meaning that copyright reverts back to the author after publication. We may also ask you for permission to publish your work on our website.

For all submissions...

Please include your name, address, and email address if possible (we will use your email address to confirm receipt of your manuscript).

Also, be sure to include a SASE with sufficient Canadian postage, or an International Reply Coupon for submissions outside of Canada. Canada post will not accept American or foreign postage, so we would be unable to contact you with our decision. Please note that we do not return manuscripts.

Room of One's Own does not accept simultaneous submissions. Room of One's Own is not responsible for unsolicited manuscripts.

Fiction, creative non-fiction, and essays: Please submit typed, double-spaced, single-sided pages of unpublished work of less than 5000 words. Please include the word count in your cover letter. Note: submissions longer than 5000 words will be returned unread.

Poetry: Please submit typed, single-sided pages of unpublished work. Send groups of 4-5 poems, rather than single poems.

Book Reviews: Please submit typed, double-spaced, single-sided pages of unpublished work of up to 700 words.

Submissions can be sent to:

Room of One's Own
PO Box 46160
Station D
Vancouver, BC
V6J 5G5

Note: Chapters carries copies of 'Room of One's Own' in the Magazine Lit Section.

**"THIS IS WHAT THEY'LL PUT ON MY
TOMBSTONE:
HE WAS ONLY HERE ON SPEC!"**

—LOUIS PHILLIPS, POET AND PLAYRIGHT

Upcoming Workshops/Speakers

Watch this spot for upcoming workshop announcements.

Writing Websites

- **Novelists, Inc.** - <http://www.ninc.com>
- **Royalty & Sales Information** - <http://www.karenafox.com/money.asp>
- **Chocolate for Women** - <http://www.chocolateforwomen.com>
- **Writer's Resource Center** - <http://www.poewar.com/index.html>
- **Take this Spelling Test** - <http://www.sentex.net/~mmcadams/spelling.html>
- **Oprah's Writers on Writing** - http://www2.oprah.com/obc/writers/obc_writers_main.jhtml