



No. 16: Fall 2019

Upcoming Meetings

Monday,
September 16

Annual General Meeting

Monday,
October 21

General Meeting with Guest Speaker Kevin Chong

Monday,
November 18
Christmas Social

*Venue and time
to be confirmed*

Monday,
January 20

General Meeting with Guest Speaker Jean Teillet

Meeting location:

The Program Room, 3rd Floor
North Vancouver City Library

Time: 7:00 – 8:45 p.m.

Members: Free

Non-Members: By donation

Website: www.nswriters.com

Write On!

Newsletter of the North Shore Writers' Association
Linking North Shore writers since 1993

President's Message

Sonia Garrett

September, for me, is a time for beginnings.

As a teacher, I start a new academic year, with all its hopes and challenges, refreshed after the summer break. As president of the North Shore Writers' Association, I return, with a similar energy and enthusiasm, to an action-packed year ahead.

It's also a time when I like to make resolutions. I thought I'd share three of these with you.

TAKE RISKS: This year I would encourage you to join me and step out of your comfort zone. Try something new – Dare to be Heard with our host, Mark Turris is a fabulous opportunity to read your work out loud in a supportive, non-critical environment. Come to our General Meetings and hear the fabulous speakers being lined up by our executive. Submit an article or join in the 100 Word Challenge in our amazing newsletter, expertly edited by Wiley Ho. Attend a Writing with Writers workshop and try your hand at a new genre. Read newsletters and member emails as our Membership Coordinator, Carl Hunter, keeps us informed about literary events. Enter the NSWA Writing Competition, attend festivals, introduce yourself to a

new member, or volunteer to help the executive. There are so many possibilities, just resolve to try one new thing during the 2019/20 Season and have some fun along the way.

BE OPEN MINDED: The NSWA membership is broad and inclusive. We have a twelve-year old and members in their nineties. We have poets, non-fiction, and fiction writers —those with multiple publications and others waiting to publish their first book. We have new Canadians, and those born here. The thing that binds us is our love of writing. Be open to members, old and new. Give what you can —be it time, expertise, or encouragement. Join in with an open mind and giving heart.

AIM FOR BALANCE: Writing is only one part of our lives. I aim to read and write daily, but its not always possible. I am also a mother and teacher. I need to exercise and eat well to stay healthy. We all do. The NSWA is run entirely by volunteers. If you have an idea, please share it with us. We love getting suggestions, but we also need people who are willing to step up and help manifest those ideas. Many hands make light work. Consider volunteering. Our strength is in our membership and the support we give each other.

I hope you will enjoy all the NSWA has to offer. I know I will. ■



hello fall.

A Note from the Editor

Was it Mark Twain who said, “The secret of getting ahead is getting started.” How apropos for fall.

I’ve had a fun summer. Hiking, camping and canoeing adventures with friends and family from near and far filled the precious weeks of summer, distracting me away from my writing desk. Socially sated and well-exercised though I am, I miss my writing practice. Always when the weather turns, I gravitate back to my writing and an urge to reconnect to my writing community.

I look forward to seeing you at NSWA’s upcoming meetings, starting with our AGM on September 16th!

Our membership has been busy with their projects! This issue is chock-full of wonderful writing news and submissions from you!

Here’s to getting re-started and getting ahead. Write on!

- Wiley

**Deadline for next newsletter:
December 1, 2019**

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Newsletter Submission Guidelines

- Submissions from NSWA members only.
- Send writing news (recent publications, book launches, notices, etc.) and your creations (poems, short fiction or non-fiction pieces up to 600 words) to editornswa@gmail.com.
Snail mail to NSWA, PO Box 37549 Lonsdale East, North Vancouver, BC V7M 3L3.
- Member writing that appears in the NSWA newsletter is eligible for submission to the NSWA writing contest.
- The Editor reserves the right to make revisions or corrections.
- Publication in *WRITE ON!* is at the discretion of the Editor, in consultation with the Executive.

Disclaimer: Contributors are responsible for the accuracy, originality, reliability, etc., of their submission content, and any views expressed are not necessarily those of the Editor or the NSWA.

Meetings & Speakers

Monday
September 16

Annual General Meeting



Speak up and be counted! Make sure you attend our Annual General Meeting. This is your opportunity to have your say on the upcoming season of the NSWA.

We'll be **electing new executive** members for 2019/20, accepting volunteers for upcoming activities, answering your questions and listening to your ideas. Bring your suggestions for the upcoming season.

It is also **membership renewal** time. For a mere \$40, you can renew your membership by cheque or cash at the meeting.

This is a great evening to meet and mingle with other members of NSWA, catch up after summer, and swap writing tales and tips!

Monday
October 21

Meeting plus Guest Speaker Kevin Chong



Kevin Chong is the author of seven books, including the novels *The Plague*, *Beauty Plus Pity*, *Baroque-a-Nova* and the memoir *My Year of the Racehorse*.

His writing has appeared in the *Globe and Mail*, the *Walrus*, *Maclean's*, *Chatelaine*, and on the CBC Arts website; his work has been published in Canada, the US, France, Australia, and Macedonia. He has been shortlisted for the Hubert Evans Fiction Prize and a National Magazine Award. Kevin teaches in UBC's Creative Writing Program as well as at The Writers' Studio at Simon Fraser University.

In his talk to us, Kevin will focus on speculation in creative non-fiction. The evening will include a short writing exercise, so come prepared to write as well as to listen and learn.

For more info on Kevin and his work, see <https://thatkevinchong.wordpress.com/about/>.

Monday
November 18

Christmas in November



It's an annual tradition — our pre-Christmas social event in lieu of a meeting. The location will be a local restaurant and it's always a fun evening of mingling and lively chatter, complete with door prizes! Save this date!

Venue, time and arrangements to follow!

After a break in December, we'll be back January 21 for the first meeting of 2020 with dynamic guest speaker Jean Teillet.

North
Vancouver

City Library

The North Shore Writers' Association thanks the North Vancouver City Library for their generous support of our ongoing activities and special events, and also for their support of all local writers and readers. The Library plays an active and varied role in the cultural life of our community - for more information and to find out how to participate, go to: www.nvcl.ca

Writing with Writers Workshop

Designing Deep Characters with April Brosshard

Friday, November 8, 7:00 pm
North Vancouver City Library

Story characters are like you and me. They have foibles and flaws, hopes and dreams, and histories full of sweet memories as well as unhealed wounds. As a writer, you may base some of your characters partially on yourself or people you know. You may give one character your own childhood (perhaps growing up on a farm), add to that your cousin's flaws (maybe an excessive thirst for bourbon) and weave in your mother's hopes (maybe to win the lottery and finally gain the respect of friends and neighbors). Soon you're on the way to developing a character you'd like to follow around for a bit, see what happens to them, watch them struggle and change, succeed and fail, be overcome by a tragic fate, or fulfill some unexpected destiny.

As the writer, it will be your job to *decide* where this character will lead you, what will happen to them, which struggles they will face and how they will change because of those struggles, what exactly will they fail or succeed at, and whether or not they meet a happy end or a tragic one. Then, at some point it's likely you will have to rein in your unbridled creativity and shape a story to suit your character and a character to suit your story. You'll need to ask yourself questions such as: Is this character believable, interesting, worthy of curiosity and care? Which situations best reveal this character? What type of change or growth is relevant for this character?

There is no wrong way to develop your character but it can be most satisfying, and efficient, to develop your character in connection with your story's structure. Come along and learn April Brosshard's tricks of the trade.



April Brosshard Bio

Sometimes called a "story whisperer" and other times a "story genie," April is a deft and experienced workshop facilitator and story coach who works with writers around the world. Her keen awareness of story principles and deep understanding of the writer's craft sheds light on many of the complex issues writers face when it comes to story creating and sticking to the writing process. She has presented at the San Miguel Writers Conference and various writing events in Paris, San Francisco, and Vancouver. More Info: www.deepstorydesign.com.

Dare To Be Heard



If you're a writer and wish to read your work to a non-critical audience, come out to the next Dare to be Heard Literary Evening at North Vancouver City Library! Dare welcomes writers of all genres at all stages of the journey – plus interested listeners!

We meet in the **2nd Floor Boardroom at North Vancouver City Library** on the **first Monday of each month**.

Dare starts at 6:30 p.m. If this early start is impossible for you, please arrange your time with Mark Turris, at mark.turris@gmail.com and he will make sure you have a spot on the readers' list.

Dare to share! See you there!

Upcoming sessions: Oct 7, Nov 4, Dec 2, Jan 6, Feb 3, Mar 2, Apr 6, May 4, Jun 1
Venue: The 2nd Floor Boardroom, North Vancouver City Library
Time: 6:30 p.m. - 8:45 p.m.

Publishers Corner



North Vancouver City Library, North Vancouver District Library and West Vancouver Memorial Library kicked off the North Shore Authors Collection this year. This is an initiative to connect local readers to local authors.

Selected books from local authors (living in North or West Vancouver) have entered into the collection at each participating library.

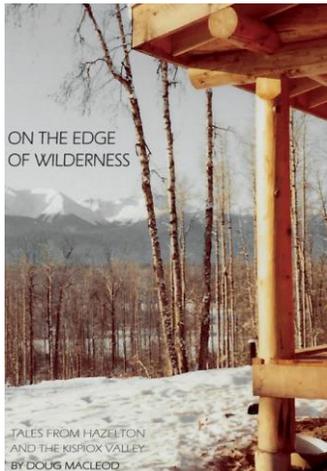
Applications for the 2019/2020 collection have now closed. The next cycle of applications will begin in spring 2020.

This is an exciting opportunity for local authors to have their works showcased in our local libraries. In exchange for the publicity, authors are expected to donate three copies of their books.

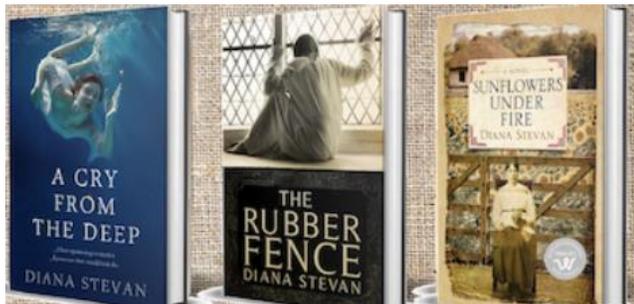
For more information about eligibility, visit <https://northshoreauthorscollection.com/>

BRAVO!

Bravo to **Doug MacLeod** for the release of *On The Edge of Wilderness*, *Tales from Hazelton and the Kispiox Valley*! Doug launched his book to a huge crowd on Sep 14th at St. Martin's Church in North Vancouver. His launch continues this fall as he heads up north to the source of inspiration for his stories.



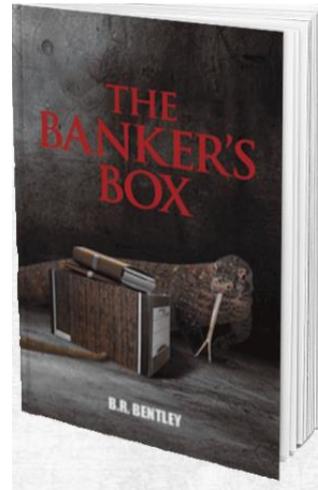
Congratulations to **Diana Stevan** whose latest historical novel *Sunflowers Under Fire* is a finalist for the 2019 Whistler Independent Book Awards (winner to be announced on Oct 18th) and a semi-finalist for the 2019 Kindle Book Awards in the Literary Fiction Category! All three of her novels *A Cry From the Deep* (2014), *The Rubber Fence* (2016) and *Sunflowers Under Fire* (2019) have been accepted as part of the North Shore Authors Collection.



For more info, visit <https://www.dianastevan.com/>.

Kudos to **Erin MacNair** for winning the 2018 EVENT Non-Fiction Contest with her story "*Where Things Rise, Unannounced*". The story was published in EVENT 48/1 (Summer 2019).

Hats off to **B.R. Bentley** for the release of his latest book *The Banker's Box* (2019) to critical acclaim. His previous two books *The Cross* (2014) and *The Bermuda Key* (2015) have been accepted as part of the new North Shore Authors Collection. For more info, visit <http://brbentley.com/the-bankers-box.php>



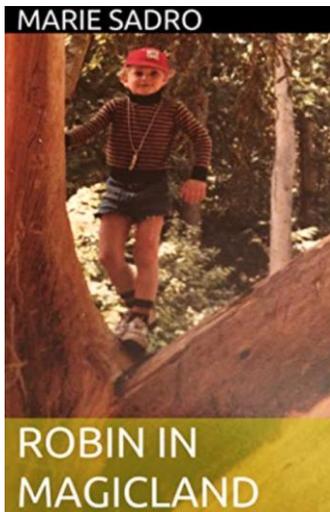
Congratulations to **Martha Warren** whose poem "*Berengaria*" appears in *emerge 19*, this year's anthology from The Writer's Studio. Copies available at the book launch and reception Oct 9 at SFU Harbour Centre 7pm (details on page 18).



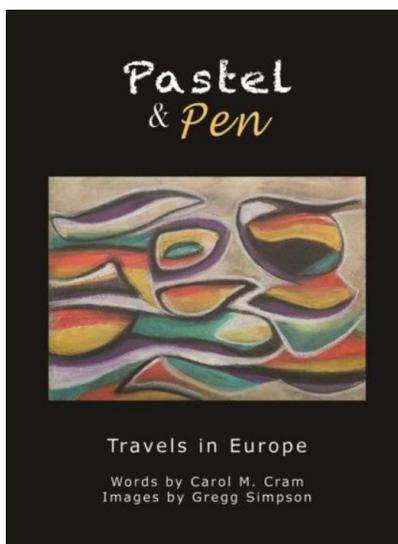
Wiley Ho is the winner of the Federation of BC Writers' BC Short 2019 with her story "*Blind Luck*". The story will be published in the fall issue of *Wordworks* magazine. <https://www.bcwriters.ca/the-bc-short-2019/>. Wiley is also thrilled to have been selected to attend the Emerging Writers Intensive Workshop at the Banff Centre for the Arts in October.

Congratulations to **Joyce Goodwin** for placing *1st Place in Poetry and 3rd Place in Non-Fiction in the 2019 NSW Annual Writing Contest!* On October 24th she will give a reading at UWC Hycroft as part of a member author series. Her work continues to be published regularly by The Ontario Poetry Society in anthologies and bi-annual newsletters.

Brava to **Marie Sadro** for publishing her e-book *Robin in Magicland* on Amazon, a fantasy tale for very young children, originally written in several episodes as bed time stories to be read to little ones.



Carol Cram is excited to announce the release of her latest book *Pastel & Pen*. It's a "non-collaborative collaboration", a collection of funny and engaging stories from thirty years of traveling together with artist Gregg Simpson. The book is available online or contact Carol for a copy to be sent to you.



A big shout out to three NSWA members who are big winners at this year's [Chanticleer Authors' Conference](#):



Karen Dodd for winning a First in Category Clue award for her thriller *Scare Away the Dark*.

Lawrence Verigin who won a First in Category Global Thriller award for his novel *Beyond Control*.

Carol Cram for winning First in Category Goethe award for her third novel *The Muse of Fire*. Carol was also honoured to present a well-attended workshop: *Tapping the Experts – Guidelines for Connecting with Sources and Experts While Researching Novels and Non-Fiction Works*.

A perennial cheer for **Bernice Lever** who is prolific as ever, publishing her verses in various poetry magazines and her 11th book of poetry *Ingredients for Peace*, due for release in 2020. One of the poems from that collection "Let Life Grow Love" appears in this newsletter, on page 15.

A collective BRAVO to all you wordsmiths out there - sung and unsung. Write on!

Photo Gallery!



2019 Creative Ink Festival (Delta, BC) March 29 - 31:
Janine Cross was a presenter and Steve Rayner was the
winner of a full festival pass (see below)

My mother was always lucky when it came to raffles and draws. Me, less so. I was surprised and delighted therefore when I learned that I had won a 3-day pass to the 2019 Creative Ink Festival. I reckoned that it must be a good omen. Perhaps the fates decided that I needed the help the most! Helpful indeed I found the experience to be.

The festival ran over three days starting Friday, at the Delta Burnaby Hotel and Conference Centre. It featured panels and workshops held in two meeting rooms and a ballroom offering a choice every hour, throughout the day, of a wide variety of topics of discussion. I won't attempt to list all of the topics here; if you are curious, please take a look at the program and/or program grid at <https://www.creativeinkfestival.com/>.

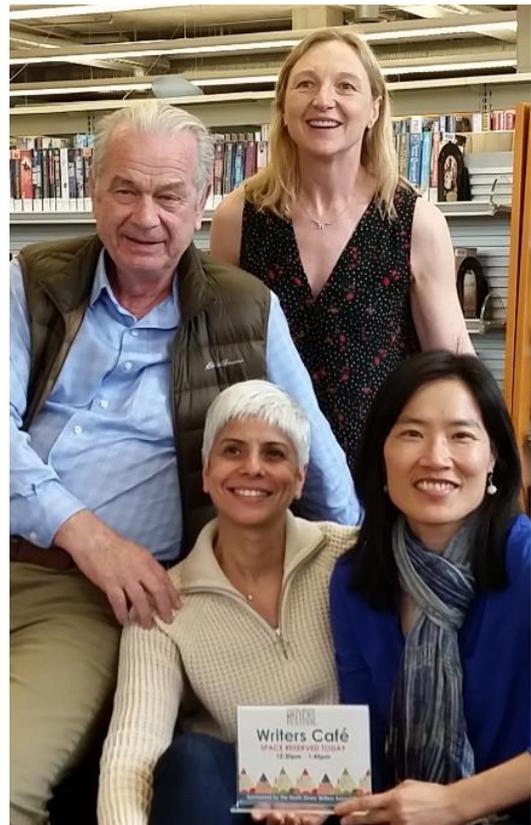
I came away from the Festival re-energized and looking forward to applying the lessons learned. The main takeaway? Keep Reading, Keep Writing!

- Steve Rayner



2019 North Shore Writers Festival (Lynn Valley library)
April 5 and 6

NSWA participated in the 20th anniversary North Shore Writers Festival with a team on Literary Trivia Night, a hosted panel discussion on "Finding Your Audience", the lunch-time Writer's Café and the Local Author Book Fair.



Panelists and Writers Café hosts at this year's North Shore
Writers Festival (L to R: Rod Baker, Mahtab Narsimhan,
Sonia Garrett, Wiley Ho)

100 WORD CHALLENGE

The challenge was to produce a story or poem, in **100 words or less**, on the theme **in for a penny**
Here are your creations

Viva Las Vegas

Rod Baker

In for a penny in for a pound.
Those words are rumbling round and round. I still
keep throwing good bucks after bad, not wanting to
realize that I've been had.

I'm gambling, I'm losing, far more than I planned.
But dammit, wouldn't winning be wonderfully
grand?
Roll a pair buddy, just one more time
Keep going, be lucky, on my last dime.

I toss 'em, they're jumping, running real hot
All eyes on the table, and believe it or not
they frolic and tumble those ivory dice
and land... double sixes. How wonderfully nice!!!

Karen Bower

What did that mean anymore? Yeah, he knew it
meant any project begun should be completed even if
it was much more difficult than imagined. But for the
now non-existent penny? Not likely. And a pound?
That wasn't Canadian currency. Had it ever been?

He'd never been a risk taker; wasn't about to start
now. He turned away from the precipitous slope of
The Duwamish Chief. "Nope, not doing that." Then
he felt the whole area shake violently. He knew an
earthquake when he felt one. "The Big One? Why
had he come here? Why had he taken the bet?"

Marie Sadro

"In for a dime" is an old saying
That might involve some mighty paying
You go in a store for a loaf you need
And come out with a bag of dairy and meat
You go out shopping in a mall or two
Looking for a pair of decent shoes
And out you come with dresses and tops
And forgot what you went there to shop
The best is to stay at home and get
Whatever you need off the internet.

Rose Dudley

To hell with in for a penny, let's go in for a pound,
although, in our adopted country, it was in for a cent,
in for a buck.

In heady times, mortgage paid off, and advice to
invest, invest we did. First stocks, then a condo, and
another still under construction. Alas! mortgage rates
shot through the ceiling.

"We'll bail out," we said. "We'll sue," the developer
responded. With salaries being sucked into a black
hole, we rented both places.

In true British tradition, we named our purchases –
"Inn for a Penny" and "Inn for a Pound."

Elly Stornebrink

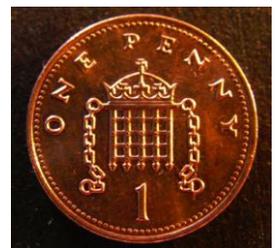
It was an ordinary day in the U.K for Emily as she
started working. By late afternoon, things turned
awry.

She had recently invested in a new online business
and had checked an office phone number via a
Google search.

When she called she was given instructions, albeit
somewhat unusual, in attempting to cancel a
transaction. The agent had told her, "people don't
generally know about this."

It wasn't until sometime later that she discovered she
had 'lost' more than 600 pounds from her bank
account: Emily had been scammed!

"In for a penny, out for a pound!" she thought.



In for the Penny Special, in for (Another) Pound
Cinda Jong

Fannie just wanted the one-cent coffee advertised.
She said so at the cafe.

“Oh, you also get the apple fritter for no charge,” said
the barista, “You must take it!”

So Fannie did so, with gusto. Then every day for the
next week, she paid full price for her coffee and
donut.

She gained a pound but didn’t want to quit the cafe.

She saw an ad outside the Fitness Farm: “Burn fat for
only a penny!”

Fannie just wanted the one-cent workout advertised.
She said so at the gym...

Rod Baker

In for a penny in for a pound?
Certainly reasoning most unsound.

His missus wouldn’t be so glad
him throwing good money after bad.

Lucky for him, she’ll not be aware
it’s tips from the restaurant he didn’t declare.

Finishing late when she’s in bed
thoughts of gambling fill his head.

He’ll just wager up to twenty
That should really leave him plenty
but soon he finds his pockets empty.

Unable to resist temptations,
It’s just another of many occasions

he arrives home late and very broke
but *this* time... she’s with another bloke!

Next 100 Word Challenge Theme:

Talk to me

You may include or exclude the theme words!

Submit your 100-word masterpiece to

editornswa@gmail.com

or by mail to

NSWA PO Box 37549 Lonsdale East, NV V7M 3L3

100-Word Challenge Tips:

- Strictly 100 words or less (excluding title, if any).
- Use the word count facility in WORD; it keeps track of the number of words used.
- Hyphenated words and words including an apostrophe are counted as single words.
- Fiction, non-fiction, poetry acceptable.
- If the challenge theme inspires a longer piece, please feel free to submit it for consideration for the newsletter (with an “inspired by...” note).
- Exercise your precision and concision.
- Have fun!

Prose

A Change of Heart

Rose Dudley

She had little time left to live, so I could not allow all the trivial tasks that I thought needed to be accomplished that day be more pressing than spending precious moments with someone who had been an essential part of my life for so many years. Yes, it would have been easy to convince myself that I wanted to remember her as she had been. What a feeble excuse for my cowardice!

Carrying my culinary offering, I approached the house, my heart pounding as I picked my way down the icy steps. Fear gripped me. Fear of what? Fear of a life ending. My own future mirrored, perchance?

Placing the meal at the door, I fled, slipping and sliding my way up the steps, praying that I had not been seen and feeling such a sense of relief when I made it safely back to the car and slammed the door.

It wasn't until I drove away that I began to question my actions. What sort of friend am I? Can I justify letting my own fear and discomfort supersede my love for a dying woman? How would it feel to be abandoned by friends in the last days of life? I knew what I had to do.

Once more, I made my way cautiously down those icy steps and approached the front door. Before I could knock, her husband threw it open and invited me inside.

I braced myself for what I was about to see, attempting to hide my shock at her appearance, someone I no longer recognised.

She was sitting at the dining-room table in her housecoat. It hung loosely around her, no longer able to disguise the skeletal form beneath. A grey-green toque concealed her baldness. Dull eyes, the light now extinguished were sunken into her jaundiced expressionless face. Gingerly, she picked at a piece of dry toast while twiddling a spoon in the other hand. A bowl of untouched fruit and yogurt sat before her on the table.

"Thank you for coming," she whispered, as I gently hugged her wasted frame. "My friends don't realise how much I need them at this time. It's almost as if they are afraid to see me like this." she added, as I swallowed hard, mumbling incoherently.

Then, in her customary manner, she set about putting me completely at ease. Without mentioning the inevitable, she freely expressed what she was feeling, delving into her hopes and fears, reminiscing about happy times we had spent together and how much she had appreciated our long friendship. In return, I told her what a special person she was and how her strength and courage through several bouts of cancer had been such an inspiration to me and all who loved her. We both wept as I explained how her unconditional love had always had such a capacity to heal the emotional scars of others. I told her that her beauty was enhanced by her simple but elegant taste in clothing and that her flair for design had brightened up the home in which she had come to live. I asked her if she had any idea what joy she had brought to the recipients of her carefully chosen gifts. We spoke of how her friends had all envied her culinary prowess, and, predictably modest, she laughed, reminding me of all the laughter we had shared over the years.

Sensing she was now exhausted, I hugged her long and hard one last time, and she thanked me again for coming. "It was a pleasure," I said through my tears.

That was our last exchange. Just three days later she fell into a coma, and shortly afterwards she took her last breath and slipped away from us.

I was broken-hearted to have lost an irreplaceable friend but felt some comfort in knowing that my change of heart had served us both well. ■

Remembering Lavender and Lilac

Joyce Goodwin

The perfume of the old world flowers, lavender and lilac, revive memories of childhood days spent with my Dutch grandparents in their home in Amsterdam. Grandma seemed to inhabit a cloud of purple mist; where time was measured in mauve and violet moments.

Bouquets of lavender brought home by my loving Grandpa, were placed in vases or hung upside down in bunches. Some of the sweet-smelling clusters were also dried then carefully gathered up into little muslin sachets which Grandma patiently sewed together. Later they were carefully placed in the underwear drawer, to liven up the “broekjes”, as she called them. I loved to rummage in the drawers to seek them out, giggling at the various undergarments, including Grandpa’s long-johns, which always came out smelling of lavender. He never seemed to mind. The strong chunks of tobacco he chewed and the occasional Cuban cigars he smoked, soon dispelled any feminine traces on his clothing.

It was the lilacs that made Grandma sing. “We’ll gather lilacs in the spring again...when you come home once more.” It was always the same Ivor Novello war time song, of yearning and hope that would start her off. Grandpa and I often joined in, straining our lungs at the high notes. When tears quietly ran down Grandma’s face as she sang, I pretended not to notice. Grandpa would put his arm around her waist and we would keep on singing. So many of their friends and neighbours had not survived the war, so many never saw another spring.

Over time I learned the lyrics of all those songs and remember them to this day. We sang many Vera Lynn favourites.

“There’ll be bluebirds over the white cliffs of Dover, tomorrow just you wait and see” and “We’ll meet again, don’t know where, don’t know when, but I know we’ll meet again some sunny day.” 1941 and 1942 were especially dark days during the Second World War and the songs of the time helped to keep hope alive for so many.

Now lavender, lilac and wartime songs remind me of my beloved grandparents and childhood moments in Amsterdam. ■



Charles *Stuart Newton*

I always think of Charles Bukowski when walking past a laundromat and expect to see him in there, with all the odds-an-sods of our neighbourhood. For me, it would be his natural habitat, rather than a library or college, where many of his poems might begin, in just such a place.

No surprise, one afternoon, I found myself sitting next to him at a nearby ‘wash-an-dry’ in the quiet of mid-week. And he spoke to me freely -- about the weather of course, all the waiting involved and the cost of smokes, his preferred brand. It was all very normal and reassuring, to hear how he had ordinary concerns, the same for all of us. He scratched his scruffy beard when talking and ran his hands over a head of thinning hair, when I responded. Like this every time I sat with him -- a well practised mannerism towards social interactions in our laundry place, at his job, or in his favoured bar-room.

Apparently, he was from German stock – though to me he seemed more like Russian, or ‘Roushan’ like we say round here – never refined or embarrassed with anything. Early beginnings in his homeland did not matter to him, not like the present and his adopted home in Los Angeles – a fitting locale for a very modern persona.

Yes, he was ugly enough, but had enough humanity to make me pay attention and see/hear something more – like humour and knowledge, interest and intelligence, a clean shirt and sensible footwear. His hands were very mobile, as if trying to draw something for us, while his head shook at times, back-an-forth, to underline things -- seeming to be in earnest and honest.

We know how he wrote poems about getting a haircut at the barber-shop (my favourite), tribulations with gal-friends, how Post Office work frustrated his life, with commitments and details. It turns out Charles was not only ugly, he was also depraved, believing sex and mortality were somehow entwined forever, as eternal twins in the heart.

At my laundry he never said ‘hello’ or ‘goodbye’ – but simply continued a conversation from before, or from someone else that day – like he was teaching or proselytizing something (not quite sure what). Always something else on his mind to cause anxiety and the need of company, moving from one machine to another. Always the rhetorical questions he conjured up, following a bit of tension and frustration. Yet his poems were free of this dysfunction and complexity; they flowed well without hesitation about mistakes and failure, without any awkwardness or misgivings on the pursuit of love.

He never asked for my name, yet knew me well enough to recognize my weekly visits for washing and to speak openly about things. When I eventually left, equally restless and confounded, he retrieved a cigarette from somewhere and glad to resume a lonely smoke, as default option. Myself, glad to leave with clean clothes and a commitment to seek another laundromat, a different town and new book to read. ■

The Newfield Road Riders – UK 1958

by Rod Baker

The first time I saw them, the clattering speed reeled me in like a greyhound to an electric rabbit. The riders started on the steep section of Church Road, then after thirty yards, screeched hard left onto the long sweeping run down Newfield Road. It was fun to watch but I was thirsting to try it myself.

Nige, was my classmate and one of the riders. “Can you show me how to make a board like yours, Nige?”

“Yeah, it’s easy. Find a bit of wood like mine. Cut it this long with your dad’s saw. Then you get a roller skate, bash the top flat with your dad’s hammer and nail the board on top of the skate half way along.”

On the way home from school, I found a six-inch wide piece of fence plank, went into the garage and got to work cutting it to length. It wasn’t as easy as Nige said. We were both twelve years old. I think his big brother, Ian, had made his board while Nige watched.

My board was ready. The plank was not quite straight on the skate and a little loose. Never mind. It would do.

Next day after school, we walked to the top of the run. I sat on my converted fence plank with my knees bent in front of me, my hands gripping the thin wood, and pushed off. I had three tries at the left-hand corner and each time crashed off the sidewalk onto the road, cutting my knee and spraining my wrist.

“You gotta lean over,” said Nige. I leaned over so only two of the metal wheels were on the paving stones but still crashed.

“You gotta press down on the front of the board when you get to the corner so the back can skid round.” It worked. I leaned, pressed and screeched around the corner at speed onto the main run.

Riding was different than watching. I gritted my teeth and hung on for dear life as the board accelerated towards maximum velocity.

Like a car rattling over train tracks, my board careened over the paving stones, my fingers white and aching anchored me to the board two inches above the ground. The vibration tingled upward like

electricity, blurring my vision, and making it hard to stay on course.

The clatter of the small metal wheels rocketing over the paving stones was amplified by the solid row of red brick houses either side of the street and echoed like the staccato chatter of machine gun fire. A man walking his dog toward me became alarmed by the horrendous racket and the projectile hurtling toward him and hastily crossed the street.

As Newfield Road flattened out, the ride slowed and finally eased to a halt. My clenched lungs exhaled and started to breathe again. I sat drained but satisfied and watched other riders make their descent.

As an experiment to make more noise, three people tried the run at one time, but it detracted from the beauty of the sole rider swooping down alone.

The best to watch was Big Beechy: Michael Beech almost six feet tall, and quite rotund. Everything about him was big except for his school cap, which didn’t come in large sizes. He had a Saint Bernard dog, which followed him everywhere.

Beechy sometimes had problems with the left turn, but once around the corner, his ride was exciting to watch. His larger size and the grey flapping raincoat overlapped the board, obscuring his means of locomotion. He hurtled down the paving stones at above average speed, one hand alternating between clutching his bobbling cap and gripping the board. The Saint Bernard followed in hot pursuit, barking voraciously the whole length of the ride, splattering faint spider-web trails of slobber in his wake and leaving a faint aroma of big dog.

It livened up an otherwise dull street.

The resilient residents of Newfield Road never complained. Perhaps it reminded them of when they were eleven years old having fun.

Later in the sixties, rebellious youth in spiffy Lycra-cling clothing, riding glossy, store-bought fiberglass boards garnished with grip tape, alloy trucks, and polyurethane wheels, claimed California as the home of the skateboard. But us Newfield Road Riders, we knew different. ■

Poetry

Let Life Grow Love

Bernice Lever

Just sense Nature: inner and outer
that abounds on all sides in all forms,
leading you to be at peace
with all earth's inhabitants
and yourself -
just smiling at all who pass.

I must believe in the impossible dream -
all else is waste.
Surrounded in the mystery
I waste no time nor effort
searching for an exit.
All is here – available now.

Encourage love to feed life.

Autumn Trees

Marie Sadro

Autumn comes with a gentle sigh,
An army of golden leaves marching by,
Red pennants flutter in evening sky,
And small birds gather for a last good-
bye.

Oh, marching souls, your fate is nigh,
The snow will fall and you must die,
Each leaf detaching sailing sigh
Down to the ground where it must lie

A Waterloo of nature's splendor,
An artist's brush washed out in candor,
A bleeding heartbreak that will render
Each soul more thoughtful, wise and
tender.

When autumn winds in coolness blow
Our game is done and we must go
In nature's endless cyclic flow:
Whatever's born to death must bow.

I reply with brush and pencil

Margaret Witzsche

it becomes
a dance
music and rhythm
maybe silence is
best though
to be more spontaneous

I don't know

the call to dinner
an annoying gnat

the presence of another
if they are quiet
if they are reassuring
if they do not demand

I am like an eight year old
I play a game
I am the gnat or mosquito
I am the periphery

I am something large but benign
a presence

without brush or pencil
I lose the thought
though may speak
whole poems in my head
walking in woods

even when jumped on by dogs
even when spoken to





Curtains

Jannette Edmonds

Peeling back the curtains,
And looking, finally, seeing, revealing
The tangle of thought and emotion
Clogging the contours of my mind.
Begging to be released, refined,
Refurbished by the light of day
And the restorative power of pen on paper.

Drain us, they cry, pour us out,
Give us our power to proclaim
All that is, and was, and could be.
Free us or we will turn into enemies
Instead of the allies we are.
We will become cerebral cement,
Mental mush—and we will take you down, with us.

And so, with splendid relief,
Pen hits the page, and slowly, methodically,
Thoughts drain out.
Questions and answers march
Across the lines of the healing place—
The page—where anything is possible
As long as curtains are finally pulled back
And curtailments put to flight.

CATHERINE JEAN

Joyce Goodwin

Catherine is a radiant child, born
in the prism of summer's later days,
the air alive with a chorus of wings,
feathered migrations when birds
change course with the season.

Catherine born as leaves become gold,
when a waning sun and coastal rains
create translucent arcs, spectrums
of colour, across the glimmering sky.
Vancouver born, with European sensibility,
Catherine arrived in the mists of morning,
a gift of love and shimmering light,
a radiant child with a rainbow smile.



(Images pp 9-15: Bing)



Member Bulletin Board

Call for readers! Read your work at an upcoming NSWA meeting! Practice sharing and reading your work to a supportive audience (poetry or prose). Email Janine Cross at janinecross@shaw.ca with your interest!

Joan Boxall will lead a [Word Vancouver](#) workshop Sept. 28th, 2019 at SFU Harbour Centre 2:30-4:30pm where she'll discuss the braided essay and her newly published book, *DrawBridge: Drawing Alongside My Brother's Schizophrenia*.

This will be an augmented version (more stuff!) of the talk she gave June 5th at North Van City Library.

For book clubs looking to discuss *DrawBridge*, her latest blog has discussion questions and reviews: <http://www.joanboxall.com/drawbridge-questions-reviews/>

Carol Cram is pleased to introduce **Art In Fiction** (www.artinfiction.com), a new website for lovers of novels inspired by the arts. The website is a literary oasis that only lists books inspired by the arts—a comfortable, laid-back, and friendly place where you can browse hundreds of curated titles. Almost every genre is included—historical, thriller, mystery, literary, and even a smattering of romance—across a wide range of subjects, from architecture to dance to ... knitting!

With nearly 900 books to choose from, and more titles being added daily, Art In Fiction is your one-stop shop for arts-inspired novels to add to your TBR (To Be Read) pile. And best of all, membership in the Art In Fiction community is free—and worth every penny!

In addition to book listings, Art In Fiction offers author blogs, book reviews, and, for members, the ability to create their own book bag of titles they'd like to read. There's even a podcast in the works, so be sure to stay tuned for that.

Carol invites you to visit www.artinfiction.com to discover hundreds of wonderful novels. While you're there, please join the community (it's free!) so you can leave reviews of books you've read. You can also message Carol to share your impressions of the site, inquire about being interviewed for the upcoming podcast series, or suggest a title for consideration. Carol would love to hear from you.

Illustrator & Animator: Solaleh Kazemi

Well-versed in illustration, animation, and communication design.



Emily Carr University alumna,
currently available for freelance and
commissions on such projects as: book
covers, story illustrations, and more!

Visit www.artbysolaleh.squarespace.com
OR E-mail solalehk.art@gmail.com for more information.

Free reception and readings by graduating students of SFU's The Writer's Workshop Oct 9th 7pm

Join students and faculty of SFU's [The Writers Studio](#) program as we celebrate the launch of *emerge19*. This annual anthology features works of fiction, genre fiction, non-fiction and poetry from students in both the on-campus and online cohorts.

A casual reception featuring cash bar and hors d'oeuvres will precede formal readings by TWS students. Copies of *emerge19* will be available for purchase for \$20 CDN.

RSVP here: <https://bit.ly/2kAK37R>

The Member Bulletin Board is a new feature in our newsletter. One of the main goals of the NSWA being the sharing of writing and publishing knowledge, this is a space and opportunity for you to network with your fellow NSWA members.

Do you have an upcoming writing workshop? Are you looking for a writing group in your genre? Perhaps you have a writing question to which someone else has the answer.

Send your notices and questions to editornswa@gmail.com or by mail to
NSWA PO Box 37549 Lonsdale East, NV V7M 3L3.

Executive 2018-2019

2019-2020 Executive to be elected at AGM Sep 16

President (and Director)

Sonia Garrett

Vice-President (and Director)

Rod Baker

Secretary (and Director)

Janine Cross

Treasurer/Member Relations (and Director)

Doug MacLeod

Membership Coordinator

Carl Hunter

Library Liaison

Sonia Garrett

Speaker Coordinator

Sharon McInnes / Janine Cross

Dare to be Heard Host

Mark Turriss

Newsletter Editor/Archivist

Wiley Ho

Writing Contest Coordinator

Doug MacLeod

Promotion & Webmaster

Kelly Hoskins

Members At-Large

Joanna Gould, Christine Cowan, Barbara Reardon

North Shore Writers Festival Liaison

Sonia Garrett

A hearty thank-you to all our volunteers for their dedication and hard work!



The Solitary Leaf ©Wendy Alden 2014

*“Remember to turn everything off once a week - including your brain - and sit somewhere quiet.”
- unknown*

Events Calendar

September 16 NSWA Annual General Meeting

October 7 Dare to be Heard

October 21 NSWA general meeting with guest speaker Kevin Chong

November 2 Dare to be Heard

November 8 Writing with Writers

November 18 Christmas Social

December 1 Newsletter submission deadline

December 2 Dare to be Heard

January 6 Dare to be Heard

January 20 NSWA General Meeting with Jean Teillet

The Last Page

Cathy L. Scrimshaw

As I write this, it is early August, the Dog Days of summer. I'm in my basement office with my dog, Glee, avoiding those hot, humid days which I dislike so much. Since Glee and I are spending so much time together staying cool, my thoughts have turned to what I have learned from her, and from the other dogs who have graced my life.

They've taught me a lot over the years.

The importance of staying alert to the people and things that surround us, for a start. That sounds easy, but it's not, especially in our hyper-connected world. We're constantly bombarded by information, most of which causes us to tune out the real world and focus on our devices instead. Yes, some aspects of that electronic world are useful and important. But much of it is just noise, distractions from the reality around us.

Dogs register everything around them, all of it real. Their noses twitch with each scent that wafts their way. Their ears perk up with the approach of a footstep, the sound of a voice. They sort through the information, react only to that which matters. They exercise judgment and discretion, and they never tune completely out.

They're also great listeners. I had wonderful conversations with our first dog, Regan. Okay, those discussions were a little one-sided. But whenever I needed to talk, he was there. His attention never wavered. It was a great way to work through an issue. By the time I'd finished talking, I usually knew what I needed to do.

Wouldn't it be great if people could listen with such intensity and purpose? How many times have friends or family members said "let's talk about this", only to interrupt mid-sentence and talk over you? Dogs never do that. They know that sometimes what we humans need is the presence of one who will be silent, and be a sieve for us to pour our thoughts through.

Glee, like the other dogs we've lived with, thinks about what she is doing now, not what she might be doing next. That doesn't mean she ignores the schedule. Dogs learn the daily routine, and they settle into it. They know how to enjoy the moment, without fretting because it might be over soon, or it might not happen again. When they're playing, they're playing, and anything around them becomes a potential toy. When they're working, they keep their mind on work. When it's done, they move on.

How many times do we people get stressed out because, instead of concentrating on the task at hand, we spend our precious time worrying about what might happen next? The future will come as it will. If we've made a schedule, made the best possible plan, then take things one at a time, we'll achieve more. And we'll have time left over to play and invent.

I've also learned how wonderful an afternoon nap can be!

Now for the most important lesson dogs can teach us: unconditional acceptance.

My dogs have never judged me. When I'm happy, they're happy. When I'm sad, they've provided a furry neck for me to hug. Zoe, who

was a certified therapy dog, extended that help to the residents at the care home where she 'worked' every Wednesday morning for six years. Loki, who had been rescued from a horrifically abusive home, came with me for visits when my own mother was confined to a dementia ward; he was a constant source of support, for her and the other residents, as well as for me. Even though he wasn't an official therapy dog like Zoe, he brought smiles to faces that too often wore looks of despair, fatigue or emptiness.

We can apply all those lessons to our writing. If we spend more time listening and watching than talking or disappearing into the digital universe, we'll learn more about the world around us. If we make the best plan and schedule we know how to make, and then concentrate on one step at a time, we'll accomplish our goals more effectively. If we set aside needless worries, if we instead relax and enjoy the moment, we'll find new ways of seeing and doing, and nourish our creativity. If we judge less and exercise compassion and understanding more, we'll be better people. And hopefully, better writers.

If you don't believe me, just ask a dog.

So, going into the new season, be more like my four-legged companions. Work, play, love, learn and enjoy life. And write! ■

