

WEST COAST WRITERS

Writers Helping Writers



Founded 1921

Canadian Authors Association - Vancouver

Fall 2008

Branch President's Message

2008 Fall Season

Welcome back to our fall season of events at CAA Vancouver. I hope all of you had an enjoyable summer.

As I write this, I am on vacation in the Republic of Ireland and I bring greetings to all of you from Patrick Taylor, our Vancouver member at large. Patrick is enjoying life with Dorothy in the peaceful Irish countryside and is making us all proud of his grand success with his *Irish Country Doctor* series.

During this past summer, CAA held an excellent annual CanWrite! Conference in Edmonton. Fourteen members from our branch attended, which was a good contingent.

At the Annual General Meeting, our branch proposal to host the 2010 Conference was accepted. While we originally thought we might situate that conference in Victoria, our branch executive has since reconsidered and decided to hold the conference in Vancouver, from which home base we will be better able to organize events. We will begin planning this fall and invite our members to join us in the preparations.

Looking ahead through the coming season, we have excellent speakers and a terrific workshop lined up, and we will participate as usual in the *Word on the Street* festival. We look forward to seeing you there.

Best wishes

Margaret Anne Hume



Photo by K. A. Hume

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SPOTLIGHT ON ANITA PURCELL, CAA National President

On July 6, 2008, at the tail end of the annual CAA CanWrite! conference in Edmonton, we welcomed Anita Purcell as the new president and CEO of the Canadian Authors Association. She is highly qualified for the position, as you will see.

Anita was born in Moncton, NB, and has since lived and worked in Montreal, Ottawa, the Toronto area, Edmonton, and Riyadh (Saudi Arabia). She was educated in Montreal at Concordia University (BA. English) and at McGill (B. Ed). Today she lives near Lake Simcoe in Ontario.

The mother of two adult sons, Anita's professional work experience is as varied as her volunteer interests. She has been a high school teacher in Canada, an English and computer studies teacher in Saudi Arabia, an administrator for an international development NGO, the executive director of a social service organization, a college director and instructor, a management, marketing and communications consultant; workshop instructor, freelance writer, editor and marketing consultant. On the volunteer side, in addition to the extensive work she has been doing for the CAA for the past few years, Anita has donated her time in many ways and to many projects, both here in Canada and during two long sojourns in Saudi Arabia.

Anita's writing interests and experience encompass both fiction and non-fiction, while her editing skills have been put to good use to improve other people's books, articles, website content, reports, etc. She is currently co-writing the screenplay for a full-length feature film.

Anita is a Member of the Editors Association of Canada; a director of the Book and Periodicals Council, and the official CAA representative to that body. She is also the CAA's alternate representative for the Canadian Copyright Institute.

A CAA member for a decade or so, Anita took on the presidency of the Ottawa branch in 2004. Within two



years she more than doubled the membership. She led the CAA's first strategic planning initiative, before being elected National Vice-President in 2006.

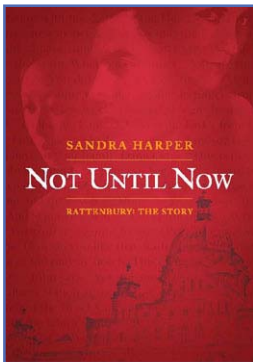
Despite her hectic daily schedule of business and volunteer work, Anita enjoys gardening, cooking, sewing, looking after her two dogs and, when she can find time – woodworking.

As President of the CAA, Anita's demanding role, for the next two years – at least, will include overseeing task forces on risk management and board governance; chairing meetings with the executive board (both face to face and on line); monitoring committees and managing staff. It is a role she will handle efficiently and expertly for the long term benefit of all members of the Canadian Authors Association.

By Anthony Dalton

NEW TITLES - VANCOUVER BRANCH

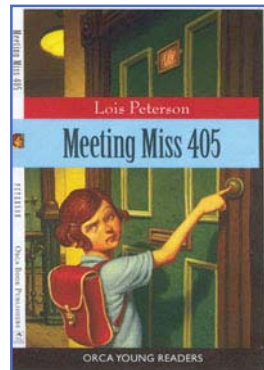
We introduced a new section in the spring 2008 issue to highlight newly released books and awards to Vancouver Branch Members. Please submit your book cover and a short description of new titles published within the last six months. Don't forget to tell us the ISBN & where it is available.



Sandra Harper: *Not Until Now*: Hawthorn Publishing Company. To be released on September 15, 2008. ISBN 0-9734986-3-9

Not Until Now is an unforgettable story of genius, rivalry and passion that plays out for one man and two women. This first-ever novel unfolds the story of the legendary BC architect, Frank Rattenbury, and his two wives - Florrie and Alma - so different but both with a burning desire for independence.

Florrie is quiet, staid and dutiful-driven to be a woman of her own distinction. Alma is creative, dynamic and fiery-determined to be a musical star. Each of them tells the story of their intertwining lives. When their three worlds come together, the fragile balance of relationships collapses, with startling results. Harper has woven their stories into an amazing novel that is thoroughly modern

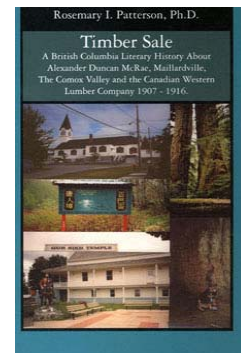


Lois Peterson: *Miss 405*. Orca Book Publishers (Young Reader). ISBN 9781554690152, Oct. 2008. Available in bookstores and online at Amazon, Chapters, etc.

Life is hard enough for Tansy with her depressed mom away indefinitely and her dad making a mess of things at home. But then Dad sends her down the hall to a wrinkly old babysitter named Miss Stella, who Tansy hates on sight. Miss Stella's perspective on life is unique, to say the least.

But with the help of her best friend Parveen, Tansy gradually learns to manage all the changes in her life and make unexpected new friends in the process.

Author and broadcaster Bill Richardson says of *Meeting Miss 405*, 'This is a lovely, sad, and hopeful story, very well told.'



Rosemary Patterson: *Timber Sale: A Literary History About Alexander Douglas McRae, Maillardville, the Comox Valley and the Canadian Western Lumber Company, 1907 - 1916*. ISBN: 1439205205. Booksurge, 2008.

This book tells the story of the endeavors of wealthy entrepreneur, Alexander Duncan McRae, to create the largest lumber complex in the British Empire, if not the world. It also highlights the hardships of the French Canadian, Sikh, Chinese and Japanese workforce used for the heavy labor of the mill.

Patterson's book also captures the spirit of the time in Maillardville (the site of Fraser Mills) and the Comox Valley on Vancouver Island where McRae's logging and transportation networks cut down and transported the largest Douglas Fir forest in North America.

CAA members are invited to bring their books - chapbooks & self-published books, too - to Vancouver Branch meetings. We have a Members' Display table all set up, waiting for you.

CanWrite! EDMONTON 2008

CanWrite! EDMONTON

Here are a few gems and observations from some of our members who made the jaunt to Edmonton. Each of us are at different stages in our careers, and each of us found something worthwhile.

Kudos to **ANTHONY DALTON**, our intrepid CAA Vice-President and Vancouver Branch Past-President, who was kept so busy making things run smoothly that he didn't have a chance to actually sit through the workshops. But he did a wonderful job. Thanks, Anthony, for all your hard work.

Here's a contribution from **BEN NUTTALL-SMITH**: Fourteen scribblers from Vancouver— Anthony, Margaret, Bernice, Jean, Scott, Colleen, Bonnie, Lilija, kc, Barbara, Gordon, Belle, Sarah, and I – flew and drove to Edmonton for the Canadian Authors' Conference July 3 to 6. What a magnificent way to cement friendships, gain new writer friends, refresh the murky inkwell, and discover new ways to tap our creative genius. Presentations matched the Edmonton temperature: Hot! Hot! Hot! We were well fed but never fed-up.

Our own members did us proud: Anthony 'Tony' Dalton worked tirelessly from long before and throughout the conference, chairing the Awards Committee and helping to keep the AGM on track. Bernice made her presence felt with solid input, especially at the AGM. Several

members read at the poets' open mike on Thursday night.

And a breath of fresh air: Sarah "Who's Sarah?" Munn had everybody enthused about the future of our organization. At 15, Sarah is our youngest member and resides in St. Lucia, West Indies. She encouraged members to seek other student members, as she gained so much from the conference.

What did I gain above all? Apart from deepening friendships and new insights, I found renewed hope. I've been inspired to polish and recycle some limping scribblings. I'll write that masterpiece yet and join the ranks.

LILIJ VALIS: Here's some of what I learned from a conference that I had decided not to attend, but then changed my mind and went. First, from poet/performer **Sheri-D Wilson**, the self-described pacifist who carried a gun when she was in New York: "Performance will rewrite your poem." "Silences equal the utterance." "Authenticity enables you to break the rules."

Next, from Edmonton author **Tim Bowling**, who was on the joys-of-rewriting panel: "Writing is easier than life." "Editing is powerful. Consider Ambrose Bierce's observation that a saint is *a dead sinner revised and edited.*" and "Your flaws may be your best qualities."

From suspense author **Cheryl Kaye Tardiff**, on a Hot CanWrite! - cont. page 5

TOP: Anthony Dalton, Ben Nuttall-Smith, Jean Kay, Lilija Valis, Colleen Heinrich, Scott Parker, and Gordon Mumford.

SEATED: Margaret Hume, Barbara Mumford, and Bernice Lever.

LEFT: Bonnie Fournier

RIGHT: Sarah Munn
MISSING: Belle Curd and kc dyer



CanWrite! EDMONTON 2008

Can Write! - Cont. from page 4

Trends panel, that it's all right to become a *shameless promoter* of your work, a helpful idea to someone who thought any promotion of one's work was shameful.

These thoughts from Book-of-the-Month Club and Oprah-Winfrey-blessed author **Ralph Keyes**, in his keynote address, *The Courage to Write*: "Work close to your obsessions" and "Writing is a product of our fear".

From **Deborah Windsor**, Executive Director of The Writers' Union of Canada, I learned that writers claim and succeed in receiving some interesting tax exemptions, among them a dog's expenses for the writer who works alone and needs a guard dog, and the peculiar outfit another writer wears only for readings.

Finally, from **Elmore Leonard's** *10 Rules of Writing*, which I bought at the conference I'm so glad that I attended: "If it sounds like writing, I rewrite it".

JEAN KAY: Congratulations, CAA Alberta Branch, on a great CanWrite 2008 Conference. Well organized, good food, excellent variety of workshops, good food, fantastic sponsors, good food, dynamic keynote speaker, good food, friendly atmosphere, good food, extra special camaraderie, good food, amazing team work, good food, thoroughly enjoyable, good food. I'll be back.

SCOTT PARKER and **GORDON MUMFORD** were overheard comparing notes on their individual sessions to discuss their manuscripts, an opportunity that made this conference very worthwhile.

BONNIE FOURNIER: The Can Write conference in Edmonton was a great experience for me. I am so close to publishing that I felt an added boost of encouragement and acceptance from authors nationwide. The Courageous Writing presentation with **Ralph Keyes** was very motivating. **Deborah Windsor** was a DIVA in her session, *Romancing the Tax Man: Tax Tips for Writers*. I am a retired new writer on a very tight budget and it was encouraging to learn that Revenue Canada allows for certain expenses. **Ian Ferguson's** humor was very entertaining at the banquet. I can't express how honoured I felt being in the company of many fine Canadian Authors and I applaud the effort put forth, by Host Edmonton, that made the weekend such a success.

KC DYER: The food service was excellent, and the evening events at the auditorium (off campus) was terrific. I particularly enjoyed **Deborah Windsor's** talk on Tax Tips for Writers. Very informative!

And for **SARAH MUNN**, attending the CAA Conference in Edmonton was a real eye-opener. Here's her input:

At fifteen, I don't know much. But I do know one thing for sure. Writing is my passion. It's what I want to do, the way I want to make my living. It's a friend to turn to in times of trouble or joy. It lets me express my creativity, allows me to paint pictures with words, because it knows I can't draw to save my life. This skill is such an integrated part of me; if it were taken away, I would never be the same.

And yet, despite how wonderful writing is, and how much happiness and creative release it can bring, it's not always easy. It puts up a fight, gets stubborn, and covers its ears while shouting, "Lalalalalalalala!" It makes you want to stop, forget you ever knew how to read or use a pen.

Well, attending the CanWrite conference in Edmonton this summer opened my eyes. I'm not the only one who gets frustrated. I'm not the only person out there who worries about never reaching my writing goals. Seeing so many writers in one room who have managed not only to get a book out there (which is a fantastic feat in itself) but have also won awards, and have gotten their names known by more than just their immediate family and friends, was truly inspiring.

Every session I attended was chockfull of information I needed. Questions I never knew I had were answered in presentations. I found advice, made friends and career-assisting connections. I can't wait to be a part of the next CanWrite, and would love to one day inspire someone else, the way I have been encouraged, both directly and indirectly, by the amazing people I met in July.

The difficulties writing brings forth don't seem so huge now. Sure, they exist, but it is possible to jump over them. They're just the hurdles of this career path, and any job has its fair share of those.

When writing puts up that big, obnoxious fuss, I now think that what it's really doing is testing us. "How bad do you want it? Can you really write? Are you serious about this?" When we figure out we are serious, we discover that we really can write, and we suddenly know how badly we want it. So we put our all into it, and we wait, wait, wait, to reap the potential rewards.

MEETINGS & EVENTS

Meetings and Workshops

Vancouver Branch holds regular meetings on the second Wednesday of each month, September through June, from 7:00 to 9:00 pm (doors open at 6:45 pm). Meetings are held in Vancouver at the **Alliance for Arts & Culture Centre**, Suite 100, 938 Howe Street (opposite the law courts), and are open to the general public for a nominal fee. These meetings include Branch announcements and guest speakers (or events), followed by time for socializing (and book signing) at the end of the evening.

In addition to our regular meetings, we offer several workshops each year, for which a fee is charged. CAA members are offered a substantial discount on these fees. For details, please visit www.canauthorsvancouver.org/. For more information, contact Margaret Hume, Branch President (e-mail mahume@canauthorsvancouver.org, or phone 604-806-0471).

CAA members are requested to wear their CAA name tags. If you do not have a name tag, please see Jean Kay before the meeting. CAA executive are requested to arrive by 6:40 pm to assist with setting up the room and also to stay after the meeting to put chairs away. All CAA members are requested to arrive before 7 pm and may add books they wish to sell to the display table.

Monthly Meeting Format

Prior to our featured guest speaker(s) at our regular monthly meetings, we allocate two ten-minute reading slots for members. Members can read from their writings, published or in progress. Our intention is to go alphabetically down the membership list to see who is available for the upcoming meetings.

If a member has a new book coming out, we will fit them in as close to their launch date as possible. Please prepare your presentation so you stay within the ten minute time frame. You will be given a two minute warning (peace sign) and then at ten minutes we will start to applaud to let you know your time is finished.

Please advise Jean Kay, Program Chair of any new books being published so we can assign a month to you. Jean can be contacted by calling 604-943-9247 or email jkay@canauthors.vancouver.org. Members can also submit a summary of their new book, along with a jpg of the cover and order details to the National Newslines and to the West Coast Writers within six months of publication.

Outside Events

From time to time, the Vancouver Branch has displays at various events where we hand out leaflets and information about the CAA and our Branch, as well as displaying (and sometimes selling) books by our members.

At least one or two members are in charge of a table at each event, and other members should volunteer to assist. The prime purpose of these events is to publicize the CAA and the Vancouver Branch. Unless otherwise stated, all members may display and sell books, but each individual is responsible for getting his/her book(s) to the event and collecting the book(s) afterwards.

Word on the Street

CAA will again have a display table at Word on the Street on Sunday, September 28, 11 am to 5 pm at Library Square. Volunteers are required to staff the table, and all members are encouraged to display their books.

Surrey International Writers' Conference October 24-26, 2008, Master classes Oct 23

A major writing conference in our own backyard, where CAA Vancouver Branch members will again have important roles, with kc dyer topping the list as Conference Coordinator. SiWC caters to writers at every level. See <http://www.siwc.ca/> and sign on.

FALL MEETINGS & EVENTS

MEETING: Wednesday Sept. 10 at 7 pm Annette Humphries: Trafford Publishing

Scott McIntyre is postponed to January 14, 2009.

Cost: CAA Members free; Non-members \$5; Students (with student ID) \$2

Annette Humphries, Corporate Communications Manager for Trafford Publishing, in Victoria, will be discussing "Your Book—Your Way." Since its inception in 1995, Trafford's award-winning publishing service has led the Print on Demand (POD) publishing revolution with a roster of over 18,000 titles representing more than 15,000 independent authors from all over the world. For more information contact Jean at 604-943-9247 or e-mail JKay@CanAuthorsVancouver.org

FALL MEETINGS & EVENTS - Cont. on page 7

FALL MEETINGS & EVENTS

FALL MEETINGS & EVENTS - Cont. from page 6

WORKSHOP: NEW DATE: Sat, October 4 Rodger Cove: Structure for the Storyteller

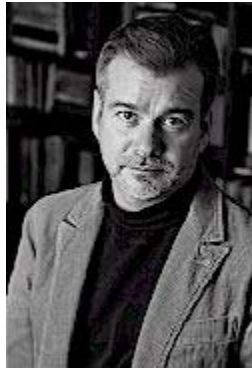
Time: 9:30 - 4:30 pm (doors open at 9:00 am)

Place: Alliance for the Arts & Culture, Suite 100, 938 Howe Street, Vancouver BC

Early Bird Price: CAA members \$45; Student (with student ID) \$55; Non-members \$80

Cost after Sept. 20: CAA members \$55; Student (with student ID) \$65; Non-members \$90

Rodger Cove will focus primarily on the principles of dramatic structure and crafting a strong character arc in this very informative workshop. He will also touch on how to format and structure a screenplay. A senior instructor in the Writing Department of the Vancouver Film School and former interim department head, Rodger began writing professionally in radio where he worked for seven years as a copywriter and creative director. He has since published short fiction, had stage and radio plays produced, and written eight feature length screenplays, with selling options on four to date.



Rodger has a BA in English from Simon Fraser University, and an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of British Columbia. A former editor of the literary magazine *PRISM international*, he is a two-time Praxis Fellow. He was also a semi-finalist in the prestigious Chesterfield and Nicholl Screenwriting Competitions. Related work experience includes stints as a dramaturge, script analyst, and story editor for Theatre Terrific, CBC Western Drama Development, British Columbia Film, Movie Central, and Praxis.

Most recently, he has written and co-produced the low budget feature length film *Hair of the Sasquatch*. The world premiere will be held at the Calgary Film Festival from September 19-28

Space is limited. Please register early by sending the following information:

* Your name, address, phone number, and e-mail.

* Cheque or money order payable to Canadian Authors Association - Vancouver

* If you are paying the student fee, a photocopy of your Student ID or other proof.

Mail to: Canadian Authors Association, 851 Underhill Drive, Delta BC V4M 2V4

Deadline for registration is Thursday, September 25, 2008. For More information, contact Jean at 604-943-9247, or e-mail JKay@CanAuthorsVancouver.org

Cancellation Policy: 25% non refundable if cancelled within 10 days of workshop date.

MEETING: Wednesday October 8, at 7 pm Kate Austin: The state of affairs on affairs of the heart

Cost: CAA Members free; Non-members \$5; Students (with student ID) \$2

The art of selling romance and women's fiction is more complicated than ever—paranormal, urban fantasy, erotic romance, erotica or inspirational. Kate Austin will help you make sense of what's hot (in more ways than one!), what's not, and who's buying what.

Kate Austin is a multi-published author of women's fiction. Her eighth book—*Seeing is Believing*—about a woman who sees death in photographs, was published in October 2007, by Harlequin's women's fiction line. Her next book—*Book One of The Losers' Club*—will soon be published in trade paperback. For more information about Kate, check out her Website at www.kateaustin.ca.

MEETING: Wednesday Nov. 12, at 7 pm Howard White of Harbour Publishing

Cost: CAA Members free; Non-members \$5; Students (with student ID) \$2

Howard White is an award-winning writer of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, articles and essays. His book *Writing in the Rain* won the Stephen Leacock Medal for Humour. Harbour Publishing is well known for the *Raincoast Chronicles*, a series of anthologies on BC coast history and culture, of which twenty have now been produced. We have asked Howard to help us celebrate the 150th anniversary of BC with his presentation.

OUTSIDE EVENTS

SUMMER DREAM LITERARY ARTS FESTIVAL (Stanley Park, July 26)

The fifth annual festival was held on July 26 in Stanley Park. Bonnie and Sita of **Pandora's Collective** dedicate months of planning for this event and are to be congratulated on a job well done. CAA members Bernice Lever, Gordon Mumford and Ben Nuttall-Smith each read from their works on the Main Stage. Bernice also read a great story as part of the *Telling Tales* group from Bowen Island. KC Dyer gave a presentation at the Children's stage, while Anthony Dalton participated in a panel discussion on *The Future of Canadian Publishing*.

CAA had an information table where we displayed books written by our members and handed out CAA literature. We also collected several names for our email list. Thanks to all the members who came out to support the festival and the CAA.

Reporter: Jean Kay

TRADE MAGAZINE WRITERS' SYMPOSIUM (SFU Harbour Centre, July 28)

The symposium was presented by the **British Columbia Association of Magazine Publishers**, with financial support from the Government of Canada and others, including CAA.

Trade magazines circulate to insiders of a profession, business, or trade. Often highly technical, they usually come as part of the annual membership fee of the trade association. John Keyes (writer) and Lauren Kramer (editor) summarized how trade magazines differ from ordinary consumer magazines.

Advertisers influence what is written, and topics are usually related to who is advertising that month. Advertising dollars also dictate the number of words and position in the magazine of each article. Keyes and Kramer recommended that writers review back issues, and check the website for a style guide, terminology or any other helpful information. Pay rates vary from twenty-five cents to a dollar a word.

Anne Garber's presentation was very informative. Her website www.evaluate8.org includes a section called "Breaking into the world of trade magazines" and gives examples of query letters. Through attending trade shows while travelling overseas, she has accessed a whole new market for trade magazine writing.

The afternoon concluded with a *Writers and Publishers Panel* moderated by Kim Mah, and composed of Jennifer Patterson, Jerry Ebers and Deborah Windsor. They answered questions from the audience.

Reporter: Cathy Barzo



MEMBERS' NEWS

Members' News

ANTHONY DALTON is in negotiation with a British television production company planning a documentary based on his book, *Wayward Sailor: In Search of the Real Tristan Jones*. He will be in England in early October to work on the script with the director and to tape his own contribution to the film. Also in October, Anthony will present three workshops and moderate a panel at the Surrey International Writers Conference. Anthony now has three new non-fiction books in various stages of production with three different publishers. The first, *Adventures with Camera & Pen*, will be published in 2009, the other two are scheduled for 2010.

SANDRA HARPER, co-author of *Kenya: Our Global Friend teacher resource kit*, has spent the last six months giving sessions for teachers and readings on her companion novel *Breaking Out*. The implementation of this teacher kit and novel was supported a significant grant from CIDA. Sessions for classroom teachers and students will continue this fall. Sandra was also one of the CAA authors reading at AFRIKA DEY on August 17. The end of September will see the launch of her new novel, *Not Until Now*, which is the first-ever novel on BC's Francis Rattenbury, architect of the BC Legislature and countless other buildings, and his two wives - Florrie and Alma. A series of readings on this book have been organized for the lower mainland, Vancouver Island and northern BC.

BERNICE LEVER will read poetry at *Word Storm* in Nanaimo on Sept. 18 for *Ascent Aspirations* magazine, at *Word on the Street*, Sept.28, and *World Poets Reading Series*, Sept.29. Bernice and prize winning poet:Diego Bastianutti are co-leading a series of Poetry workshops for World Poetry at the Alliance for the Arts on Saturday afternoons this fall. The four sessions are: Sept. 27, Imagery, Oct. 25, Music of Words, and Nov. 22, Polishing & Marketing. She is working at Surrey International Writers' Conference, Oct. 24-26. At the request of Black Moss, she submitted her 4th poetry manuscript for 2009 publication. This will be her 9th poetry book. A CD version of *The Colour of Words"- a grammar & composition book for all writers* is now available.

GORDON MUMFORD displayed his books on

August 4 (BC Day), as part of the Burma Star Association exhibit at the Burnaby Village Museum. The Museum celebrated British Columbia's 150th Anniversary with a *Salute to our Veterans*. Gordon was also one of the readers at the two-day AFRIKA DEY FESTIVAL, held on Aug. 16 & 17 at the Serbian Cultural Centre.

BEN NUTTALL-SMITH has a new website. Check it out at <http://www.bennuttall-smith.ca>. One of his poems is featured on <http://blueskiespoetry.ca/>, a Canadian publisher website.

LOIS J. PETERSON (LPwordssolutions) and the Surrey Public Library will present **Fraser Valley-area Writers Meet 'n Greet on Saturday, September 27 from 1 - 4 p.m.** at the Semiahmoo Library, 1815-152 Street, Surrey. Readings, Show and Tell of new publications, networking, refreshments, book/magazine exchange. Readers are wanted. If you'd like to read from your recent work and/or display your latest book at the Show and Tell Table, please send an e-mail to Lois, lpwordssolutions@hotmail.com.

There are a number of events to celebrate the publication of Lois Peterson's first children's book *Meeting Miss 405*. These include:

* **Sunday October 5** - CWILL (Children's Writers and Illustrators of BC) Fall Book Harvest - Vancouver Public Library Main Branch. Details at <http://cwillbc.wordpress.com/>.

* **Saturday November 1** - Everyone is invited to the booklaunch and writing workshops at the Newton Library, 13795 - 70 Avenue. **Booklaunch 12 noon - 1:15 p.m.** (Books for sale on site by Vancouver Kids' Books, Surrey) plus readings, signing and refreshments. There is a **Kids' Workshop, 10:30-11:15 a.m, Story Spinning** for kids aged 7 to 12; and an **Adult Workshop, 1:30-4 p.m, The Building Blocks of Good Writing**. For complete details, see www.loispeterson.net. Workshop admission is free, or by voluntary donation to Surrey Public Library. Registration is required. To register, e-mail lp@loispeterson.net or phone the Newton Library 604-598-7400.

* Lois will also present the full-day workshop **Writing Fiction for Kids** on Saturday, October 25 at Johnston Heights School, Surrey. Further information and registration at <https://ceregister.sd36.bc.ca/> or at Lois' own website www.lpwordssolutions.com.

WRITING & EDITING ADVICE

SCHEDULING YOUR WRITING: An Interview with Sandra Harper

The key to success in writing is writing on a regular basis, and scheduling one's writing so that it happens. For some insight and guidance on this, I talked recently to Sandra Harper, a CAA Vancouver member who is skilled at this disciplined approach.

Sandra was a teacher, principal, and staff development trainer in the Delta School District for thirty years. She taught at the elementary and secondary levels, and also taught education as a sessional instructor at the University of British Columbia and Simon Fraser University. In addition, she taught in the Czech Republic and was principal of the ESL program at Charles University in Prague. During these years, Sandra was always involved in training sessions and developed a workshop training model. She wrote two dozen educational articles and a textbook on social studies.

Since she retired a number of years ago, Sandra has written four books, including a children's novel entitled *Breaking Out*. She custom-wrote this book about a boy growing up in Kenya for the grade six social studies program in British Columbia schools, and, to accompany the novel, Sandra and three others, with the assistance of a CIDA grant, developed a teachers resource guide, *Kenya, Our Global Friend*. The novel and its teachers' guide are now in use in schools around British Columbia. Sandra's other books are *Travelling the Sun*, *Inside Kenya*, and her latest, *Not Until Now*, an historical novel based on the life of Francis Rattenbury. In addition to her writing, Sandra is actively involved in the Rotary Club (currently the local president) and Access in Kenya, and has a busy travel and speaking schedule. While carrying on so many other demanding duties, she has

accomplished a great deal of writing. I asked her how important scheduling writing was to her success.

"It is absolutely essential. I don't believe that I could have completed my writing unless I had a definite plan and schedule. I started out writing saying I would write every morning, but I have learned that, depending where you are in a book, you have to schedule your time differently. And this scheduling also depends on how many writing projects you're working at because in the last two years, I have been working on three at one time.

"So, I have gone from what I would call a simple view of 'I will write every morning for three or four hours' to 'I have to plan my week.' So, I sit down just like a business person, and say, okay, I've got a reading here, meetings here, and so then my writing time is put in my day timer just like a meeting or anything else. I find that very effective because if you get your mind set that it has to be done and you don't let anything interfere with it, then you will get it done. You try not to let things interfere. Occasionally, things do interfere, but most times they don't."

Sandra begins planning with a monthly calendar, then works out a week by week schedule, and finally draws up a daily schedule as each day arrives.

"I find that if it is on that list for today, it gets done. I guess I have that obsessive kind of personality that if it is on a list, it gets done. But I am much more realistic than I was seven years ago so my lists are shorter now."



WRITING & EDITING ADVICE

SANDRA HARPER - Cont. from page 10

When Sandra is in the midst of a busy travel and/or speaking schedule, she finds her daily time is naturally not as productive for writing, although it can be useful for other types of writing activity, such as jotting down new ideas to use later.

Although it sounds as if Sandra takes little time off from work, she emphasizes the importance of looking after yourself physically, intellectually, and emotionally. She schedules gym and social times into her daytimer as well. And contrary to what we might think, she has found scheduling allows her to avoid feeling overloaded and to keep a calmness in her life. She accomplishes this by setting a reasonable work plan and not expecting too much of herself.

“You have to take charge of your writing career,” Sandra said. “If you are too stressed out or overloaded, your writing is not quality work.”

Other tips Sandra employs include setting priorities, delegating duties where possible, learning self-assertiveness. She said, “These are the things I want to accomplish. I have a certain number of goals this week, or I want to do a certain number of chapters.” In

addition, Sandra uses consequences—if she doesn’t get a listed item finished by the scheduled time, then she will need to work on it later that day, or on the weekend to complete the task.

More pointers: don’t answer the telephone while writing and read your e-mail later in the day, such as the late afternoon.

What about unexpected things that disrupt carefully laid plans?

“That’s life. Go with it, pause, but get back to work when it’s over. Permit intervals for catching up.

“I am disciplined about time — organized, but flexible. But there is no one way to manage one’s time. The main point is not waiting for the spirit to move you.

“Be proud of the way you are writing if it works for you. Really know yourself and what works for you. If you want to learn more, ask others and read.”

And Sandra’s final thoughts: “There is value in giving yourself breaks from writing. You will come back refreshed with new ideas.”

By Margaret A. Hume

CAN WRITE - Cont. from page 5

A surprise guest at the the final breakfast was **NELLIE McCLUNG** (1873-1951). She was one of the most important leaders of Canada’s first wave of feminism, and she is still remembered for her role in the famous “Person’s Case” which saw Canadian women declared persons in 1929.

However, not many of us had realized that Nellie McClung was also an author and a strong advocate for author’s rights.

She spoke to the gathering about her various experiences as an author, and then joined the delegates for breakfast.



MEMBERS' WEBSITES

* Branch Members can have an individual webpage site and e-mail address on the branch website for a nominal fee.

For details, please contact Margaret Hume (mahume@canauthorsvancouver.org, or 604-806-0471).

* If you already have a website, you can get it listed on the Vancouver Branch Members page. You can double your chances of being noticed by having both your existing site and a site associated with the Vancouver Branch.

* Also have your website(s) mentioned on the CAA National site. For information, see <http://www.canauthors.org/members.html>.

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WRITER IN RESIDENCE

Bernice Lever, Writer in Residence for Vancouver and Ottawa branches, is a former editor with the Dundurn Group. She will read and comment on the first 20 pages of your manuscript for the nominal sum of \$25. Those who have taken advantage of this service have high praise for her thoughtful and professional comments.

For a reasonable cost, she edits manuscripts and gives marketing advice. She comments on mailed, printed pages, using a dialogue of suggestions to support writers in their revisions. She works on prose articles and books: fiction, factual or memoirs, as well as poetry. She does not work on stage or video scripts, nor with scientific or heavily documented manuscripts.

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It's time to share your writing/publishing/public speaking news with fellow members.

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WEST COAST WRITERS

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