



Bay Seniors NEWSLETTER



IN THIS EDITION

Writers get creative in story competition

Still time to enjoy winter art show online

The sparkling gift that arrived 50 years late

What books are you reading right now?

Winter in the Bay writing contest reveals a treasure trove of storytelling talent

by Neil Everton

As you drive down highway 3 from Tantallon to Hubbards you find yourself rounding a corner and going 'wow'. A few minutes later, another corner, another 'wow'. No matter how often you make the trip, you always see something new.

That's what we judges felt like when we plunged into the adult non-fiction essays for the Winter In The Bay competition. Lots of 'wow' moments, and a chance to see some familiar territory in a new light.

One writer confessed a secret pleasure in driving down that road at night, singing to the moonlight at the top of her voice. "These salty beach-side back roads can become the most perfect place on the planet to be yourself."

We learned about the gentle kindling of a friendship over



Sue George's painting, Winter Cove, was the inspiration for several of the stories. The names of all the winners will be published in the Masthead News and at discoverstmargaretsbay.ca.

lemon-ginger tea and dark roast coffee at the Bike and Bean. "At first it was awkward. After all, we barely knew each other."

Fuelled by exchanges of homemade soup and the New Yorker magazine, the friendship bloomed. Until Covid stopped the meetings. "Like a winter fog it crept and

chilled."

Other writers, too, felt the chilling impact of Covid on their lives. "Even a walk with my dogs in my neighbourhood was stressful."

Escape, for that writer, came in the chance to express herself in the essay

Continued on Page 2

Storytelling competition

continued from Page 1

competition. Therapy, she called it.

Another's salvation came in a glance out of the window towards the Bay. "I tilt my head towards the light to find that the moment has stilled my mind of chaos, or boredom, and of negativity and has replaced it with newness, hope, beauty and a present grace."

There were the big wows. The engagement ring that was delivered 51 years late. (See Member's Stories). Or the sailing holiday that became a nightmare: "Our sails shredded, our engine flooded, and waves were higher than our 45 foot masthead."

And there were the little wows, the invitations to examine the familiar with new eyes. Like those first, stumbling attempts to master that most Canadian of winter pleasures: skating. "Lawn chairs of various sizes were brought out from sheds for me to push; hockey pants and pads were added to my body; a hockey helmet was put on my head, but to no avail."

That's the joy of stories. They don't have to be dramatic. They just encourage us to look anew at ourselves and our world.

They are fragments of the lives of strangers... but they are our lives, too. They stir something within us. And if they do that, they've done their job.

The other judges were writer/editor Heather White, and Masthead News editor Ron Driskell.

Winter in the Bay art show is still online

The Winter in the Bay art and quilt exhibit at the Community Enterprise Centre certainly kept the February doldrums away for the many visitors delighted by the 37 works of art on display. Thank you to participating members of the Peggy's Cove Area Festival of the Arts and local quilters, many of whom are also Bay Seniors members.

More than a third of the items on display were sold by the end of the month. The remaining pieces, except for two not for sale, are still available to view and buy at discoverstmargaretsbay.ca/winterinthebay/. You can also read about the artists' inspiration for their works there.

The art was used as inspiration or illustration for the 48 nonfiction essays already submitted to Winter in the Bay, and for the short fiction being submitted for the March 15 fiction contest deadline.

The inspiration goes both ways. When the artists learn about stories inspired by their works, they're delighted. As one said, "I'm touched—and honoured—that something I created has sparked someone else's creativity. I couldn't ask for a bigger compliment."

Why not share one of your stories?

You have until March 15 to submit a story in the fiction category. (Max. 2,500 words). Send entries to winterinthebay@gmail.com.

But you don't have to compete. Just write for the joy of sharing. Let's keep this storytelling alive. There's always a home for your stories in this newsletter and on <https://discoverstmargaretsbay.ca/>.



One of the pieces in the show: Cold and Bright (collage, printed tissue on canvas) by Anne Fraser

Winter in the Bay is a partnership between St Margaret's Bay Community Enterprise Centre, Bay Seniors, Peggy's Cove Area Festival of the Arts, The Masthead News, St Margaret's Bay Chamber of Commerce, Halifax Public Libraries, BayRides, and St Margaret's Bay Stewardship Association.

Step into spring with matching mask and bag

The Bay Seniors' sewing team has some "lovely spring fabrics," says team co-lead Betty Learning, which the sewing volunteers are now using to make masks and bags.

Starting April 1, Betty adds, a limited supply of Spring-themed



matching bags and masks will also be available for \$20/set, and beginning on May 3, a limited number of matching bags and masks for Mother's Day will be sold, also for \$20/set.

The sewing team will also take special orders for masks or bags at the regular prices, based on fabric availability. Please note these special orders may require more time to complete.

Effective immediately, all masks will have a "pocket" opening into which wearers may insert an extra layer of fabric or a filter.

The flat-style masks already have this opening, but it will now be in all Olson-style masks as well. The Olson style curves up over the bridge of the nose and around the chin.

Masks and bags can be purchased at the Community Enterprise Centre, 5229 St. Margaret's Bay Road, weekdays between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Musical masks hit the right note



Glenna Earle, one of Bay Seniors' sewing team leads, loves a chance to harmonize her music gifts with her sewing talents, and it makes her friends grateful. She recently met some fellow musicians for lunch, and they all sported musical masks made by Glenna.

Says Glenna, "These ladies are both former music students of mine from the 80s, a mother and daughter. I used to give ukelele lessons to the parents of my students."

This photo shows Glenna (left) with mom Linda, a bass player with the Halifax Concert Band and two other bands, who has been recording with a trio, and her daughter Natalie, a double major in pharmacy and music, now a mom of four and a piano teacher. Adds Glenna, "Old friends, being covered by Bay Seniors' masks! Isn't that fun?"



Speaking of music, when her first beautiful matching bag and mask with a vintage



brooch for the Winter in the Bay art exhibit sold, Glenna made a second custom set with an elegant fabric that featured grand pianos.

The Bay Seniors Jewellery Committee adorned the set with a vintage string of black jet beads and matching earrings, available for \$35 (value, \$50).

Member's Story: The Engagement Ring That Arrived 51 Years Late

Suzanne Pelham recalls slipping the engagement ring on to her finger... half a century after the proposal. Suzanne's story was one of the wonderful contributions received for the Winter in the Bay writing competition.

Christmastime, 1969, the first Christmas Chris and I shared as a couple. At a time when my girlfriends were receiving proposals and engagement rings, I remember my proposal.

Instead of the engagement ring I expected, I opened a gigantic black bag, and discovered an enormous teddy bear we named Elmer McGregor.

We moved on with our married life: university, work, life in France, the birth of our daughter and, more recently, of our beloved grandkids, Henry and Helen.



"It was worth waiting for," says Suzanne Pelham, of the small blue box she found among her Christmas gifts from partner Chris.

November, 2020, Christmas in the Bay celebration. We were asked to provide a short video of a Christmas memory of long ago. Chris recounted the story of Elmer McGregor and the (non-existent) engagement ring.

He turned to me and said, jokingly, "I don't know if you ever got your engagement ring." I quipped back: "I know."

Christmas Eve, 2020. After a lovely dinner with our daughter and grandkids, we returned home, plugged in the tree lights, set a warm fire and lit several scented candles. Following tradition, we opened our stockings and one gift. Little gifts were emptied out from our stockings: I was happy with the array of decaffeinated teas, a calendar of witty wisdom from female personalities and an assortment of dark chocolate truffles. Chris' gifts included a Lee Valley measuring tape and another magnifying glass. (He often notes that instruction print gets smaller every year.)

A glass of red wine to end off the evening. Still wrapped was the single gift. We had each selected the gift the other would open. I examined mine: it was a generous-sized box. Initial opening revealed a small item wrapped in numerous layers of red tissue paper.

Then, I saw it: a slate blue fabric ribbon tied around a small, deep blue box. I felt a single tear slide down my cheek as I gingerly opened the box. Inside, I found the loveliest little diamond in a white-gold setting.

Today, whenever I look at the ring, I see it as the reflection of a life enjoyed by two who embarked on a journey that would last a lifetime.

It was worth waiting for.

Protect yourself against fraudsters

The Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre says Covid-19 made 2020 a lucrative year for fraudsters, with 56,000 reports of fraud in Canada, up from 36,000 in 2019. So mark your calendar for March 18, when RCMP Corporal Adam Best will give us tips on how to avoid being a victim of fraud.

The presentation is available both in person and by video on the Zoom platform for Bay Seniors members. Attend in person at Shining Waters Marina at 2 p.m. For those who prefer to attend the live video presentation from home, look for the Zoom meeting coordinates in the mid-March member update.

Our AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the Seniors Association of St. Margaret's Bay will take place immediately after the fraud presentation.

Visit museums without leaving your own home

Thanks to our friends at Chebucto Links for putting together a wonderful guide that includes virtual tours of museums and other attractions, online courses and do-it-yourself tutorials, and more. We'll share many of these links on our Facebook page in the coming weeks. If you'd like to receive an electronic version of the 17-page guide, email centre@bayseniors.ca.

Reader Round-Up: Your Current Book

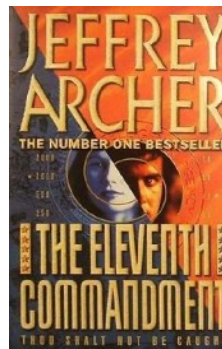
March is Reading Month in Canada, so we asked you to tell us what book is on your night table right now, and if you'd recommend it.

Diane Peacock:

I'm currently reading *The Eleventh Commandment*, by Jeffrey Archer.

The main character is an assassin for the CIA, and this book is the kind that can keep you up at night reading it.

If you like spy stories, I recommend this book.



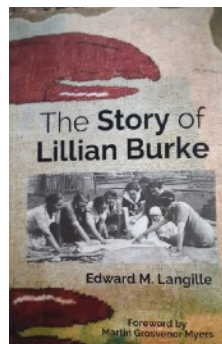
Linda Alderdice:

I am reading *The Story of Lillian Burke*, by Edward M. Langille. I enjoy reading biographies.

Lillian Burke was born in Washington, D.C. Her life's journey brings her to Beinn Bhreagh, Cape Breton.

The book tells the story of her connection with the Alexander Graham Bell family and Cheticamp rug hookers.

There is much history woven throughout this book, which anyone would enjoy reading.



Jerry Walsh:

I am currently reading *Been So Long*, the autobiography of Jorma Kaukonen, a founding member and lead guitarist of the Jefferson Airplane and the still touring Hot Tuna. The book is the story of his passion for music and how his youthful dream continues to unfold.



Tax tips to help seniors save

Federal Seniors Minister Deb Schulte reminds us that seniors are eligible for a number of tax benefits, including the GST/HST credit, the age-based credit for those over 65, and the Guaranteed Income Supplement for seniors with modest incomes, among others.

This year, free tax clinics for those with modest incomes and simple tax situations are being offered through videoconference and document drop-off arrangements. For more information, visit canada.ca/taxes-help.

To read more timely tax tips from the Minister of Seniors, visit <https://www.facebook.com/SeniorsinCanada/>.

Get your toonies out: BTC weekly draw is back

We have two ways to play, two ways to win, and two ways to support important projects and programs in the Bay. Bay Treasure Chest's popular weekly toonie 50/50 draw is back, as of March 3. For a complete list of rules, retailers and recipients, visit <https://baytreasurechest.ca/>.

For those who prefer to play from home, the monthly online draw is still available. Buy your tickets at <https://www.rafflebox.ca/raffle/btcamonthly>

Help shape research into quality of life for seniors

The Institute of Aging is launching an Older Adult Advisory Council to guide them on matters related to the well-being and quality of life of older adults. The council will meet virtually. Applications to join the council must be submitted by March 31.

If you are 60 or older or a caregiver for a senior and would like more information or to apply, visit <https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/52327.html>.

Valentine's Riddle Contest winner takes home a sweet prize

Cathy Byrne says, "My hairdresser was running a bit late, so I took out my phone to check Bay Seniors Facebook, and I knew right away it was puppy love."

Cathy (right), along with other Bay Seniors Facebook friends, had fun in the week leading up to Valentine's Day with six Valentine riddles supplied by our funny lady, Joan Redmond.

The first person to comment with the correct answer had their name entered into a draw to win a Bay Seniors bag and mask, donated jewellery—in this case, a pewter brooch and three silver-toned bangles—and a box of Lindt chocolates. And it was the answer

"Puppy love" that earned Cathy the win.

When Cathy collected her prize, she said she spends time helping out her parents, who are in their 90s, and she looked forward to sharing the chocolates with her folks.

As for Joan's new career as a holiday riddle-writer, we promised not to put pressure on her for another riddle round for St. Patrick's Day.

But Betty Learning tells us the sewing team is working on a lovely matching green mask and bag, so keep an eye on Bay Seniors Facebook page this month. <https://www.facebook.com/bayseniors>



Established in 2009, the Seniors Association of St. Margaret's Bay (Bay Seniors) is a not-for-profit registered society whose purpose is to promote and participate in the development of wellness living for seniors; to research and represent the interests of seniors living in the greater St. Margaret's Bay area; and to provide housing and accommodation options for seniors. For more information about any of the topics in this newsletter, visit our website www.bayseniors.ca or contact the Seniors Information Centre: email centre@bayseniors.ca telephone 902-820-3334. The centre is located at Unit 1 – 5229 St. Margaret's Bay Road, Upper Tantallon, NS, B3Z 4R5. It's open 10 - 2 on Tuesdays and Thursdays.