



# Comox Valley Writers Society Newsletter

## September 2021

### WELCOME!

We hope you had an enjoyable summer in spite of the heat ... and COVID. Now that fall has arrived, there are lots of great events coming up, some in person, some online. Thanks to everyone who contributed to this edition of the newsletter!

### MEMBER NEWS

Please let us know when you have news. We'd love to spread the word! Send submissions to Isobel at [comox.mcdonald@shaw.ca](mailto:comox.mcdonald@shaw.ca)

Terry James' poem, *River Mouth*, appeared in the summer issue of **Sea and Cedar Magazine**.

Janet Miller had two flash fiction stories published this summer in *Release All the Words Stuck Inside You III*. Her sister from Port Alberni (LKThompson) also has stories there. This year the edition is online only. Enter your email address at <https://applebeardeditions.ca/> for your free download of the book.

Sharon McInnes' essay, *Disappearing*, about her mother's journey with dementia, received Honourable Mention in the 2021 Victoria Writers' Society Annual Contest and will be published in the winter issue of **Island Writer Magazine**.

Neil Garvie's, story, *God Save the Queen!* will be published in *Canadian Stories Magazine* (Fall, 2021). His poem, *A Time to Pause*, will be in the winter issue of *Island Writer*. His poetry books are available at <https://garvie.ca/>. Also, the *Comox*

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS

**It's a party! Thursday September 16 – CVWS Social at Kin Beach 4 to 8 pm.**

Under the shelter. Bring your own picnic. Five-minute readings from 4:30 to 6. No need to sign up. The board asks that, in light of the current situation with Covid, everyone wear a mask.

**September 23 – CVWS Reading Night** on Zoom. Email Susan at [smmcpp@hotmail.com](mailto:smmcpp@hotmail.com) for info.

**September 25 – Launch of *Re-Collections*** by the **Group of Glacier Writers'** at Anderton Gardens at 2 pm. More info on page 2.

**October 1** – Deadline for members to have their news items to Isobel for the October newsletter. Send them to her at [comox.mcdonald@shaw.ca](mailto:comox.mcdonald@shaw.ca).

**October 30** – Launch of *Canada by Jove* by **Betty Annand** at Filberg Gardens from 2 to 4 pm.

**October 31** – Last day to renew membership to keep receiving membership benefits. Dues are \$25 if you pay in person, \$26.25 if you pay online. See details on page 5.

*Valley Record* (August 12) published his prose poem, *Under a Heat Dome*.

**Carolyn Montgomery's** story, *The August Regatta*, was published in the inaugural edition of VIRL's **Sea & Cedar Magazine** edition. [Read it here.](#)

**J.E. (Jayne) Barnard** was a panelist for **When Words Collide Writers Conference** in August. She helped plan and present The Heroine's Journey Continues; Books by the Cover; Twisted . . .; Love of the Land - The Importance of Place in Fiction and Mystery: Big Crime, Small Towns.

**Four CVWS Members are teaching at the Comox Valley Elder College this fall** and the courses all look great! [Details here.](#)

#### GREAT TRIP TO COMPELLING STORY

**Instructor: Kim Letson** Oct. 6 to Nov. 10. In this course students will discuss components of meaningful travel memoir and develop their creative nonfiction writing skills. The importance of journaling, blogging, photography, steady writing practice, professional editing and publishing options are explored. Participants will bring a favourite adventure tale and begin the process of creating a compelling written account. For those wishing to share, we will peer review short homework writing challenges each week.

#### INVIGORATE YOUR BOOK CLUB!

**Instructor: Marlet Ashley** Oct. 7 to 14  
Want to liven up your book club meetings? Learn how to apply the language of literary analysis to the work you read, and sound informed as you comment on what you liked or disliked about the book selection.

#### WRITERS' WORKSHOP

**Instructors: Marvin Haave and Ian McIntyre**  
Oct.8 to Nov.26. This is an interactive class in which writers and would-be writers may share their work and have it gently appreciated and critiqued by others. No formal instruction.

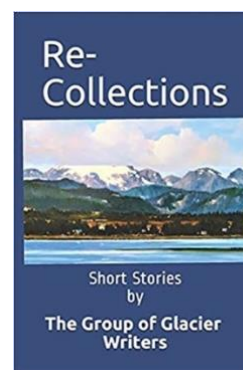
#### HISTORY OF THE COMOX VALLEY

**Instructor: Christine Dickinson**

October 4 to November 29. The course is an overview of the history of the Comox Valley during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, including early settlement, agriculture, forestry, military, and social history. We will also highlight the valley's many colourful characters.

Keep your eyes open for the next issue of **Comox Valley Collective**. There will be an article on books by local authors, including all the CVWS members who published books last year. We have been looking for ways to publicize the work of our members locally. Let the magazine know if you appreciate this outlet for local book news. [CVC here.](#)

#### MEMBER BOOK LAUNCHES



Marlet's Fiction Writers Critique Group, now aka **The Group of Glacier Writers**, has published an anthology of short stories, *Re-Collections*, many of which are previously-published. The launch is on **Saturday September 25** at 2 pm at Anderton Gardens under the big tent, outside. Please wear a mask and social distance where possible.

Everyone in attendance will have a chance to win the **Comox Glacier framed painting** by Pieter Molenaar that graces the cover, which is valued at the gallery price of \$1100. Thank you Pieter!

Profits from the sale of **Re-Collections** will go to Habitat for Humanity and Anderton Gardens.



And **Betty Annand** will launch her book, ***Canada by Jove***, in the lounge of the Filberg Centre on Anderton Road, Courtenay, on October 30 from 2 to 4 pm.

Vaccinations mandatory. There will be light refreshments.

## McLOUGHLIN GARDEN SOCIETY UPDATE

*Submitted by Christine Dickinson*

The **McLoughlin Garden Society** has had a great season. As you might imagine **Jennifer Manuel** was very popular and everything she did was so well received.



Her two workshops ***Three Steps to a Strong Narrative Theme*** and ***The Hidden Layers of Narrative Details*** were booked out. There were, however, very few CVWS members in attendance. We were amazed at how generous

she was with her time - offering many more writers' consultations than we would have asked of her.

There was a reading scheduled which we at first cancelled because of COVID concerns, but a response from a disappointed book club and Jennifer's enthusiasm caused us to reconsider, and so we went ahead with a small group in the studio.

Our short-term residencies have been very popular and successful from our point of view. We are about halfway through and these will continue until mid October. This is definitely something we would like to try again.

Plans for the fall are the continuation of workshops with Jeanette Taylor and Margo

McLoughlin. I will chase up final arrangements and let you know - these may have to be on Zoom.

**Review of *The Hidden Layers of Narrative Details* workshop** with Jennifer Manuel  
*Submitted by Christine Dickinson*

My experience was first class. We sat outside under the trees with the waves lapping. Jennifer's instructional material was so helpful and her response to the questions was insightful. I learned so much it sent me scurrying home to find my writing mojo.

*A note from Terry James ..*

When **Jennifer Manuel** was the keynote speaker at the NIWC in January I encouraged my 14-year-old granddaughter in Chilliwack to take in the session. In July when she was staying with us for a week she had a 1:1 consult at McLoughlin Gardens with Jennifer. Both events were exciting for my granddaughter who is aspiring to write beyond the requirements for school. Jennifer, a former high school English teacher, was delighted to have a consult with such a young writer and invited her to stay in touch. The report from both of them brought me delight.



**Also from McLoughlin Gardens -- "Bringing Our Stories to Life" with Jeanette Taylor and Margo**

McLoughlin. Three workshops: Sept 25 & 26: **Scenes and Dialogue**; October 30: **Point of View and Voice**; November 27: **Falling in Love with Revision**. Due to rising COVID cases, the September workshop will be held on Zoom but later workshops will be held in person, if possible.  
[Register here.](#)

## NEWS FROM DENMAN ISLAND

### Denman Festival News, and an idea for CVWS...

by Stewart Goodings

I'd like to tell newsletter readers about an event which took place on Denman July 16/17—local DI writers and performers sharing their work to a *live audience* in the Community Hall!

We called it **Turning the Page** (on Covid, of course, though the recent increasing cases of the infection show we were a bit too hopeful that a page had been turned!). There was an eclectic mix of poetry including "I Will Be More Myself in the Next World", Matsuki Masutani's debut book of poetry published by Mother Tongue Press, several short stories, an excerpt from Des Kennedy's latest novel-in-the-works, "An Island Commune", guitar and piano magic by two local musicians, Kevin Mitchell and Bethany Ireland, and a surprise appearance by an early settler to Denman, William Baikie who died in 1941, but returned (courtesy of a certain Stewart Goodings, sporting a moustache, bowler hat, and cane, and an appropriate Scottish accent) to share his perceptions of how Denman had changed but still remained the same 'bonnie wee island' he remembered.

What struck me afterward was to wonder whether something similar could be put on by CVWS, either as part of the annual January conference, or at a separate time? The talent pool in our society is diverse and deep and a program could be organized to enable more of our local writers to present their work in a bigger venue than the small back room in the Courtenay public library. This would be a good way for new books to be given a boost by our members as well as to introduce aspiring writers to the broader community. For Denman was a bit of an experiment. Is this an initiative worth replicating for CVWS writers?

### Review of the Denman Island Writing Week

by Janet Miller

The Denman Island Writing Week was held online, by Zoom, from July 12-16 with 8 participants (4 from Vancouver Island and 4 from Ontario and Quebec).

The instructor, **Caroline Adderson**, started the mornings with craft lessons: Beginnings, Transitions, Writing Narrative Scenes and Character Motivation and Arc.



Caroline Adderson

Each participant submitted up to 5000 words pieces and these were distributed to the group prior to the Writing Week. Caroline provided 'Critique Guidelines'. During the week each person had their work reviewed by the whole group and also had a one-on-one consultation with

Caroline. Our task on Friday, after working diligently on revision of a section of our work, paying attention to what we had learned and to suggestions that had been made, was to read aloud a 5-minute piece.

Caroline is an award-winning author of many kids books and novels and a great writing instructor.

### Review of Wendy Wickwire's Workshop: Animating the Creative in Creative Nonfiction

by Kim Letson



Wendy Wickshire

Wendy brought her experience as professor, author and historian to this workshop/discussion packed with useful tips for keeping readers engaged as they negotiate historic details.

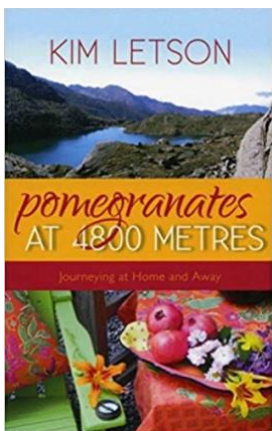
Some takeaways ...

1. Massive information dumps overwhelm readers. Wendy has avoided this pitfall by providing smaller bites of historical data at each stop along a train journey.
2. Allowing the reader to learn as a character learns keeps the reader engaged.
3. Too much context and background information in the first paragraphs or chapter is a huge turn off.
4. The purpose of the piece/book is key. Academic writing has specific requirements while non-academic writing can use more creative dialogue and scene. Regardless, the writer's integrity requires remaining true to the facts and maintaining reasonable objectivity. (Recognizing that even objective writing has a subjective bias which needs to be acknowledged.)
5. Research provides masses of material. No need to share it all with the reader. Just pick the salient bits that matter for the particular story.

## MY BOOK JOURNEY as an Independent Author/Publisher

by Kim Letson

When I started writing *Pomegranates at 4800*



*Metres*, I thought writing a book meant sit, write, publish. I had no trouble with sitting and writing. The rest not so much.

Floundering, I signed up for a CVWS workshop with an editor and had an ah-ha moment. The editor – Trevor McMonagle – reviewed my work, made

numerous suggestions to improve my writing and helped me sort the stories into logically

sequenced chapters. I continue to work with Trevor, publishing *Soul of a Nomad* last year and currently in the final revision stages of *In the Footsteps of a Roman Legion*.

My sojourn into the world of book design was rocky. However, at another CVWS workshop I connected with one of the presenters – Greg Salisbury. Book designer, type setter extraordinaire, he sorted out the mess for a second printing of *Pomegranates*. He then worked countless extra hours on *Soul of a Nomad* because I'd used a free word processing program instead of Microsoft Word. The free program didn't convert well into In-Design which is the industry standard for book layout.

I continue to work with Greg who also organizes my ISBNs and is my book distributor through Red Tuque Books.

I've used two printer/binders, both of whom provided excellent service and well-bound books. I started with First Choice Books but switched to Island Blue when I started working with Greg because of his connection with them. Island Blue is lined up to print my third book this November. As an independent author, I publish under West Moon Publishing. A hopeless marketer, I'm about to contact Vancouver based The Self-Publishing Agency, for assistance in that department.

This journey has taught me that writing books is the easy part and working with a supportive team of professionals is a vital component in book production.

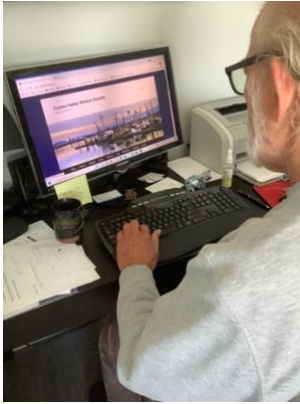
### ON WRITING

Making people believe the unbelievable is no trick; it's work. ... An overturned tricycle in the gutter of an abandoned neighbourhood can stand for everything.

From Stephen King in a *Writer's Digest* interview

## WEBSITE REPORT

Submitted by Leslie Cox



Now that summer is winding down and cooler temperatures are returning, our writing schedule is ramping up.

Please share your news...submissions, contests, publications, and funny rejection letter with the rest of

us. Remember: we are in the “game” together and it can be a lonely game. Sharing experiences can be uplifting to your fellow writers. It can be the inspirational lightning bolt we sometimes need when the ideas are not coming, the words are not flowing or another rejection letter has landed in our mailbox. Besides, do we not all love an excuse to celebrate something...especially in these COVID times?

Drop me (Leslie) a line through the Contact page on the website by selecting [webmaster@cvwriterssociety.ca](mailto:webmaster@cvwriterssociety.ca) in the dropdown box. Pictures are good too, but they must be in .jpg format and no larger than 500KB. (You may have to email your photos to me as an attachment in a separate email to: [duchessofdirt@telus.net](mailto:duchessofdirt@telus.net).)

One more thing: check out **Workshops & contests of note** in the dropdown box under **Events** on the menu bar. As the title indicates, this is where you will find a list of events such as the literary festival and Word Vancouver. And, please, if you hear of anything that should be included in this section of the website, send it to me through the webmaster address on the Contact page and be sure to include the link to the event.

Okay...one more thing. If you want to get the news as it is posted on the website, you MUST subscribe to the CVWS News. (It is in the righthand column on every page of the website.)

Rest assured the CVWS website is a secure website and we have a strict privacy policy in place.

## NORTH ISLAND WRITERS CONFERENCE UPDATE

Submitted by Leslie Cox

Planning is already underway for the 5th North Island Writers Conference (NIWC) to be held in January 2022.



Exact dates must still be decided but the Committee is currently

focused on a combination of in-person and online sessions. Ultimately, the workshops will be conducted in the format which will follow the health authority protocols in place at that time.

A lot of workshop topics have been discussed but we are looking for input from CVWS members on what they would be like to see included in the 2022 NIWC program. You can find the workshops for the previous four NIWC Conferences on the CVWS website ([cvwriterssociety.ca](http://cvwriterssociety.ca)) under “Conference” on the menu bar.

Please go to the “Contact” page on the CVWS website, select “NIWC” in the dropdown box to send us your ideas. Or phone Joline at 250-218-1353.

### ON WRITING

There are no laws for the novel. There never have been, nor can there ever be.

Doris Lessing

## CONTESTS

**Canadian Stories Contest.** Categories: True Stories, Fiction, Rhyming Poetry, Non-Rhyming Poetry, Lest We Forget, and Black and White Line Art. **Deadline November 1.** [Information here.](#) The winner of 'Lest We Forget' in 2020 was Neil Garvie's story *1945 Freundlich Gefangene*. You can read Neil's story on the Canadian Stories website.

**Surrey International Writer's Conference Short Story Contest.** 2500 to 4000 words. First prize is \$1000 plus publication. Deadline: Sept. 17, 2021. All the details [here.](#)

**The Fractured Lit Micro Fiction Prize.** Deadline: September 19, 2021. <https://fracturedlit.submittable.com/submit>

**Literary Taxidermy Writing Competition.** Deadline: September 26, 2021. They provide the first and last lines from a classic work of literature, and you provide the rest, poem or story, up to 2000 words. Details [here.](#)

**Zoetrope Short Story Contest:** <https://www.zoetrope.com/contests/stories-2021/> Deadline: October 1, 2021

**The CBC Short Fiction Contest.** Deadline: October 31, 2021. Up to 2500 words. More info [right here.](#)

**Malahat Review Open Season Award.** Deadline November 1. Early bird discount if you enter before September 30. Details [here.](#)

**Tadpole Press 100-Word Writing Contest.** Theme: Abundance. First place: \$1000. Deadline November 30, 2021. Check it out [here.](#)

**Next Generation Indie Book Awards.** Deadline: Feb 11, 2022. Everything you need to know is [right here.](#)

**Stories Through the Ages: Baby Boomers Plus 2022 Short Story Contest.** Up to 4000 words. Deadline: June 15, 2022. Everything you need to know is [right here.](#)

## SUBMISSION OPPORTUNITIES



**Vancouver Island Regional Library (VIRL)** is currently seeking literature and art submissions

for the Winter 2022 issue of our serial digital publication, *Sea & Cedar Magazine*. We will accept submissions year-round, but will also make callouts and post deadlines for consideration in specific issues. The submission deadline to have your work considered for the next issue, Winter 2022, is **October 31, 2021 (midnight)**. Visit our [Submissions page](#) for details.

*Sea & Cedar* is a biannual digital publication dedicated to showcasing exemplary new writing by both emerging and established writers in VIRL's service area. They also seek to highlight the work of visual artists in VIRL's service area.

**CV Collective** is looking for engaging, creative and unique written content to publish in our upcoming editions. Our mantra is to 'create, play and explore' so we are seeking fun, interesting and exciting written content that will engage our readers and keep them coming back for more.

Please submit your story idea(s) for CVC to [jenn@roammedia.ca](mailto:jenn@roammedia.ca). If your submission(s) are approved, we are committed to communicating the heart of your story, but all stories will be subject to editing.

**Wordstorm's** new digital anthology, **Counterflow**, to be published annually, is open for submissions on October 1. [Details here.](#)

**Room Magazine** invites unpublished writing on any theme for their open issue 45.2. Deadline: October 31. Details [here.](#)

The New York Times **Modern Love** column is always looking for personal essays about love in all its variations. 1500-1700 words. Pays: \$300  
More information here:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/06/style/how-to-submit-modern-love-essays.html>

**SLATE magazine** publishes news & politics, culture, human interest, business, technology, sports, and health and sciences pieces. Pays. [How to pitch to them here.](#)

**DAME magazine.** Articles, essays, features. Pays well. [Here's what they want.](#)

**Christian Science Monitor.** Personal essays of 400 to 800 words. Pays. Also takes short poems. [Contributor guidelines here.](#)

**Good Old Days Magazine.** [Here's the magazine.](#)  
Pays. [How to submit.](#)

## CONFERENCES & WORKSHOPS

**WORD Vancouver** is on-line this year and all 60 events are FREE. September 10 to September 26. Read all about it and sign up [here.](#)

**Victoria Festival of Authors** online  
Sept. 29 to October 3, 2021. Podcasts from the 2020 festival are also available [here.](#)

**Vancouver International Writer's Festival**  
October 18 to 24, probably online. Stay informed [here.](#)

**Surrey International Writers' Conference** Mark your calendars for October 22 to 24. Online. [Check it out here.](#)

**Koffler Centre of the Arts** Winter 2021 Books and Ideas Series. [Check it out here.](#)

**Jane Friedman** teaches or sponsors workshops on Zoom all year round. [Check out the offerings here.](#)

And check out the many online workshops and events through the **Federation of BC Writers** [here.](#)

## WRITING RESOURCES

**Publishing ... and Other Forms of Insanity** is a blog that posts regularly, listing submission opportunities for writers as well as other valuable information. The August 30 post lists **106 paying markets** with a September deadline. [Here!](#)

**Jane Friedman** shares her vast expertise about the publishing world with writers everywhere. Her newsletter, *Electric Speed*, is free. Or you can purchase her *Hot Sheet*. She also offers courses and consults. [Start here.](#)

## READINGS & OPEN MICS



**Electric Mermaid**, with two featured authors and an Open Mic, is on the third Friday of each month from 6 to 8 pm. The next open mic is on

**September 17.** [Sign up here.](#)

Janet Miller participated in the **Electric Mermaid Reading Series** on Friday August 20th. Her sister, Linda K. Thompson, with her poetry book **Black Bears in the Carrot Field** (Mother Tongue Publishing) was one of the featured readers. Janet was pleased to be part of the in-person audience at Char's Landing in Port Alberni. It was a hybrid event - about 15 people in-person there



at the amazingly wonderful Char's Landing and another 15 or so on a really big zoom screen up on the wall. It worked surprisingly well.

The fall schedule of **Wordstorm's Metaphorically-Speaking Online Open Mic** starts on September 12 at 7pm on Zoom. [Details here.](#)

**Planet Earth Poetry** is now meeting on Friday nights at Russell Books in Victoria. [More info here.](#)

## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

*Submitted by Leslie Cox*

CVWS membership renewals are now due for 2021 / 2022. You must pay up by October 31 in order to keep receiving all notices and the CVWS newsletter. (You can pay after October 31 too but until the date you renew your membership, you will not receive anything from the CVWS.) There are two ways of paying your membership dues: online or by mail with a cheque.

If you are paying online, fill out the online membership form [here](#) and pay by credit card or through your PayPal account, if you have one. (To cover the PayPal fee the CVWS is charged by PayPal, we have added \$1.25 to the \$25.00 membership fee.) The instructions are on the website for you to follow.

If you want to skip the PayPal fee, you can print off the mail-in membership form [here](#), fill it out and send it to the CVWS, along with your cheque, to the PO Box noted at the bottom of the form.

Regrettably, you will not be able to pay your dues at a monthly general meeting as the CVWS Board has decided there will be no in-person meetings through to, and including, December. The COVID-19 situation and local Health Authority rulings will be evaluated at the end of the year to determine if we can return to in-person meetings in the new year.

## FUN STUFF

*Thanks Janet!*

Did you know? ...

A **capitonym** is a word whose meaning changes when it is capitalized. For example:

- march > March
- august > August
- polish > Polish
- china > China
- lent > Lent
- hamlet > Hamlet
- fiat > Fiat
- mark > Mark

Also from Janet -- **Interesting words I've never used ...** Peripatetic and Zeitgeist, both out of the Globe and Mail.

"... an award-winning documentary about his peripatetic life..." and "... polarized political zeitgeist..."

## We are looking for YOUR feedback.

What newsletter features do you like the most?  
Which ones are you less interested in?  
What would you like to see in the newsletter that isn't there now?

Please reply to Janet at [1234jvm@gmail.com](mailto:1234jvm@gmail.com).  
Thank you!

**From your CVWS Newsletter Team:**  
Janet Miller, Sharon McInnes, and  
Isobel McDonald