

January 31, 2011

Joe Rosenblatt was born in Toronto in 1933. He dropped out of trade school as a young adult and worked at a series of low-paying jobs until he started working as a laborer for the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1956. He became interested in writing through his association with the worker poet Milton Acorn in the early sixties and the metaphysical poetry of Gwendolyn MacEwen. By 1966 he had his first book of poetry published and he also received a Canada Council grant which allowed him to leave his job as a freight handler of the old Canadian Pacific Railway and devote the next year to writing and traveling.

Over the years, Rosenblatt has written more than 20 books of poetry, several autobiographical works and his poems have appeared in over thirty anthologies of Canadian poetry over his forty year career as a poet. His poetry books have received major awards, such as the Governor General's award for poetry in 1976 and the BC Book Prize in 1986. He has traveled widely giving readings of his poems in Europe, Canada and the United States. Several bilingual volumes of his poetry have been published in Italian with translations by the late Prof. Alfredo Rizzardi of the University of Bologna, and Ada Donati of Rome. His most recent poetry volume, *Parrot Fever* was published by Toronto publisher, Exile Editions, 2002. His poems have also been also translated into French, Dutch, Swedish and Spanish. For the past 30 years he has been living in a beach resort community of Qualicum Beach on Vancouver Island with his wife Faye and their three cats.

Kevin Roberts: Born in Adelaide, South Australia in 1940, Kevin Roberts went on to Adelaide University, where a tutor, Geoff Dutton, an ex RAAF Spitfire pilot in WW II, encouraged his writing. After graduating from Adelaide Teachers College with a B.A. Dip T., Roberts traveled to Canada, teaching high school in Dawson Creek. He completed a M.A. from Simon Fraser University in 1968, and was hired as one of the three original faculty members in English at Malaspina College in Nanaimo, BC. In the 70's, Roberts lived for a year in Ikaria, Greece, under the Colonels' Regime, then pursued graduate studies at University of Exeter, published his first book -- of poetry and prose -- *Cariboo Fishing Notes* (Beau Geste Press, 1973), chaired Malaspina's English Department for one year, and ran a 32-foot salmon troller, the *Miriama*, off the coast of Vancouver Island for several years. In 1980, a book of poetry, *s'ney'mos* (Oolichan) appeared that later was broadcast by the CBC. His first book of stories, *Flash Harry and the Daughters of Divine Light*, was published in 1982 (by Harbour), along with a book of poems, *Stonefish* (Oolichan). The next year he became writer-in-residence at Wattle Park College, Adelaide.

In the mid-80's, Roberts went on disability leave due to non-Hodgkins Lymphoma, an experience he later wrote about in *Cobalt 3*, a Finalist for the Milton Acorn Poetry Prize. His first novel, *Tears in a Glass Eye* came out in 1989. For Roberts, 1992 saw both the publication of a book of poems drawn from Australia's continental core, *Red Centre Journal*, and the production by Nanaimo Festival Theatre of a play about that city's coal-mining history, *Black Apples*. After retiring from Malaspina University-College – where he was named an Honorary Research Associate – Roberts completed a Ph.D at Griffith University in Queensland (2003). Following a teaching stint in Shanghai, he published his eleventh book of poetry, *Writing the Tides* (2006), and a novel, *She'll Be Right* (2007). Of his work, Kate Braid observes that Roberts is

“like the fisherman, hauling beauty in out of the darkness.” His literary papers are held at Simon Fraser University and the National Library Archives in Ottawa.

Kendall Patrick is a singer songwriter from Ladysmith, BC. She has 7 years of classical piano training under her belt, taught herself guitar and has been writing songs since grade 7. She is currently attending The Malaspina Jazz program, majoring in voice. She released her first album, *House of Ink*, in 2007, which includes a beat poetry piece called "The Girl Rant" . "The Girl Rant" was written to empower young girls into awareness out of the media-driven conventions of today's popular culture, which heavily emphasizes superficiality. "The Girl Rant" has received recognition from the Oprah Winfrey Show, and has been taken to local schools. The power of this piece has inspired Kendall to continue writing for empowerment and she is currently on a mission to begin "The Girl Rant Movement". She will be performing at The Vancouver Island Music Festival in Comox in 2008. You can find her music at [My Space](#).

February 28, 2011

Blaine Marchand is an Ottawa writer who has published five books of poetry, a young adult novel and a work of non-fiction. His books include *After the Fact*, *Open Fires*, *A Garden Enclosed*, *Bodily Presence*, *African Journey* and *Aperture*. His work has appeared in magazines and anthologies in Canada and the US. He has won several literary awards including the Archibald Lampman Award (for *A Garden Enclosed*), and his poem "The Craving of Knives," took second place in the National Poetry Contest in 1990. He was President of the League of Canadian Poets from 1992-94 and was a co-founder of *Sparks Magazine* and Ottawa Independent Writers. Both *Aperature* and *The Craving of Knives* were shortlisted for the Archibald Lampman Award in 2009 and 2010.

Gabriola Goliger's first book, *Song of Ascent*, won the 2001 Upper Canada Writer's Craft Award. She was co-winner of the 1997 Journey Prize for short fiction, was a finalist for this prize in 1995 and won the Prism International award in 1993. She has also been published in a number of journals and anthologies including *Best New American Voices 2000* and *Contemporary Jewish Writing in Canada*.

Her educational credentials include a B.A. from McGill University and an M.A. in English literature from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Born in Italy, Gabriella grew up in Montreal and has also lived in Israel, the Eastern Arctic, and Ottawa. For the past few years she has been spending her winters in Victoria, B.C.

Jenny Fjellgaard's fiction, creative non-fiction and poetry have been included in the anthologies *Islands West: Stories From the Coast*, *The Fish Come in Dancing*, *Netherwords: fictions poems rants from British Columbia*, *Portal Magazine*, *Chameleon* and most recently in *Crow Toes Quarterly: A Magazine for Hyper-literate Children*. In 2010, Jenny was awarded *Ascent Aspiration's* first prize for poetry for "Three More Payments and It's All Ours!" and honourable mention for her flash fiction piece "Jonesing," both of which were published in *Ascent Aspirations Magazine: 2010 Winter Edition, "Issues for a New World Century."* Jenny currently resides in Nanaimo, BC, with her dog, Scarlett and-frankly my dears-they do give a damn...which may not be apparent to the un-brained ear.

March 28, 2011

Christopher Levenson, who came to Canada from the U.K. in 1968 to teach English and Creative Writing at Carleton University in Ottawa, has published ten books of poetry and two chapbooks, most recently *Local Time*, 2006, from Ottawa's Stone Flower Press, and edited three poetry anthologies. He was co-founder in 1978 of *Arc poetry magazine* and its first editor; co-founder and Series Editor of Carleton University Press's Harbinger Poetry series, specifically for first books of poetry; and served for a year as Poetry Editor for the *Literary Review of Canada*. In addition to the twenty five full year credit Poetry Workshops he conducted for Carleton, he also started and ran the Ottawa Poetry Group, whose anthology *Soundings* he co-edited in 2005. He moved to Vancouver in the Fall of 2007.

Judy Mayhew lives in Qualicum Beach, where she writes short stories and novels. Her short stories have been published in literary journals and commercial magazines. She is working on her third novel.

April 25, 2011

Anny Scoones grew up in the Maritimes with her war-artist (WWII) parents and her old horse Missy who she would ride while her parents painted the New Brunswick countryside. Anny spent many summers with her Gran on Galiano Island where she grew to love the west coast and eventually settled in North Saanich on historic Glamorgan Farm, one of the oldest farms on the Island and still retains eleven original log barns and structures.

Anny is a three time municipal councillor who fights for the preservation of agriculture and heritage, "green" architecture, bicycle lanes and an anti-pesticide by-law.

Glamorgan Farm is home to many heirloom gardens and heritage breeds of livestock, including the Gloucester Old Spot Pig and the Naked Neck Hen and the Russian Woolly Horse. Glamorgan Farm also is home to the Healthy Harvest Co-op, a group of (adult) disabled gardeners. The themes of Anny's three books are home, our relationships with each other and nature, and the joys and heart breaks of rural life.

May 30, 2011

Bren Simmers: Born in Vancouver, Bren Simmers studied writing at the University of Victoria and has a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing from The University of British Columbia. Winner of the Arc Poem of the Year Award and shortlisted for the Bronwen Wallace Memorial Award, her poetry has been published in *The Antigonish Review*, *CV2*, *Event*, *The Fiddlehead*, *Prairie Fire*, and *Prism International*. Her first book of poems, (2010), is published by Wolsak and Wynn.

Di Brandt grew up in Reinland, a Mennonite farming village in south central Manitoba and was one of the first women writers to break the public silence of Mennonite women in Canada. She taught English and Creative Writing at the University of Winnipeg from 1986-1995, and currently teaches English at the

University of Alberta. She is a former poetry editor of *Prairie Fire* and a founding member of the feminist editorial collective of *Contemporary Verse II*.

Margaret Thompson was born November 5, 1940 in Surbiton, England. That is Guy Fawkes Day, but the only fireworks that year came from the Blitz. She started school just a few weeks after the atom bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, when she was not quite five years old. She could already read.

Later she attended a Church of England elementary school, and after passing the dreaded 11+ exam that all children took before going on to a secondary school at that time, went to Wimbledon County School for Girls (a Grammar school, an academic high school.) In 1959, she went to Westfield College at London University to read English, and graduated in 1962 with a BA (Hons) degree. This was followed by a year at Exeter University for a Dip.Ed. and then a first teaching job at her old school. Much later, she earned her M.A. from San Diego State University.

In 1963 she married Alan Thompson, a Physics lecturer at Chiswick Polytechnic. She left teaching temporarily with the arrival of her sons Jeremy and Simon, and the family emigrated to Canada in 1967, when Simon was five weeks old. Their first home in Canada was in Merritt, B.C. where her daughter, Joanna, was born. After three years there, they moved to Madeira Park. Margaret subsequently taught English in Sechelt and then spent 20 years in Fort St. James, where she was the senior English teacher in the high school and also taught university transfer courses for the College of New Caledonia.

Margaret Thompson has taught other people how to write for years, and frequently wrote plays for her students. She began to take her own writing seriously in the early 1990s and self-published a collection of prose and poetry about the early days of Fort St. James in 1992, specifically for the Gift Shop at the National Historic Site in the town. The information acquired in her research for that project gave her the material for her first children's book, the YA historical novel, *Eyewitness* (Ronsdale, 2000) which won a BC2000 Book Award. Earlier, in 1996, her collection of short stories, *Hide and Seek* (1996) was published by Caitlin Press.

On retirement from teaching in 1996, Margaret Thompson left the north for Victoria and year-round gardens. She lives in a house that overlooks the farms that sweep down to the sea, with a great view of Mt. Baker and Haro Strait. She has one Siamese cat, two Basset hounds, and is visited every day by the peacocks that live in the neighbourhood. She also has four grandchildren, two of whom also live in Victoria.

She wrote another children's book, *Fox Winter*, (Hodgepog Books, 2003) which is based on a real encounter with an injured fox in her own backyard. This was followed by a collection of travel essays, *Knocking on the Moonlit Door* (NeWest, 2004) and a further essay collection, *Adrift on the Ark: Our Connection to the Natural World* (Brindle & Glass) in 2009.

Her other great interest is the Federation of BC Writers, which she first joined in 1992. She was their president for two years and is still an active member of the

editorial committee for their quarterly journal, *WordWorks*. She is also a member of The Writers' Union of Canada.

The McCartie Group is a vocal jazz trio composed of award winning senior high school music students from the Nanaimo area. Led by the Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival two-time award winner vocalist Amy McCartie, the McCartie Group strives to keep the spirit of traditional jazz alive, while giving the music their own unique modern edge. Amy McCartie is backed by virtuoso saxophone and bass player Josh Rey and drummer Jesse McNeill. Josh and Jesse have won solo and top musician awards at both Envisions Jazz Festival in Vancouver and the Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival in Idaho.

There really isn't a life outside of music for anyone in the McCartie group, and that is the way they would like it to stay. Every member plans on making a career of music, be it as a full time player or as an educator. Each musician comes from a different musical background, but all come together for a common love of jazz. Music dominates their worlds. They look forward to sharing their music with WordStorm!

September 26, 2011

Linda Lee Crosfield was born in 1948 in Nelson, BC. She lived there until she went off to join the circus (thinly disguised as Air Canada). She worked in Ottawa, Windsor, Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver before moving back to the Kootenays in 1988.

From 1991 to 1996 she studied creative writing at the Kootenay School of Arts in Nelson.

She is one of four writers who collaborated on *The Noslen Enigma*, a serialized satirical sci-fi soap opera that was online from September 1998 to September 1999. The writers recorded it for broadcast on Kootenay Co-op Radio in 2004.

A member of the Federation of BC Writers since 1993, Linda has served as regional representative, on the board, and as a member of the editorial committee for *Word Works*, the Fed's quarterly journal. She has participated in *Off the Page*, a program that puts writers into classrooms around the province.

Her writing has been published in the U.S.A., New Zealand and Canada, including *Room of One's Own*, *Horsefly*, *The New Orphic Review*, *Ascent Aspirations*, *The Minnesota Review*, *Labor*, and in several chapbooks and anthologies, including *between sleeps: the 3:15 experiment 1993–2005* (en theos press 2006), *Literary Mama: Reading for the Maternally Inclined* (Seal Press 2006), and *The Fed Anthology*—brand new fiction and poetry from the Federation of BC Writers (Anvil Press 2003). One of her poems has been accepted for a forthcoming issue of *The Antigonish Review*. She has published three chapbooks: *Ways to Get to Here* (2004), *Generation Dance* (2008), and *Etiquette* (2011).

In 2007 her poem *Could Be A Bigger One* came first in the Canadian Poetry Association's annual contest.

Linda lives in Ootischenia (which means “valley of consolation” in Russian) at the confluence of the Columbia and Kootenay Rivers in South East BC where she blogs sporadically at [lindafraser.com](#) and makes handmade and limited edition books through her imprint, NIB Publishing. NIB stands for nose-in-book, where hers can usually be found.

David Fraser lives in Nanoose Bay, on Vancouver Island. He is the founder and editor of *Ascent Aspirations Magazine*, since 1997. His poetry and short fiction have appeared in many journals and anthologies, including *Rocksalt, An Anthology of Contemporary BC Poetry* and *Walk Myself Home*. He has published four collections of poetry, *Going to the Well* (2004), *Running Down the Wind* (2007), *No Way Easy*, 2010, and *Caught in My Throat*, 2011. [Home Site](#): He will be performing new work and work from his latest collection.

Ursula Vaira - Book Launch *And See What Happens*

Ursula Vaira was born in Germany ... grew up in northern B.C. in a tiny place called Little Prairie, later renamed Chetwynd, 200 miles north of Prince George. After studying Education at UBC, she taught school on the north coast and in the Arctic, then moved to Vancouver Island in the early eighties. She studied creative writing at Malaspina University-College (now Vancouver Island University). She worked at Oolichan Books for ten years; then founded her own publishing house, Leaf Press, in 2001.

She loves wilderness camping and kayaking, has a passion for the west coast — the summer of 2005 she kayaked with a group from Port Hardy to Zeballos, including the dreaded Capes Cook and Scott. In 1997 she paddled by Coast Salish canoe from Hazelton to Victoria as part of Roy Henry Vickers' Vision Quest to raise addictions awareness and funds to build an all-nations recovery centre. Through these and other experiences she has learned the power of the arduous journey as a metaphor for self-growth. In truth, all journeys do lead to the interior.

Lisa Shatzky's poetry has been published in *The Vancouver Review*, *Room Magazine*, *Quills Canadian Poetry Magazine*, *The Nashwaak Review*, *The Antigonish Review*, *The Dalhousie Review*, *Canadian Literature*, *Canadian Woman's Studies*, *The Prairie Journal*, *Jones Ave.*, *The New Quarterly*, and five chapbooks by Leaf Press (edited by Patrick Lane) along with anthologies across Canada. Her poetry book *Do Not Call Me By My Name* was published by Black Moss Press in August 2011. She lives on Bowen Island B.C. where she works as a therapist when not writing.

November 28, 2011

Richard Osler writes poetry when he isn't watching the poetics of the stock market's rise and fall as a specialty money manager. His poems have been accepted in numerous journals including *the Malahat review*, *Prarie Fire*, *Antigonish Review* and *CV2* which published a feature interview with him in its Winter 2011 issue. He also leads weekend writing retreats for poets and conducts poetry workshops in drug and alcohol recovery centres. The Cowichan Valley in B.C. has claimed him as one of its own since 2010.

Joy Huebert is a Victoria writer and winner of the 2008 Short Grain Postcard Story Competition. She has been published in several literary magazines and three chapbooks produced by the Root Cellar Press. She is an editor of the short story collection, *Magic Night*, and placed second in the Vancouver Story Slam.

Gisela Ruebsaat is a Victoria poet who has been published in *Island Writer*. Her work explores the intersection of music, spoken word and song. She has worked as a speechwriter for governments in Ontario and BC and currently acts as Legal Analyst for the Ending Violence Association.

Katrin Horowitz published her first novel, *Power Failures*, in 2007. Last year she was a winner in Victoria's Night on the Town prose competition for her story, "Blues for a Bridge". She is finalizing a new novel, *Convenient Lies*, and is also working on more short stories.

Kim Clark lives on Vancouver Island. Disease and desire, mothering and the mundane propel her ongoing journey between poetry and prose. Her work can be found in e-zines and other publications in Canada and the U.S.. Kim holds a BA in Creative Writing from VIU. She won the 2005 Cecilia Lamont prize for fiction and her story "Solitaire" was shortlisted in the Malahat Review's 2010 Novella Contest. Kim's first book, *Attemptations*, published by Caitlin Press, is a collection of short, long and longer fiction.