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2016

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## From the editor

BY SHARYN HEAGLE

**T**HIS ISSUE FEATURES the last in a series of articles on “Tapping your Creativity” by Barbara Florio Graham <http://SimonTeakettle.com>. We thank Barbara for this excellent series, and we hope that the articles have inspired the reader to greater creativity.

*Byline* welcomes the beginning of a four-part series of articles on “Writing the Page-Turner,” by Barbara Kyle <http://www.barbarakyle.com/>

After a 20-year acting career in film, TV, and stage productions in Canada and the US, Barbara published her first historical novel in 2008, *The Queen's Lady* (Kensington Books), which introduced Honor Larke, lady-in-waiting to Queen Catherine of Aragon in the court of Henry VIII, and ship captain/courtier Richard Thornleigh.

This was succeeded by the internationally-published Thornleigh Sagas which follow a middle-class English family's rise through three tumultuous Tudor reigns. *The Traitor's Daughter*, is the latest, released in 2015.

Barbara has also written thrillers under the pen name Stephen Kyle, including *Beyond Recall*, a Literary Guild Selection. Over 450,000 copies of her books have been sold in seven countries.

*continued on page 2*

### OUR MONTHLY MEETINGS

- 
- Our next meeting is September 20, 2016
  - After that, we meet the second Tuesday of the month
  - 7 p.m.
  - McNabb Recreation Centre, 180 Percy Street, Ottawa
  - We meet at 7 for conversation and refreshments and start our meetings shortly after.

## FROM THE EDITOR

*continued from page 1*

CAA-NCR is delighted to present the fall line-up of programs, beginning in September. Topics, dates and available information are contained in this issue. Note the date of the first fall meeting taking place on September 20, due to McNabb Center renovations earlier in the month.

Our 2016-17 program year is shaping up to be interesting and exciting. We encourage you to come out to the meetings and workshops, engage with your fellow writers, enjoy a cookie and a cuppa and learn something you may not already know about the art and business of writing.



# September Meeting

**TOPIC:**

**OTTAWA INTERNATIONAL  
WRITERS FESTIVAL**

Nina Drystek gives us a behind-the-scenes look at the 2016 Ottawa International Writers Festival.

Tues., September 20, 2016  
7:00 p.m.

McNabb Recreation Centre  
180 Percy Street, Ottawa

# Standing up to take a chair

BY ARLENE SMITH

Why be the chair of the Canadian Authors Association branch in Ottawa? That is the question I asked myself before I took the leap. I have a busy schedule, like everyone else. I have family commitments, like everyone else. I have other writing to do. So why?

Here's why. I have agreed to be chair because many of the activities that busy schedule of mine is full of are opportunities that came to me because of skills I learned through my connection with CAA or people I met through CAA. I've taken on this task because my family is now grown and they don't need me to care for them, but they do need me to model community service. I have agreed to be chair of the organization that was the first to advocate for the writers' rights that are now mine when I complete my other writing.

As a professional writer in Ottawa and in Canada I benefit from the work that the CAA began in 1921. I honour the founding members, and every writer since, when I do my part. That's why I'm standing up to take the chair position.

One of my goals for the coming year is to put together what I'll call my "Idea Energy" group. We understand that everyone has busy lives and can't make a long-term commitment to particular tasks. That's fair. But we would still like to benefit from your support, your ideas, your input. The people in this group will only have to commit to meet once—maybe twice—per year. We will meet in February to brainstorm about activities for the following year. We will meet again in May, if we feel there is a need.

I am looking forward to a fun and productive 2016-17 year, with your helpful support, ideas and input along the way.



2016 National Capital  
Writing Contest - Poetry  
Third Place

Who will feed the Flowers  
by Helen Gamble, Perth ON

Who now will tend the flowers  
At the old burial ground?  
Who now will tend the flowers  
Now that he is gone?  
Eighty-three on bended knee  
Hatless, careless,  
Hands deep in debris,  
Deadheads and weeds,  
He laboured on  
Nurturing nature  
While tulips showed their heads  
And Others slept beneath.  
Do you suppose  
That even now,  
With nature nurturing,  
That his mortal body  
In eternal sleep  
Labours still.....  
Feeding the flowers  
At the Old Burial Ground?

**From the author, Helen Gamble:** *This is a tribute, taken from real life. I would walk my dog, Vinnie, at Last Duel Park here in Perth. Adjacent to the park is The Old Burial Ground, from the early 1800's. (This year is Perth's 200th Anniversary). I would find my good friend, an elderly gentleman, tending the flowers, heedless of hot sun. I'd stop to chat and give him water. When he passed away, this poem emerged from my head and my heart.*

# The 2016 Canadian Writers' Summit

BY ARLENE SMITH

THE CANADIAN AUTHORS Association was one of fourteen organizations that helped to host a writing super-conference in June 2016. Hundreds of people from across Canada came to the Harbourfront Centre in Toronto to steep themselves in the world of writing.

Attendees were invited to enjoy four days of professional development sessions, networking opportunities, and social gatherings. Keynote speakers included Lawrence Hill, Jean Little, Kenneth Oppel and Heather O'Neill. The summit also included the annual Book Summit, which focuses on publishing.

This was the first time the organizations joined together to host such a large conference. The harbourfront setting beautiful and participants were able to sit in the sunshine or stroll along the waterfront. They could enjoy the restaurants, shopping and other Toronto attractions within walking distance.

As always, with a first-time event, there were logistical and scheduling glitches that were noticeable but not overly disruptive, and Canadian Authors Association members familiar with the intimate atmosphere of past CAA conferences missed that sense of close camaraderie.

At the moment, organizers plan to the event to be held every second year. They have gathered feedback from participants to take forward to make the 2018 session even more impressive.

## Spread the Word

If you enjoy reading *Byline* magazine, share your copy with other writers or readers, or have them contact the *Byline* editor, to receive their own copies directly.

**PREPARING FOR WINTER  
BY GERRY MOONEY**

November's palette is dreary,  
coloring the park with many  
shades of grey. Slate river waves  
bounce, jostle each other,

toss whitecaps to the wind,  
chortle and chase them to shore  
where tall trees stand  
in shy nakedness,

musky garments  
abandoned at their feet  
rustling taffeta-like  
with each chilly gust.

The windmill's one silver eye  
spins ferociously, monitoring  
river and pond, while  
lighthouse stares in disbelief

as sailboats are craned  
from their moorings,  
carted off to storage.  
Olive-coloured goslings

now tuxedoed into black, white  
and tan of mature geese  
depart on their first migration  
honking a frenzied farewell.

And then it is over.  
The park is quiet, colorless,  
a lonely place  
waiting for Winter

to bluster and bellow,  
display his force and fury,  
eclipse both earth and sky  
in blinding, raging snow.

**BIO:** Over the last two years, Nepean poet Gerry Mooney, a member of TOPS, has had poems published in *Canadian Stories* and several TOPS anthologies. She won awards in the 2015 and 2016 CAA National Capital poetry competitions and in the 2015 William Henry Drummond poetry contest.

2016  
*National Capital  
Writing Contest*  
**POETRY**  
*Honourable Mention*  
Gerry Mooney



Gerry Mooney with  
NCWC Co-ordinator, Sherrill Wark

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mailing list?

If you wish to receive *Byline* or our  
email updates, send your information  
to

[Arlene Smith.](#)

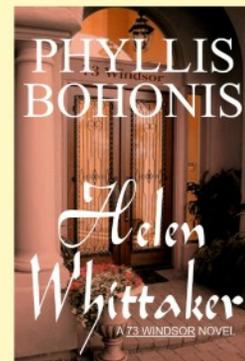
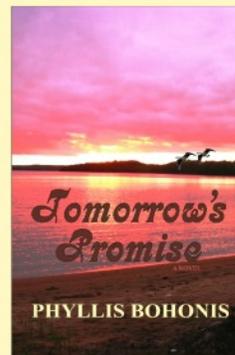
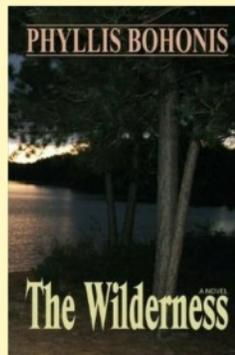
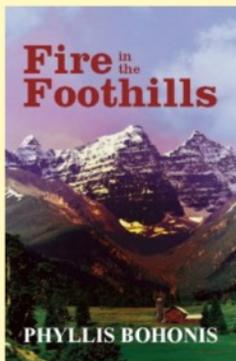
## JOIN OUR FACEBOOK GROUP!

Join the CAA-NCR [Facebook group page](#) to receive updates on meetings, workshops, author activities and other news of interest to writers. Add your suggestions or comments about our programs, or share your news.



## CAA-NCR IS ON TWITTER

Follow us [@caa\\_ncr](#) for writing tips and connections with other Ottawa area writers.



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**COMING SOON:** *The Track* (suspense) & *Margaret McFarland* (romance e-book)

# Our 2016-17 Program

## Another busy season

BY DEBBIE ROSE, PROGRAM CHAIR

CAA-NCR IS GEARING up for another busy season of presentations by local authors at our monthly meetings at McNabb Recreation Centre, 180 Percy Street, Ottawa.

Our meetings usually take place on the second Tuesday of the month and start at 7:00 p.m., beginning with some refreshments and a few minutes of branch business, followed by a presentation from our star attraction.

However, the first meeting of the new season will be on the third Tuesday of the month—September 20, as the McNabb Recreation Centre is closed for annual maintenance for the first two weeks of September.

### Tuesday, September 20

**Nina Drystek** from the Ottawa International Writers' Festival will join us to discuss this fall's lineup and to give us a peek into what happens behind the scenes to put the festival together.

### Tuesday, October 11

**Sonia Tilson**, author of *The Monkey Puzzle Tree*, and *The Disappearing Boy*, will make the case that, when it comes to writing, "Better Late than Never" is better than not writing at all. At the point of retirement, many people know they would like to write but feel it's too late to start. Sonia will talk about the circumstances that led to her experience as a very late-bloomer in the world of publishing.

BIO: Sonia was born in Swansea and educated at Monmouth School for Girls and the University of Wales, Swansea. In 1964 she immigrated to Canada, settling in Ottawa. An English teacher all her working life, she has

taught at Elmwood School for Girls, Algonquin College, Carleton University, and the University of Ottawa.

### Tuesday, November 8

Local crime writer **Brenda Chapman** will present her topic "On Becoming a Serial Writer". She will share her process for beginning a series and keeping the plot-lines flowing. With three separate mystery series under her belt, Brenda has written for the young adult, adult and adult literacy markets and will share her experiences and writing tips.

BIO: Brenda is an Ottawa crime writer who has penned three series and a few stand-alone novels. Her books have been shortlisted for several major awards, including the 2006 Canadian Library Association Book of the Year Award for Children, two Golden Oak awards for adult literacy, and two Crime Writers of Canada Arthur Ellis awards for best novella and crime novel. Brenda is a former special education teacher and senior communications advisor, now writing full time. She lives in Ottawa.

### Fall workshop

**First Page Challenge**, in cooperation with the Ottawa branch of the **Editors' Association of Canada**. At one of the most popular sessions at the Canadian Writers Summit, authors submitted the first page of their work to editors and publishers and received feedback on whether or not those savvy literary professionals would want to turn to page 2. Have you written a ripper of a first page? Find out this autumn.

Details to follow.



## Our Website

For CAA-NCR Branch programs and activities, or to see what your fellow writers are up to, check our website.

Current and back issues of *Byline* are available on the site.

[canadianauthors.org/nationalcapitalregion](http://canadianauthors.org/nationalcapitalregion)

Canadian Authors Association  
National Capital Region  
Branch

2016-2017 Executive and  
Coordinators

Please feel free to contact any of the following with suggestions or concerns.

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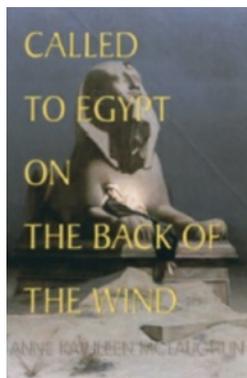
*Writers Helping Writers*

Author Showcase

*Called to Egypt on the Back of the Wind*

borealispress.com

BY ANNE KATHLEEN MCLAUGHLIN

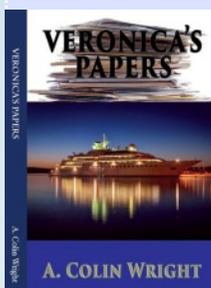


Jean Houston leads students through the temples, tombs and pyramids of Egypt in a quest for a new planetary spirituality. The myth of Isis and Osiris becomes a catalyst for the healing of old wounds related to love.

Copies available from Borealis Press, at Singing Pebbles bookstore on Main Street across from Saint Paul University in Ottawa, at the Ottawa Public Librayr or from Anne Kathleen.

*Veronica's Papers*

By A. Colin Wright



Gerald Clayton, suffering from amnesia, receives a package of papers from Veronica, a former clinical hypnotist. She tells him they accomplished his fantasy of gathering together, on the ship *Marguerite*, his past loves with the two of them present, but in disguise.

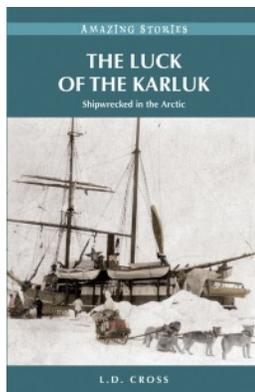
In hopes of discovering his own past. Gerald invites the passengers to share in a mystery by guessing what, or whom, they all have in common.

"Veronica's Papers has an amazing premise that makes the reader think about the likelihood and outcome of such an experiment in his or her own life." Cold Coffee Press.

Available: <http://www.coldcoffeepress.com>

*The Luck of the Karluk: Shipwrecked in the Arctic*

BY L.D. CROSS



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# Characters: Your story's life blood

BY BARBARA KYLE

This is the first article in a 4-part series: *Writing the Page-Turner*.

*You take people, you put them on a journey, you give them peril, you find out who they really are.*

— Joss Whedon



## Stories are about people.

That seems obvious, doesn't it? Yet emerging writers often get so carried away constructing elaborate, convoluted plots, or, more commonly, get so engrossed in style—so obsessed with word choice they forget this simple, essential focus. Stories are about

people.

Long after a book's clever plot twists have been forgotten and the author's carefully sculpted prose has become a blur, what lingers in a reader's mind is the impression of the characters. Vibrant, unique characters can live on for decades, sometimes for centuries.

Robinson Crusoe. Moll Flanders. Elizabeth Bennet. Victor Frankenstein. Oliver Twist. Cathy and Heathcliff. Anna Karenina. Jane Eyre. Ebenezer Scrooge. Sherlock Holmes. Huckleberry Finn. Jeeves. Scarlett O'Hara. Atticus Finch. Lolita. Jay Gatsby. Mary Poppins. Holden Caulfield. 'The Godfather' Don Corleone. Harry Potter. Katniss Everdeen.

You only have to say their names to conjure up entire, distinct worlds.

## The Bond of Intimacy

Forging a deep intimacy with characters is why readers love stories. Perhaps it's because in life we can never know everything about anyone. I've lived with my husband for many years and know him very well, but I can never know *exactly* what he's thinking and feeling, what he's hoping and fearing.

In a novel, though, you *can* know people. Here's what E. M. Forster, the author of *A Passage to India* and *Howard's End* among other novels, says about this in one of his 1927 Cambridge lectures collected in the book *Aspects of the Novel*:

"We cannot understand each other, except in a rough and ready way; we cannot reveal ourselves, even when we want to; what we call intimacy is only a makeshift; perfect knowledge is an illusion. But in the novel we can know people perfectly...and find here a compensation for their dimness in life. In this direction fiction is truer than history, because it goes beyond the evidence, and each of us knows from his own experience that there is something beyond the evidence."—E.M. Forster

The "something beyond the evidence" is a person's inner, secret life. Or a character's. Glimpsing that inner life and sensing what drives the character, for good or ill, is the connection readers crave.

## Character-Driven vs. Plot-Driven

Critics will sometimes categorize a novel as either "plot driven" or "character driven." When they say a book is "plot driven" it's their shorthand for saying the story is exciting but the characters are a little thin. For example, a Tom Clancy techno-thriller might be called "plot-driven." When a critic says a story is "character driven" that's shorthand for saying the characters are complex and fascinating but the plot is a little thin. Many literary novels, such as *Saturday* by Ian McEwan or *Olive Kitteridge* by Elizabeth Strout, might be called "character driven."

Shorthand may be necessary for critics, but for writers this binary reduction is a false taxonomy. It's meaningless. Because the simple fact is that *all* stories are character driven. Plot cannot exist without characters. Characters create plot.

What's at work here is causality. E. M. Forster summed it up thus: "The king died and then the queen

*continued on page 9*

## CHARACTERS

*continued from page 8*

died," is just a sequence of events, but "The king died and then the queen died of grief" is a plot. The queen's sorrow caused her death. The characters *caused* the plot.

To illustrate this dynamic further, let's look at two of Shakespeare's best known characters: Hamlet and Romeo. What do we know about Hamlet's character? He is introspective, analytical, cautious. What do we know about Romeo's character? He's passionate, intrepid, bold.

In Act 1 of *Hamlet*, Hamlet encounters the ghost of his dead father who tells him he was murdered by his own brother, Claudius. This stuns Hamlet, because his Uncle Claudius is now married to Hamlet's mother and is king. The play is about Hamlet longing to take revenge on Claudius but being constantly restrained by his own meditative, analytical character. Now, what if Romeo found himself in that situation? Desperate to avenge his father's death, Romeo, being passionate and impetuous, would kill Claudius in Act I and the story would end—there would be no *Hamlet* plot.

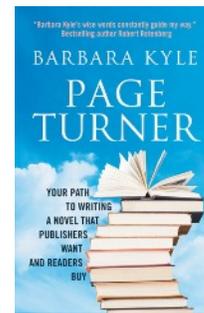
Likewise, by the end of Act I of *Romeo and Juliet* Romeo is so madly in love with Juliet he'll risk everything to be with her, even risk being killed by her family. But if Hamlet found himself in Romeo's Act I situation, he might become so engrossed in pondering the existential nature of love that Juliet, unaware that he adores her, would obediently marry Paris, the man her parents have

chosen for her, and the story would end. No *Romeo and Juliet* plot.

So, always remember this. Character creates plot. Period. It's a vital piece of knowledge to help you on your path to creating a page-turner.



*BIO: Barbara Kyle is the author of the acclaimed Thornleigh Saga series of historical novels and of contemporary thrillers, with over 450,000 copies sold in seven countries. Barbara has taught writers at the University of Toronto, and is a popular presenter at writers conferences. Her master classes and manuscript evaluations have helped launch many writers to published success. Barbara's book Page-Turner: Your Path to Writing a Novel That Publishers Want and Readers Buy will be released in November 2016. Visit [www.BarbaraKyle.com](http://www.BarbaraKyle.com).*



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## Did You Know?

### The Writers' Coalition Program Health and Dental Insurance

If you're a member of **Canadian Authors**, you are eligible for a group health and benefit plan.

Underwritten by ACTRA Fraternal Benefit Society (AFBS), the Writers' Coalition Program is a simple way to assist writers in managing health care costs. Writers get the coverage they need—minus the complications. No medical questionnaires and they won't deny access because of pre-existing conditions—guaranteed acceptance.

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Details: [www.writerscoalition.ca](http://www.writerscoalition.ca)

# Leveller

BY ADRIENNE STEVENSON

## 2016 NCWC Short Story Third Place

**M**Y SISTER ELLIE isn't the swiftest bird in the flock. This morning, she was cooing over a rodent that got into our kitchen.

"Oh Julie! Just look at the sweet little mousie!"

Mousie? More like Ratzilla, as far as I was concerned. But, when I tried to take a broom to it, did I get grief.

"You can't clobber the poor thing. You just can't."

Well, what was I to do? I smacked her, instead. Not all that hard, but she shrieked and ran. Then, when she was in the bedroom picking straw out of her hair, I cornered and bashed the rat, and took it out to the compost heap, on the far side of the garden, near the greenhouse. I could hear the crows taking note -- it wouldn't last long.

We didn't always live in a deteriorating cottage, open to rat invasions. Before the Big Levelling and the currency collapse, we had a house in town, with city water, reliable electricity, and a working furnace. Nowadays, nobody has that stuff. We don't think about what it's like in the towns. You hear stories up at the depot. I try not to listen when they get to talking about it.

We're lucky we had a cottage on a good-sized lake to come to. So far, we haven't been bothered a lot by looters, either. Well, there's nothing much for them to take, is there. Not worth hacking through the overgrown road or braving our little trail out to

the highway. We don't make the trek often ourselves.

See, we've managed to carve ourselves out enough bare ground to grow a few vegetables and medicinal herbs, and keep a few chickens and rabbits. We cut wood for the stove, and sleep beside it in winter. Every so often, one of us walks up to the depot to see if they have any flour, or candles. Sometimes they do, and we trade crops or one of our bits of jewellery for some.

Funny, that people still want jewellery. You can't eat the stuff.

When there's no more flour, we'll have to make do with potatoes, I guess. So far we're thinner, but mostly healthy. And tired enough most days not to want to sit up past dark. Like I said, nobody much bothers us.

Except for the most determined.

Ellie says it was Tuesday, but what does it matter? Tuesday, Wednesday – they're all the same.

We were out hilling potatoes and picking off the bugs when a man wearing a backpack came out of the woods. He stopped at the edge of our field, polite-like, and called out a halloo.

Ellie looked down at the plants, and kept picking, but I halloosed back, and he started walking towards us. I leaned on my hoe and sized him up. Ordinary enough guy, a little taller than me and a little shorter than Ellie. Brown hair; brown eyes; brown shoes. Faded clothes that might once have been blue. Lines in his forehead labelled him a worrier.

"Can I rest a while here, maybe get a drink?"

I spoke for us. "Sure you can, water's in the lake. Hasn't poisoned us yet."

He nodded, dropped his pack, and unhooked the tin mug that swung from its side. He lifted it in my direction and headed for the beach. There's a little patch of sand among the reeds that we use to get in to swim or fetch water. He sure was thirsty. Three mugs later he rose up, face dripping, and came back towards us.

"Thank you, miss...ma'am," he said. He lowered his head and stared at his cracked shoe-tops.

"You know where I might find the Blaydon family? A man at the last depot I stopped at said they might live on one of the lakes in this area."

"You're in luck, mister," I said. "Julie and Ellie Blaydon, that's us."

"Just you? I thought I might find Marty Blaydon, too." His brow creased even tighter.

"Marty's our brother," said Ellie, with a swift look up at him. "Haven't seen him since we came out from town." She looked down again.

"Don't much want to see him, either," I said. "What do you want with him?"

"He has something of mine. Something he was keeping for me."

"And what would that be?" I asked. "And who are you, anyway?" Not a peep from Ellie. I guess potato bugs are more interesting than men.

*continued on page 11*

He flushed a shade of overripe tomato. "Vince Peters. I should have said. Manners gone the way of civilization, I guess. Marty had some letters he salvaged when...he left me a message at the warehouse."

"Were you one of his customers?"

"Yes."

Ellie raised her head and gave me one of her looks.

"What?" I asked.

"Nothing," she said. "I'll put the kettle on. I want some tea." She took the bucket of drowned potato bugs and stomped off towards the cottage.

"Tea?" asked Vince.

"It's only herbs. What were you expecting? Boiled potato bug?"

Vince laughed. He got more talkative then. He said that Marty had promised him a cut of his drug business. He said he'd seen our herb garden clearing, the one with the opium poppies and half-mature marijuana plants, on his way in from the highway. He said he wanted in, wanted part of the take. Said he had no place else to go and this looked like a comfortable spot. He even made a half-assed pass in my direction. Said if I didn't want him, he'd have a go with Ellie.

Well, I wasn't having any of that. A sharp blow to his nose with my hoe felled him like a dried-up cornstalk, and

a cut to his temple finished him off. He looked better dead. A bit surprised, but all the wrinkles were relaxed out of his forehead. By the time Ellie came to the door to see what was keeping us, I had already dragged him halfway across the field. She shook her head, but joined me.

"I hate it when you do that. Did you have to?"

"For another of Marty's friends? What do you think?"

We buried him alongside the other rats, under the compost. It's nearly two years since the Levelling, and sometimes I wonder just how many friends of Marty's are going to try it on with us. That makes four, so far. Five, if you count Marty himself. I think I'll need to start another compost pile.

Ellie says I'm too hasty, but what can I do?

It's a matter of survival.



*BIO: Adrienne Stevenson survived a career of 32 years as a federal public service scientist, and now divides her time between garden, books and computer, with musical digressions. An aspiring writer of stories, articles and poems, her work has been published in Quills, Byline, Anglo-Celtic Roots, and on the website of Geist magazine, and her stories have won prizes (Ottawa Public Library 50+, CAA-NCR Short Story) or been short-listed (Capital Crime Writers) in local contests.*

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## CAA-NCR Membership

BY FRANCOIS MAI, MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

**C**AA-NCR BRANCH IS part of the national organization of the Canadian Authors Association. Being part of a country-wide group is a major asset as it makes us aware of what is happening to authors and publishing in all parts of the country. In particular, the CAA organizes an annual conference to which leading Canadian authors, publishers and agents are invited, so authors get a chance to meet with them, pitch their writings and hone their creative skills.

The local branch organizes monthly meetings in the region, held between the months of September and May. Local authors, agents and others involved in marketing your books are invited as speakers to help develop our writing and marketing skills. These meetings have major educational value.

Members and other writers in the community are encouraged to submit to our quarterly e-magazine, *Byline*, articles related to the creative, business or professional aspects of writing. We welcome your input and your point of view on any topic.

Finally, the Branch holds an annual poetry and short story competition, the National Capital Writing Contest, open to writers from Ontario and Quebec. We have heard some fascinating presentations on Awards Night at the May meeting!

## Byline Advertising New Rates for Quarterly Publication

MEMBERS ARE ENTITLED TO A 1/8 PAGE ADVERTISEMENT IN EACH ISSUE OF *BYLINE* AT NO COST.

New bits for the “Kudos” column, or member book reviews *are still free for branch members.*

### Otherwise, Member Rates are:

Single issue: 1/8 Byline page: N/C  
1/4 Byline page: \$15  
1/2 Byline page: \$30

One year - (4 issues - price of three)  
Quarterly 1/8 Byline page: N/C  
1/4 Byline page: \$45  
1/2 Byline page: \$90

### Non-Member Rates

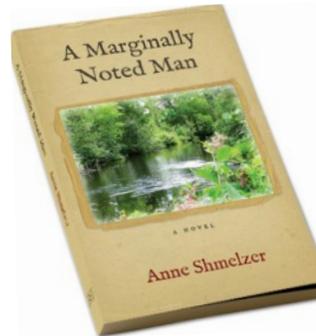
Single issue: 1/8 Byline page: \$15  
1/4 Byline page: \$30  
1/2 Byline page: \$50

One year: (4 issues - price of three)  
Quarterly 1/8 Byline page: \$45  
1/4 Byline page: \$90  
1/2 Byline page: \$150

**Note:** Yearly prices reflect the cost of three issues; the fourth publication is free. For more information, contact *Byline*. *Byline* is distributed by e-mail to those on our extensive CAA–NCR mailing list. **To have your name added to our mailing lists, contact the editor.**

## Author Showcase

### *A Marginally Noted Man* by Anne Shmelzer



**T**HIS TIMELESS AND poignant story portrays Will Nicol’s internal struggle to regain his sanity after five years in the WW1 trenches of Flanders Fields and explores the central themes of lasting love and friendship. Will’s journey plunges readers into the moral ambiguity of war, his recuperative convalescence with Trappist monks and his courage in confronting his memories and demons, as he searches for redemption.

Shmelzer’s debut novel has received the endorsement of Col Rakesh Jetly, Chief Psychiatrist for the Canadian Armed Forces, who said: “Anne Shmelzer displays an acute understanding of the warfare experience. She shines a light on the early emergence of PTSD and creates a vivid image of Will Nicol’s internal struggle to regain his mental health. From the battlefields of the Western Front to his reintegration into society, *A Marginally Noted Man* takes us on an emotional journey that is difficult to put down. This is a great read!”

Anne’s passion for writing was first nurtured during her childhood, which was spent between Toronto and Madoc Township, and further enhanced through her experiences as a psychiatric nurse, musician and poet.

*A Marginally Noted Man* is available through the publisher’s website [railwaycreekbooks.ca](http://railwaycreekbooks.ca), Amazon (link), Kobo (link), and iBook stores (link). Print editions are also available at **Perfect Books** and **Books on Beechwood** in Ottawa, **The Book Nook** in Perth and **Novel Idea** in Kingston.

### Title of Your Book BY YOU

Your  
Book

This corner could be yours to promote your books, advertise your services, or draw attention to your blog.

A 1/8 page *Byline* ad is FREE to CAA–NCR members. Non-members - \$15.00 per single issue.

See additional pricing in this issue, or contact [Byline](mailto:editor@byline.ca) for details.

# Developing Creative Promotional Ideas

## Tapping Your Innate Creativity

BY BARBARA FLORIO GRAHAM



**T**HIS IS THE last of four articles about how you can increase your creativity to achieve your goals.

It would be best to read these in order, beginning with the Introduction which appeared in the Fall 2015, *Byline*. Each article deals with a different concept.

These articles are not structured the same as the online course I teach. Do consider taking that tutorial, which is customized for you, with specific comments on assignments. I offer it on a flexible schedule, to suit your busy life. Go to my website to see the full description and testimonials: <http://SimonTeakettle.com/tapping.htm>.

Do you often wonder, when you watch a clever TV commercial, how ad agencies generate ideas?

I worked at an ad agency for a brief time the year after I graduated from university, and realized that the best technique was just to toss out random ideas, doodle on a white board, and create an atmosphere more like a playground than an office.

It wasn't unusual to have a create director dance around the table, while an artist circulated quick sketches, some of which were balled up and tossed, or shredded into ribbons. These were not destructive acts, but rather a way to see ideas in a different way.

Throughout history, inventors took conventional ideas and added a touch of novelty.

Prof Colin Raston, a chemist from Flinders University in South Australia, solved a problem in his lab by successfully unboiling an egg, reverting gelatinous whites back into liquid form. It was an achievement that in 2015 earned the research team an Ig Nobel Prize for Chemistry.

The brains of creative geniuses and people with schizophrenia are similar in surprising ways. They both have an extremely active precuneus, the area that facilitates daydreaming and free association. The only differ-

ence is that, unlike people with schizophrenia, creative geniuses can distinguish between fantasy and reality.

I've always believed in the adage that if something is hard, you should figure out how to make it easier, and if it seems impossible, you should see if you can find a way to attempt it.

That's what led me to training the first Simon Teakettle as if he were a dog. Not only did that work remarkably well, but my article "**Training Your Cat Like a Dog**" won the \$1000 special award for best article on training from the Cat Writers' Association.

We have no idea what the brain is capable of. Humans are able to learn several languages at once, and many different musical instruments in childhood.

I had a college roommate who played 16 different musical instruments. She learned most of them simultaneously as a child, because her parents loved music and Sandy's curiosity was happily satisfied at will. She was brilliant and so multi-talented that she became a leading art historian. She has now, at age 80, started to write mysteries based in the art world. And she still plays the flute, guitar and percussion!

Recent experiments with helping increase both speed and comprehension have revealed that we take in information in different ways. Some people read more quickly and retain more information when lines are shorter, or when fonts are bolder, or in different colors. A new pattern called BeeLine starts a new sentence in the middle of a line in a different color, so that the beginning of each line is in a different color than the ones above and below. That's a creative use of color put to good use!

Improv performers trained at Second City mention the technique they use called "Yes, and..." This is a way to extend a current idea into new territory.

There are other creative prompts you might try when you think you've reached the end of a scene, or are stuck finding a clever way to promote your work. Try "And yet..." or "Or maybe..."

Design Taxi, a group that creates new products for existing companies, describes the basics of the design process. Here are their five steps you might want to use

*continued on page 14*

## DEVELOPING CREATIVE PROMOTIONAL IDEAS

*continued from page 13*

when you're designing a logo, your website home page, or promotional materials:

**Empathize:** Learn about and understand your audience.

**Define:** Narrow the problem you're addressing to a simple statement.

**Ideate:** Brainstorm solutions to your problem statement.

**Prototype:** Create a first draft of your design that you can use to demonstrate your solution to a potential audience.

**Test:** Show your prototype to your a sample audience, gauge reactions, and adapt as necessary.

Meanwhile, here's something to ponder, from Trina Paulus: "How does one become a butterfly? You must want to fly so much that you are willing to give up being a caterpillar." 

**BIO:** *Barbara Florio Graham is an award-winning author, publishing consultant and marketing strategist. Her popular workshop on creativity has won accolades from participants all over the world, and is now taught as an online tutorial. See the wealth of free information on her website: <http://SimonTeakettle.com>.*



canadian  
authors

## Writing Circles

We currently have two circles:

one on the  
**third Saturday of each month, 9:00 a.m.** at  
McNabb Community Center on Percy St.,  
and one in the west end.

Writing circles are an exciting way to get valuable feedback on your own work and improve your writing through critiquing that of others.

Join a **CAA** Writing Circle—a great opportunity for a writer!

Participation is **FREE** to **CAA members**.  
Non-CAA-members may join for \$75 for the year.

For more information or to join a writing circle, contact:

Ottawa Centre  
West end



# Canadian Authors Association

The local and national organization for professional and emerging writers across Canada



THE CANADIAN AUTHORS ASSOCIATION provides writers with a wide variety of programs, services and resources to help them develop their skills in both the craft and the business of writing, enhance their ability to earn a living as a writer, and have access to a Canada-wide network of writers and publishing industry professionals.

We are a membership-based organization for writers in all areas of the profession— aspiring, emerging and professional—in every genre and across all writing-related professions. As a not-for-profit national arts service organization, much of what we do benefits all writers, whether they are members or are affiliated with us as partners or through other writing groups.

## What We Do

- Advocate for the protection of rights and equitable treatment for writers
- Help members promote their work through a members' book catalogue, online directory, advertising opportunities, book fairs, readings and touring support
- Provide writers with up-to-date information on awards, contests, opportunities, calls for submissions and writing conferences and retreats via monthly national bulletins, branch newsletters, and the website
- Provide learning opportunities for writers at every stage through webinars, podcasts, and CanWrite! – our national conference
- Showcase Canada's incredible literary talent through our literary awards, ezine, website, social media, conference – and whatever other media we have at hand

## Our Mission

The Canadian Authors Association (CAA) is a national organization with a local presence dedicated to promoting a flourishing community of writers across Canada and to encouraging works of literary and artistic merit. We do this by

- providing opportunities for professional development
- promoting the fair and equitable treatment of writers
- increasing public awareness of Canada's writing and publishing environment



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### BYLINE DEADLINES

*Byline* is a quarterly publication of the National Capital Region Branch of the Canadian Authors Association.

Submissions of articles, poems, writing tips, interviews, literary events and member achievements are welcome.

Deadlines:  
Fall Issue: August 15  
Winter Issue: November 15  
Spring Issue: March 15  
Summer Issue: May 15  
Send to *Byline*