

An Interview with Marylyn Peringer

Storytelling Ramblings

I am blessed to have known Marylyn Peringer for well over three decades. Together we made our first forays into the world of children's culture, I as a singer and Marylyn as a teller. Marylyn continues to shine brightly as a teller of tales for people of all ages. Here is a glimpse into her thoughts on being a storyteller. – Deborah Dunleavy

DD: What opened the door to storytelling for you?

MP: It was the stories themselves that opened the door, although I didn't know it at the time. Gisele, my French Conversation teacher, asked everyone in our class to prepare a half-hour speech in French on a subject of our own choice. My lack of expertise in any particular area prompted me to reach for my husband's second-hand books of Quebec folktales; he had bought them for the illustrations by Canadian artists. The stories captivated me so much that on the day it was my turn to speak I went on for long past 30 minutes. The class liked my exposé and one woman suggested, "Why don't you tell those stories in schools? The kids would love them." I liked her idea because I found that sharing good stories with others was even more fun than reading them by



myself. And so instead of going back to work as an English teacher, something I was contemplating at the time; I decided I would return to the classroom by telling stories in schools.

DD: Do you remember your first for-

A Note From the Editor

"No story sits by itself."



"No story sits by itself. Sometimes stories meet at corners and sometimes they cover one another completely, like stones beneath a river." – Mitch Albom, *the five people you meet in heaven*.

This quote resonates for me as I

ays into telling? How have things changed?

When I began to visit schools, my repertoire was limited to French-Canadian folklore. Listening to the tellers at 1,001 Friday Nights of Storytelling made me realize I could explore other stories. So now my material is more varied, with stories from all over the world, including my mother's native country, Malta. I used to get stage fright in my early days, but learned through experience to put trust in my stories. And because of recent immigration trends, the demographics of my audience have changed. There are students from Russia or Iran who know about Mullah Nasruddin; many young people from the Indian subcontinent can tell traditional stories from their own cultural background.

DD: What drew you toward the French Canadian stories and legends?

MP: First of all, they were new to me,

sift through the pages of Pippin. I see where our personal stories intersect with one another and I recognize how the fabric of life is built upon our desire to share life's stories with each other.

We have all started up conversations with complete strangers at a party, in a doctor's office, in a line up at the grocery store. It doesn't take long before you realize what it is that you have in common with the other person – or in some cases what you do not have in common. But it is

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A World Full of Stories — cont'd

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through the overlaying of our stories that we are able to come to this "corner" in our lives.

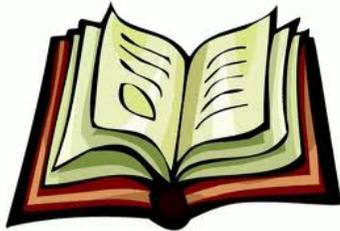
Stories are the cement that glues our lives together. These are the personal stories that are repeated over and over again by the elders in our families. And they are the stories we take to heart from faraway lands and imaginable places. But it is the human

condition of these stories that excites us to tell them and to hear them.

It has always been my goal as editor to have Pippin serve as a conduit for you to bring your stories about each other to print and in so doing strengthen our relationship with one another. Only by sharing at the corner of our storytelling lives are we able to appreciate the great work we are doing as tellers.



****NOTA BENE****



BOOK NOOK

We realize that the publishing industry is having a tough time but folks are still reading, aren't they, albeit it might be on an electronic format. And I am sure there are oodles of great storytelling resources out there that folks would like to hear about – or read about as the case may

be in Pippin. Here's the scoop. Please go to your own storytelling bookshelves and pull out your storytelling "Bible" or "Koran". Send in your take on why that book has inspired you, serves you well, or amuses you. We'll share these mini reviews in the next edition of Pippin.

Every Friday night since 1978 storytellers and listeners have been gathering in downtown Toronto. Each evening is hosted by an accomplished storyteller. Anyone is welcome to tell a story.

Every Friday night is unique.



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1,001

FRIDAY NIGHTS

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PIPPIN is the newsletter of
Storytelling Toronto



The Storytellers School of Toronto is a registered, non-profit organization that provides a creative home for a community of storytellers,

listeners, and story-explorers. Our mission is to inspire, encourage and support storytelling for listeners, tellers and those who have not yet heard. Since 1979 we have been providing courses and workshops; holding gatherings, festivals and events to celebrate and present the art of storytelling; supporting the creative work of storytellers; and producing publications about storytelling and storytellers.

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Listings

Marylyn Peringer

Program Leaders

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unlike the folktales that I already knew: Grimm, Perrault, the classics of Greece and Rome. These new stories were peopled with dark, fascinating characters and themes: the loup-garou (werewolf), the feu-follet (will o' the wisp), la chasse-galerie (the flying canoe) and le diable (the devil) himself. They were suspenseful. They were funny, especially when that tricky diable was tricked himself by a clever French-Canadian. And the stories took place in a landscape of snow, forests, rivers, and farming communities that were so recognizably CANADIAN!

DD: Who do you most admire in the storytelling world today? And why?

MP: I admire many, for their different contributions to storytelling. There's Dan Yashinky, of course, who keeps finding more and more ways to bring storytelling to new audiences, and who unselfishly promotes and encourages other storytellers as much as he looks after himself. I admire people like Louis Bird who preserves and tells the traditions of his First Nations people. I have great

respect for the unsung heroes of the 1,001 Friday Nights hosting team and for the many others who organize storytelling concerts, festivals and regular gatherings. And I have a special regard for Norman Perrin, for assembling what must be one of the best storytelling collections on the continent and for generously opening his Four Winds library to the storytelling community.

DD: What has been your most recent discovery in your art as a storyteller?

MP: I've discovered how much I enjoy collaboration. In the past few years I've had the opportunity to work in various community projects as part of a storytelling team: Four in Hand. Planning, evaluating and the sessions

themselves have been very stimulating. I've also partnered several times with a mural artist whose suggestions have influenced my choice of stories to appear on a particular wall space in a school. After I've told the students the stories and asked them what pictures they've imagined while listening, she helps them to reproduce the images which form the mural. What a joy to see so many of the stories I've told through the eyes of my young listeners.

DD: What do you think is the biggest challenge facing storytellers today?

MP: I'm not sure. Perhaps it's balanc-



ing the need for the self-promotion suitable in the digital age - web site, videos, etc. - with the need to maintain the honesty and simplicity of good storytelling.

DD: If you could pass on advice to an aspiring teller what would that be?

MP: Keep learning the craft. Read. Listen. Tell. Belong to a community of tellers. If there isn't one near you, form one.

DD: Of all the places you have told which stands out as being the most memorable and why?

MP: It's memorable to tell stories of the stars and constellations in a planetarium, and that has happened to me in three places: the Ontario Science Centre, the Winnipeg Museum and

the planetarium at Laurentian University in Sudbury (which has since closed, unfortunately). In each case, the domed ceiling of the planetarium theatre was covered with stars and I narrated in total darkness, except for the laser flashlight which located the relevant constellations in the story I was telling.

DD: Do you have a humorous incident to share?

MP: I was telling a diable story to a class of Grade 4's in Ottawa. A young, rather naive nun was preparing to cross a bridge at the invitation of the man who had just repaired it for her, a

handsome stranger clad all in black, waiting at the opposite side. "And all at once," I continued, "the good woman realized that the stranger was no ordinary man who went about fixing bridges. No! It was---" and here I spoke directly to my listeners. "Do you know who this man really was?" From the tone of my voice, the look in my eyes, Grade 4 knew it was somebody bad, and they replied appropriately: "A robber, a kidnapper a murderer?" "Worse than that," I kept repeating. They weren't going to get it; I would have to tell them myself. And then a red-

haired boy in the back row started waving his hand energetically. Thank goodness! "Yes," I said. "Who was the stranger?" "It was her ex-husband!" he announced. After that, identification of the stranger as the devil was quite an anticlimax. The session came to an end. It happened to be Valentine's Day and as he was leaving the room, the red-headed boy came up and gave me a Valentine's card cut from one of those books of valentines they sell at the stationery counter. This card said "Don't forget me." "No fear," I told him. "I'll never forget you."

DD: Do you have a favorite quote?

MP: When an old person dies, a whole library is lost. (African proverb)

Not Sexy Enough?

By Brian Hetherington

The Canada Council recently decided not to fund the Toronto Storytelling Festival because storytelling is “not sexy enough ...” or so one insider put it. Other storytelling groups have had similar decreases in funding from the Canada Council. Perhaps this all too sudden and unexpected elimination of funding is a crisis for storytelling as we know it.

I am told that the Chinese word for “*crisis*” is made up of two characters, one meaning ‘danger’ and another meaning ‘opportunity’. We must seize this opportunity to re-examine our storytelling and improve upon it. In my opinion, there are two possible responses to this decision (and countless variations of these two basic premises). We can either refute this opinion or change it or both. Both options represent an opportunity to advance storytelling as an art form.

Refuting it would include either arguing that art forms shouldn’t have to be sexy to be funded or that storytelling is sexy. Since the Canada Council jury obviously believes that being sexy is important, then, arguing that sexiness doesn’t matter seems pointless. This is not an argument we’re going to win even though quality should be the criterion, not some arbitrary opinion based on style or sexiness.

We can argue that storytelling is sexy and indeed, some performances are sexier than others. A traditional teller, sitting on a chair before an audience, is not as sexy as a performer who stands on a professionally-lit stage, dresses to suit the occasion, and has a commanding presence on stage through his or her use of voice, body language and staging. I am not necessarily arguing that one is better than

another, just that the latter performer is “sexier” and more to the jury’s taste than the former.

Storytelling, too, is a traditional art form and sometimes lovers of story are willing to hear traditional material traditionally told and that, I suspect, is not what the jury wants to see. Perhaps tradition is not exactly a cherished concept these days. Innovative and daring artistic endeavors are es-



teemed. In the world of visual art, collage, performance art, installations and multimedia pieces seem to be in, the more traditional forms like portraiture and realistic landscapes, once the primary sources of income for many visual artists, are out.

Again, I am not valuing the innovative over the traditional, but the jury may do so. We must decide whether we want to change our focus and emphasize the innovative over the traditional. For some, doing so might be the storytelling equivalent of selling our souls to the devil. Hopefully, we are clever enough to get out of our

bargain before we have to fulfill our part. It would be a shame if the passing on of these traditional stories were disrupted by the vicissitudes of funding.

Changing the nature of storytelling is a much harder task. How do we update storytelling for our increasingly electronic age? Do we add an electronic dimension to our storytelling, make it a multimedia event? When does it cease to be storytelling and become something else? Do we make it more theatrical, using more sophisticated lighting and staging techniques and maybe even sets? There’s a resistance to change within our storytelling organizations.

Resistance to change takes many forms. For example, years ago, when a storytelling festival in Vancouver had Javanese dancers perform a traditional story-based dance, there was some criticism that this wasn’t storytelling. More recently, Kelly Russell, the amazing Newfoundland fiddler and storyteller, mentioned criticism of his *Tales from Pigeon Inlet* because they were memorized, not “told”. These stories were originally performed on radio, not told around the kitchen table.

Many of the great, traditional pieces of oral literature were recited, not told: for example, Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were poetry and the wording couldn’t vary or the metre would not be correct, and the Icelandic sagas were read through the centuries in the long Icelandic evenings. The readers may have read them so many times, they really recited them rather than read them, but they were never “told”. To me, what’s important is the quality of the performance, a great performance

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such as Kelly's is to be valued, not the label you attach to it. Perhaps we should push the boundaries of storytelling more for it is that boundary pushing that keeps an art form vital and alive. Even Beethoven had to win over his traditional audiences to become a musical giant.

Another type of resistance to change is our attitudes towards professionalism. When I was Artistic Director of the Toronto Festival, the feedback from the Quebecois tellers was illuminating: they liked the community feel of the Festival but felt that the Festival could have been more professional. While we made every effort to be professional, the lack of enough paid staff and reliance on volunteers made it impossible to be as professional as we wished. This is not a criticism of the volunteer and paid staff – on the contrary, they were all amazing in their dedication and ability. It is just that volunteer-run organizations or those with a very few paid staff and many volunteers cannot dedicate the time needed to the job because everyone has other important responsibilities like earning money to put food on the table.

Professionalism in administration demands enough adequately-paid staff to do the job and a collective will to find the money to make it happen. Years ago in Vancouver, I overheard a conversation between a board member of the Vancouver Society of Storytelling and the then Executive Director. The board member talked effusively about how she longed to return to a smaller, more community-oriented festival but didn't seem to realize that a smaller festival couldn't hire an Executive Director (and the

current one put in many more hours than she was being paid for). This is a conflict that we haven't resolved: do we return to a community-based model (and not hire paid staff and risk losing further funding) or do we make the decision to become truly professional and find the money to hire the staff necessary to do the job well? I think, given the Canada Council deci-



sion, the middle ground we've been seeking is no longer tenable. We need to move sharply to one extreme or the other.

Another aspect of professionalism concerns money. We, as storytellers do not always demand the fees that we deserve. Granted, many potential employers out there do not see storytelling as an art form and do not expect to pay storytellers as they would musicians or other performers. Still, we don't always turn down jobs be-

cause they don't pay or don't pay well enough.

A third aspect of professionalism is the production values of the events that we plan. We tend to eschew performers that are "too theatrical" because we feel they are not authentic storytellers. Ben Haggerty, the UK storyteller that appeared at the Toronto festival years ago, commanded the stage and used the lighting and venue very well. But to some, he was more a performer or a one-man show than a storyteller, but his performance was masterful, polished and "sexy".

Refute it or change it? Both. There are many storytellers that are innovative and push the boundaries of their art form while others tell the traditional stories superbly. Both should be valued. We support the innovators by allowing them a place in our concerts and festivals (and hopefully please the funders in the process) and we support the traditionalists by arguing for their inclusion in the funding. But I fear that this argument is a difficult one to win as so many of our traditions are now being questioned. Fifty years ago, for example, few would have imagined the decline in our churches and synagogues or in the Scouting movement. It is perhaps a perverse characteristic of our times that to be truly countercultural we have to support some of the traditions of our ancestors like storytelling. We shouldn't value the traditional merely because it is traditional, but cherish what is timeless and essential in storytelling while appreciating the new directions of this art form.

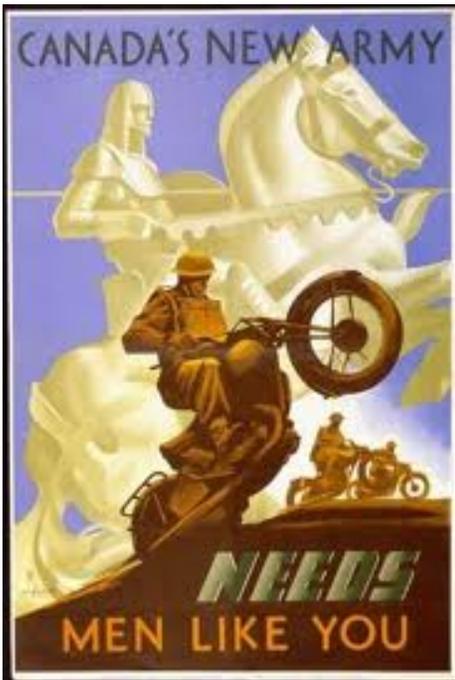
How should we, as lovers of the art of story, fight against the idea that storytelling is "not sexy enough?" How do we take best advantage of this opportunity?

And We Remember

Submitted by **Lynda Howes**

What happens to those of us who have forgotten our stories, or who feel discouraged from telling our stories because nobody wants to listen?

For several years, Lorne Brown and I have been visiting the veterans at Sunnybrook Hospital. Among the veterans, men and women, some are mobile and others are in wheel chairs. At



first, they appear disconnected from each other, dozy, their heads down. We have taken up the challenge to engage their interest, and ultimately to encourage them to reach back in their memories, to find, and to tell their own stories.

The process, we have learned through experience, is careful, long, and slow. We offer up riddles and encourage them to answer. (There is no such thing as a right or wrong answer; there is the answer I am looking for. When they learn that answer, they are pleased. And they like to be asked the riddle again and again so they can demonstrate their ability to remember.) We offer up songs, and encour-

age them to join in the chorus. We tell them personal stories. After time we tell more challenging stories, folk tales and wonder tales, longer stories that require remembering the beginning in order to make sense of the end. The listeners, for that is what they are becoming, learn to trust and like us, and gradually want to participate in the process - to tell stories.

From the very beginning, we played with language. We sang songs; we asked riddles; we recited verse; we shared jokes. And when Lorne took up his banjo and started to play and to sing songs such as O! Susannah, Sidewalks of New York, Skip to My Lou, Swanee River, When You and I Were Young, Maggie, Bring Back My Bonnie, the veterans sat up, lifted their heads and sang as if there were no tomorrow.

After several sessions, some of the vets began offering up their own stories, recitations, jokes, riddles, and songs. Russ, one of the vets, took great delight in reciting the following rhyme:

He grabbed me by the neck
I could not yell or scream
He took me to his dingy room
Where we could not be seen.
He stripped my "flingy" clothing off
And gazed upon my form
I was cold and chilly
He was hot and warm.
He pressed his fevered lips to mine
I could not make him stop
He drained my very life away
I could not call a cop.
He made me what I am today
Broken, hated, and cast away
And that is why you see me here
An empty bottle of Labatt beer.

This rhyme became a regular introduction to the afternoon of storytelling. And everyone appeared to enjoy, even anticipate, Russ's recitation.

Trevor told how he was a rear gunner on a Lancaster bomber in WWII, and he was shot down over enemy territory. He described how he parachuted out, landed in a tree, and how he was eventually taken POW.

The project had its humorous moments. One day, Lorne was tuning his banjo while the vets were arriving, a slow process involving caregivers, wheelchairs, and walkers. One vet arrived and asked his caregiver, "Is that a banjo?"

"Yes!" she replied.

"Then I'm leaving!" he announced emphatically. And he did.

Jerry loved to give recitations of humorous narratives he'd composed long ago. Lee told us how he met his late wife, Esther, "You know, from the Bible!" referring to her name. Ian took a mouth organ out of his breast pocket, smiled and brought it to his lips. When he finished his tune, we asked for another tune, and he was pleased to comply. Daphne told us



how, using a cyclorama, she taught prospective pilots how to fly, though she herself never learned to fly. This woman, whom no one appeared to

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know or even cared to know, suddenly became a person of interest. Everyone wanted to hear more of her story.

By way of celebration on the last day of our 8-week series of sessions, we always brought a celebratory cake I had baked. Everyone sang *If I Knew You Were Coming I'd Have Baked a Cake*. When we all had a piece of the cake and a cup of tea, Lorne took up his banjo one last time, played *Good Night Irene* - and all of us, the veter-

ans and the staff and I – belted out the words.

Lorne and I have been working with the veterans in L Wing now for four years. We will return in the winter of 2012. Each time we return, we have to prepare ourselves for what we will find because we know someone will be missing - gone from this world. But we have heard their stories. And we remember.

Sunnybrook Veterans Hospital, now Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, was es-

tablished in 1948 to care for wounded World War II veterans. Today 500 war veterans are located in K Wing and L Wing, long-term facilities where they are provided services such as mental health, cognitive, and palliative care. Several years ago, Lorne was hired to provide entertainment for the veterans and their families and friends. Upon realizing the impact storytelling appeared to have on the vets, the staff at Sunnybrook arranged for Lorne and me to work with the veterans in L Wing, a secure facility for cognitively impaired residents.

World Storytelling Day 2012

The World Storytelling Day is on March 20, 2012. It is a global celebration of the art of oral storytelling. It is celebrated every year on the spring equinox in the northern hemisphere, the first day of autumn equinox in the southern.

The significance in the event lies in the fact that it is the first global celebration of storytelling of its kind, and has been important in forging links between storytellers often working far apart from each other. It has also been significant in drawing public and media attention to storytelling as an art

form.

The theme for World Storytelling Day 2012 is TREES. Thanks to funding from SC/CC many collectives in Canada are participating in this global celebration. Here's what is happening around Ontario.

Cambridge, ON

Tongue Wagging

Productions will premier their produc-



WSD in Oshawa plan to grow to an additional 5 or 6 venues using libraries, bookstores, schools, and community or art centers.

They will be sending their 17 tellers out in troupes of three or four over a two-week period.

Eastern On-

tario

Brian Hetherington and Deborah Dunleavy have developed a show called ***Branching out in All Directions*** which they will perform in three locations (Kingston, Brockville, and Gananoque on March 20, 21, and 23). They are planning to make new storytelling connections in each community. For details contact Deborah at teller2go@gmail.com.

Baden, ON

Baden Storytellers' Guild will be recording a concert live at the Waterloo Region Museum based on the WSD theme of Trees. They will then use it to extend the impact of WSD, the Guild and SC-CC. The Guild will be able to leverage the SC-CC grant with additional funding from a recording studio.



tion of "The Backwoods without a Butler" at the O'Keefe Cottage Café and are doing lead-in events for Culture Days 2011 for WSD 2012.

"The Backwoods without a Butler" premieres on **24 March 2012**.

Cost: \$35 for Dinner and Stories **Durham, ON**

The Durham Folklore Storytellers, currently in their fifth year of presenting two concerts annually for

Bringing a Voice to the Past

A Report from Pauline Grondin

As an 1812 re-enactor, professional storyteller and historical interpreter, and in recognition of the Bicentennial of the War of 1812, I find my schedule heavily booked throughout Ontario to tell stories of the people and their times during the War of 1812.

Mine is the voice of Mrs. Gage on the War of 1812 documentary to be released on History Television this year. When the producers phoned looking for a storyteller, Heritage Toronto recommended me. It was a proud experience.

My reputation as a teller of Canadian history has resulted in numerous venues requesting my performances throughout the next three years and beyond. There were phone calls and e-mails beginning in January of 2011 requesting bookings to ensure their dates could be accommodated.

I am the social historian for the Southwest Ontario Barn Quilt Trail on part of the 1812 route, a permanent route being established in recognition of the War of 1812 bicentennial. My first performance for the Barn Quilt Trail committee involved stories of the women and children during that time period and stories of female camp followers.

Many of my tales come easily. I have re-enacted the life of a camp follower for the past fifteen years and interpreted Canadian history in a number heritage village for the past twenty years. I am also the historical advisor for the Lincoln Lamplighter Tours. My first presentation to this organization told stories of the brave women and children caught up in conflict and struggle both on and off the battlefield. I have also had the honour of being asked to form a commit-

tee in Burlington to seek out the grave sites of 1812 war veterans.

In 1813 an Upper Canada Preserved medals were cast to 1812 veterans, which were never received. The intent of the Grave Site Recognition Committees across Canada is to place a permanent plaque with a medal and appropriate identification at the gravesite. A larger plaque will be placed on the church or cemetery fence to point out that War of 1812 veterans are at rest.

I have already identified three of these veterans in Burlington. What an exciting adventure to write their stories for the telling.

I am very proud to involve the art of storytelling in helping to recognize the brave efforts of the men, women and children who lived through a conflict, which at times, has largely been forgotten in Canadian history, The War of 1812.

www.paulinegrondin.com



Stories Going Round

Bits of Life: An Odyssey in Story and Song took place at the Butler's Pantry on Saturday February 11th and Sunday February 12th. Put on by Legless Stocking it featured Lorne Brown the wandering family bards known as Bananafish made up of Brian Fukuzawa, Ben Fukuzawa, Rebecca Melville, Tom Melville, Tiki Weyman & Caleb Yong.

Who's doing what!!! Hey! Is it really that bad out there that no one is telling stories anymore? Or are people too busy to send in a notice. Maybe Pippin needs a shot in the arm. If you don't tell Pippin, how can it be printed? Here's your chance to have bragging rights. Celebrate your storytelling adventures with one another. Send your information to the editor at teller2go@gmail.com anytime, all the time!

Listings — Spring 2012

GATHERINGS



* **NEW LISTING** * **Storytellers All** is the title for the monthly storytelling gathering hosted by **Micki Beck** at the main branch of the Belleville Public Library. The opening session takes place Tuesday, March 20 in the Art Gallery above the library. Future gatherings will be on the 4th Saturday of the month, at 3:00pm. Training workshops will be combined with story sharing. Info: Micki Beck, bumbleberry@sympatico.ca

Dan Yashinsky, Storytelling Toronto's storyteller-in-residence hosts **Bread and Stories** most Saturday mornings 10-12am at the Artscape Wychwood Barns, 601 Christie St. Look for the red tent on the west side of the Barns. Open to storytellers, listeners and those who like to "talk" story. Come and be mentored as you try out new or familiar stories. Info: dan_yashinsky@hotmail.com

Storytelling Circle every Tuesday at 2:15-3:15pm, 6 St. Joseph St., led by **Molly Sutekaitis**. Open to all. (416) 239-1345, mollysutekaitis@hotmail.com

1,000 Friday Nights of Storytelling continues every Friday evening at 8pm at the Innis College Café, Sussex Ave. and St. George St., Toronto. Suggested donation: \$5. Open to all who wish to listen or tell. (416) 656-2445, www.1001fridays.org

Stories Aloud meets the 1st Friday of the month, September through June, 8:00pm, at The Story Barn, in Baden, 89 Snyders Rd. W. <http://thestorybarn.ca>. Mary-Eileen McClear, maryeileen@thestorybarn.ca. Open storytelling. Suggested donation: \$5

The **Baden Storytelling Guild** meets on the third Friday of the month, 7:30-10pm at The Story Barn, 89 Snyders Rd W. Info: Mary-Eileen McClear, maryeileen@thestorybarn.ca <http://thestorybarn.ca>

The **Ottawa Storytellers** meet for their Story Swap on the first Thursday of the month, 7pm At Library and Archives Canada, 395 Wellington St, Room 156, free admission. Info: info@ottawastorytellers.ca

The **Ottawa Storytellers** also sponsor Stories and Tea every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month at The Tea Party, 119 York St., Ottawa, 7pm. Suggested donation: \$8 or pay what you can. Info: info@ottawastorytellers.ca

The **Dufferin Circle of Storytellers** meets the 1st Thursday of the month, 7:30pm. Info: Nancy Woods, (519)925-0966.

The **Brant Taletellers Guild**, welcomes tellers and listeners to its monthly gatherings September to June, 7 – 8:45pm, on the first Wednesday at the Station Coffee House and Gallery, beside the Brantford VIA Station. Visitors welcome. Fair Trade Coffee, Steam Whistle beer, wine and snacks can be purchased during meetings. Info: Barbara Sisson, email.taletellers@bizbrant.com or phone (519) 756-0727

The **Durham Folklore Storytellers** (formerly Durham Folklore Society) meets every 3rd Thursday, 7:30-9:30pm in the Seniors Day

Activity Room, Northview Community Centre, 150 Beatrice St. E., Oshawa. Info: Dianne Chandler, (905) 985-3424, storyteller@xplornet.com or www.durhamstorytellers.ca

Cercle de conteurs de l'Est de l'Ontario (CCEO) se réunit aux soirées de contes libres une fois par mois dans diverses communautés de l'Est ontarien. Renseignements: Guy Thibodeau, guythibodeau@rogers.com, www.cceo.ca

The **Hamilton Storytelling Circle** meets once a month, September to June, 7:30-9pm at Temple Anshe Sholom, 221 Cline Ave N., Hamilton. Info: Barry Rosen, barry-thestoryteller@gmail.com

The **Guelph Guild of Storytellers** meets the 1st Wednesday of each month, 7:30pm at the Cooperators Building, MacDonnell St., and the 2nd Wednesday at 8pm for Stories at the Boathouse, a tea room on the river, Gordon St. Info: Sandy, (519) 767-0017

The **Montreal Storytellers Guild** meets the 4th Tuesday of the month at the Westmount Library. Info: Christine Mayr, christinemayr36@yahoo.ca

The **1000 Islands Yarnspinners** invite folks to gather on the third Monday of the month at the Brockville Museum, 5 Henry St. at 7 p.m. April 16 – *The Sun, The Moon & Other Celestial Stories*; May 21 – *Stories Our Mothers Told Us*; June 18 – *Where the Road Leads Us – Stories of Travels & Journeys*. Contact Deborah Dunleavy 613-342-3463 or FOS.Brockville@gmail.com. Also on Facebook.

PERFORMANCES



See concerts for World Storytelling Day. Diana Tso and her Monkey Queen story returns during the Asian Heritage for two performances. May 8th at the Jane/Sheppard Library at 2pm; May 16th at the Spadina Library, also at 2pm

1001 Friday Nights of Storytelling is held every Friday at 8:00 pm at Innis College, University of Toronto, Sussex Avenue at St. George Street. www.1001fridays.org.



FESTIVAL FEVER

Artistic Director Debra Bap-
tiste is busy at the helm of the Toronto Storytelling Festival which runs from March 29 to April 01 with pre-festival events beginning on March 24. This year's theme is "Celebrating Canadian Identity". Please check the Storytelling Toronto website for details.

WHATS UP?

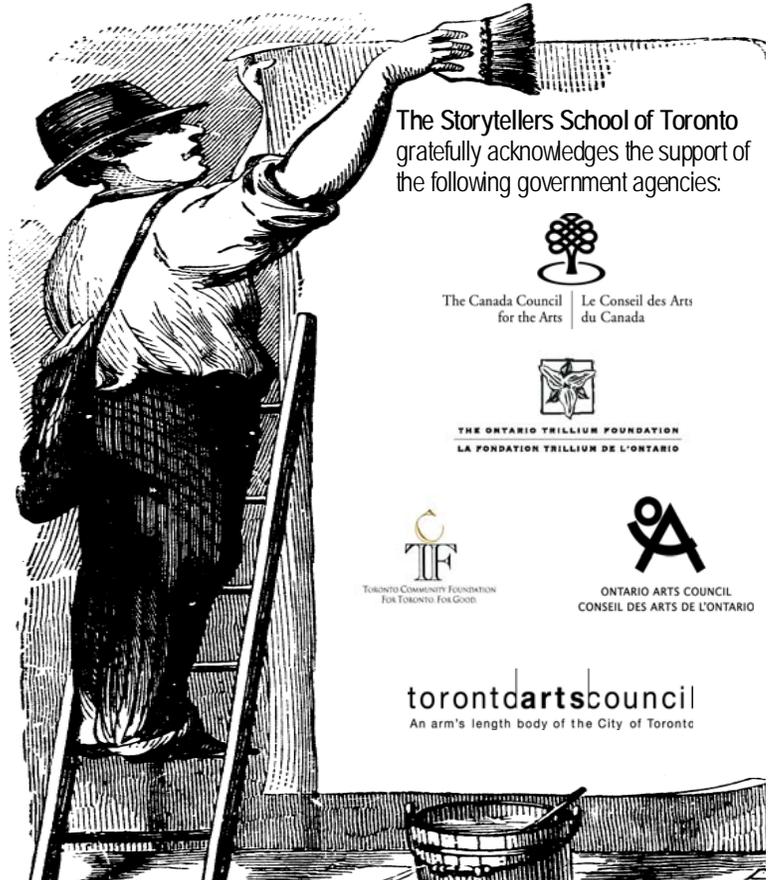
What's new with you? Where are you telling stories? What new books have you read? Whoe did you hear telling stories? Send your submissions to Deborah at kqp@ripnet.com

WORKSHOPS



Storytelling Stepping Stones taught by Deborah Dunleavy at St. Lawrence College, Brockville Campus, July 16 – 20. *Enjoy a storytelling getaway in the heart of the 1000 Islands.* Step into the art of telling stories. Discover the magic and power of your own voice, manner and way of spinning a good yarn. From fairytales to personal experiences the group supports each other in their journey to tell stories. At the end of the week participants may choose

to tell their stories to invited guests at a local café. Material fee: \$5 to the instructor. Cost for five days: \$279.90. Senior (65 and up) discount: 25%. To register: 1-866-276-6601 (press 3) or www.stlawrencecollege.ca/summerarts. Accommodation is available at the college. To reserve: 1-877-225-8664 or email: bresj-



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torontodartscouncil
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