

The Reading-Writing Connection

In partnership with The Haliburton County Public Library

Website: www.reading-writing-connection.ca/

June 2014 Newsletter

Upcoming Events: *(Mark your calendars for those you would like to attend.)*

Wednesday July 16 at 6 p.m.: **Tall Pine Tales** at the Community Room in Haliburton

BUFFET / PRESENTATIONS / DOOR PRIZES Cost \$20
Tickets available from Diana, Pauline, Irene, Sharon

Wednesday, July 30 at 7 p.m.: Joining Muskoka Writers at Baysville Library

Sunday, August 17 at 7 p.m.: RWC members visit to the Haliburton Forest Festival:
Featuring Barbara Budd at the Logging Museum

Monday, August 18 at 7 p.m.: Joining Muskoka Writers at Bracebridge Library

- *"How lucky I am, that the thing I take the greatest joy in—sharing stories—is something I've been able to do in so many different formats."* Barbara Budd

Now you can put a face to the wonderful voice in this expanded version (80-90 minutes) of *As It Happened To Me*, the informal and humorous one-woman show presented by the Stratford Festival Forum this season. One of the greats of CBC Radio, Barbara Budd's voice is among the most recognizable in Canada, and after 17 years as co-host of *As It Happens*, she is still recognized around the world. You'll laugh and be moved, and laugh again. You won't want to leave afterwards, so plan on coming up for a little chat and reminiscence. Ask her whatever you want. Eventually, we're going to have to kick you all out. But you'll go laughing.

Meetings for the Month of June: *(Mark your calendars.)*

- Wednesday, June 4 at the Howard Robert's Room of the Dysart Library—10 a.m.
- Wednesday, June 18 at the Rotary Room of the Minden Library—10 a.m.

We extend an invitation to all members to join us for lunch at a local restaurant.

Current Projects *(if you choose to work on them):*

- Your biography (in 60 words or less).
- A story to read at one of our three summer events combining Muskoka and Haliburton writers.

Bring your best or your funniest piece of writing to Wednesday's session.

Open invitation to visiting friends, or the general public to come out and just listen:

Anyone can record memories for themselves and their families. You don't have to be a professional author, just be a writer, producing for a limited and non-judgemental audience. Come out and listen to published examples of family stories or history and decide when you would like to pick up your pen. It may not be for a year or two, but when the mood strikes, you will have an idea where to start. You may just want to be a closet writer for a while. That's okay too.

Some interesting and useful advice from Harvey Stanbrough:



The Professional Writer: Ideas

May 30, 2014 03:34 am | Harvey

Hi Folks,

Welcome! Let's ask and answer that timeless question: Where do writers get ideas? Harlan Ellison, upon being asked that very question, said he gets all his ideas exclusively from a small shop in Schenectady. Would-be (wannabe) writers don't want to hear the real answer, yet here it is again:

Where do we get ideas? Everywhere. You just have to pay attention.

You're a writer. Every moment you should be listening and looking for ideas, but not forcibly. Perhaps it's more accurate to say that in every moment you should be *expecting* ideas. Again, you're a writer. Looking and listening for ideas should be a matter of instinct, and recognizing them when they show up should be a matter of routine. You don't have to practice looking for them; you just have to practice opening yourself to them, receiving them. It's also a good practice to write them down or otherwise record them as they occur, but I've found if it's a really good idea that yearns to serve as the seed of a

story, it won't slip away easily.

A week ago, as I write this, I addressed the Society of Southwestern Authors' forum in Tucson on The Electric Secret to Success as a Writer. (You can listen to the enhanced, extended address free at [Harvey Stanbrough's Audio Lectures](#).) President Chris Stern, during his comments before he introduced me as the speaker, mentioned that he would afford everyone the opportunity to "take a bio break." *Bing!* Idea. I didn't write it down, but obviously I remembered it. By the time this posts in a few weeks, I might well have written a story based on it. Now, everyone present understood what Chris meant by "bio break," but for me the term conjured up an SF scene.

I walk quite a bit, though not as much as I'd like. During my walks, often a profound or colorful sentence will pop into my head and become the basis for a story. Other times a character will say a line of dialogue that grabs me. Other times nothing more than the character's name will appear in my mental ear. Sometimes I've met the character before—for example, perhaps he's been a peripheral but interesting character in one of my magic realism stories (written as Gervasio Arrancado) and it's time for his story to come out—and sometimes I've never met him or her before. Either way, it makes me feel pretty special when a character walks up and hands me a short story.

“But ideas don't happen like that for me.”

Usually when I hear that, the writer has the wrong notion of what constitutes an idea. Some would-be writers believe ideas present as complete stories with setting, characters, conflict and resolution, and with the beginning, middle and end already written. But that isn't how ideas work. Most often an idea provides a character and/or a setting and/or the mood or tone of the story. It might even provide a general direction, and the better ones at least hint at the conflict. In the next post, I'll give you some of the ideas that have occurred to me between now and then. You can even use them to write a story if they strike you.

Your job is to write, not sit around waiting for inspiration. As the great Peter DeVries once wrote, "I write when I'm inspired, and I see to it that I'm inspired at nine o'clock every morning." That's what professional writers do. They write.

If you haven't checked it out yet, I invite you to visit [Harvey Stanbrough & Friends Writing in Public](#). Sign up for the blog over there and you'll get a freshly minted short story in your email once a week.

You listen to my advice on writing. Wouldn't it be a good idea to see whether I practice what I preach?

'Til next time, happy writing!

Harvey

Book Donations:

In order to raise funds for speakers' lunches and to cover miscellaneous expenses for the group, we ask for donations of a book or two at each meeting. Members chip in a looney for each book they take.

We are also asking members to chip in a toonie per session to help cover expenses for our Tall Pine Tales event this summer (posters and programs).

Remember, spread the word

**Members of the public are always welcome
to sit in on sessions of the Reading Writing
Connection whenever they wish,
even if it's just once in a while.**