

Local authors hold successful book launch

By BOB OWEN
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Two Colborne writers led the readings from the anthology *Changing Ways* at the launch at Meet at 66 King Street Nov. 28.

Pat Calder, known by many in this community for her active voice in the political scene, was introduced by Marta Cooper, who coincidentally is her daughter.

In summarizing her mother's background, Ms. Cooper remarked on her literary and teaching background and her genetic connection to cabinetmakers, fishermen, parish priests and homemakers.

Ms. Calder's contribution to the anthology of stories, poetry and reflection is not her first published work. She has been published in *Outdoor Canada*, *His* magazine and the *Toronto Sun*.

Ms. Calder writes about transitions with a broad commonality which struck a chord with listeners at the Nov. 28

readings.

One of her three selections in the anthology tells the experiences of a family which has moved recently to the country, and the patience and idiosyncrasies of the long-time residents with the newcomers.

Another deals with the realities of finding new information about a deceased loved one and reacting to the facts which don't appear to fit.

Ms. Cooper's introduction of Len D'Agostino gave biographical data familiar to readers of the *Colborne Chronicle*. Mr. D'Agostino has not only rubbed elbows with the famous, he has contributed to some of Canada's signature television stories — *Road to Avonlea*, *The National Dream*, and *Dieppe*.

Mr. D'Agostino told the troubled tale of his great great grandfather as he emigrated from Italy to Scotland in the late nineteenth century. The audience was drawn by the pathos of narrative which unveiled the boy's unhappy plight in an era when child labour and abuse were

commonly accepted practice.

The four chapters about 13-year-old Tony form part of a yet-to-be-published novel for young people.

Ms. Calder and Mr. D'Agostino are members of the Pollard Writers' Group which is based in Port Hope and meets regularly in members' homes.

Changing Ways is a product of the works of six of the Pollard writers.

The Pollard Writers' Group lineage can be traced to the Ganaraska Writers' Group, formed more than 20 years ago to share a common love of writing. With an elderly membership, attrition set in and numbers dwindled.

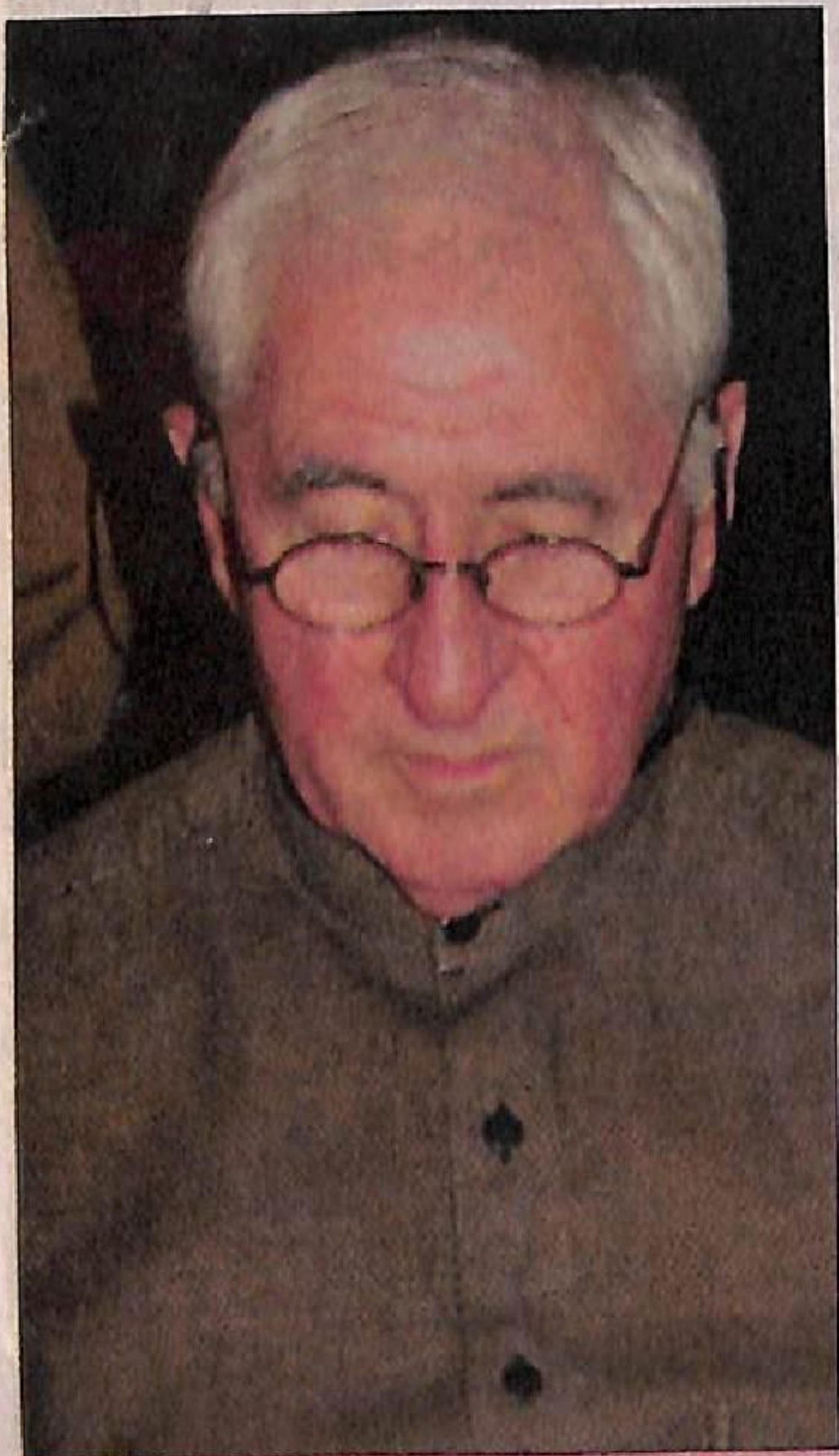
An advertisement in the *Cobourg Daily Star* calling for members attracted new writers from across Northumberland County and the group has thrived. Acknowledging the contribution of Margaret Pollard, a driving force behind the resurgence, the group's name was changed shortly before her death in 2006.

With its varied mix of subjects — including stories for young readers — *Changing Ways* explores the human condition from many perspectives. Shane Joseph writes in the anthology about a father attempting to retain dignity and independence in a seniors' residence while coping with Parkinson's Disease.

Brian Mullally's *Out of a Clear Blue Sky* took place just south of London, to a day in the Battle of Britain in 1941 as experienced through the eyes of a young boy.

The foreword of the book best puts into perspective the apparent incongruity of the contributions: "It is, rather, the result of each contributing writer's contemplation of the same constant: that life and the world are locked in an endless dance of flux and change." Colborne area residents can purchase a copy of the anthology from Pat Calder or Len D'Agostino, or online at www.hiddenbrookpress.com using Paypal or credit card.

With files from Gramahe Woods



Colborne resident and author Len D'Agostino reads his work at the launch of a new published anthology, *Changing Ways*.

Author Pat Calder read from her work included in a new published anthology, *Changing Ways*.

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Nearly \$1M goes to bring high-speed Internet to rural areas

By Valerie MacDonald
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Northumberland County is receiving nearly \$1-million of \$30-million in provincial government grants to bring high-speed Internet to rural Ontario during the next four years.

The county's application had finally been successful to build the necessary infrastructure for connectivity in rural Northumberland, local MPP Lou Rinaldi announced at Northumberland County headquarters in Cobourg Friday.

The \$976,833 cheque represents one-third of the project's cost.

"This has been long awaited by this community. We need every advantage to compete with the rest of the world," Mr. Rinaldi said.

County Warden Christine Herrington described it not only as an early Christmas present but one that is going to "keep on giving."

People wanting to move their businesses to the area or to start up a cottage industry will now be able to do so and have the communications advantages of large centres with full connectivity. It will also help people who commute daily by reducing those trips. Dial-up service is both slow and can't handle the capacity required to do business involving the transfer of a lot of data.

Less than 30% of Northumberland currently has high-speed Internet, said the county's economic development director, Dan Borowec. Within 18 months he anticipates coverage of up to 90% of the county.

He said in an interview that Northumberland County involved 20 companies in the initial hunt for an Internet service provider (ISP); narrowed

it to six, which included a consortium involving Cobourg Network Inc. and another by longtime Cobourg-based ISP Eagle.ca; then reduced the hunt to two — Bell Aliant and Barrett Explorenet. The return date for Requests for Proposals (RFP) from the two is this week and a service provider will be selected early this month.

"Hopefully this (RFP) will form the basis of the infrastructure," Mr. Borowec said.

It's anticipated that bringing high-speed Internet service to Northumberland will cost about \$3 million and the county is looking for the balance of the investment to come from the private sector, Mr. Borowec said.

The challenge in bringing high-speed Internet to the county is the hills that interfere with line-of-sight signals and the need for towers to overcome those barriers. A significant number of towers already exist in the county and it's expected they could become part of the network.

"We're trying to be environmentally conscious," Mr. Borowec said of installing even more towers.

The remaining 10% of the county that will have to rely on other types of technology due to black holes in reception include some spots on Rice Lake's south shore and a few pockets in Alnwick/Haldimand Township, Mr. Borowec said. It's hoped the county will be able to apply for federal funding for enhanced technologies once the details are available, he added.

A working committee comprised of members from each municipality put the successful application together and continues the work of selecting an Internet service provider.