

MILTON LITERARY FESTIVAL - KIDS LOVE TO READ

BY DONNA DANIELLI
CAMPBELLVILLE & AREA

When you give a child the gift of a book, you give a gift of imagination and the gift to dream whatever he dreams to be. The 3rd annual "I Love to Read - Literary Festival for Children" brings together 12 authors, illustrators and storytellers in the promotion of literacy and the importance of reading to children.

Held at the picturesque country setting of the Farm Museum (the former Ontario Agricultural Museum) in Milton on Sunday, June 7 from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., the Festival will bring stories to life from the pages of books to the festival stage. Children can meet the people who create the books they enjoy, buy a book and have it signed by an author or simply enjoy the drama of storytelling.

Presentations will be held throughout the day at several

locations on the museum grounds. At 12:30, scheduled performances include Itah Sadu, "a storyteller who sparks joy in her audience recounting stories rich in the traditions of Africa, North America and the Caribbean", Sonja Dunn, a storyteller who uses her guitar, story skirt, story hat, puppets and books to enhance her tales, Claire Mackay, noted children's author and Ruth Ohi, an illustrator "who dazzles children with her spontaneous drawings."

At 1:30, look for presentations by Maryann Kovalski, author and illustrator, Karen Reozech, a local illustrator, Judy Ann Sadler, author of several craft books, who will be hosting a hands on craft session, and Gordon Semple, a storyteller who initiated the Trickster's Touch, a method of

teaching students to be more effective communicators through storytelling.

Starting at 2:30, four more artisans will be presenting their crafts. Scheduled are Gisela Sherman, the Burlington Author of the hit book "There's a Snake in the Toilet", Kathy Stinson, a Rockwood author whose award winning "Red is Best" has been translated into seven languages, Janet Wilson, an Eden Mills illustrator whose books are distributed internationally, and Aubrey Davis, a storyteller whose "hilarious, haunting, sometimes bewildering tales provoke laughter, introspection and surprise in his listeners."

Also available will be books for sale, author signings, face painting, displays and wagon rides. While cold

drinks and snacks will be available for purchase, why not take advantage of the picnic grounds on site and bring lunch with you.

Tickets for adults are \$5.00, but children will be admitted free of charge. The "I Love To Read Literary Festival for Children" is sponsored by the Town of Milton, Milton Public Library, Halton Hills Public Library and Milton Community Resource Centre with financial assistance from the Canada Council for the Arts through the Writer's Union of Canada. For more information, please contact the Milton Public Library at 905-875-2665.

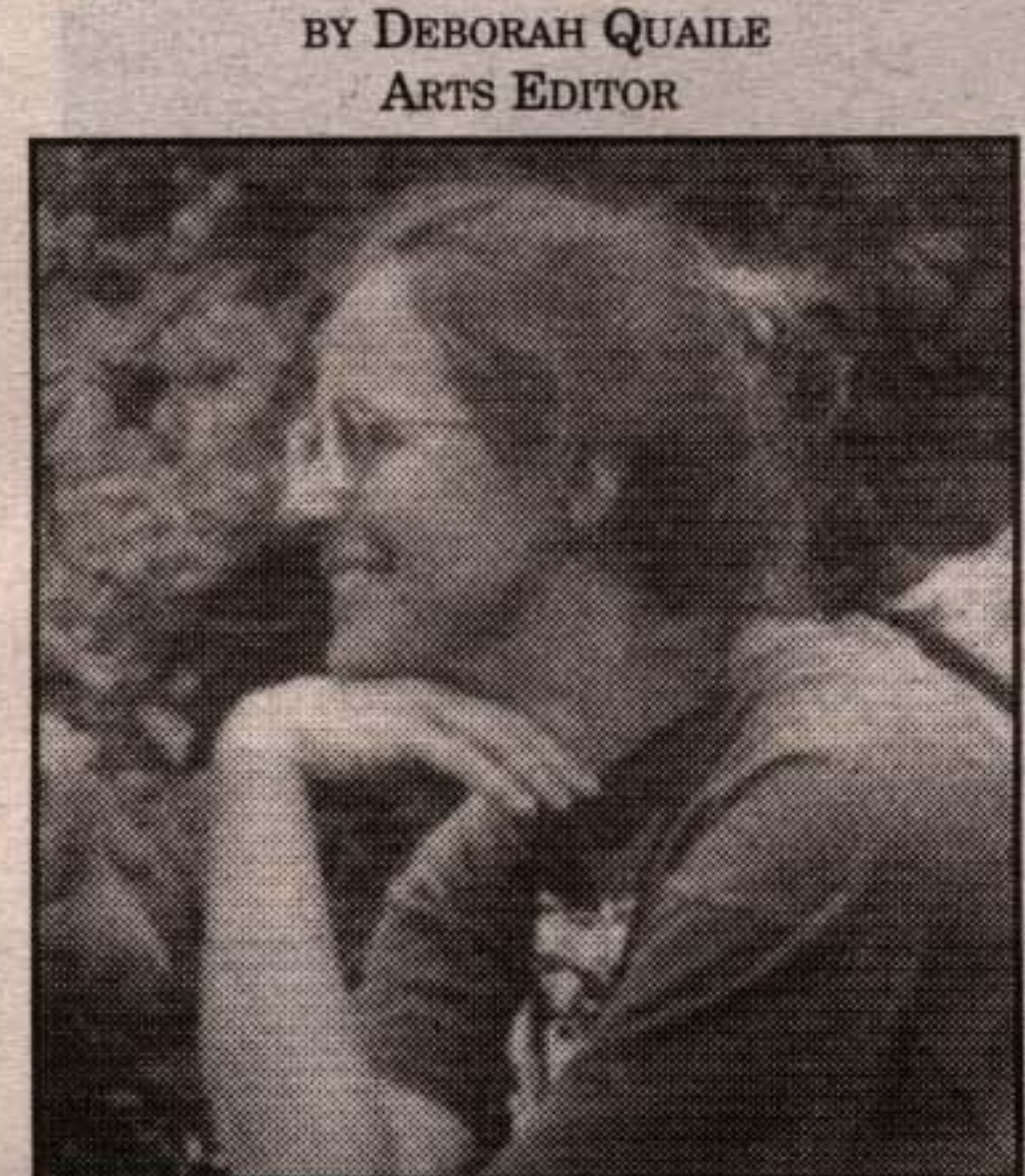
LITERARY FESTIVAL -

Author Kathy Stinson lives in Everton in a cozy home on spacious grounds, where she and husband Peter moved from Toronto in 1997.

"We always wanted to live in the country but with the children growing up and going to school it was never the right time. When my daughter was adamant that she was not going to live at home while going to university, the timing was right," Kathy remarks. Both Peter and Kathy enjoy their move to a small town. Peter, an editor, is also able to work from home.

Kathy has written 15 books, ranging from juvenile and young adult fiction, to non-fiction and picture books.

"I used to teach elementary school, but when I was home with Matthew, I didn't want to go back to teaching and was looking for something to do from home. I took a course on how to write and



KATHY STINSON

get published," she recounted, which led her to discover the Canadian Children's Book Centre. They invited her to see their library, and Kathy received a list of publishers who accepted manuscripts. Luckily, Kathy's talent and perseverance paid off and she published her first two books, *Red is Best* and *Big or Little?* Both were award-winners, with *Red is Best* being trans-

Local artisan profiles

BY DEBORAH QUAILL
ARTS EDITOR

lated into seven languages.

Kathy has been teaching writing courses in Toronto each spring and fall. She is always creating, whether chapter books or picture books, and is also working on a collection of short stories for young adults. Her writing for preschoolers is in sensitive, poetic language, easy for young minds to follow. She's even tackled difficult issues such as divorce and adoption, or changes in custody, such as in *one year commencing*, when Al, a high-spirited 12-year-old from Alberta finds she must suddenly live an entire year with her father in Toronto. Al adjusts to her new home and school, and how often she is challenged and changed will surprise some readers just as she herself is surprised.

Kathy's work is highly recommended and she will be an engaging writer for children to see at the festival.

Acton illustrator Karen Reczuch has seven published works to her name, and is working on the eighth. Her most recently published work, *Morning on the Lake*, is on the short list for the Christie Prize.

"I couldn't do this without family support; my illustration costs them a lot of my time and often my husband has to pick up the slack when I'm reaching a deadline," Karen says. Craig, a photographer, understands Karen's creativity.

"From time to time I do library and school presentations. Illustration is something I do totally on my own but every now and then it's nice to get audience feedback. Kids are usually extremely curious about the whole artistic process and I find it nice to fill them in a bit. My kids, though... I can't wow them; it's what I do and they're used to it," Karen laughs.

"I have a studio to work in. I'm sharing space in Williams Mill (in Glen Williams). They have studios available to artists."

"It's a different energy



KAREN RECZUCH

when working with other artists. I'm more productive this way. It used to be that when my kids were in school I was doing things in two hour stints; now I put in a whole day. There were pluses both ways but it's nice to mentally just close the door on your work and go home."

Karen's books include *The Auction* (her first), *The Harvest Queen*, *Morning on the Lake*, *The Dust Bowl*, *Just Like New*, *Sure as Strawberries*, and *This New Baby*, to be released in September by Groundwood.

"Usually your favourite book is the one you're currently working on, but my

favourite is *Sure as Strawberries* for the story. Kids really take to it and you can read it out loud to an audience without losing them. For my own work, it's probably *Morning on the Lake*. It's closest to achieving what I set out to do. As an illustrator, you come up against your own limitations, but that was as near as I could get."

Karen's first book was *The Auction*. She put a portfolio together and went to Groundwood to offer her work. Groundwood liked the black and white work Karen had in her portfolio and asked if she could add colour to it.

"I did a few samples and got my first book. Whether it's the emotional content or the historical content, that may be what publishers come to me for."

Obviously, the publishers are right. Karen's work is soft and gentle, evoking loving times and emotional entanglements between characters. Her use of light and shadow and particular attention to detail draws readers into the story and give a new perspective to the written word.

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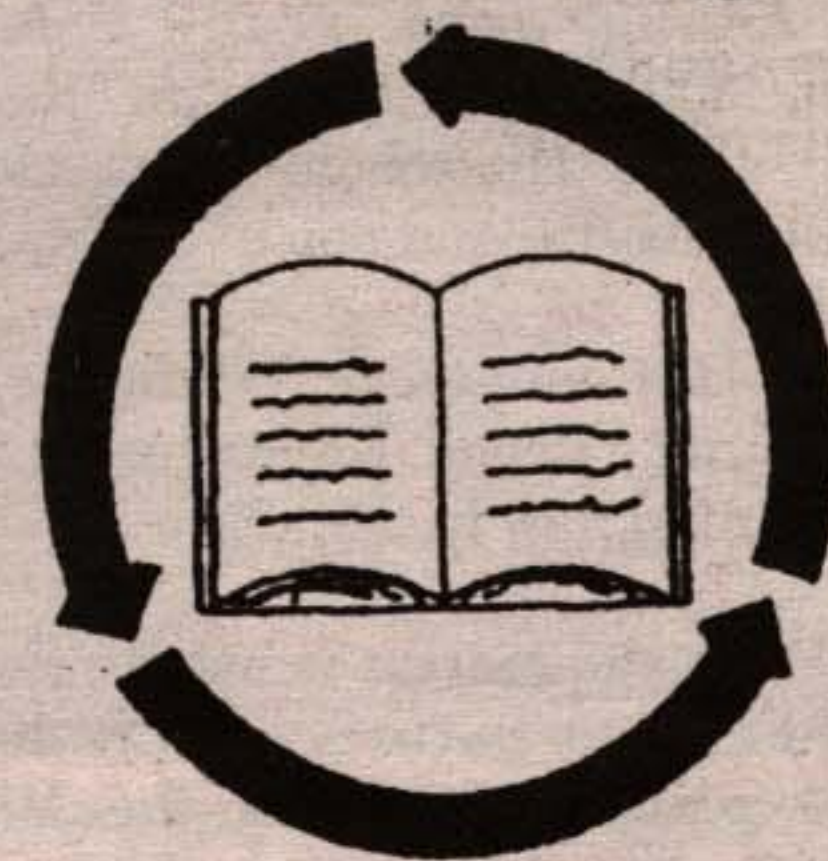
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