



Quaile Reviews

by Deborah Quaile

As Unique As A Snowflake

How do you describe snow to a child who has never felt it squeak beneath her feet or melt on her tongue?

"To know snow / you must hold it in your hand / feel it melt to pearls of water / until it is gone..."

The response, written by author Sheree Fitch to a fictional child, is part of a poetic letter of most amazing quality, rich with lyrics that roll off the tongue, in a feast of sound. Through asking and telling, two penpals - one Canadian and one Ghanaian - reach halfway around the world to touch each other with the beauty of words and images.

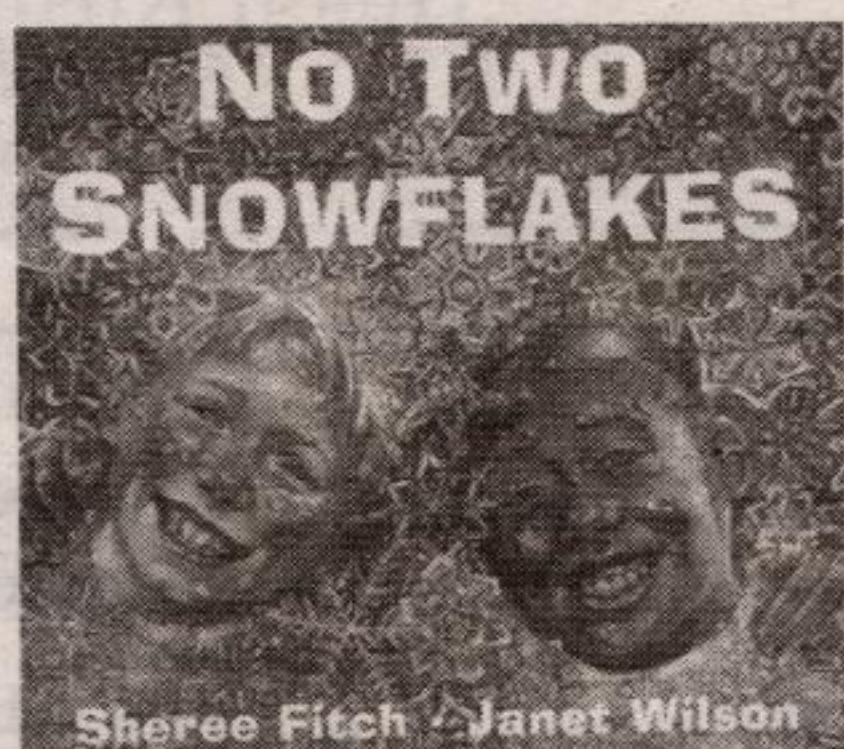
After hearing the words "no two snowflakes are alike" in grade two, Ms. Fitch

was hooked on images of differences - of people spread across the wide world, of traditions, lifestyles and of course, snowflakes. When visiting Belize as an adult, she shared stories and poetry with children and their teachers. One boy asked her to tell him what snow was like, and although she tried, it was too difficult to describe when you had never experienced it before.

Obviously, when the author arrived home and rediscovered snow, the words that softly tumbled from her pen truly captured the essence of those remarkable flakes. The resulting book, *No Two Snowflakes*, has part of its proceeds going toward UNICEF and the group's ongoing work. At the end of the book are several suggestions from UNICEF Canada's teacher-volunteer Dinny Biggs, experiments that celebrate the senses, and undoubtedly children will enjoy delving into them.

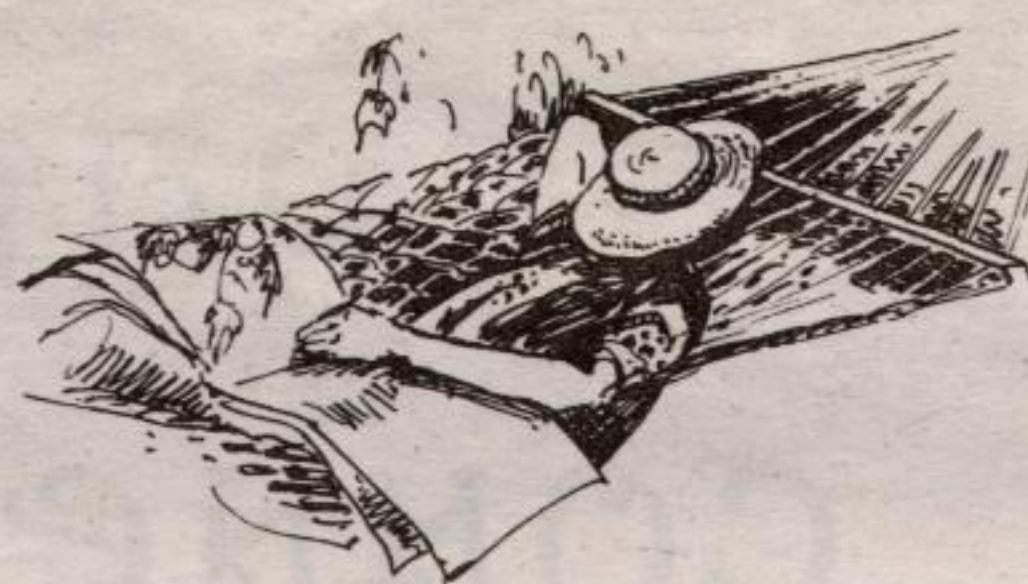
Eden Mills illustrator Janet Wilson's pastel work reveals wintry wonderlands of snow. The settings glide through all types of whiteness, from crisp and crusty, to spraying or snowball-making. She has produced crystalline images of blizzards, sledding days, crunching through crusts in lunar-like landscapes, and traipsing home in an indigo evening after an afternoon of play. One might expect that a book of snow would be somewhat tedious - snow's just white, after all - but Ms. Wilson has created vibrant pages portraying laughing children as they romp in bold snowsuits. The warm glow of home lights peeking like beacons through trees or behind a blizzardy night, or sun and moon shadows played against a snowy backdrop are enchanting.

Ms. Fitch has won many awards for her 13 books of poetry for children, including a Mr. Christie's Book Award and a Vicky Metcalf Award. She is a renowned poet and performer, and in recent years has been a visiting author to Belize, Mexico, Bhutan, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. Ms. Wilson is a multi-award-winning illustrator, known for her graceful work in books such as *In Flanders Fields*, *Selina and the Bear Paw Quilt*, and *Anna's Goat*.



No Two Snowflakes
Written by Sheree Fitch
Illustrated by Janet Wilson
Victoria: Orca Book Publishers, 2001
ISBN 1-55143-206-4
32 pgs, \$19.95, HC

Idle



Pursuits

Montgomery Country Christmas 2001

by Deborah Quaile

Saturday, November 24 marks the annual Montgomery Country Christmas celebration, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Lucy Maud Montgomery lived in Norval from 1926 - 1935. She was already famous for her book, *Anne of Green Gables*, published 18 years earlier. During her time in Norval, she published five novels and wrote two-and-a-half of her 10 journals from her writing room in the Presbyterian Manse overlooking Russell's hill of pines. Many of the day's festivities are designed to honour Ms. Montgomery.

Explore a unique little town with quaint country Christmas celebrations, where you can indulge in a marvelous lineup of events and eating. It's also a great opportunity to pick up some superlative Christmas gifts, whether Montgomery related or not!

At Canoe Country

At this year's Montgomery Country Christmas, Canoe Country is pleased to present Julie Shephard, a talented local singer/songwriter, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. There are also wood carving demonstrations by the Ontario Wood Carvers Association; some of these carvings will be available for sale.

The Norval Community Association will offer hot apple cider, coffee, and homemade cookies for sale. As well, they will have a display and sale of Heritage Seeds from the Lucy Maud Montgomery Garden, LMM Garden souvenir T-shirts and gardening hats, Norval Country Kitchen Recipe Book and Norval History 1820-1950, homemade preserves, and a raffle. All prizes have been graciously donated. The Grand Draw will be at 4 p.m.

At Crawford's

At 2 p.m., book signings by Alexandra Heilbron, author of *Remembering Lucy Maud Montgomery*, and Elizabeth MacLeod with *Lucy Maud Montgomery: A Writer's Life* will be held at Crawford's Bakery.

Ms. Heilbron's book is a collection of first hand reminiscences by Maud's friends, family, servants, and neighbours - what was she really like? Alexandra Heilbron worked as editor of *The Avonlea Traditions Chronicle*, a magazine for fans of L.M. Montgomery for five years. In 2000, she won a writing award from the Prince Edward Island Museum and Heritage Foundation for her first book, *The Lucy Maud Montgomery Album*.

Elizabeth MacLeod's book was reviewed in the May 2001 issue of *The North Halton Compass*. Her colourful, easy-to-read, 32-page biography is suitable for children ages 8 to 12, and is available from Kids Can Press.

At Norval United Church

Don't miss the Annual Bazaar and Tea from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Visit the Bake Table, Farmers' Market (plants, fruits, and vegetables), Children's Corner - small gifts and toys at child-sized prices - and the Treasures Boutique. The crafts and tearoom will be in the church, while the bake table, children's table, Treasures and Things, and Mary's Country Store will be in the house next door to the church. A few *Anne of Green Gables* items will be also be available. Not to be missed: the Brass Ensemble will be touring around the Village again this year to lend an earful of merry music.

Ghost of a Chance

by Deborah Quaile

It may be just after Halloween, but the ghosts haven't left the area yet. Theatre-goers can catch one at Theatre in the Trees, at The Arboretum, the University of Guelph.

This fall the comedy "Ghost of a Chance" will be presented November 10, 17, 23, 24, 30, and December 1, 7, 8, 14 and 15. The play is directed by John Snowdon, Artistic Director of Theatre

Downstairs.

Bethany is bright, strong, independent, and beautiful but has absolutely no self-esteem. She has brought her fiancé, Floyd, and his mother, Verna, to her cabin in the woods, the site of the hunting accident that killed Chance, her first husband. Much to her consternation, he - or rather, his ghost - is still there. Only Bethany can see him, and Floyd and Verna quickly assume Bethany is going crazy as she frantically tried to rid them of nobody. Meanwhile, Chance is doing everything he can to prevent Bethany from marrying Floyd. As another resort, Bethany brings a delightfully kooky psychic to help deal with the ghost of Chance, but this only adds to the already crazy situation.

Theatre in the Trees tickets for *Ghost of a Chance* are \$49, including a hot and cold buffet. Cash bar is available. Order by calling Barb Watson-Ash, Marketing Coordinator, at 519-824-4120, ext. 4110. Also available is a Theatre in the Trees overnight package, with accommodation at the Best Western Emerald Inn and complimentary continental breakfast for two the next morning.

We do birthday parties too!
Scibbles
A creative, educational, "fun" program for kids 2 1/2 to 5

Qualified Staff will make your child's first school experience a positive one.

For more information call

Kidz Korner
(905) 878-4697
150 Nipissing Rd.
#10 & 11, Milton

THEATRE IN THE TREES
The Arboretum & University of Guelph
Food, Friends and Frivolity

Enjoy a scrumptious hot & cold buffet and the light-hearted comedy "Funny Valentines"

\$49 per person (inclusive)

Saturdays:

February 2, February 9,
February 16, February 23,
March 2, March 9,
March 16, March 23,
April 6, April 13,
April 20, April 27

To order tickets, contact The Arboretum
(519) 824-4120 ext. 4110
www.uoguelph.ca/~arboretu



Recycled Reading
Book Exchange

Gift Certificates

"Previously Enjoyed Books"

Winter Hours: (Nov. - May)
Closed Sunday, Monday, Tuesday
184 Main St. East
Milton, Ont. L9T 1N8

Lorraine Keech
Owner/Manager
878-6024



British Gifts, Books, Toys, Specialty Foods & Coronation Street Collectibles

OPEN HOUSE: November 3 & 4, 11 AM to 4 PM

Call for our free mail order brochure

149 Church Street E.
Acton, ON

(519) 853-1633



OPEN DAILY
Monday-Saturday
10 am to 5:00 pm,
Sunday 12 to 5 pm

• Wheelchair Access