

The Eden Mills Writers Festival

17th Annual event this year features jazz and literature workshops

BY ANN KORNUA

Now in its 17th year, The Eden Mills Writers Festival is an annual celebration of Canadian literature held this year on Sunday, September 11. The Festival itself is the personal vision of Governor General's Award winner Leon Rooke, and attracts attendance in the thousands each year who enjoy the mix of pastoral surroundings, great literature and a relaxed ambience.

Jenny Kitson, a member of the Festival committee, explains that this is not an event to miss. "With all the music workshops and readings, it's like it is growing into an arts festival," Jenny said. Featured this year are fringe and young adult readings, along with French language readings by French authors, which started last year in 2004. Authors will be available to sign copies of their books during the event. Featured authors this year are: James K Bartleman, Judy Fong Bates, David Bezmozgis, Tim Bowling, Joseph Boyden, Dionne Brand, Catherine Bush, Lynn Diamond, Emma Donoghue, Liam Durcan, Sheila Fischman, Catherine Gildiner, David Gilmour, Susan Goyette, Francois Gravel, Drew Hayden Taylor, Alistair MacLeod, Stephen Marche, Pauline Michel, Nelofer Pazira, Paul Quarrington, Ray Robertson, Leon Rooke, Bonnie Rozanski, Mairuth Sarsfield, and Selvadurai Shyam.

Gate entrance \$10 Adults, \$5 students and kids \$25 per family. Advance tickets are \$8 per adults, \$4 for students and children, and \$20 per family. Ticket outlets include: Bookshelf, Macondo, Guelph; (also selling Saturday tickets), Words Worth in Waterloo; (also selling Saturday tickets), Fanfare Books in Stratford; A Different Drummer in Burlington; The Attic in London; Bryan Prince Bookseller in Hamilton; Bookers in Oakville; BookLore in Orangeville; This Ain't the Rosedale Library, and UofT Bookstore in Toronto; Book Express in Cambridge; and Green Heron Books in Paris. For more info, go online at www.edenmillswritersfestival.ca, or call 519-826-0876.

Two workshops featured this year at the Eden Mills Writers Festival will take place on Friday and Saturday leading up to the main festival. Landscape and Literature and all that Jazz is where aspiring authors are grouped with secondary school students who are taking part in the Community Environmental Leadership Program (CELP). "It is a program where kids from the high schools do a whole semester at the camp and it's all done outside as much as possible. We are offering a writing workshop as part of that program as well as encouraging aspiring jazz composers." Jenny Kitson said. This interdisciplinary study program engages young writers who share concerns about the environment and different cultures, as well for students in love with jazz music. On the author participants list are James Raffin, Paul Quarrington, Drew Haydon Taylor and Natale Ghent. Their discussion will explore the different genres that can be considered nature writing and offer their personal thoughts on writing about places from a Canadian perspective. Internationally famous jazz musicians Dave McMurdo and Mike Malone will offer young jazz composers an experience to spark the imagination.

The Saturday Seminar at Camp Edgewood on September 10th is a chance to listen to how festival authors approach the writing process in an intimate outdoor setting. "This will be our third year doing them at Camp Edgewood. It is always involves four to five authors and they give seminars in the afternoon for aspiring writers," Jenny Kitson explained. "It's a more intimate event than on the festival day on Sunday." Guest authors Ray Robertson, Jean Little, Pauline Michel and Alistair MacLeod will read from their works and discuss their motivation and living as authors. Aspiring writers are asked to bring a sample of their writing for group discussions. This Saturday event will take place from 1 to 6pm at Camp Edgewood in Eden Mills. Tickets are only \$30 each and can be purchased at the Bookshelf in Guelph (519) 821-3311 or Words Worth in Kitchener (519) 884-2665. Space is limited.

from the bookshelf

A REVIEW BY DIANE DINEEN

Three Day Road

Joseph Boyden, Viking Canada, 2005, 351 pages, hardcover

According to the Ojibwa people the three-day road is the after-death journey made by the soul between the body and the afterlife. In this novel the three-day road is the canoe journey made by returning World War I veteran Xavier Bird from the train station to the place where he grew up. Suffering from war wounds both physical and mental, Xavier is accompanied by his aunt, Niska.

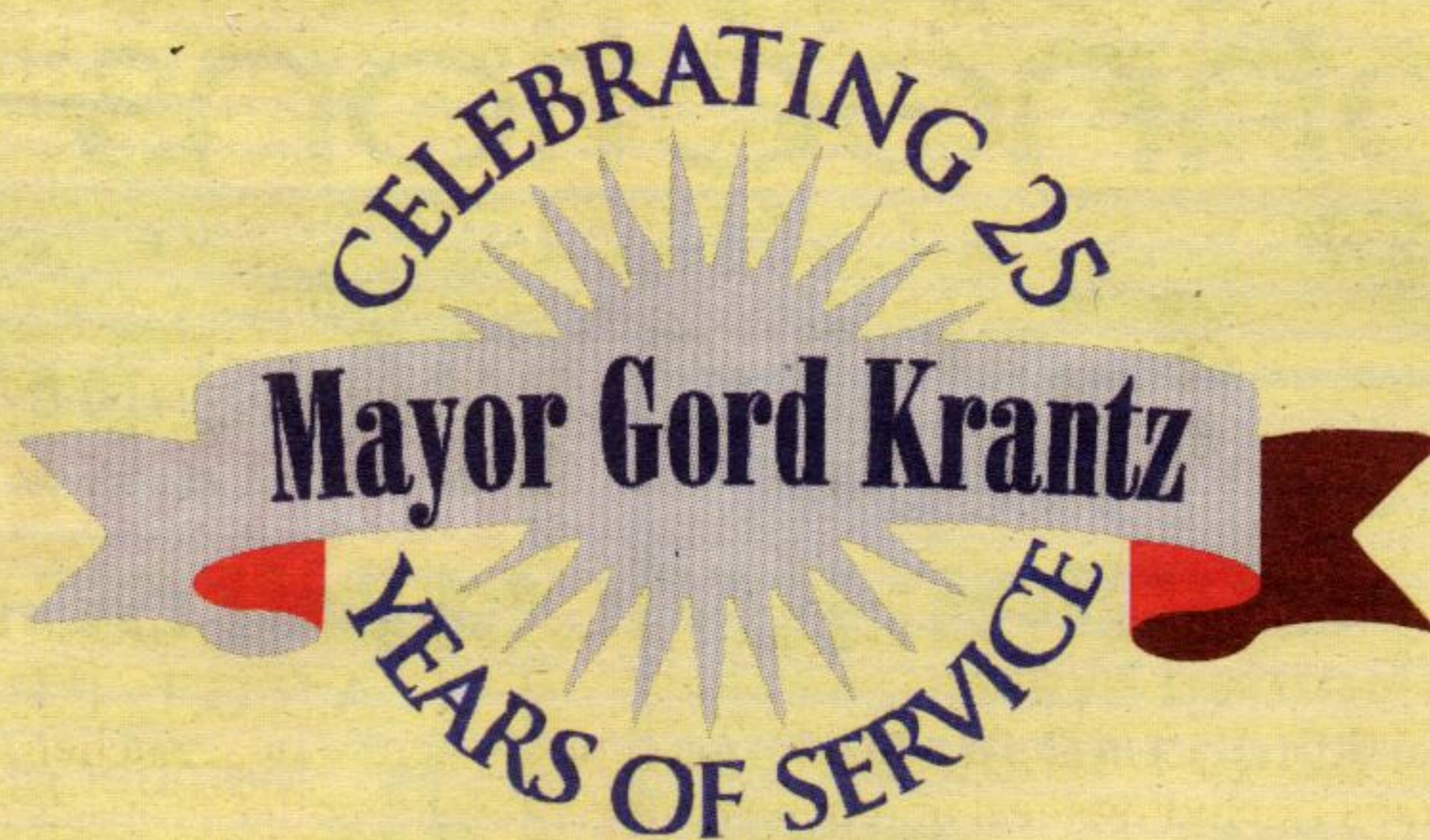
Aboriginal Canadians have always volunteered in large numbers for Canada's military, numbers far greater than one might expect from a relatively small population. This novel tells the story of Xavier Bird and Elijah Weesageechak (Whiskeyjack), natives from the Moose Factory area. After joining the military they are sent to Belgium and France to act as snipers, the assumption being that natives are good trackers and marksmen. Indeed both prove to be excellent snipers, navigating no-man's land to find and kill one enemy at a time. The craft of the sniper is clearly

shown, the need to be not only a skilled tracker and marksman but to be able to operate independently of one's unit, often at dawn or dusk, deliberately targeting and killing individuals. Xavier is good at this but finds it distasteful, Elijah is outstanding as a hunter but comes to enjoy the killing far too much. Elijah comes to resemble the Windigo, the Ojibwa evil spirit that enjoys killing people

Although it is a story of war it is even more a story of soul and conscience and of being able to face oneself and the world. The story as told alternates between Xavier's memories of Europe and his aunt's memories of his childhood. The book is slower and quieter than most war novels and much more introspective.

This is a remarkable first novel, basely loosely on the true story of a native sniper, Francis Pegahmagabow. It has won literary awards and is rumoured to have been sold for a movie. A fine and highly recommended book.

The Milton Chamber of Commerce presents



This year marks Mayor Gord Krantz' 25th year as mayor. Residents, businesses, friends and colleagues are invited to join the Milton Chamber of Commerce in commemorating Mayor Gord Krantz for his leadership and lifetime of service. The net proceeds of this event will be directed to the Chamber Legacy Fund in the name of Gordon Krantz to improve and maintain community landmarks.

Mayor's 25th Celebration
Saturday, September 24th, 2005
Rattlesnake Point Golf Club
5407 Regional Road #25
 Cocktails at 6:00 pm Dinner at 7:00 pm
 Tickets \$125.00 per person (GST incl.)

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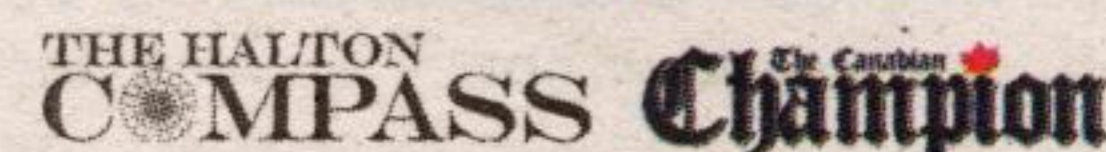
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