

2021 – A Year in Review

“The Royal City Literary Arts Society’s mission is to maintain and build a welcoming community of writers and readers, to support the goals of writers at all stages of their development, and to promote an appreciation of all forms of literary arts. We are committed to building community capacity through the literary arts, promoting literacy, social connection and cross cultural understanding and the central importance of the written and spoken word in community life”

Programs and activities report for 2021

In 2021, we continued to offer interactive workshops centered on the art of writing. Our ZOOM workshops this year included:

“Setting The Stage: How to Write Fiction Novels or Memoirs”

with Ruth Kozak

“Wild Mind: Freeing the Writer Within” with Heather Conn

“Show Versus Tell – Getting the Balance Right in Your Manuscripts”

with Eileen Cook

“Phase II: Writing the Heroine's/Hero's Journey” with Carol Johnson

“A Chapbook in A Week”, a 15-Hour Intensive Workshop

with Cynthia Sharp

“A Peek into Publishing” with kc dyer

This year we were happy to be able to bring back **Poetry in the Park**. This summer at PIP 2021 we celebrated a 10th Anniversary, one year late, and with both a new venue and a new day. **PIP** was presented at the new *Open Space Saturdays* event held outdoors in July and August at The Massey Theatre with great success. Thanks to those who have continued to support us by coming out to read and to listen. Thanks so much the City of New Westminster and Arts Council of New Westminster for 2021 funding.

*“It was thrilling to present our **PIP programming** in partnership with the Massey Theatre, City of New Westminster and Arts Council of New West. It was our first live in-person RCLAS event in 16 months! This year we even had our very own “Poet Tree”. Thanks so much to PIP Manager **Aidan Chafe** for his hard work over these many years. Bravo, Aidan! PIP PIP Hooray! - Janet Kvammen*

Our literary online magazine, **Wordplay at Work** is published 10 months of the year. This beautifully crafted E-zine gives RCLAS members an opportunity to submit their poems, short stories and other literary formats for publication. It is a wonderful showcase for both emerging and seasoned writers. Winners of our *Write On! Contest* are published annually in the June/Sept/Oct issues.

“My 86th issue came be out in October. Over the years, I have enjoyed the opportunity to work with amazing RCLAS members. Through these challenging times our members have continued to submit and to support us. Some of my highlights include the February Haiku Special Feature and contest issues. Once again I organised a National Poetry Month Co-operative Poem with contributions from 24 RCLAS members.” – Janet Kvammen

Our free bi-monthly group **In Their Words** features three presenters sharing their favourite authors from any genre in poetry, fiction, non-fiction or drama, followed by Q&A. Thank you to **Ruth Kozak**, our dedicated volunteer In Their Words manager and host.

Tellers of Short Tales, our free evening events, were held on zoom. The program attracts storytellers from New Westminster and throughout the Lower Mainland. ToST includes one featured writer as well as an Open Mic segment for short stories. 2021 Featured Authors included Nasreen Pejvack, KT Wagner, P.J. Patten, Shawn Gale, Margaret Franz, Leah Ranada, Maria Reva, Richard Toews.

Poetic Justice reading series has also been presented once a month on zoom showcasing the work of two featured poets each session followed by a popular open mic. Thank you to Carol Johnson for her great work hosting most of our zoom events including PJ, Silver Bow Publishing book launches, and more! Thank you!!!

In mid-January we launched our successful 9th **Annual Write On! Contest**. Open to submissions of poetry, fiction and non-fiction with cash prizes in all three categories. The 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winning stories and poems as well as the honourable mentions were published in the RCLAS e-zine. We are thankful to our 2020 winners for judging this year’s contest in each of their winning categories. The board wishes to thank **Angela Kenyon** for outstanding volunteer service.

Now in its eighth year, *the Annual Fred Cogswell Award for Excellence in Poetry* called on authors and publishers from across Canada for submissions of poetry books published in English in 2020. 100 books were received. Our 2021 Judge is award-winning poet Jónína Kirton. Our longlist of TEN books will be announced at our virtual **Annual General Meeting** to be held Nov 20. Later in December, cash prizes are to be presented to our First, Second and Third place award recipients and each will be given a medal.

The current board of directors: **Janet Kvammen**, Interim President; **Carol Johnson**, Treasurer; **Deborah White**, Secretary; **Lisa Strong**, Director-at-Large; **Sarah Wethered**, Director-at-Large; **Angela Kenyon**, Director-at-Large. At the end of May, **Alan Hill** stepped down as President. We are forever grateful for his dedication to RCLAS and we wish him all the best.

Visit our website www.rclas.com for our ongoing events and announcements. We continue to maintain an active presence on our **Facebook group Royal City Literary Arts Society**, and **FB RCLAS page**. You can also find us on Instagram @royalcitylit and twitter @rclas_com.

On Dec 12, 2021, RCLAS will be turning 9 years old! Thank you to the RCLAS Board of Directors. I wish to thank the City of New Westminster and the Arts Council for their ongoing support as we strive to move forward through challenging times. I also want to thank our supportive members and volunteers who keep us going. You motivate us to do what it is that we do. On behalf of the RCLAS Board, we wish everyone a safe, healthy and happy holiday season. Let us endeavour to grow together in new and interesting ways. We hope to see you all in 2022 as we slowly return to in-person events (as well as continuing to offer some virtual programming). Please join us on our mission to bring the literary arts into our community.”

– Janet Kvammen,

President Interim, Royal City Literary Arts Society (RCLAS)

*Keep in mind that we are always looking for volunteers!
Membership is \$35 a year. We appreciate your support.*

Visit our website www.rclas.com

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Facebook Group: Royal City Literary Arts Society | FB Page: RCLAS

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