

The Shining Scroll

© December 2008

*Newsletter for
the L.M. Montgomery Literary Society*

founded by Carolyn Collins and Christina Eriksson 1991



Welcome to the 100 Years of *Anne of Green Gables* Edition of *The Shining Scroll*.
This is the second part of our 2008 newsletter; the first part is available at our web site:

<http://home.earthlink.net/~bcavert/id9.html>

This issue will review the 2008 Montgomery conferences and events that our Literary Society hosted, as well as information on new books, a new musical, and three articles related to L.M. Montgomery:

**The 2008 L.M. Montgomery Conference, Prince Edward Island
“L. M. Montgomery, Anne of Green Gables and the Idea of Classic”**

New Edition of *The Anne of Green Gables Treasury*

The Nine Lives of L. M. Montgomery musical

**L.M. Montgomery Conference, Guelph, Ontario
“From Canada to the World: The Cultural Influence of L.M. Montgomery”**

L.M. Montgomery Literary Society Meetings and *Anne* 100 Events
There are many!

A Writer Forgotten: The Story Of Edith Russell
by Christy Woster

**L.M. Montgomery’s Book Dedications:
Robert Brooks, 116th Battalion, C.E.F.**
by Mary Beth Cavert

The Open Fellowship of Kindred Spirits
by Vanessa Brown



“L. M. Montgomery, *Anne of Green Gables* and the Idea of Classic”

June 24th- June 29th, 2008
Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island
by Christy Woster

One of the wonderful events held during the centennial year of *Anne of Green Gables* was the bi-annual conference sponsored by the L. M. Montgomery Institute of the University of Prince Edward Island. This year it was held at the Delta Hotel in Charlottetown and many of our Literary Society members were able to make the trip to this important and impressive conference co-chaired by Elizabeth Epperly, Mary Rubio, and Elizabeth Waterston.

After video greetings from Princess Takamado of Japan and Jennifer Litster (and daughter Tabitha) in Scotland, the conference began with a touching presentation honoring the first generation of L. M. Montgomery Preservationists. Mary Beth Cavert, assisted by our founder, Carolyn Strom Collins, initiated, researched and organized the tribute. Family members of the honorees were invited to attend this special event.

The presentation was an important reminder of the invaluable work that these people have done to preserve L. M. Montgomery’s legacy, long before many scholars felt that anything of Montgomery’s was worth saving or studying. Fans from all around the world are able to walk in many of places that Maud once loved and Montgomery scholars have access to Montgomery artifacts and papers because of the foresight of these amazing people.

The honorees were: Leta Andrew, Father Francis Bolger, James and Ruth Campbell, Maud, Amy and Georgie Campbell, Wilda and Harold Clark, Mollie Gillen [Mollie celebrated her 100th birthday this November], Ruth Macdonald, John and Jennie Macneill, Heath and Mary Ella Montgomery, Elizabeth Waterston, and Anita, Marion, Pauline, Lorraine and Keith Webb [For the complete script and photos see http://lmmontgomeryliterarysociety.weebly.com/uploads/2/2/6/5/226525/honoring_the_first_generation_-_lmm_08_conference_presenta.pdf]. A video (created by Beth) with images from the first editions of the *Anne* books was dedicated to these honorees and was so moving that many in the audience were brought to tears.

Several of our literary society members participated in presentations and panels. Carolyn Strom Collins presented her paper titled, “Re-creating the Lost 1919 *Anne of Green Gables* Movie”. She included many pictures from the 1919 film and informed us of the sometimes-bizarre story lines she discovered in descriptions of the film written at the time of its production. Emily Woster presented her paper titled, “The Creation of a Classic: L. M. Montgomery, Fiction Writing and Artistic Interpretation”. She discussed Montgomery’s responses in the rare book, *Fiction Writers on Fiction Writing* by Arthur S. Hoffman.



Emily Woster Carolyn Collins Adam-Michael James Katharine Ings Benjamin Lefebvre

Mary Beth and Carolyn were invited to be on two of the Keynote Panels – Beth’s paper was “I Dwell Among My People: L.M. Montgomery’s Kindred Spirits” and Carolyn’s was called “Spirit, Fire, and Dew -- Elements of a Classic”.

Christy Woster, with the help of her daughters Emily and Anne, put up a display about our Literary Society, which included information on the many 100th Anniversary events that our group participated in this past year. We also had information on our newsletter, *The Shining Scroll*; many new kindred spirits signed up to receive it via email. Other members of our Society attending the conference were Pat and Sarah Riedel and Ann Johnson.

The conference was filled with fifty-five speakers, book launches, receptions, silent movie night, tours and a banquet where John and Jennie Macneill were honored by the LMM Institute for their service and given a commemorative photo taken by their son, David, of the old homestead apple tree. The conference brought together people from all over the world who love

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Kate, Deke and Ruth Macdonald with Betsy Epperly and Beth Cavert



Maureen Maud George Ruth Georgie
CAMPBELL

L. M. Montgomery and reminded us that her writing continues to transcend generations, languages and cultures. We are already looking forward to the upcoming 2009 conference in Sweden and the 2010 conference on PEI [For the list of speakers, see <http://ocs.vre.upei.ca/public/conferences/2/schedConfs/1/program.pdf>].



International Anne

Ann Johnson

Anne is 100 and she has been busy traveling around the world. As I sat down to lunch the first day of the conference in Charlottetown I was pleased to learn the woman next to me was from Northern Ireland and a woman across the table was from South Africa.

A speaker from Japan, Yoshiko Akamatsu, shared images of the story as told through anime cartoons and I was impressed by the story adaptations and the quality of the images of the characters and the images of the PEI landscape in the background. Later in the conference, Francesca Montuschi explained that many children in Italy are introduced to *Anne* through the Japanese cartoons. Kerrie Banks shared photos of the outback in Australia and related that the rolling green hills of PEI were very different to their landscape. A highlight was hearing a teacher from Iran, Sami Gorgan Roodi, sharing how he uses the *Anne* story in his classroom. His students plan plays and use simple hats (such as the straw hat with red braids or a boy's cap) over their headscarves for their costumes. The wide smiles of the girls in the photos showed their enjoyment of this activity. Conference attendees were from eleven countries.

Imagining Anne, an exhibit at the Confederation Centre Art Gallery, held another example of the travels of *Anne*. *Anne of Green Gables* can be read in 36 languages and many of these international editions were on display. The first translation was into Swedish in 1909 and other languages followed including Japanese, Korean, and Arabic. The images of *Anne* on the covers are as varied as the languages.

A Note About Books

Mary Beth Cavert

I want to add a postscript to Christy and Ann's conference reports. First, I enjoyed the entertaining company of author Budge Wilson during the conference. She is a fun, witty, and humble person as well as an accomplished writer [see <http://www.100yearsofanne.com/gables-wilson.htm>]. She approached her task of writing *Before Green Gables*, the prequel to *Anne of Green Gables*, with diligence and respect. Meeting Budge was one of the highlights of the conference for me.

Secondly, at the Penguin book launch for Budge's book and Betsy Epperly's *Imagining Anne*, we were treated to an excellent paper on writing by author Gretchen Laskas. I was so impressed with her presentation that I recommended her book, *The Midwife's Tale*, to my book group [her web site is at <http://www.gretchenlaskas.com>].

Simon Lloyd (PEI Collection Librarian) took us to the Robertson Library on the UPEI campus and showed us a sample of the world class Montgomery book collection acquired and donated by Donna Campbell. More of Donna's books were on display at the Confederation Centre in the *Anne* centenary exhibit curated by Elizabeth Epperly.

Before the conference, Carolyn and I attended some Montgomery events. We visited Green Gables and heard Dr. Irene Gammel speak about her new book, *Looking for Anne*. Readers will enjoy Gammel's investigation into the varied sources of Montgomery's creative wellspring. We crossed paths with Irene again at John and Jennie Macneill's Homestead bookstore when they hosted the CBC radio show, *Island Morning*. After the radio show ended there was a launch and celebration of the new *Anne* Canadian and Japanese stamps [<http://www.canadapost.ca/personal/collecting/default-e.asp?stamp=stpart1&detail=2527>].

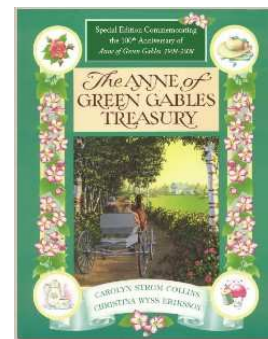
A book that should always be on every Montgomery fan's reading table is Elizabeth Waterston's *Magic Island*. Read it along with Epperly's *Fragrance of Sweet Grass* and Rubio's *Gift of Wings* (add Mollie Gillen's *Wheel of Things* biography too) for a well-rounded Montgomery exposure.

The 9th International University of Prince Edward Island Montgomery Institute conference in June 2010 is called *L.M. Montgomery and the Matter of Nature*. I would recommend Epperly's *Through Lover's Lane* as a thoughtful resource for approaching this topic.

New Edition of *The Anne of Green Gables Treasury* Published

The Anne of Green Gables Treasury – Special Edition Commemorating the 100th Anniversary of “Anne of Green Gables” was launched at the L. M. Montgomery International Symposium in June 2008. The new and limited edition has all of the same material the original *Treasury* had plus a new chapter – “Following in Anne’s Footsteps: An Anne Tour of Prince Edward Island” that details all of the Anne and L. M. Montgomery-related sites on PEI.

First published in 1991 by Penguin Books, *The Anne of Green Gables Treasury* was written by Carolyn Strom Collins and Christina Wyss Eriksson and includes chapters on L. M. Montgomery, Prince Edward Island, synopses of the eight Anne books, a time-line of events from 1866-1919, fashions of the era, one-room schooling, Anne recipes and crafts, flowers mentioned in the Anne books and their meanings in Victorian flower language. It was illustrated by Barbara Massey and several other Canadian artists.



Carolyn and Christina wrote two more Anne-related books (*The Anne of Green Gables Christmas Treasury* and *The Anne of Green Gables Treasury of Days*) as well as companion books to *Little Women*, *The Secret Garden*, and Laura Ingalls Wilder's “Little House” series. They are the founders of the L. M. Montgomery Literary Society. For more about the new edition, go to www.inglesideimpressions.com.

***The Nine Lives of L. M. Montgomery* musical debuts on PEI**

The new hit musical, “The Nine Lives of L. M. Montgomery,” opened to a full house and ran from June through August on Prince Edward Island, this summer. Adam-Michael James and Leo Marchildon wrote the play (as well as the lyrics and music), which was produced at the King's Playhouse in Georgetown in honour of the 100th Anniversary of *Anne of Green Gables*. In fact, opening night was June 20 – the very day LMM received her first copy of *Anne* one hundred years ago. It was an exciting night to be part of – many of LMM's relatives were in attendance along with Island dignitaries, LMM scholars, and Anne-fans -- the audience was expectant and enthusiastic. Leo and Mike directed the production and Mike was in the cast.

The musical numbers integrated much of LMM's life-story with the spoken dialogue and the musical style of each piece mirrored the decade in which the action was taking place, moving from Victorian times through the “jazz age,” etc. Photographs and video of Island scenery and landmarks, along with the Canadian prairies, World War I, and Ontario, were used effectively and imaginatively as backdrops for each scene. **A CD of the musical numbers is now available at www.ninelivesoflmm.com; there is also a great deal of information about the musical on the website.**

With the classic “Anne of Green Gables” musical at the Confederation Centre in Charlottetown and “Anne and Gilbert” at the Harbourside Theatre in Summerside, theatre-goers could see not only the famous “Anne” story enacted on the stage but also the story of the author herself and how her story affected the creation of the eight main characters in her books: Anne, Emily, Jane, Marigold, Valancy, Sara, Pat, and Kilmeny -- the nine “lives” of L. M. Montgomery!
[read more at: <http://home.earthlink.net/~bcavert/id21.html>]

From Canada to the World: The Cultural Influence of L.M. Montgomery

by Christy Woster

In October, an L.M. Montgomery Conference was held in Guelph, Ontario, and several of our members attended: Carolyn Collins, Mary Beth Cavert, Ann Johnson, and Emily and Christy Woster.

On the evening of October 23rd there was a special screening of two short films that reflected the themes that L. M. Montgomery often wrote about. The films -- "I Know a Secret", based on a short story written by Montgomery and "Boys and Girls" adapted from an Alice Munro story -- were shown, followed by a panel discussion.

On Friday the 24th we participated in a coach tour to Bala, Ontario, to visit the L. M. Montgomery Museum. When we arrived, we were greeted by Jack and Linda Hutton and were given a private tour of the Museum, which they have so carefully restored. It was such fun to see all the Montgomery-related artifacts they have filled the Museum with and all the early editions of Montgomery's books they have on display. We had a delicious lunch at a local restaurant and then walked around the grounds of the Rose Lawn Boarding House, now a private residence. Jack and Linda are delightful hosts and we thank them for a memorable day!



On Friday afternoon, Bernard Katz (who is working on an up-dated Montgomery bibliography) presented a program on the many editions of *Anne of Green Gables* [A video of this talk can be viewed at <http://www.lmmrc.ca/conference/proceedings.html>].



Friday evening we attended the official opening of the exhibit "Searching for Home: The Lives of L. M. Montgomery" at the Macdonald Stewart Art Centre. It was an outstanding display, curated by Mary Rubio, with beautiful picture panels and many rare Montgomery artifacts, including the original handwritten *Rilla of Ingleside* manuscript [see the L. M. Montgomery Research Centre website <http://www.lmmrc.ca/exhibit/index.html>].

Saturday was the day of the Conference, held at the Delta Guelph Hotel. We were welcomed by Alastair Summerlee, President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Guelph. Mike Ridley, the University's Chief Librarian, discussed the importance of the L. M. Montgomery archives. Helen Salmon, Associate Chief Librarian and Lorne Bruce, Head of Special Collections, discussed the launch of the L. M. Montgomery Research Centre Website and their vision for making the archives more accessible to people around the world.

Dr. Elizabeth Epperly discussed her work with the archives and how it has shaped her as a writer and scholar. She also discussed the need to continue to be able to access the archival materials directly, along with the digital images, as some things cannot be seen or felt by just viewing it on the computer [To paraphrase Dr. Epperly, "If we could not see the actual journal page where Maud writes about Frede's death, we would not see the tear stains on it."].

Catherine Ross, former Dean of the Faculty of Information and Media Studies at Western, discussed her findings from a survey of what people chose to read and the importance of L. M. Montgomery in the lives of many of those who participated in the survey.

Liz Driver, Food Historian gave a presentation on Montgomery's personal recipe book and what it can reveal about the author. Elaine Crawford [granddaughter of Myrtle Macneill and Ernest Webb from the Green Gables farm] gave a delightful talk about adapting Maud's original handwritten cookbook (a gift from her aunt, Anita Webb) for publication as *Aunt Maud's Recipe Book* [Do not miss this excellent interview with Elaine: http://www.lmmontgomerynorval.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=82&Itemid=87].



Lorraine Webb Wright,
her daughter Donna Burr,
Kelly and Elaine Crawford

Åsa Warnqvist, who is with the Department of Literature from Uppsala University in Sweden, spoke about the 1909 publication of *Anne of Green Gables* in Sweden. She also showed us some beautiful pictures of the Uppsala area, where an

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L.M. Montgomery Conference will be held in 2009. Start saving your money, it sounds wonderful! [see <http://www.ahmansson.com/montgomery2009.html>]

Irene Gammel, Professor of English at Ryerson University presented a paper entitled “There’s such a lot of different Annes in me: Putting Together the Fragments of Life and Writing in Anne of Green Gables”.

Elizabeth Waterston, Professor Emerita at the University of Guelph, gave a very informative presentation on the *Rilla of Ingleside* manuscript and explained the great care that Montgomery put into her writing -- always editing until she had found the right phrase, word or name, and developing a complex coding system to complete her editing when writing the final draft of her works.

The final speaker was Mary Rubio, Professor Emerita at the University of Guelph. Dr. Rubio has spent much of her academic career working on a biography about L. M. Montgomery and she explained the journey she has taken in writing the biography “*The Gift of Wings*” (just published in October 2008). Dr. Rubio’s presentation was informative, moving and powerful as she discussed Montgomery’s complex personality. Dr. Rubio had the foresight to interview many relatives, maids, and acquaintances of Maud before their special insights were lost forever. Dr. Rubio’s moving presentation made for an emotional ending of an incredible day.

[Dr. Rubio’s insights on the end of Montgomery’s life were riveting: “Does it matter how Maud died?” said Rubio, towards the end of her speech Saturday. “I don’t think it does. What matters is that she brought creative people together.” For more about this presentation see http://www.theontarion.ca/viewarticle.php?id_pag=1977]

All of us who love L. M. Montgomery and her writings owe a great debt of gratitude to Dr. Rubio and Dr. Waterston. Without them L. M. Montgomery would not have found her rightful place as an esteemed author. Due to their scholarship they have unlocked some of the mysteries of an incredible woman and author and have blazed the trail for further research. So much of Montgomery’s story and artifacts would have been lost if it were not for their dedicated work.

That evening Linda and Jack Hutton treated us to a delightful performance of “Memories of Lucy Maud Montgomery”. Linda wrote and narrated a “script” for the 1919 silent film *Anne of Green Gables* as Jack performed the music to the re-created magic lantern show. This was followed by a sumptuous banquet and a presentation by Dr. Pamela Wallin, Chancellor of the University of Guelph.

On Sunday, we took part in a coach tour of Montgomery’s Ontario homes. After tea and scones at the Leaskdale church, we were given a private tour of the Church and Manse that the Leaskdale volunteers are so carefully restoring. We had a specially prepared lunch at a local restaurant then stopped at the cemetery where Maud and Ewan’s son Hugh is buried. We traveled on to Norval and toured the Church with our host, Kathy Gastle, and enjoyed viewing the outside of the Manse. We finished the day with a stop at Crawford’s Bakery where we were able to try Maud’s Christmas cake and purchase some of their wonderful baked goods and jams. The L. M. Montgomery display there is just amazing, with many one-of-a-kind items. Both the Leaskdale and Norval groups are doing an outstanding job in preserving such important L. M. Montgomery sites. We thank both groups for all that they are doing.

[Note: Every year, the Norval community celebrates their connection to Montgomery with tours, shopping opportunities, programs and presentations. This year, on November 29, they had Mary Rubio signing her new LMM biography, *A Gift of Wings*; Jack and Linda Hutton presenting their re-creation of the 1919 *Anne of Green Gables* silent movie; and a program featuring talks by LMM scholars Benjamin Lefebvre, Irene Gammel, and Edith Smith.]

http://www.lmmontgomerynorval.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=69&Itemid=77

As you can see it was a very full weekend of all things L. M. Montgomery. We visited with old friends, met many new kindred spirits and came away with a new appreciation for the wonder of Montgomery’s writing, even though her own personal life was so often filled with darkness and despair.

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Elizabeth Waterston and daughter Jane at the John McCrae Home



Mary Rubio signs Gift of Wings with help from her granddaughter



Kathy Gastle



First L.M. Montgomery Conference at University of Guelph

This article and photo appeared in *Mosaic Magazine*, ABM Publishing, Durham, ON, Canada, Nov/Dec 2008 issue by Deborah Quaile © 2008

Though it's been 100 years since the publication of *Anne of Green Gables*, Canada's foremost novel as far as book sales go, public and scholarly enthusiasm for its author, LM Montgomery, has not waned. Drawing on its extensive collection of Montgomery memorabilia, the University of Guelph put together its first conference from October 23-26 to offer the official opening of an installation at the city's MacDonald Stewart Art Centre entitled *Searching for Home: The Lives of L.M. Montgomery* (running until January 18, 2009), and to highlight the Guelph archives and several books released this year that relate to *Anne* and her creator.

The university was also pleased to announce the new searchable LMM image collection, accessed from the website at http://www.lmmrc.ca/image_search.html

In 1981 the journals and scrapbooks of LM Montgomery were purchased by the university from the author's son, Dr. Stuart Macdonald, and after his death in 1982 additional material was collected, including the original *Rilla of Ingleside* manuscript in 1999. Drs. Mary Rubio and Elizabeth Waterston worked for decades to decipher this vast collection and provided the public with five edited L.M. Montgomery journals as well as several comprehensive studies, including this year's releases, *Magic Island* by Waterston and *The Gift of Wings*, Rubio's long-awaited biography of the author.



Several speakers added to the excitement of the weekend event, including Irene Gammel, Elizabeth Rollins Epperly, Elaine Crawford, and a memorable keynote address by Dr. Pamela Wallin, Chancellor of the University of Guelph [pictured are Karem Allen, great-granddaughter of L.M. Montgomery; Pamela Wallin, and Luella Veijalainen, granddaughter L.M. Montgomery]. Perhaps the most eagerly awaited session of the conference was one presented by Mary Rubio who spoke on the process of writing Montgomery's biography, the divergences between the author's journals and her research findings, and a discussion of her findings as they relate to the recent media release by one of her granddaughters, Kate Macdonald Butler, of a what was thought to be Montgomery's "suicide note."

[http://www.lmmontgomerynorval.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=71&Itemid=79]

Montgomery was a tireless supporter of Canadian literature, noted Dr. Rubio, who spent her retirement years promoting new writers. She did wish, however, that people wouldn't think of her as solely a children's writer (Montgomery penned two adult novels, many short stories, magazine articles and poems) because her books were read by many adults, including Earl Grey and two Prime Ministers of England, Stanley Baldwin and Ramsey Macdonald. Margaret Laurence once admitted that LM Montgomery's work was the beginning of women's writing in Canada.

Through Rubio's 30-year process of discovery, she found that Montgomery artfully retold her own story – which meant that her biographer had to uncover her own truth. Montgomery's daughter-in-law, Luella Reid Macdonald, told Rubio that the journals had a great many words but did not really reveal much about what the author thought about herself. Consequently,

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they didn't present the real, full picture – that of a woman who laughed a lot and had a lot of stories to tell. It was a “head-spinning” amount of detective work, “to say the least,” Rubio admitted.

Montgomery and her husband, Rev. Ewan Macdonald, had been ill for many of their senior years, and took many drug compounds administered by doctors and by themselves. The author, who was never a large person, lost a great deal of weight and was a “birdlike wisp of a woman” in 1942, again according to her daughter-in-law. That the constant medical cocktails may have hastened her demise is possible, and the fact that she had been found dead in her bed with a note beside her may have pointed to suicide.

But it's that note that really calls into question whether she would be capable of such an act. Montgomery was under considerable strain in many ways, from one son's transgressions to the ousting of her style of writing by a particular book reviewer tied to the Canadian Authors Association. She had also spent 20 years covering up her husband's mental illness to avoid the stigma associated with that.

The first questionable item regarding the “suicide note” was that it was dated two days before her death and numbered at the top, rather like a manuscript page. Montgomery's style was to write up loose pages of information for her journals and then recopy them in the book when she could see how life turned out. Some personal issues were held back until she could decide whether she wanted to record them or not. She did not, for example, say how she'd been skewered by male members of the writing aristocracy in Canada who dismissed her writing as frivolous, feminine and for the uncultured masses.

Could this have been a final page in the life account, the last in an unbound series from 1939 to 1942, or was it a suicide admission? Would she have taken her own life over these and other related issues? Dr. Rubio leaves it up to the reader to decide, and in so doing gives her audience hope. In that way, perhaps Montgomery's death was untimely and unfortunate, but the thought that she may not have committed such an act ultimately becomes the happy ending that the writer liked to give her readers.

L.M. Montgomery Literary Society Meetings and *Anne* 100 Events

Members of the LMMLS shared their enthusiasm for LM Montgomery with more than 500 people this year, see photos and more at <http://home.earthlink.net/~bcavert/id2.html>

Summer 2007 Carolyn Collins participated in Prince Edward Island's "Anne 2008" events by speaking at some community libraries about life on PEI during the time of L.M. Montgomery's youth and the setting of *Anne of Green Gables*. Her presentation was "Around the Waterloo Stove: the Heartbeat of Green Gables." She explained how LMM used the kitchen for writing *Anne of Green Gables* as well as the room's function for food preparation, laundry and all the activities that required the iron cook stove in "Anne's day."

January 5, 2008 The Literary Society met at the Avalon Tea Room where Pati Kachel did a lovely presentation on Christmas Memories -- lots of nostalgia as well as humor -- and the tea served by the tearoom was very elegant and tasty. Christy presented a host of ideas for the "Anne Day" and we brainstormed on additional ideas and details. Those present: Sarah and Patricia Reidel, Beth Cavert, Penny Schreck, Christy Woster, Anne and Emily Woster, Pati Kachel, Ann Johnson, Carolyn Collins, Corrie Beck, Peggy Yaeger, Joan O'Brien, and Betty Heath.

April 2008 Betty Heath and Ann Johnson designed beautiful *Anne* displays for their local libraries in Bayport, Woodbury, and Hastings, Minnesota.

April 19th, 2008 The Literary Society hosted its first *Anne* event at the Rum River Library. The displays brought in by our members were attractive, informative, interesting, and impressive. Christy and Emily Woster, and Penny Schreck organized the day. Sarah and Pat Riedel brought a table full of antique household tools that intrigued children and adults; they also brought beautiful display cases that held a large number of LMM first editions for the 150 visitors to view. Pati Kachel did two story-telling events and also provided a large selection of vintage dresses, hats, aprons, gloves, etc., for visitors to dress up in and have their pictures made. Thanks to Ann Johnson, Carolyn Collins, Christina Eriksson, and Beth Cavert for helping out.

May 31, 2008 The Red Balloon Bookshop staff (Sally Rigler, Amy Baum, and Michelle Cromer-Poiré) hosted a happy 100th Birthday Party for *Anne of Green Gables* May 31, 2008 at their store on Grand Avenue in St. Paul. Christy Woster and

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Penny Schreck brought lots of display materials, crafting supplies, and scrapbooks along with door prizes to give out. Pati Kachel entertained the capacity crowd with stories about LMM and Anne (from Elizabeth McLeod's new children's biography on LMM and Dierdre Kessler's new *Anne of Green Gables* for young readers). Carolyn and Christina signed copies of the new *Anne of Green Gables Treasury - Special Commemorative Edition*. Ann Johnson assisted with the display tables. To top off the party, a cake decorated with a picture of the original *Anne of Green Gables* book cover was served.



July 24, 2008 The Red Balloon Bookshop and the L. M. Montgomery Literary Society, hosted "A Tea Party to Celebrate 100 Years of *Anne of Green Gables*" at the historic University Club of Saint Paul. A hundred guests attended and viewed the three rooms of 17 + tables of L.M. Montgomery Literary Society exhibits about the author of *Anne of Green Gables* as well as displays of collectible Anne dolls, books about Montgomery, early edition books, several editions of the new *Anne* prequel book, and many artifacts related to *Anne*, Prince Edward Island, and the author. Our thanks to LMMLS members Sally Rigler (representing Red Balloon) and Christy Woster for their superb organizing skills.

October 15, 2008 Christy Woster was the speaker at an *Anne of Green Gables* tea held on at the Brooklyn Park, Minnesota Community Center. Sixty people attended. Christy and Penny Schreck set up a display of dolls, old books and information on L. M. Montgomery, and Christy did a presentation about the author. A lunch was served and participants brought their own teacups, which made the beautifully set tables even more festive. A special thank you to Pat Busch, Adult and Senior Center Activity Director at the Community Center, for doing an outstanding job setting up the tables, planning lunch and coordinating the event. Ms. Busch has asked Christy to plan another event with the help of our Literary Society for spring of 2009, and a Mother/Daughter "Anne" tea is in the planning stages.



September 6, 2008 Literary Society members met at Beth Cavert's house to share photos of the summer LMM conference on PEI and our tea event in July. Christy and Penny brought a table's worth of food and treated us to a PEI wine tasting party! We watched the *Anne Tribute* video that was shown at the summer LMM conference with the illustrations and covers of the first edition books that morphed from one to the other.



November 7, 2008 Professional storyteller Pati Kachel had the pleasure of introducing 200 elementary students at Nevada Community School near Ames, Iowa, to Lucy Maud Montgomery and Anne Shirley. Nevada's multi-age classroom teachers are strong advocates for inspiring the love of reading and writing in their students. Their curriculum theme this year is, "Water, Water, Everywhere". Aware that Maud loved nature and that she used the imagery of water throughout the *Anne* book series, Pati crafted an interactive story program for her young listeners.

Four separate groups of approximately 50 students came to spend an hour with Pati. She dressed up in her Victorian style costume, complete with three layers of petticoats, pantaloons and laced up boots. The classroom where she gathered the students featured six educational stations of colorful display boards created by our Minnesota society members. One station featured Emily Woster's Avonlea School Room display where children could see and learn about the kind of textbooks, chalkboard slates and toys that children would have used during the turn of the 20th century. One of Sarah Riedel's displays provided a good geography lesson with her map of PEI. The kids enjoyed putting together a large jigsaw floor puzzle of Canada provided by Christy Wooster. The children colored and made their own flags of Canada to take home. Sarah Riedel's display board featuring her beautifully taken photographs of PEI helped the kids to see the wonderful sights of many kinds of water that Maud wrote about. Pati read excerpts from *Anne of Green Gables* describing all of the various bodies of water -- the sea, the brooks, the rivers and the lakes on PEI. Sarah Riedel also created a photo display of the Green Gables House through the years.



In another area Pati displayed her personal scrapbook from her vacation to PEI in 1993, along with dozens of her books about Montgomery, the island and her treasured collection of Anne Shirley dolls. Pati also brought along her extensive wardrobe of antique clothing and accessories and invited the kids to walk through her "Victorian Times" corner, where her students had to use their "museum eyes". There they could see the vintage fashions described by another one of Christy Woster's displays constructed with pages from women's magazines and catalogs from that period in history. During their time together, Pati read aloud from Elizabeth McLeod's book about Lucy Maud Montgomery written especially for young readers and then had a question and answer time afterwards. She gave away handouts of her "Ann-with-an-e-isms" - listing all of the



funny things Anne Shirley said. She also gave away many copies of the PEI vacation planner catalogs and bookmarks.

But by far, the place that the students enjoyed the most was at the end of each hour when both girls and boys could put on straw hats with red braids and boyish caps, had freckles painted on their faces, and then had their photos taken with their classmates. The delightful students and the dedicated teachers of the multi-age learning program of Nevada Elementary and our traveling storyteller had a wonderful day together. Pati is confident that 200 new Iowan Anne fans were added to our kindred spirits club that day!

November 8 Literary Society members met at the Serendipity Cafe in Andover to talk about the LMM conference at Guelph and other news.

November 29th Christy, Emily, and Anne Woster and Penny Schreck hosted a scrapbooking party to raise funds for the Leaskdale Manse and Church.

A Writer Forgotten: The Story Of Edith Russell

Christy Woster © 2008

L. M. Montgomery's scrapbooks contain much about the author herself, but they also contain the writings of other, lesser known poets and writers. As I read *Imagining Anne, The Island Scrapbooks of L. M. Montgomery* by Elizabeth Epperly, clippings of the work of one such aspiring writer jumped out at me.

With each clipping that bore her name, I became more interested in finding out more about this person. I searched the internet, ordered her death certificate, and wrote for information. She became more than a name, she became a real person who deserves to be remembered again.

Her name is Edith Russell, and Maud had pasted several references to Edith, as well as poems by her throughout the scrapbooks. Maud had met Edith while working at the *Halifax Echo* newspaper office in 1901. I have had a special interest in Edith for quite some time. Several years ago when traveling to Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia, I purchased several old postcards but did not look at the backs of the postcards until we had returned home. To my delight I had found a wonderful treasure without even knowing it! One of the PEI postcards had been written by L. M. Montgomery and mailed to Edith Russell in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.

The postcard Maud mailed was from the Canadian Souvenir series and has a picture of Pulpit Rock at Kildare Capes, PEI. The card was mailed from Cavendish on October 12, 1906, and Maud wrote: "Dear Miss R. - Your letter received. Will answer next time Sunday comes in the middle of the week-or before if I get time. I have succumbed to the craze and am making postal collection too. Will you send me a Dartmouth card? L. M. M."

The handwriting is unmistakably Maud's, and I have had this confirmed by several LMM scholars who agree that Maud indeed is the sender of this postcard. So when reading *Imagining Anne, The Island Scrapbooks*, and seeing the clippings and references to Edith that Maud had so carefully pasted on several different pages, I just had to know more about this acquaintance of Maud.

The first place that I can find Edith is on the April 1891 census in Dartmouth, Halifax County, Nova Scotia. At that time, she was fourteen and living with her parents, John G. T. Russell (age 40) and Alice Mary (age 43), and two sisters, Isabella I., (age 12) and Helen Curtis Russell (age 9). Both of Edith's parents were born in Nova Scotia, as were all three of their daughters. They are listed as being Methodist. The 1901 census gives a bit more detail: the family is still living in Dartmouth and Edith is now 24 years old. Her birth date is listed as January 29, 1877, and she is single. Her profession is a music teacher. This census was taken before she began working at *The Echo*.

Maud's first mention of Edith is in *The Selected Journals, Volume 1*, on page 281. Maud is working at *The Echo* and her entry of Friday, May 20, 1902, states:

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I had a good laugh today. Miss Russell, a Dartmouth girl, who was recently added to our staff and who is rather nice said to me: –“That story *Under The Shadow* is the strangest one I ever read. It wandered on, chapter after chapter, for weeks and never seemed to get anywhere; and then it just finished up in eight chapters, lickety split. I can’t understand it.

Maud had been asked to shorten the story by cutting out all the unnecessary fluff. In her journal entry of Sunday, May 4, 1902, she writes “I have followed instructions, cutting out most of the kisses and embraces, two thirds of the love making and all the descriptions, with the happy result that I have reduced it to about a third of its normal length.” It appears that Edith never knew that Maud had shortened the story.

On page twenty of the Red Scrapbook, Maud pasted a printed card entitled *A Century Greeting to Mrs. Susan Meagher, Dartmouth, 1803-1903* by EMR. EMR is Edith May Russell and this is a poem written to celebrate Susan’s, 100th birthday. Susan Keeler Meagher was born in Dartmouth April 23, 1803 and passed away March 18, 1904, not quite reaching the age of 101. She married Edward Meagher, who passed away in 1877. I found Susan in the 1891 census living in district 34, the same district in which Edith lived, so I assume Edith knew Susan and this was her special gift on the occasion of Susan’s 100th birthday. Since Maud was no longer working at *The Echo* in 1903, Edith must have mailed this to her. It appears that the two women kept in contact and that Maud followed Edith’s literary career for a time.

On page 48 of the Red Scrapbook is pasted a poem by Edith entitled *A Defeated Motion*, a comic political poem that still rings true today. It asks the question “what is too old to hold political office?” On page 50 of the Scrapbook, there is a picture of Edith, the only woman among a group of men advertising Sun Life of Canada, an insurance company. Beneath Edith’s name it states that she is apparently in charge of “The Women’s Department”. On page 59 of the Scrapbook, there is a clipping titled *Two Pictures, A Fresh Air Sermon by Edith Russell*. It is a rather depressing look at a child’s life in the city. The first stanza is recited by a lad who has the good fortune to be enjoying the beach and good food, but the poem continues with another child who did not get to “Has a week o’picnic down there at Cow Bay”. “Wish that nice kind ECHO catch a site of me-never seen no ocean , never climbed no tree.” It appears that *The Echo* newspaper must have assisted in getting some of the city’s poor children to summer camp. This poem is just one of Edith’s writings that strives to give a voice to the poor and disadvantaged.

Maud’s next mention of Edith in her journal is not until Friday, December 7, 1917. In volume two, on page 232, Maud writes of the newspaper headlines reporting on the Halifax explosion, the terrible explosion caused by the collision of two ships carrying munitions in Halifax harbour: “Today I finished shopping, the Halifax story grows worse in each dispatch. I hope Edith Russell and her family escaped. There were many killed in Dartmouth where her home is.”

In searching for information about Edith I came across a chapbook of poetry written by her. Maud makes no mention of this, so perhaps she never knew of this publication. It is entitled *Indispensable Friends* and is a small paper-covered booklet consisting of 14 pages. There is no indication of a publisher or any date of publication, so I assume that Edith had this published herself. The first page states: “Cordially Dedicated to All Who tread the Path of Labour”. “Introductory: In presenting this little booklet of rhymes no slight is intended for the many who work with heart, head and hand, who necessarily cannot be mentioned owing to paper shortage and cost of production.” The mention of a paper shortage leads me to believe that this must have been published during World War I. I was very fortunate to find a copy that is signed by Edith. The *Indispensable Friends* that Edith chose to acknowledge are “The Cobbler, The Street Sweeper, A Fireman, Elevator Man, The Traffic Cop, Coal Hawker, The Laundress, The Grocery Boy, The Postman, The News Vendor, The Miner, The Policeman, The Motorman, The Night Watchman, and The Ferry Stoker. All the poems tell of the lives of common working people and their plight in life.

According to the Dartmouth City Directories from 1910 to the 1950s, Edith lived at 22 Dahlia Street in Dartmouth, the home that was owned by her father, George. In the 1918 directory, Edith’s occupation was listed as a stenographer. Edith’s father passed away in 1929, and her mother died in 1932. It appears that Edith inherited the home after her mother’s death. Neither Edith nor her two sisters, Isabel and Helen ever married; they lived in their childhood home for the rest of their lives.

An entry in Robert Long’s *Nova Scotia Authors and Their Works* (1933) gives more details about Edith Russell:

Edith was born in Dartmouth, where she resides. Educated in Dartmouth public schools and Halifax County Academy. Spent three years in reportorial work on a Halifax daily. Has been a frequent contributor of stories and poems to various periodicals, including *Success, Outdoor Life, Sunday School Times, Epworth Herald*, etc. Five of Miss Russell’s contributions to *Our Dumb Animals* of Boston have been awarded prizes.

It is interesting that Edith published items in some of the same periodicals as Maud. *Our Dumb Animals* was published in Boston and was the publication of the first Animal Humane Society in America.

Maud's final mention of Edith in her journals is in volume 3, page 296. Maud writes on Monday, June 28, 1926, "...

I went to Toronto last Monday to attend The Triennial. The first evening there was a reception in the club room and who should pop in but Edith Russell, my old co-worker on the Echo in the early days of the century. I have never seen her since I left Halifax twenty-five years ago-though I put my foot in it by saying so, as Edith did not like to be reminded that she had been Miss Russell for so long a time! We corresponded for several years but I have not heard from or of her for a long time. She is as odd and unattractive as ever, yet with something likeable about her." "... I came home Friday, very tired to prepare for our Anniversary on Sunday, Edith Russell came Saturday for the weekend. I asked her out for I think the poor thing has a rather hard life of it and finds it hard enough to make both ends meet. Edith, poor thing, is a fearful bore and I could not help feeling relieved when she went today."

There is a picture of Edith on page 297, apparently taken during her visit.

I can find no further mention of Edith in Maud's journals -- when they first met Maud would have been interested in the success of a fellow authoress and her publications. Obviously, Edith never gained the fame that Maud did and Maud seemed to pity Edith in later years, as Edith seemed to have had a difficult life.

In the papers of Thomas H. Raddall, housed at Dalhousie University, is a letter that Edith wrote to Raddall on January 30, 1951. I was able to obtain a copy of the letter. Thomas Raddall was a prolific, award-winning writer. He received the Governor General's Award for three of his books, and was made an Officer of the Order of Canada. He also was very involved with preserving Nova Scotia's history.

Edith writes to Raddall about a boy that was born across the street from her family, Melbourne Charles Wilson. Edith had kept up a correspondence with Wilson for many years, and in a recent letter Wilson had written to Edith, he writes, "Yes, it's too bad you couldn't follow along the writer's path. I understand one young fellow who used to be an assistant Radio Officer with me during World War I has made quite a name for himself as a writer. Do you know Thomas Raddall?" Edith writes to Raddall that Wilson had a flair for writing himself and "had done some really good verse, and is always deploring the fact that I gave up writing short stories, in which I had been fairly successful, and urging me to start anew."

Edith continues that she replied to Wilson that she had met Raddall at an Author's Association meeting, and is sending Wilson's current address to Raddall in case he should wish to make contact with a "brother officer of by-gone days". She ends the letter with "Everyone I know is greatly interested in your literary achievements, and my neighbors were delighted with the radio dramatic portrayal of *The Nymph and the Lamp*. I have no radio, so missed the pleasure"

Thomas Raddall noted on Edith's letter that he had sent a reply on February 5, 1951, and also noted that Wilson had died at sea soon after he had received Edith's letter, aboard an American freight steamer.

In 1951, Edith would have been in her 70s, but obviously, still maintained an interest in writing, and was still attending the Authors Association meetings. Edith passed away in 1957 at the age of 80. The house at 22 Dahlia Street was listed under her sister Helen's name. Helen survived Edith but I have not been able to find a death date for her.

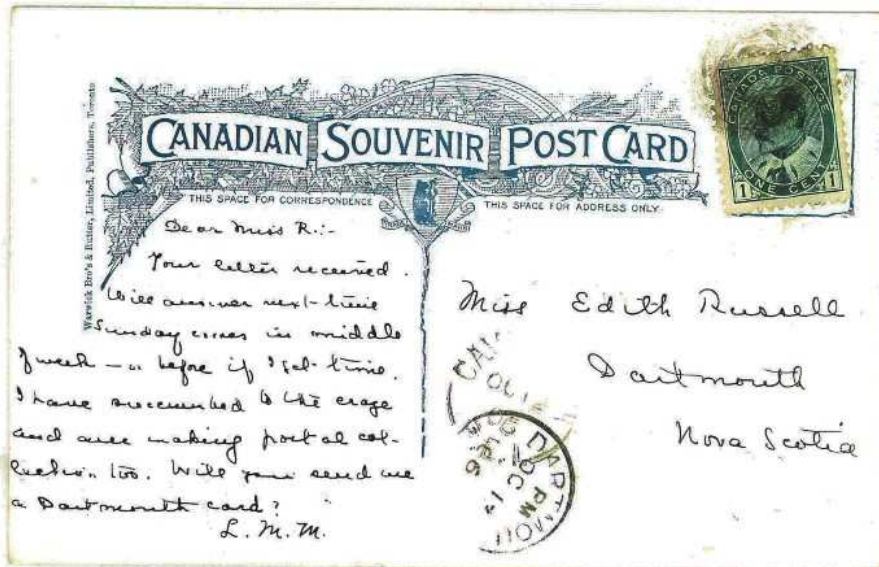
It seems that Edith tried many vocations, music teacher, newspaper reporter, stenographer, insurance company representative, author and poetess -- but her writings are now long forgotten. It must have been quite a thrill for Edith to meet L. M. Montgomery again in 1926 and to be invited to spend some time with Maud who by then was a famous author.

Edith seems to have written of the working man, the poor and the disadvantaged, even winning awards for her stories for the Humane Society, giving a voice to those "Dumb Animals" unable to speak for themselves.

Most authors write from their experiences, and Edith must have known the difficulties of being a single woman at a time when being an "old maid" had negative connotations. She knew the reality of working hard, but making little money, and society's showing little respect for the humble working person of the day. She seems to want to give a voice to those disadvantaged and to say "thank you" to those people who were seldom acknowledged for their service.

Maud stated in her 1926 journal entry that she felt bad for Edith and felt that she had a hard time of it. Even to the end of Edith's life she must have not had much money, not even owning a radio in 1951.

Edith has no family to remember her, and her attempts at literary success are long forgotten. She must have been inspired by Maud's success and her characters, as so many women have been for over a century, to never give up your dream of becoming a writer or climbing the Alpine Path. It is nice that, with the publication of *The Island Scrapbooks* by Elizabeth Epperly, Edith's writings are made public again and that her memory is not forgotten. Maud's scrapbooks have again brought to light the writings of many long forgotten authors, an additional gift that Maud has given to us.



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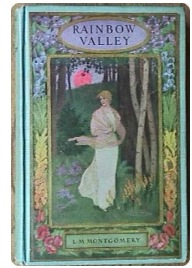
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L.M. Montgomery's Book Dedications: Robert Brooks, 116th Battalion, C.E.F.

Mary Beth Cavert © 2008

The First World War ended ninety years ago and Lucy Maud Montgomery dedicated two of her books to soldiers who died in it: *The Watchman and Other Poems* (1916), "To the memory of the gallant Canadian soldiers who have laid down their lives for their country and their empire," and *Rainbow Valley* (1919), "To the memory of Goldwin Lapp, Robert Brookes, and Morley Shier who made the supreme sacrifice that the happy valleys of their homeland might be kept sacred from the ravage of the invader."



.....

L.M. Montgomery moved to Ontario at the end of September 1911 after her marriage to Reverend Ewan Macdonald. Ewan was the minister for the Presbyterian congregations at Leaskdale and Zephyr, about seven miles apart. The Macdonalds lived in the Leaskdale Manse, a "white" brick house that was close to the road, beside a dozen houses in a country setting. The couple spent a month getting the house ready to occupy and they moved in to it in late October.

Montgomery accompanied her husband on what she considered "long wearisome" buggy rides over "dreadful" roads to the Zephyr church every week. She disliked the responsibilities of tending to a second congregation in those early years. The old wooden building with its worn frosted windows compared unfavorably with the new brick Leaskdale church. She resented the required dull visits and invitations to tea so that the "Zephyrites" were "getting their share of my attention." Later, she became good friends with a few families there like Rob and Lily Shier (Lily was Maud's household help from 1912 to 1916). Rob's nephew was Morley Shier who was a young member of the Leaskdale congregation. Lt. Morley Roy Shier was a reconnaissance pilot in World War I who was lost over the North Sea on September 6, 1918.

Zephyr was also the hometown of respected attorney and politician Samuel Simpson Sharpe who practiced law in nearby Uxbridge and, beginning in 1908, was a member of the House of Commons. Sharpe was a year older than L.M. Montgomery and his wife became a friend of hers through their membership in the Uxbridge Hypatia Club, a women's discussion group about books and authors.

Some of the members of the Zephyr congregation that became linked to the Macdonalds were the children of Edward Brooks, Jr. and Catherine Forrest Brooks (no resemblance to the character in *Anne of Windy Poplars*, Katherine Brooke). Catherine had been a widow for several years when Ewan became her minister. Her grown sons Albert and James had left home and she was in the care of her grown daughters Janet and Mary. Her youngest son, Robert, had been on a homestead in Saskatoon for six years but came home to work on his family farm. Catherine died in 1912 and the farm was left in the hands of Robert and Janet, who kept house for him. The Brooks farm was a mile southwest of Zephyr with a hundred acres of corn, orchards, and meadows (on Lot 24, Concession 1).

Maud Macdonald had her first child in 1912 and began what were to be the happiest years of her life as a mother, famous author, and wife. In spite of the somber world events that dominated her life, the years 1911 through 1918 would be her golden years of domestic joy. She had her own home with two sweet young children, a rewarding career, and her closest friend, Frederica Campbell, was a frequent companion.

On August 4, 1914 war began between Britain and Germany; Canada declared war the next day and recruiting centers were organized in Ontario County. Major Samuel Sharpe began enrolling soldiers for his 34th Ontario Regiment, a militia unit with headquarters in Uxbridge. In October 1914 he sent 200 men across the Atlantic to the Salisbury Plain of Britain with Canada's 1st Contingent. The small local militias were soon replaced by a newly created force of 260 infantry battalions of 1000 volunteer men who became known as the Canadian Expeditionary Force.



On September 16, 1914, Ewan performed the marriage of 33 year-old Janet Brooks to 37 year-old Jacob (Jake) J. Meyers, Jr. in Zephyr. Janet's brother, Bob, signed as a witness on the marriage license. Jake was a farmer whose parents, Elizabeth Segrist (or Secrist) and Jacob Meyers, came from Zurich, Switzerland and belonged to the Mennonite Brethren in Christ Church. Jake's cousin, John Rudy Meyers, had two daughters who worked in the Macdonald house as maids during the war years. Edith Meyers was hired in January 1916. Her older sister, Lily Ann, followed her and worked for Maud from 1917 until 1923.

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Maud Montgomery received a letter from her pen pal Ephraim Weber in July of 1915. In it he dismissed the war as a “commercial” one not worthy of sacrifice. Montgomery seethed with anger over those words because she, like everyone else she knew, viewed the conflict as a just and righteous war, a “death grapple” between freedom and tyranny, worthy of the ultimate sacrifice.

By September, the county had supplied enough soldiers, 943, to form a battalion which was assigned the number 116. Bob Brooks decided early in the summer to enlist and he began his training under the new command of Lieutenant-Colonel Sam Sharpe as soon as the fall harvests were finished. He had his physical exam in December and signed his attestation papers (a contract of enlistment) on January 12, 1916. On Christmas Eve, Maud and Ewan gave a dinner for the enlistees from the Leaskdale church: “as I looked at the splendid young fellows my heart ached,” she wrote to Weber.

In January 1916, there were recruiting meetings every night and Maud was hosting Red Cross groups at the manse to sew and knit huge bales of supplies for the military hospitals. It was a “strange, strained painful” life of war. She grieved over the faces of the poor mothers. “The church is full of stifled sobs as [Ewan] prays for the boys at the front and in training.” The new recruits of the 116th spent the winter training in Uxbridge.



In March, Private Bob Brooks took a leave to go home and sell his machinery, horses, and livestock that his brother-in-law, Jake Meyers, cared for while he was in Uxbridge. The sale was the largest in the area and earned him nearly \$8000. Janet was not happy about all that he was giving up. He said, “It isn’t as though I had a wife and family dependent upon me here. They do need me over there and I’ve got to go.” His hired man, Joe Newell, decided to go with him too. Bob rented the homestead, probably to Janet and Jake who eventually made “the rolling fields of autumn furrows, acres of ripened corn, fruit-laden orchards and meadows, and sleek cattle” their own.

By the spring of 1916, there were 1145 men in the 116th Battalion -- they left Uxbridge in June for basic training in Niagara after one last march through several villages and towns in the county, passing under arches by the manse and church in Leaskdale. There were speeches and gifts along the way of oranges, cigarettes, and a large tent. On July 23, 1916 they set sail from Halifax on the *HMT* (His Majesty’s Transport) *Olympic*. The 116th was stationed at Witley Camp in England for training until they were sent to France on the 11th of February 1917 and then to Vimy Ridge on the 11th of March. The battalion fought with the 3rd Division of the Canadian Corps and the 9th Infantry Brigade.

The attack on the German stronghold at Vimy had been planned for months using a mock replica of the area for practice. Three miles of tunnels were dug to secretly move troops. A few days before the battle started, the soldiers heard that the United States had finally declared war on Germany. All four divisions of the Canadian Corps took part in the offensive from April 9 to the 12th under cold and wet weather with heavy snowfall. During the assault, they followed a moving “creeping” barrage of artillery, a tactic invented by Canadian General Currie. The 116th moved supplies to the front line, repaired trenches, worked on the roads and then relieved another battalion at the front as troops were rotated.

It was generally understood that we were to take the place of the 60th Battalion. We were fresh and eager to do credit to the name of our unit and our Commanding Officer (Col. Sharpe), whose untiring energies had succeeded in gaining a place for us in France; ... For two years [the Germans] had looked down into our trenches from the top of that accursed ridge, which had been lost by the French in the early days of the war. He could see the country behind our lines for a distance of about 5 miles... To drive him from the top of the ridge we must advance a distance of nearly three miles, uphill, over deep mud and shell holes, and through barbed wire entanglements ... The successful capture of Vimy Ridge ended another chapter in the annals of the Canadian Corps which was soon to be regarded as second to none on the Western front. It also witnessed the birth of a new battalion, whose fame up to the present, had not extended beyond the borders of the County of Ontario, but whose ideals, if lived up to, would make it second to none in the gallant Corps to which it now belonged. *The 116th Battalion in France*



Vimy Ridge was one of Germany's strongest defensive points; the defeat there was demoralizing for the Germans and provided a strong position for the British advance in 1918. Montgomery noted the price of these successes in her journal on April 17, 1917: "There has been a fortnight of 'good' war news – with huge casualty lists. The British and the French are slowly advancing on the western front, purchasing a little village or so a day with the lives for which mothers have agonized."

In May, June, and July the 116th provided working parties for roadwork, trench reinforcement, and moving supplies. They were reviewed by King George V, had training exercises, made night raids into No Man's Land, and were assigned to take a series of German trenches and hold them. As part of a preliminary operation in Lens, the 116th launched an attack at the Méricourt trench.

The assault was delivered at 1:00 a.m. on 23 July by the 116th Battalion (of the 9th Infantry Brigade). In spite of a gas attack launched by the enemy just as our troops were forming up, the operation ... was completely successful. The 116th quickly took the trench that formed its first objective, killing many Germans. In solid hand-to-hand fighting the attacking companies gained the railway embankment and blew up a number of dug-outs and a tunnel. After thirty-five minutes the main body returned to its original position as planned, leaving outposts who subsequently came under a heavy counter-attack and had to be withdrawn. The Canadian battalion, whose own casualties numbered 74, brought back 53 prisoners. *Canadian Expeditionary Force*, pp. 285-6.



King George V Behind the Lines in France
Watching Bombardment of German Lines.

After four months of fighting, troops were usually sent 12 miles behind the lines for rest and reorganization. In mid August the 3rd Division was pulled off the lines, only to be sent back to engage in the Battle of Hill Seventy at the French city of Lens on August 20th. They relieved the 27th Battalion on the front line for five days then rotated back to dig trenches and move mortar ammunition to the front. The Canadian troops captured the high ground in hand-to-hand combat and held against several counterattacks of mustard gas and flamethrowers.

In mid September the 116th was moved to a position 1500 yards from the enemy line in the Méricourt trench south of Lens. They were relieved on the 18th of September and left by train for rest and much needed bathing. After seven months of active service, eighteen officers had been killed and two hundred and seventy soldiers were killed, wounded, and missing. The Corps picked up replacement ranks at times but at the end of September, the 116th Battalion had 30 officers and 669 "other ranks" (O.R.).

On the 14th of October 1917 the battalion received orders to take a train to Ypres, in West Flanders Belgium, to prepare an attack on the German concrete "pill boxes" on the Bellevue Ridge and help take the area around the town of Passchendaele. The deep muddy quagmire surrounding the ridge was the result of the "rotting debris of three years of war." At 5:40 a.m. on the morning of October 26th, the 9th Brigade, with the 116th in support, advanced over the swampy marshland on wooden duckboards toward the Bellevue Spur in a wet mist. Lt. Col. Sharpe did not expect to survive Passchendaele so he wrote to his wife: "We have very little protection there and I may not pull through. If it should be my fate to be among those who fall, I wish to say I have no regrets to offer. I have done my duty as I saw it ... I die without any fears as to the ultimate destiny of all that is immortal within me." It was a horrible bloody assault, but by the morning of the 27th their brigade had achieved its goal and a German garrison was destroyed. After five months the allied forces finally recaptured the Passchendaele ridge (Third Battle of Ypres) on November 6, at a cost of hundreds of thousands of lives and the total destruction of the woods, farm houses, and town – only to lose it all again four months later.



Private Robert Brooks received a field promotion to Sergeant at some time during the last part of 1917. He also took a brief furlough in England and received news that his sister Janet had a new baby daughter during the summer of 1917 named Olive. He wrote: "I don't by any means long to go back to the bloody battlefield. I'm glad the crops are good over in Canada, and I want you to take good care of that little girl. I'm willing to go back and do my duty to the end, then when I come back she'll be great company for me."

On December 1st the troops voted in the Canadian elections – 90% of the soldiers in active duty voted for conscription. For one year, the boys from Zephyr, Leaskdale, and Uxbridge, who Sam Sharpe had recruited and trained so well, did what was required. They moved in endless marches from one battle to another, carried bombs, set communication wire under fire, cut barbed wire, and built trenches and roadways. They lived in constant cold and



wet, were gassed, and fought the enemy in acres of knee-deep mud. At Passchendaele, the shelling tore up the wet ground where soldiers had been buried after the fighting in 1914 and 1915. The recently killed soldiers in 1917 were never moved from where they fell in the shell holes, or in the sucking mud.

Colonel Sharpe could not find relief from the exhaustion and the images of waste and carnage. By February 5th, 1918, he was removed from duty with the battalion and sent to a hospital in England suffering from a nervous breakdown. Sharpe had managed to keep the 116th Battalion together despite attempts to break it up in England and France. It was common for battalions to be split up to provide reinforcements to other battalions -- but the 116th remained as a complete fighting unit and earned battle honors wherever it served. Sharpe was rightly loved and respected by his men for his leadership and for his bravery in scouting out enemy machine gun positions and marking the openings in barbed wire entanglements in No Man's Land. The command of the 116th was taken over by Major G. R. Pearkes, another decorated officer.



Through the winter of 1918, the Canadian Corps held a seven-mile line in the Lens-Merciourt sector fortifying defenses. On May 25th the battalion received word that Col. Sharpe had died when he jumped from the window of a hospital in Montreal. On June 9th the battalion attended a memorial service for their commanding officer in the small village of Linghem in northern France.

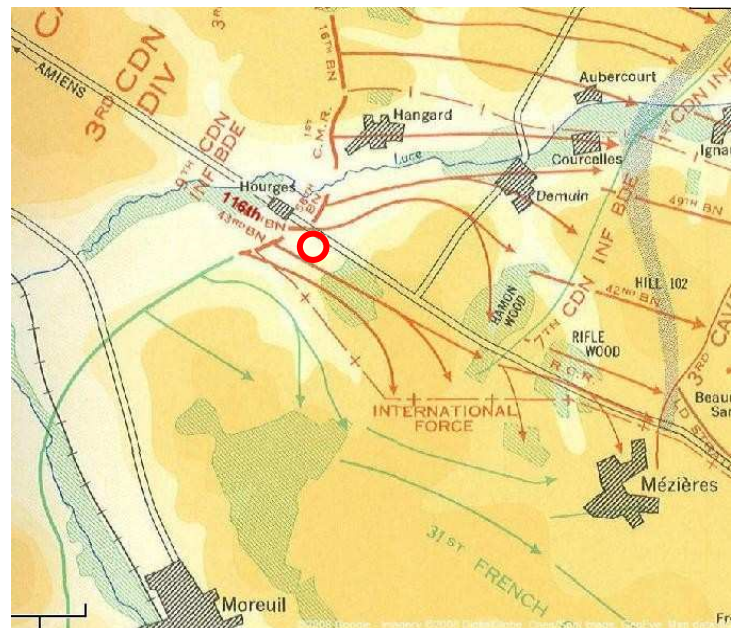
Later that month, on June 27th, German forces bombed two Canadian hospitals and a medical ship in route to England from Halifax named the *Llandover Castle*, killing 235, including 14 Canadian nurses. Throughout the summer, the battalion had training exercises for a surprise attack planned on August 8, which became known as the Battle for Amiens (Third Battle of the Somme). "Llandover Castle" (or "LC") was the code word for the attack plan and the signal for readiness. Amiens became known as the beginning of The Hundred Days Offensive -- Australian, British and Canadian forces, with heavy tank and air support, moved seven miles on the first day and decisively broke the German line, starting the drive which ended the German resistance within a hundred days.

The senior officers of the Corps did not know their destination until July 30th. The infantries moved silently in the dark and under strict rules of silence. Starting on August 1st the 116th marched in the rain on moonless, dark, narrow, muddy roads to the Boves Woods. They left Boves at 11 p.m. on August 6 and arrived at 6 a.m. in their final position at Gentelles Wood and their assembly position near Hourges, France on August 7.

On the night of August 7th, the battalion walked single file through zigzag lanes that had been cut in the cornfields. Each soldier had two water bottles, two-day rations and 170 rounds of ammunition in addition to his usual equipment. "To drown the curses of the weary troops as well as the approach of the tanks it had been arranged with great forethought, for a flight of heavy bombing planes to operate during the night in this area. It was a bright moonlight night, and the movement forward proceeded uninterrupted; ..." One gunshot at 4:20 a.m. signaled start of the attack in a heavy dark mist. The whole Luce Valley was enshrouded in a fog, which made it difficult for the soldiers to keep their pace and find their direction. The 116th was placed in the center of the brigade and succeeded in crossing the River Luce. "... it was not until 7:30 [a.m.], after the 116th Battalion had overcome German resistance north of the road and tanks had

2. TASKS.

- (a) The 9th Cdn. Inf. Bde. and 28 Tanks will advance south of the LUCE RIVER and capture the GREEN Line. Should the 7th Cdn. Inf. Bde. fail to pass through, this position will be consolidated. Should the 7th Cdn. Inf. Bde. pass through successfully the 9th Canadian Inf. Bde. will be ready to reform and come into Divisional Reserve. The 42nd French Division will advance at ZERO as far as the MAGDEBURG Trench. They will then halt for about 45 minutes, exact time will be notified, later.
- (b) The 7th Cdn. Inf. Bde. and Tanks will advance south of the LUCE RIVER and pass through the 9th Cdn. Inf. Bde. at ZERO plus 4 hours, and, assisted by the Tanks of the 9th Cdn. Inf. Bde., capture and HOLD the RED Line and push patrols well beyond it.
- (c) The 8th Cdn. Inf. Bde. (less two Battalions) and 14 tanks will advance North of the river LUCE and be responsible for the capture of all objectives beyond the river LUCE and the Northern Divisional boundary. The 8th Cdn. Inf. Bde. and Tanks will also assist the 9th and 7th Cdn. Inf. Bdes. by attacking DEMUIN, COURCHAINS and CHREPS WOOD, crossing from the north to the south banks of the river LUCE for this purpose wherever possible.
3. The 9th Cdn. Inf. Bde. will attack on a 3 Battalion frontage the 43rd Cdn. Bn. on the right, the 116th Cdn. Bn. in the Centre, and the 58th Cdn. Bn. on the left with 52nd Cdn. Bn. in Brigade Reserve. The 9th Cdn. T.M. Batt. will be with Brigade Hdqrs. and will be kept for carrying parties. The 1st C.M.R. Battalion (8th Cdn. Inf. Bde.) will carry out the first phase of the attack and capture HANGARD VILLAGE, on our left.



worked their way southward among the shattered stumps cleaning out machine-gun posts, that the wood could be reported free of the enemy. There were regimental claims of upwards of 40 machine-guns captured, and more than 250 German prisoners. By half-past seven the 9th Brigade had reached the Green Line. The 116th Battalion, suffering fairly heavy casualties, had captured Hamon Wood, between the Luce and the Roye road." *Official History of the Canadian Army in the First World War*, p. 399

Sgt. Robert Forrest Brooks died sometime early that morning, five weeks short of his 32nd birthday. Lieutenant-Colonel George Randolph Pearkes wrote: "He led his platoon to their objective and well past it, but was killed early in the morning of Aug. 8 in the third battle of the Somme while helping a wounded comrade to safety. He was a good soldier, keen, and showed marked ability in the leadership of men. His loss to his company cannot be overestimated." The battalion casualties were two officers and 29 soldiers killed and ten officers and 148 soldiers wounded or missing. Sgt. Brooks was buried, almost where he fell, with 143 others in a cemetery that was created after the battle – Hourges Orchard Cemetery, Sommes, France.

Robert's family heard the news of his death in late August and a memorial service was held in the Presbyterian Church in Zephyr on September 1st.

A year before Sgt. Brooks was killed, in the autumn of 1917 during the Third Battle of Ypres, Montgomery began writing *Rainbow Valley*. It was the story of the children in Anne and Gilbert's community who grew up in the last years of innocence before they would be swept into war. She finished it on December 24th, 1918 and dedicated it to Goldwin Lapp and Morley Shier of Leaskdale and Robert Brookes [sic] of Zephyr. Maud remained friends with Robert's sister, Janet Meyers, for several years.

The Macdonalds were driving to Janet and Jake's farm for tea after church on June 12, 1921 when they crashed into Zephyr resident Marshall Pickering. Janet and little Olive Meyers were in the car and, although no one was seriously hurt, Pickering initiated a lawsuit that persisted for years. Janet testified on the Macdonald's behalf and kept them informed of happenings and conversations in Zephyr about the accident. In 1925 their friendship cooled when Janet appeared to leave the Presbyterian congregation and considered moving to the Union Church.

During the war, Montgomery memorized the news and recorded campaign details in her journals – for the most part, she did not record the story of her own 116th Battalion. Her war notes were placed in her next book, *Rilla of Ingleside*. In that novel, Anne's son, Walter Blythe, is killed. The beginning of a poem written for the 116th Battalion by A.B. Lundy is reminiscent of young Walter's premonition about war in *Rainbow Valley*:

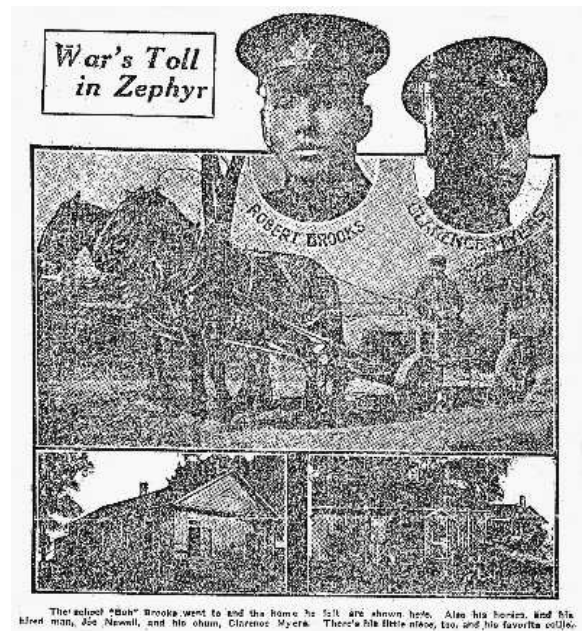
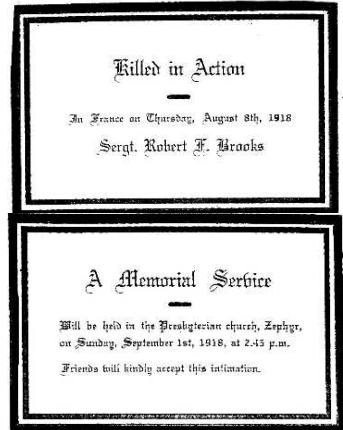
Men of the One-sixteen

*A bugle note is calling,
Insistent, clear and sweet,
While the throbbing drum beats echo
To the tramp of soldier's feet.*

*For they heard the bugle's call,
Sounding All! All! All!
While the throbbing of the drum
Answered Come! Come! Come!*

"Some day," said Walter dreamily, looking afar into the sky, "the Pied Piper will come over the hill up there and down Rainbow Valley, piping merrily and sweetly. And I will follow him – follow him down to the shore – down to the sea – away from you all. I don't think I'll want to go – Jem will want to go – it will be such an adventure – but I won't. Only I'll *have* to – the music will call and call and call me until I *must* follow."

Rainbow Valley (1919) p. 83



Read about L.M. Montgomery, the 116th, Sam Sharpe, and the First World War at: *L.M. Montgomery and the First World War*
<http://lmm.confederationcentre.com/english/collecting/collecting-6-1.html>

For more about the 116th Battalion, C.E.F see:

Official History of the Canadian Army in the First World War: Canadian Expeditionary Force 1914-1919. Colonel G. W. L. Nicholson, C.D., Army Historical Section, Department of National Defence, Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationary, Ottawa CANADA 1962. <http://www.cefresearch.com/matrix/Nicholson/>

The 116th Battalion in France http://www.archive.org/stream/116thbattalionin00alleuoft/116thbattalionin00alleuoft_djvu.txt

Birth of a Nation at Vimy Ridge <http://www.talkingproud.us/HistoryVimyRidge.html>

Canada's Hundred Days: With the Canadian Corps from Amiens to Mons, Aug. 8 - Nov. 11, 1918. J. F. B. Livesay. Thomas Allen, Toronto. 1919. <http://www.archive.org/details/canada100days00liveoft>

War Diaries of the First World War <http://data2.collectionscanada.ca/e/e043/e001058489.jpg>

War Diary: the Logistical Summary for the 116th (Ontario County) Canadian Infantry Battalion's Sojourn in France
[http://www.ontrmuseum.ca/PDF/War%20Diary,%20116th%20Battalion%20CEF%20\(Ontario%20Regiment\),%201917-1919.pdf](http://www.ontrmuseum.ca/PDF/War%20Diary,%20116th%20Battalion%20CEF%20(Ontario%20Regiment),%201917-1919.pdf)

Hourges Orchard Cemetery <http://www.britishwargraves.co.uk/page13.htm>

Amiens battlefield map

<http://maps.google.com/maps?q=http:%2F%2Fbbs.keyhole.com%2Fubb%2Fdownload.php%3FNumber%3D708296&t=k&om=1&ie=UTF8&ll=49.811293,2.512779&spn=0.063695,0.122051&z=13>

Passchendaele bunker photo

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-467811/Hell-Earth--The-seen-colour-photographs-bloody-battle-Passchendaele.html>

Decades of Harvest: A History of Scott Township, 1807-1973. Allan McGillivray. Uxbridge: Scott History Committee, 1986.

Photos of L.M. Montgomery and Scrapbook material:

L.M. Montgomery Collection, Archival & Special Collections, University of Guelph Library

Brooks family material:

Uxbridge-Scott County Museum, Allan McGillivray,
Christy Woster



**The Open Fellowship of Kindred Spirits:
Impressions of Montgomery Scholarship**
Vanessa Brown © 2008

My youth was spent idolizing names that you will recognize: Mary Rubio, Elizabeth Waterston, Elizabeth Epperly, Irene Gammel, Mollie Gillen and Rea Wilmhurst. They were the priestesses to a holy goddess. In those days I wanted to be one of them, but life took me down a path away from all that. It was a closed door, a community I could only see from afar—or so I thought.

When my employer, Marvin Post at Attic Books in London, Ontario, told me about the conference in Guelph this past fall, I assumed it was for those rock stars and not for me. I would never fit in at such an event. Then I saw the program. I saw the trips to Bala and to Leaskdale and Norval. I couldn't resist. In my mind, if I spent the whole conference hiding at the back of the room, that would be fine. I couldn't miss it. I read up online about proper attire and behaviour, what to expect at an academic conference. I asked some university professor pals of mine. With my slacks and jackets packed, I headed off.

What I found was so entirely different from my expectations that I came home glowing. I assured my husband that I would be attending the next conference in 2010, and we decided to set up a savings account just for this purpose. I knew after the first day that I would be seeing these people again over many years. Perhaps my enthusiasm is too fresh and vigorous, but I'm sure that most Kindred Spirits would understand and agree that, without hyperbole, your first Montgomery conference can be a life-changing experience.

How was I to know that I could become a contributor to Montgomery scholarship just like those stars I had admired? I would never have known unless I came to Guelph and met so many wonderful Kindred Spirits. Any comparison to fan clubs and groupies is entirely unfounded. The Kindred are not obsessed with Anne in any kind of kitschy way. In fact, when the President of the University of Guelph apologized for such a comparison, he donned a silly Anne hat with orange yarn braids for us to laugh at. No, the Kindred are definitely above such common modes of appreciating their favourite author. It's a group that devotes itself to slow careful studies, gently built and maintained networks, and the simple love of reading.



The best verbalization of this was found in a presentation at the conference about readers and Lucy Maud Montgomery. The presenter—another one of my idols, Catherine Ross—discussed a survey of readers' responses to Montgomery and how they viewed her works and subsequent impact.

What fascinated me was that the eight points she laid out could easily be applied to the Kindred. In the context of not only readership, but scholarship, these points are quite illuminating:

The Link Between Generations

There are several distinctly separate generations of Montgomery scholars, and like readers who pass her books down to their children, our older scholars have a sense of tradition and responsibility to record and make available their findings in detail for those who come after them. They assist eager young academics in providing access to materials and projects, and when they don't a sense of entitlement affects their heirs. Additionally, the joy of readings Maud's books spills over into the field of collecting. Embodying this idea of inter-generational enjoyment are Christy and Emily Woster, who have worked as a mother-daughter team to build one of the best collections of Montgomery's work and influences in North America, contributing often accidentally to the academic field. When Bernard Katz was looking for a Platypus edition of *Anne of Green Gables*—nearly impossible to find—he found it in Christy Woster's collection. Elizabeth Epperly was taken with Christy's reconstruction of the magazine sources Montgomery used to fill her scrapbooks [pictured at right: Betsy Epperly, Carolyn Collins, Christy Woster, Ann Johnson, Emily Woster]. When Kindred collector's buy Montgomery's works or find other items related to her life, they are anxious to share with others rather than hoarding. They build a network of resources together, and this is what gives the group a sense of family. And like a bickering family, they even put up with each other in ways that others wouldn't.



Safety & Happy Endings

As Ross stated, there is a contrast between Montgomery's own life narrative and the books she wrote. Montgomery did not have a happy ending. Her life, for us *Kindred Spirits*, is not a safe narrative. It does not provide the comfort found in her stories. For the members of the scholarly community, this revelation—now very well explored—causes a great deal of conflict, as is recently evident in regards to Montgomery's alleged suicide. There are many vocalized laments, and discussions about different readings of her death. For some it is difficult to face the reality that our beloved authoress did not live out the happy endings she wanted her characters to find, as Ross said. They would rather think that her death was an accident, and that her defiant spirit could not have been snuffed out by her own hand. Some would say this is a form of mass self-delusion, while others refuse to chalk Montgomery up among the suicidal writers of the twentieth century—they would rather keep her name up on the side of the schoolhouse, next to Moody Spurgeon and Josie Pye.

However, the desire for safety and happy endings also leads the *Kindred* to an endless sense of optimism. These scholars have worked relentlessly against an academic establishment that disregarded them. They have strived to break through the “smoke and mirrors” maze of academic misdirection, to borrow from Mary Rubio. The scholarship of Montgomery has developed due to an unquenchable desire to seek out a happy ending.

Sequels, Retelling and Repetition

It seems that the *Kindred* get no end of enjoyment from repeating their experiences within their own community. They love to revisit places of pilgrimage, whether they are the archives at Guelph, Montgomery's historic homes, or the same books they read over and over again. Even the most prominent members of the field find themselves in the same places many times, without contrition. This allows them a tremendous ability to recall details. Take, for example, Benjamin Lefebvre's incredible stash of knowledge about seemingly every film or television production made in relation to Montgomery's work. This kind of informative understanding cannot be retained through a single reading or viewing. Its depth comes from a love of the materials and repeated exploration of them. Just like Montgomery's general readership, these scholars reread biographies, pass on stories, and retell events. They recall the circumference of Montgomery's life and work over and over again, trying to figure out a way into the enigma of her circular existence.

Friends

Catharine Ross spoke about Montgomery's books as pages filled with characters and plot lines that become like friends to the readers of her work. We can rely on these characters. They become familiar, and we have a dialogue with them. They tell us things about themselves, about Maud, and about ourselves. Our critical response informs them in kind. In this way Montgomery scholars develop a friendship with their work. Likewise, the community of *Kindred* is one of open fellowship. If you love Montgomery, and if you show yourself to be competently conversant in her works, you have immediate comrades among the *Kindred*. They'll offer you a place to sleep or a ride to and from wherever it is you need to go. In a way, the scholarly community around Montgomery projects their relationships with the books to their relationships with each other. It's because of a common affection for work that appeals to community and friendliness that the *Kindred* look to find members of the Race of Joseph in their own circle.



Models for Living

The quintessential example of a life-model in Montgomery's work is Valancy in *The Blue Castle*. Rebelling against the role prescribed to her by her community, Valancy is a free spirit, independently minded and forcefully forward thinking. You find that same sort of vitality among Montgomery scholars. Searching for needles in a haystack, they plunder archives and ebay listings, putting the pieces of their puzzle together. And while academia is reluctant to give their work a place, forcing them to choose between Children's Literature and Canadian Literature, Women's Studies and Biography, they always find a way to study her work on their own terms. Fighting for Maud gives you the same feeling as rooting for Valancy -- you can feel her growing, you can see the change. Montgomery scholars have an attitude about their study that is informed by the influence of her subtext. It is one of defiance and determination.

The Life-Changing Book

A trademark element of many Montgomery scholars is the connection they have to her works throughout their lives, often from childhood. While some academics arrive at their specialties as late as their post-graduate work, for most of the *Kindred* it

was never a choice so much as a calling. You rarely find a Montgomery scholar that stumbled upon her work as an adult. Instead, there are endless stories of reading beat up old copies passed down through families. Perhaps that is why so many have reading copies, “really old” copies and collectible editions. The book as an object relates to a powerful change in our lives. Speaking for myself, the power of Montgomery’s work is what led me from childhood readership to adult critical study, without the urging of academia or financial reward. We read ourselves into the stories, as Ross said, and in becoming part of her scholarship, we become part of her story.

“Poaching”

Montgomery scholars, much like the larger school of readers, take only what they want from her work and life. Often they edit out the unpleasant aspects of her existence—much to the chagrin of some younger members of the community. Rarely is a conversation about her depression not accompanied by statements about her sense of humour, her close friendships and her skill as a writer. Every speaker at the conference ended their talk with a positive note about the joy of Maud. Much like her philosophy of “art for art’s sake,” you could say that the Kindred study Maud, her work and her life with an attitude of “study for love’s sake.” Perhaps this is because, as Mary Rubio said at the conference, when you are writing a biography you have to live through it in your imagination. And no one wants to live through the unbearable pain of Montgomery’s later life without remembering the joyful parts of her existence as well.

...

Finally, while Montgomery’s work has survived through accusations of its schmaltzy, sentimental and silly romantic style, so has the scholarship of her work survived its own challenges. It’s amazing the power that can be channeled by generations, seeking to find safety and happiness in a relentlessly optimistic pursuit. Our formative readership of Montgomery’s work defines us as archivists, collectors, writers and colleagues. It’s a language that only the Race of Joseph can speak, and one that can only be found among Kindred Spirits.

New Books For updates on all publications see links at <http://lmmresearch.org/bibliography/booklength/>

- *Lucy Maud Montgomery: The Gift of Wings*, by Mary Henley Rubio (2008)
- *The Anne of Green Gables Treasury – Special Edition Commemorating the 100th Anniversary of “Anne of Green Gables,”* by Carolyn Collins
- *Magic Island: The Fictions of L.M. Montgomery*, by Elizabeth Waterston (2008)
- *Looking for Anne: How Lucy Maud Montgomery Dreamed Up a Literary Classic*, by Irene Gammel (2008)
- *Imagining Anne: The Island Scrapbooks of L.M. Montgomery*, by Elizabeth Rollins Epperly (2008)
- *Storm and Dissonance: L.M. Montgomery and Conflict*, edited by Jean Mitchell (2008)
- *Before Green Gables*, by Budge Wilson (2008)
- *100 Years of Anne with an "E": The Centennial Study of "Anne of Green Gables,"* edited by Holly Blackford (2009)

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