

The Stroll Scroll

President's Message

Since this is my last "message" before the end of 1994, I want to take up some space reviewing what we've accomplished over the last year.

The first actual event I was involved in as president was the Fringe. Read Canada invited us to use their tent, and Paul Pearson co-ordinated the event from our side. I think in all, about 20 poets participated. Reading at the Fringe was different from any other reading I've ever done. We had a good crowd during the reading I was at, thanks largely to Jocko's big voice and casual delivery. But the noise level was unbelievable, and people kept walking away - which was very disconcerting. As well, it got dark a little sooner than expected, and the final two poets could barely read the words on the paper in front of them. Despite the difficulties, I had a lot of fun, and the Stroll of Poets Society was introduced to literally thousands of people.

After the Fringe was the Stroll itself. I had no idea putting on an event like that required so much planning and work. It was great to see how the burden was spread around to so many willing hands, so that no one person was taxed to the point of exhaustion. Some highlights for me were the No Bards Barred Bar, hearing poets who were reading in public for the first time, and my group, who were great to listen to, as well as very supportive of me. Another thing I was very pleased about was the amount of publicity the Stroll received. It seems that after four years we are becoming known to more and more people.

The 35 - week Poetry LIVE! reading series gave about 200 poets a chance to "do" their stuff. I hosted this, along with Phil Jagger, Anna Marie Sewell and Jocko. Reading series are a little nerve wracking for the organizer because you

never know how many people are going to show up, or in what combinations. A highlight for me was the visit and reading of Paul Wilson from Regina, who, along with strollers Gerald Hill, Ken Wilson and Dawn Carter, jammed the house to the rafters and put on a fantastic show. Many thanks to Latte Caffe for hosting the series.

Planning has been underway for the 12 Days since well before the Stroll. The 44 poets who will perform were chosen by a panel of nine prominent Edmontonians on the basis of the poems in this year's anthology. I was happy to see the names of a number of new poets on the list of 44. More on the 12 Days later in the newsletter.

Still to come? Outreach. Maybe another reading series. The Alberta Book Fair. Do you have an idea for an event? We want to be out there doing poetry. Call me. Candace at 469-8464.

12 Days of Poetry

Winter. Snow. Icy arctic blasts. Shoveling driveways. Cars that won't start. Wind chill factor. And the 12 Days of Poetry

The 12 Days of Poetry returns for the third time, beginning Sunday December

18 at 3:00 p.m. 44 poets, chosen from *Stroll of Poets - The Anthology, 1994* by our community jury will participate in 11 readings at cafés and bistros in Old Strathcona and downtown Edmonton.

The readings will happen intermittently through the holiday season until the climax on the 12th Day. Held at the new Media Club, the 12th Day celebration will feature readings by the four poets audiences from the previous 11 days most want to see again.

The Stroll of Poets Society is also very pleased to present singer and songwriter Anna Beaumont. Anna has collaborated with pianist Andrew Glover to produce musical compositions from poems in this year's anthology.



Singer and composer Anna Beaumont will perform at the 3rd Annual 12th Day of Poetry. For more information, please see the attached schedule.

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Any member that does NOT wish to allow Anna and Andrew to use their poem should call Candace (469-8464) ASAP.

And there's more. After the poets and Anna Beaumont perform, *six guys called deb* will take the stage so we can dance. There will be a cash bar, and munchies. Tickets for the 12th Day are available at the door, and in advance from Athabasca Books and the Gramophone.

Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed for a number of jobs during the 12 Days:

- two or three people to take tickets at the door at the 12th Day.
- people to attend one or more of the 11 days to sell copies of *Stroll of Poets - The 1995 Calendar*
- there are still a limited number of hosting spots for the 12 Days.
- people are needed to hang posters and deliver flyers in all areas of Edmonton

If you would like to help out during the 12 Days, please contact Paul Pearson at 438-3992

**Creative \$
Fund-raising**
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Do you ever wonder how much it costs for the Stroll Society to put on events, publish the anthology, or even send out the newsletter?

Since I've become more involved with the administration of the society, I've been thinking about money a lot. Yes, *money*, that taboo word. As a poet - presumably an "artist" - I hate thinking about money. I want to think about my poems. As a member of a Board of Directors who have accepted the responsibility for putting on events that cost money, I have to think about it whether I want to or not.

At the moment, our members pay in \$5.00 at the beginning of each year. Each member is given an Anthology (\$10), and an honorarium for the Stroll (\$10). If you participate in the 12 Days, you get another \$15-\$25. It also costs money to put on events.

On the other hand, we do have some

sources of income besides the membership - we sell our anthologies, tickets to major events, and we apply to the government and industry for funding for our various programs.

It gets harder all the time to get funding from the government - there are many more worthy arts groups than there are dollars to fund them all.

So we have to fend for ourselves. The Stroll of Poets Society has risen to the occasion. We find ways to spend less, but maintain the quality of our programming. But that's just reacting, and is no kind of long-term solution.

So Doug Elves, our esteemed Treasurer, decided to get proactive, and formed a fund-raising committee.

Anyway, I'm now to my point - well, the first of two points. Some members of the fund-raising committee took the initiative and published *Stroll of Poets - The Calendar, 1995*. These calendars will be on sale during the 12 Days for the modest sum of \$5. Each month features a poem from the 1992, 1993 and 1994 Anthologies. These calendars raise money for the society, AND enhance the creative life of the poetry community by serving as yet another vehicle by which we can get our poems out there to the audience.

If you would like to buy one (or several) calendars, contact William Nichols at 483-2032.

My second point is this - an organization like the Stroll of Poets survives because of the energy, creativity and initiative of our members. We need to do more creative fund-raising. That's a reality. Ideally, that fund-raising will allow us to "do poetry" at the same time we're putting some dollars into the society's coffers.

We're looking for ideas, and for willing hands to do the work. Do you have thoughts about fund-raising? Call Doug at 426-1751 or me, Candace, at 469-8464.

And buy a calendar or an anthology - they make terrific stocking stuffers!

Alberta Book Fair

Admittedly, the Alberta Book Fair doesn't take place until April, but the Stroll of Poets Society was invited to participate this year.

Poetry Workshops? no.

Readings? hardly.

Blue-penciling sessions? not at all.

How about participating in the April Fool's Day Cabaret? That's what you get when you send Ivan to the meeting!

(Just kidding, Ivan) This is a great opportunity to get involved in one of the most important literary events of the year. More details will be available in the next newsletter.

*The
Stroll of
Poets*

The Calendar

1995

only \$5

Order from William Nichols
at 483-2032

or pick one up for Christmas
at any 12 Days reading

**Stroll
of
Poets**

The Anthology
October 1994

Greenwoods Bookshoppe
Athabasca Books
Varscona Books

\$10.00