

## News from the Feminist Caucus, by Anne Burke

**Women's Caucus Member's News March** Penn Kemp's 3 videopoems, "River Revery", "Silicon Valley" and "Wishing Well" will be shown March 22-24 at an international festival, REELpoetry/HoustonTX, <http://www.publicpoetry.net/reelpoetry>. The videopoems can be seen on <https://riverrevery.ca>. Please plan to join us at The 2019 Annual Conference and Annual General Meeting which will take place in St. John's Newfoundland, 7, 8, 9 June 2019. This month, poems from new members: Blossom Thom, Jennifer Wenn, Janice Zhang and a review of *Beyond Forgetting: Celebrating 100 Years of Al Purdy, An Anthology of Poems Written in Tribute to Al Purdy*.

**Blossom Thom's** poetry explores the constructs of language and of society by examining the disparity between the limits we set for ourselves and the limits that others, or society, set for us. The subject of her poems is the experiences of Black people. Her perspective creates work that presents an alternative to the preferred narrative. She trains her critical eye as poetry co-editor and diversity consultant for *Jonah magazine*, shares her love of poetry by designing and leading poetry workshops, and has recently joined the Diversity Initiative of the Editorial Freelancers Association. Blossom is the author of *#HashtagRelief* (Gaspereau Press, 2017) and her poetry has appeared in *The Great Black North: Contemporary African Canadian Poetry*; *Writings: The Anthology of Montreal Writers*; and elsewhere. "The poems are an excerpt from my work in progress., In *The Measure of an Ordinary Day*, the family and friends of a teen on the cusp of graduation navigate expectations, relationships, and the randomness of violence. This tale told in poems considers the people on the periphery of violence."

## Gossamer Fields

The sun drips dew on a gossamer field.  
The tendrils sigh with each brush, every touch.  
A cicada sings and the flowers blush  
too curious to leave, too timid to rush.

## You and I and I and You

You hold me.  
You kiss me.  
You love me.  
You miss me.

I hold you.  
I miss you.  
You scare me.  
I kiss you.

## Alec's Room

Alec keeps bundles of hope in a box by his bed.  
I'd rather they come to some use, but instead  
They remain behind bars until the planets align:

His parents will bounce somewhere and so will mine.  
Finally, we'll kiss, we'll tease, we'll perspire. But by  
Then, of course, the condoms will be expired.

### **Placards and Clinics**

My life should matter  
Strangers wave placards  
Call me murderer  
But offer no help

Strangers wave placards  
Of Bible verses  
But offer no help  
My tears rouse their cries

Of Bible verses  
They sing unabashed  
My tears rouse their cries  
Their cries stifle doubt

They sing unabashed  
Call me murderer  
Their cries stifle doubt  
My life should matter

### **The Girl Who Never Was**

She whispers into  
the wind sending crows  
into flight, fleeing,  
her hand brushes the

air scattering the  
murder across the  
greying sky. The rain  
begins slowly. Large

drops rinse chalk dust from  
her eyes. She stands guard  
with arms raised for the  
girl who never was.

**Jennifer Wenn** is an “out”, trans-identified writer and speaker from London, Ontario. In addition to her day job as a Senior Systems Analyst, she has written *From Adversity to Accomplishment*, a family and social history; and published poetry in *Tuck Magazine*,

Synaeresis, Wordsfestzine , Big Pond Rumours and the anthology *Things That Matter*. She is a former Director on the Board of Pride London, and the emcee for London's Transgender Day of Remembrance ceremony. She has spoken at a wide variety of venues, including medical students at Western University, churches, schools, the Fierté Canada Pride Annual Conference, the Thames Valley District School Board's Gay-Straight Alliance Conference, and the Annual Conference of the Ontario Occupational Health Nurses Association. She is also the proud parent of two adult children. (She writes that first, there are three poems published by *Tuck Magazine*: "The Great Wall", "Carmanah Walbran", and "Transgender Anthem" ("of note is that "Carmanah Walbran" is the first poem I wrote, in the summer of 2017"). Two poems were published in the anthology *Things That Matter* : "Three Haiku for Algonquin Park" and "Three Haiku for Turkey Point".)

### **Carmanah Walbran**

Some years ago now we journeyed  
To Vancouver Island.  
This will be great! said Graham,  
Who lived in Vancouver,  
While you're here you have  
To see Carmanah Walbran.  
It's one of the few patches  
Of old growth rainforest left  
On the island. It's very special.  
Come the weekend I'll cross  
Over from the mainland;  
We can meet up at  
My brother-in-law Paul's  
Country place and go  
From there. Caught up in  
His enthusiasm, we  
(Andrew, Donna and I) agreed.

And so it came to pass.  
Enjoy, said Paul, I'll have  
A barbecue ready when you  
Return. And so we  
Bounced and jolted more than  
Two hours on a logging road,  
Filled with ruts and craters  
Big enough, it looked, to swallow  
The van, or least take off a wheel,  
Pausing only to rest our labouring  
Vehicle (and the driver) at a spectacular  
View that suddenly presented itself.  
Onward we forged, and then,  
Finally, but suddenly, we were there,

The Welcome sign marking the  
The gravel parking lot at the destination.

Alighting, we entered the domain  
Of the ancient forest giants,  
Towering majestically overhead,  
Moss everywhere, clinging to  
The massive trunks, hanging  
From branches. For sound,  
Our footsteps, the occasional  
Bird, the murmuring stream  
When we were near it, the  
Gentle roaring of the waterfall  
In the distance,  
And our attempted  
Expressions of wonder.

For there was more here  
Than a family of gentle titans.  
We were embraced by a wave  
Whose origins seemed  
Lost in time, and from some  
Other dimension entirely.  
We all felt it; "It's like there's  
A wisdom coming out of the  
Trees" declared Graham; Paul later  
Said simply "It's a very spiritual place."  
Andrew and Donna wandered, in wonder.  
As for me, I tried to find the words,  
But didn't, really. I only knew,  
Instinctively, that it was a place  
Where the material universe parts a bit,  
Opening a doorway. It brought back  
A memory from another place,  
Far away, and from another time.  
All too soon we reached the hour  
To leave the sacred space.  
We bounced and jolted  
Our way out, blowing a tire  
On the way, back to the barbecue,  
To the rest of the trip, to the rest  
Of our life journeys, but changed,  
Maybe a bit, maybe profoundly.

Soaring Sitka Spruce, the largest  
Impossibly high, magnificent

Douglas Fir, enormous Red Cedars  
That have seen a millennium of  
Rain and sun come and go.  
Will we have the wisdom to  
Let your realm remain, in peace,  
For generations unborn to  
Rediscover, to feel in their turn  
The kinship, the embrace,  
To find anew that doorway and  
The connection.

### **The Great Wall**

August, blistering hot, unseen cicadas loudly rasping,  
A different buzz than at home,  
Crows cawing us on our way,  
Me with my sunhat, heavy day pack,  
Battered little red umbrella for a sun parasol,  
Slowing down my much younger companions  
As we hiked the great brick snake,  
Up the ridge, following terrain,  
Our potential path reaching  
As far as the eye can see into the hills.  
No one around, we three alone with  
The buzz and the calls, the vistas and the heat,  
The Wall and our reflections.

Centuries old, origins of its mostly vanished  
Predecessor more than two millennia in the past,  
Stretching through the ancient country  
An imponderable distance, built to keep  
The future invader, to keep chaos, out.  
The power, the audacity to order it built,  
The commitment, the subservience to translate  
Command into hard reality.  
For a time, a bulwark against the outside,  
But long since overrun, a reminder  
That all control, all rule, no matter  
How fearsome or fixed-seeming, is, in the end,  
Fleeting, an eddy in the great river of history.

Some parts now the domain of tourists,  
Others abandoned to the crows and cicadas,  
And the ghosts of the tens, hundreds of thousands  
Who died bringing it all about,  
Silently alongside as we climb and marvel.

Not a border or barrier anymore,  
But now a part of the spectacular scenery,  
Somehow enhancing the natural, setting it off.  
Construction's contemporaneous  
Temporal power now superseded,  
But the vision, the achievement,  
The sacrifice, the lessons, remain.

### **Three Haiku for Algonquin Park**

*1*  
Woodland trail beside  
A stream burbling in my ear  
A black fly seeks food

*2*  
Plash of the paddle  
Gently stroking round the bend  
A grazing moose stares

*3*  
Unearthly loon calls  
Echo across the water  
A crackling campfire

### **Three Haiku for Turkey Point**

*1*  
Far out, sudden gale,  
Grampy's experienced hands  
Guide us safely home

*2*  
Cooking marshmallows  
Watching moonrise on the bay  
Embers perfect now

*3*  
Old sandhill was here  
Swallowed now by green living  
Still in memory

### **Transgender Anthem**

Since time immemorial,  
revealed or hidden,  
self-aware or suppressed,  
we have been here.

Through pain, confusion and joy,  
tearing at contrary, shrouding shells,  
we have been here.

We follow paths  
indescribable and incredible,  
yearning to shine forth  
our extraordinary iridescence,  
and we are here.

We are the convention-shakers,  
                  mould-breakers,  
                  trailblazers,  
and we are here!

We are not an illness  
                  or a theory  
                  or a debating point;  
We are flesh and blood,  
marvellous souls and children of the cosmos,  
and we are here!

We are dismissed by the ignorant,  
                  stared at by the fear-blind,  
                  assailed because we dare to  
                  disturb comfortable prejudices,  
but we are here!

We are scared yet courageous,  
                  despised yet loved,  
                  weary yet striding on,  
and we are here!

We are children and parents,  
                  siblings and spouses,  
                  friends and lovers,  
                  colleagues and neighbours,  
                  poor and well-off,  
and we are here!

Hatred fells some of us  
but we remain unshakeable  
                  unbreakable  
                  bright, blazing beacons of  
                  a new, rediscovered spirit,  
and we absolutely,  
                  emphatically,  
                  now and forever  
Will Be Here!

**Janice Zhang** is a Chinese Canadian poet from Toronto, Canada. As a member of the League of Canadian Poets and Chinese Pen Society of Canada, she has written a lot of poems in both English and Chinese. She authored her first book *An Immigrant's Journey through the Arts – Works of Janice Zhang* in 2016. Janice was the key organizer of a few literary events in Toronto. She received various awards for her poetry and for her contribution in promoting literature respectively. Her poetry was selected into *Genesis Poetry Book · Selected Contemporary Poetry of China*, *Celebrate Canada 150 and Culture Days from Far and Wide: Multicultural Creative Writing Collection 2017*, as well as various literary journals.

### **Love Haiku Poems**

holding breath  
alone on a snowy night  
I wait for the key to turn

---

moon river –  
fingers sliding  
the curve of her skin

---

a dozing moon  
cricket songs fade  
pounding heartbeats

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### **Window by the Sea**

I want to escape from this ordinary life  
And fly afar like the seagulls.  
From dawn to night they soar  
While the stars shine so bright.

But what if I can't flee?  
Through my window by the sea  
I watch tide and heaven collide.

And no one can stop  
My daydream  
... of you

## **Withered Chrysanthemum**

Without a brush  
The willow paints the wind

Petals fall off from  
A withered chrysanthemum

Amidst the autumn grasses  
Lies the grave of a young beauty  
The Emperor's most favoured concubine

Oh butterfly  
What are you crying about  
When you move your wings?

## **I For You**

If by chance you think of me,  
I shall sing to you at the window  
Where your shadow faded from my sight.

If by chance you dream of me,  
I shall play the melody of my touch,  
Tenderly ruffle your hair with my fingers.

If by chance you hear echoes come from the Milky Way,  
That is a moment of silence  
When my heart beats to the rhythm of yours.

## **Waiting for You**

At first you moved,  
Only a little.  
I always felt you,  
Peaceful like an angel.

As time went on,  
My belly continued to grow.  
Slowly but magically,  
A baby bump showed.

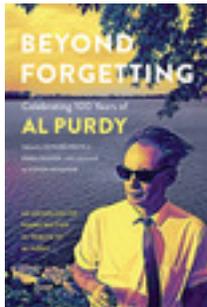
Before I knew it,  
You were all over the place.  
The doctor found TWO little ones,  
Running a race.

My heart was filled with joy,  
Mixed with anxiety.  
It took me a while to panic,  
And then embrace reality.

Oh! Very soon I'd hold  
And feed my twin babies,  
Touch your chins and noses,  
Then kiss your fingers and toes.

I was counting every second  
While I tried.  
It wouldn't be long before I  
Burst into tears,  
Not for pain, but for hearing  
Your First Cry...

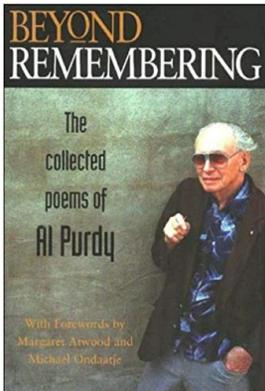
Until then, take a deep breath  
And do one FINAL  
-> PUSH ->



Review of *Beyond Forgetting: Celebrating 100 Years of Al Purdy, An Anthology of Poems Written in Tribute to Al Purdy*, edited by Howard White and Emma Skagen, with a Foreword by Steven Heighton (Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Publishing, 2018) 192 pp. paper.

*Beyond Remembering: The Collected Poems of Al Purdy* was published posthumously in the fall of 2000. Other celebratory titles of Purdy were: *And Left a Place to Stand On: Poems and Essays on Al Purdy* (Hidden Brooks Press, 2009) edited by Allan Briesmaster and published by the Canada Cuba Literary Alliance and *The Al Purdy A-Frame Anthology* (Harbour Publishing, 2009) edited by Paul Vermeersch. **"Save the Al Purdy**

**A-Frame Campaign** The Canadian League of Poets has declared a National Al Purdy Day!"

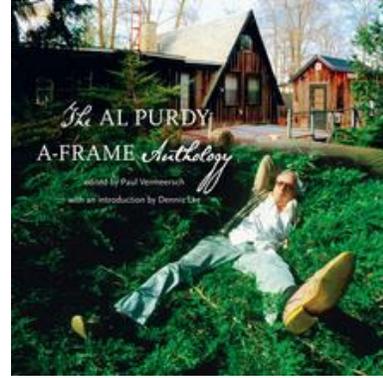


In spirit(s), December 30, 2018 was the one hundredth birthday of Alfred Wellington Purdy. Better known as Al Purdy (1918-2000) he produced thirty-nine poetry books, a novel, a two-volume memoir, four books of correspondence, and anthologies. Purdy won the Governor General's Literary Award for *The Cariboo Horses*, in 1965, and *The Collected Poems of Al Purdy*, in 1986. He was an officer of the Order of Canada and a member of the Order of Ontario. Purdy supported new voices in the *Storm Warning* anthologies. However, he was only an "unofficial" Poet Laureate, since George Bowering was the first, in 2002.

The Roman term is *Genius loci*, or, alternately, in Christianity, the Holy Spirit, by which it is sometimes referred, who invades or inhabits poetry festivals, bookstores, pubs, Roblin Lake, and especially the A-frame writer-in-residence to reflect Purdy's self-built A-frame home in Ameliasburgh, Ontario.

The indwelling spirit of a place pervades these poems and reported experiences, either directly or indirectly, with detailed encounters associated with beliefs about the sacred character of places. Although increasingly secularized, a guardian who watches over their part of the world and imbues it with a special character, is a protective spirit attached to a place, a sense of place used in humanistic geography. (Sourced online "Can Spirit of Place Be a Guide to Ethical Building?" by Isis Brook, *Ethics and the Built Environment*, London, Routledge from W. Fox, 2000).

Although the League of Canadian Poets initiated the one-time "Voice of the Land" Award for Lifetime Achievement, which Purdy received in 2000, there is also a bronze "People's Poet Al Purdy" statue with the same moniker, at Queen's Park, in Toronto. John B. Lee, in "The Unveiling", celebrates the memorial statue. So too Sid Marty's "The Statue of Al Purdy" and David Helwig's "At Queen's Park".



The "People's Poet" Award was first bestowed on Purdy's friend Milton Acorn (1923-86) when Acorn's 1969 collection *I've Tasted My Blood* was passed over for the Governor General's Award that year. While I was a graduate student at York University I was personally invited by poet and professor Eli Mandel to attend the event in a downtown Toronto pub. I should add, this was before the advent of the subway extension and a bus trip could take hours.

Bowering received the Governor General's Award that year and contributes "At the Cecil Hotel" an Ottawa bar on the down-low, subtitled as a translation of Al Purdy's poem "At the Quinte Hotel". Editor and poet Howard White alludes to the Cecil Hotel in Vancouver, where he heard Purdy read, with poets Peter Trower and Curt Lang.

In "Knowing I live in a Dark Age", Acorn writes lovingly of "my friend Al" as a union builder and cynic, but "a poem erases and rewrites its poet". In "Problem", Acorn recalls talk about suicide. Purdy wrote "House Guest" and Acorn's "Poem For Al Purdy" reflects "you're caged man...I see the bars.// My own, I can't see."

This collection of one hundred poems contains a "Who's Who" of League of Canadian Poet members. Many are occasional poems, written to celebrate or memorialize a specific occasion, such as a birthday, a marriage, a death, a victory, the dedication of a public building (in this instance, the Purdy statue unveiling), the opening performance of a play. The loosely selected themes of the poems are "Encounters", "Wildness", "Inspiration", "Legacy", and Elegies". The term elegy is limited to a formal and sustained lament, in verse, for the death of a particular person, usually ending in a consolation.

In addition to the poems, there are a Foreword by poet Steven Heighton, an unsigned introduction (likely by the editors), biographies and prose statements, as well as acknowledgements and credits.

This anthology begins with an epigraph by Dennis Lee "Tell the Ones You Love". Lee's most recent collection is *Heart Residence: Collected Poems 1967-2017* (House of Anansi Press, 2017). Robert Curie acknowledges "We're gathered together" but not for a wedding. ("Once in 1965"). Candice Fertile adds "and Al tells his poem" (in her "Sensitive Men" from Purdy's "Now I am a Sensitive Man", in "At The Quinte Hotel").

Heighton recounts how Purdy removed the toothpick from his mouth, before launching into a raucous reading at Queen's University, in 1983 or 1984. He contributes "Maps of the Top of the World", an instruction to "know where the words come" and on how "*He loved the poetry of place-names most/ and set them down accordingly—*".

In the Foreword, Heighton's memories extend to the summer of 1988 and the early nineties, in Ameliasburg. Bruce Meyer, in "Al Purdy: Voice", is "saying simply this is my place". Earle Birney pays heed to this folkloric place: "In Purdy's Ameliasburg", "man there's only dandelions/ barring the way to the privy". Birney describes the "ferocious" wife (Eurithe) and the "very cowpads before your eyes." Purdy's Eurithe being comparable to Birney's Esther, a wife whom Elspeth Cameron included in her biography of Birney.

As further evidence, Howard White's "The Poet's Wife, for Eurithe Purdy". Rob Taylor has gotten to know Eurithe ("as fine a person as they come! I'm sure Al didn't deserve her). Linda Rogers adds, "I defended Eurithe to the death, not that she, lethal words being the arrows in her quiver, needed help either". Wednesday Hudson wrote a poem "For Eurithe" a wife who endorsed the idea of Purdy being posthumously nominated as the Canadian Ambassador for the CCLA.

In Calgary, I met in person, Eurithe (Parkhurst) Purdy, his business manager as well as wife since 1941. As a pair, there was an unreal sense of his dramatic, "take-no-prisoners" performance in poetry, followed by his chilling introduction of her. Rodney DeCoo rhetorically asks, "what do you say//not much", in "Al and Eurithe". "I Met You Only Once, Al Purdy", by Dale Zieroth, "but that was enough to know".

Purdy's first published book was the doggerel or self-styled "shit" of *The Enchanted Echo*. 1944. "A good writer is somebody who hates himself and loves the world", cited p. xiii. In Taylor's "On Realizing Everyone Has Written Some Bad Poems", Purdy was snatching up loose copies of *The Enchanted Echo*, to burn.

Amid self-loathing, Purdy made a grudging peace with death. "Being dead isn't so bad, in fact it has a lot going for it", writes White, in "A Word From Al". Patrick Lane said "one of the least favours I did for Al was to nail his deathbed back together after it collapsed under him."

Posthumously, Purdy's selection *Rooms for Rent in the Outer Planets: Selected Poems 1962-1996*, edited by Sam Solecki, was featured in the CBC's 2006 Canada Reads competition. A film "Al Purdy was Here" was released, in 2015, when the League of Canadian Poets was meeting, in Toronto. The Al Purdy Songbook was released, in 2018.

In the "Introduction" we learn that Purdy's widow was responsible for encouraging the fundraising efforts to preserve their lakeside cottage, first built in 1957, and the present anthology began with her folder of tribute poems. Tom Wayman, who prepared a work plan, contributed "Purdy's Crocuses", on the "brown blooms", an array of empty beer

bottles, and describes my *alma mater*, Loyola College, in Montreal, where Purdy was poet-in-residence, in 1973. Wayman also wrote "In Memory of A.W. Purdy", an elegy. "His gift to me/ was his rambling: his itinerant lines and/ peripatetic stanzas".

David Helwig remembers how "the poems compose themselves" ("Al on the Island"). In "Purdy's Otters", by Robert Thornton, Purdy's collection of Victorian pornography is referenced. Eden Mills, Ontario, hosts an annual Writers' Festival, and Purdy was last interviewed there, by Shelagh Rogers. "He had to find his poems, like children, or an epiphany, every mouthful a poem." ("Famous Last Lines", by Linda Rogers). Heighten wears one of the poet's polyester shirts. Doug Paisley dons Purdy's leather coat. Roblin Lake endures, with the A-Frame's belongings, inside and out. ("In Al Purdy's House", by James Arthur).

Grace Vermeer imagines Purdy drawing a map, when the phone rang. ("Transient") "not sure what to say to the man", "Al and Eurithe", by Rodney DeCoo. The ubiquitous portable Underwood (typewriter). "He regaled me with his genius/ poem after poem never stopping" (Richard M. Grove, in "A Drive with Al Purdy").

In the second section on "Wildness", we learn: "The world doesn't run on poetry" despite the adage "You Have to Keep Writing", a poem by Rolf Harvey. Sid Marty's "My Editor", in memoriam to Purdy and John Newlove, and in a note Marty declares that Purdy discovered his work in *Elfin Plot*, an Andrew Suknaski project. Marty says he refused Purdy's offer to write a preface for his first poetry book, *Headwaters* (McClelland and Stewart, 1973).

"For Al", by Wednesday Hudson, reveals "my stack of failures loom like the goddam Rockies". Gregory Betts, in "Shoulders Descending", complains of how Purdy pushed him down the stairs. "Broken bones heal, but/ national literatures are much more fragile." K.V. Skene, in "As the Days and Nights Join Hands", was inspired by "The Dead Poet", a poem by Al Purdy. League Past President Susan McMaster says "How I Think of Al" is of his taunting of younger poets, so "Al, you're not my muse" but "I think of you, Al/ as you go", in part due to "my own frozen lake/ in my own dank cabin". She indicates her feminism was "budding", in the nineteen-seventies, which was antithetical to Purdy's pose as "the drinking man-among-men".

In "Another goddam poem about drinking beer", Bowering puns in a poem "draft" and "draft beer", "like a Milton Acorn poem". A particular allusion to poet Rob McLennan (who was not a contributor) resembles the unnamed mimeographer and recorder of poetry, who makes an offer of "a dollar a poem."

In part three: "inspiration", F.R. Scott puns with poetry book titles drawn from Purdy and himself, such as "my OVERTURE, my EYE OF THE NEEDLE". ("This Inn is Free") "Say the Names", invokes Kate Braid. "Standing on a Newfoundland Cliff", by Magie Dominic, was inspired by "Trees at the Arctic Circle", by Purdy. In "3 Al Purdys", Bruce Cockburn, offers three Purdy poems for a twenty dollar bill. In "Spring at Roblin Lake", by Kath MacLean, this is No Man's land and her "Too Tall for Antiquity" ("his 6'3

inches to my 5' 8 inches", by Russell Thornton). Lynn Tait, with an epigraph from Purdy's poem "Listening to Myself", offers "Challenging the Law of Superimposition", from the Purdy County Literary Festival, 2009.

"Stone Song", by Christine Smart, depends on Purdy's "*like a stone song*". "Lament for a Small Town", by Solveig Adair, is from Purdy's poem "Lament for the Dorsets" about the death of the Dorset culture, the people extinct in the 14<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Kat Cameron, in "How Students Imagine the Dorsets", begins ironically: "I thought it was a simple poem". Karen Solie, "The Sharing Economy", speaks of how the last human being on earth will perish. John Oughton's "Long Reach: Thanksgiving, 2000" was inspired by Purdy's Long Reach, Quinte Bay, and "big Canadian presses pumping/ out Al Purdy poetry books". Glen Sorestad, a practitioner of the Pub Poems tradition, contributes: "Cactus Cathedral: remembering Al Purdy", who, like Christ, was drawn to the desert and who ruminates. Peter Trower, in "The Last Spar-Tree on Elphinstone Mountain: for Al Purdy", alludes to the provincial park on the west side of Howe Sound and north of Gibsons, near the community of Roberts Creek, in British Columbia. Trower was proud of his first book *Moving Through Mystery*, published by Talonbooks, in 1969. Autumn Richardson, who was poet-in-residence at the Al Purdy A-frame, in 2017, contributed "When the Deities are Tended, Morning Comes"; "Chrysalids", at the edge of Roblin Lake, and "The Oracle".

Jeanette Lynes, in "Roadtripping: to a Kingston ex", writes of an abusive relationship and "why I stayed: because it was like living/ inside an Al Purdy poem. Good grief". She also contributed a playful inventory of "English Assignment: Situate Al Purdy's Poems in Their Various Literary Traditions". Rachel Rose dedicated her poem "Iowa City" for the writers of IWP 2015". The allusion pertains to the International Writing Program, a residency program for international artists, in Iowa City, Iowa. Since 2014, the program has offered online courses to a large number of writers and poets across the world.

Ben Landouceur, in "Stockpile", is ostensibly earning a man's love, by writing. Past League President Dymphny Dronyk contributes "Ode to Al Purdy—A Litter of Poets", in order to unite us from "coast to coast to coast". An ode is a long, lyric poem, serious in subject and treatment, elevated in style, and elaborate in structure. Some are written to praise and glorify someone (and therefore encomiastic).

Ian Williams, in "Ground Rules", relies on Johnny Cash songs. Cornelia Hoogland's "Al Develops His Pleasures", tells us about both Al and Eurithe. Ken Banstock, "Cromwell's Head Under the Antechapel", relates to the Empire Loyalist country, where the Cornwall Public Inquiry took place, in April 14, 2005. The Ontario Attorney General was tasked with an investigation into abuse of young people.

In part four "Legacy", the poem "Most days, Al Purdy" plays with Al Purdy and Alden Nowlan poems, in an excerpt from "Essay on Legend" by Phil Hall, who also contributed an elegy "from An Oak Hunch: Essays on Purdy. We learn about how "poets piece together the fragments left behind", in "How Students Imagine the Dorsets", by Kat

Cameron, who was inspired by Purdy. John B. Lee in "The Unveiling", speaks of Purdy's statue.

Doug Paisley's "Roblin Lake". and his elegy, "Last Night" are both for Purdy. Nicholas Bradley, "On Being Archaic", was derived from Purdy's poem "On Being Human". Susan Musgrave contributed: "Thirty-two Uses for Al Purdy's Ashes"; "Al Purdy Took a Bus to the Town Where Herodotus was Born", and "Each Life is a Language No One Knows". Laurence Hutchman 'composed "Al Purdy's Place" and, in Lorna Crozier's "A Cat Name Purdy", she ponders "if Al comes back", as a cat.

In part five (and the final section) "Elegies", we discover: Doug Beardsley's "breakout", Julie McNeill's "Trains, Beer & Bronze: the voice of the land", Patrick Lane's "For Al Purdy", an extended prose poem, and John Watson's "Variations" on Saskatchewan.

Among the Biographies and Statements, Solveig Adair identifies as someone growing up in a small northern town. James Arthur spent two months in residence at the Purdy A frame, in Ameliasburgh, after Purdy had passed away. For Doug Beardsley, Al came to read at the University of Victoria, in the fall of 1974. Gregory Betts encountered Purdy and his wife in a Kingston bookstore. Earle Birney (1904-95) was my first poet whom I met, at his reading in Montreal, because my high school librarian invited me. He was a friend, a model, and a mentor to Purdy, according to his biographer Elspeth Cameron, who was an undergraduate professor at my *alma mater* Loyola College. Nicholas Bradley says, "I heard the real thing only for a half-hour that I can scarcely recall". Kate Braid enjoyed Purdy's down-to-earthness and rough humour". Kat Cameron took a course with Heighton, about poetry piecing together stories. Bruce Cockburn said "I went out and got Purdy's collected works". Robert Currie reported "Al Purdy was the first poet I'd ever seen." Sadiqa de Meijer spent a July at the A-frame. Magie Dominic was inspired to write "Standing on a Newfoundland Cliff". Dymphny Dronyk discovered "Al's poetry" as a young teen. Candace Fertile believes Purdy's poetry "runs the gamut of emotions." Richard M. Grove was like many who corresponded with Purdy.

Rolf Harvey waited for Eurithe or Al to pick him up and drive to the A-frame. David Helwig and Purdy met, in 1968, in Kingston, Ontario. Cornelis Hoogland never met Purdy but feels she knows something of the man and poet through his many books. Wednesday Huson had only read a few of "Al's poem"s before writing her poem "For Eurithe". Laurence Hutchman's first encounter with "Al's work" was in grade thirteen, when he read his *Cariboo Horses* at the Kipling Public Library. Patrick Lane "resembles" Purdy because he was born eighty years ago and has written poetry for sixty of those years. John B. Lee dedicated a series of readings to the memory of Al Purdy. Jeanette Lynes remembers her "Purdy revelation". Susan McMaster says Purdy has provided touchstones for her, but she never knew him. Julie McNeill asserts Al Purdy has always been a presence in her world.

Sid Marty thinks Purdy was the kind of poet who could change lives. Susan Musgrove met Al Purdy in Mexico. John Oughton says that Purdy's poetry and life have influenced him, in many ways. Linda Rogers, another past president of the League, said that Purdy

and she were in a relationship. K.V. Skene said that Purdy's poetry makes her emotionally react. Christine Smart read Al Purdy's poetry, in the early eighties, and she met him on Salt Spring Island, in the nineties. Glen Sorestad was influenced by Purdy after reading his *Cariboo Horses*.

Lyn Tait says the Purdy Festival was a great time to be reacquainted with the land in this century. Purdy was the first contemporary Canadian poet Rob Taylor found on his own and read deeply. Russell Thornton compares Purdy's poetry with the work of all real poets, in his opinion. Purdy said the life of Peter Trower (1930-2017) was a lot like his. Grace Vermeer was a newcomer to Al Purdy's poems.

The co-editor Howard White published many of Al Purdy's books including the final title, *Beyond Remembering: The Collected Poems of Al Purdy*. Others were Purdy's autobiography *Reaching for the Beaufort Sea*, a collection of prose writings, and his last three books of poetry. He says that Purdy was the first poet he ever encountered and it completely changed his thinking, and "has been one of the greatest rewards of my years in the book trade." He serves on the board of the Al Purdy A-Frame Association. David Zieroth came across Al Purdy when first learning to write poems. Purdy published some of his poems in his anthology *Storm Warning*.



Co-editor Emma Skagen has added her editorial expertise to many bestselling books, including *On the Line: A History of the British Columbia Labour Movement* and *Grizzlies, Gales and Giant Salmon: Life at a Rivers Inlet Fishing Lodge*. She has also worked on a number of poetry collections, including Cornelia Hoogland's highly acclaimed book, *Trailer Park Elegy*. A former bookseller at the legendary Munro's Books in Victoria, Emma now lives in Sechelt, BC.