

Writer publishes book of childhood adventures

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Elizabeth II, was in the country at the time and you can't get anyone more famous than her. We mailed her the leaf and got a letter back from her saying thanks. We sent leaves to the Queen of Denmark, the king and queen of Norway and Sweden and the king of Spain. We even sent one to the pope (John Paul II) and asked him to bless the island from the leaf. We received an apostolic blessing from him, and that was pretty neat. Those letters are included in the book."

The interesting thing about Tidridge is that the only time he ever journalled was while he was on canoe trips. At that point, he wasn't a writer by any means, just a young boy keeping track of the various adventures he took.

He first started writing his book while he was in university with the help of one of his professors. What started as a project to preserve his memories of the dozens of canoe trips soon turned into something

much bigger.

While preserving his memories in the written form, he found himself bumping into the real history of the islands and areas he visited many years ago. He reached out to local historians, including Fred Hopcraft, Allan Trussler and Scott Shipman, editor of the popular book called English Bloods. Award-winning, international author Kathy Eldon, whose son Dan was a huge hero of Tidridge's when he was a boy, endorsed Beyond Mainland with the quotation that reads: 'An extraordinary story that reveals not only the identity of a 'long-lost land,' but also that of the story-teller, a gifted writer who reminds us that the journey is truly the destination.'

It was through his conversations with the local history buffs that Tidridge was able to learn many unique historical facts about the places he visited as a child. It was important to Tidridge that his book include facts about Muskoka's native history, so he spoke to

natives from Muskoka's first nations communities.

"I got so many stories from other people, I've gone through multiple revisions, encountered different people along the way," he said. "This is something I've wanted to do for years. As I was getting older, some of those stories and maps were disappearing. I realized I didn't canoe as much or visit the cottage as much as I used to as a boy. This is my way of trying to preserve my childhood."

As a way to pay tribute to one of the first canoe trips he took from Buck Lake to Huntsville, Tidridge is having a book signing at The Bookcase on May 16.

"I think the local history is really important to people," he said. "I think, as Canadians, preserving our history is something we're not really good at. It definitely feels like something I was supposed to do and I'm very happy it's done before starting a family. The book definitely has a Canadian feel to it."



SURVIVED THE CRASH: After hitting a window, this goldfinch just needed some time out before flying back into its natural habitat. Photo by Laura MacLean



You are invited to:

HOSPICE HUNTSVILLE'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, May 27, 2009
7 p.m.

Trinity Hall
Trinity United Church
33 Main Street East
Huntsville, Ontario

GUEST SPEAKERS:

Dr. Debbie Harrold and Norma Connolly, R.N.
Members of Hope Huntsville Palliative Care Team

Everyone is welcome

For further information please call 789-6878

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

May 13

□ The Utterson Live Wires Seniors Club offers euchre every Wednesday evening from 7 to 10 p.m. in the seniors' room at the Utterson Hall. All are welcome. The seniors' club also meets every Tuesday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the seniors' room. Free computer instruction is offered by the Live Wires on Mondays from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Call Carol at 385-2413 to arrange a time or for more information.

□ The Historical Automobile Society of Canada invites the public to its first cruise, which will be a fundraiser to purchase Tim Hortons gift cards for Canadian troops in Kandahar. A parade will begin at 6 p.m. in the parking lot at the Huntsville legion and will end in the parking lot at Canadian Tire. Collector cars, trucks, motorcycles and unusual wheeled vehicles welcome.

May 14

□ The Table Soup Kitchen holds a free dinner at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church every Thursday from 5 to 6:30 p.m. as well as on Mondays at Community Living Huntsville. All are welcome. For more information, contact Heather Berg at 783-5827 or e-mail table-soup@gmail.com.

□ View Eckhart Tolle's retreat talks on DVD every Thursday from 3:30 to 4:40 p.m. or 7 to 8:10 p.m. in the Hearth Room at Trinity United Church. All are welcome. Visit www.eckharttolle.com for more information.

May 16

□ The Muskoka Nights Cruise will be holding shows on Saturday nights from 7 to 9 p.m. in the parking lot at Canadian Tire, weather permitting. Hot rods, antiques, trucks, classics, imports and motorcycles will be lined up for viewing. Everyone welcome.

May 17

□ The Bay Lake Property Owners Association is hosting its annual pancake breakfast and silent auction from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Clear Lake/Bay Lake Hall (corner of Hwy. 592 and Bay Lake Road.) The cost is \$6 for adults, \$4 for children five to 12 and free for kids four and under.

May 23

□ The Huntsville Horticultural Society will hold its annual plant sale from 9 a.m. to noon in the parking lot at Staples. Funds raised go toward local beautification projects.

Register your not-for-profit events in our online calendar at <http://events.metrolandnorth.com>.





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