

STORIES OF MUDTOWN

by Terry Burns

If you're anything like me, when visitors come to Owen Sound you drive them around and proudly show off Inglis Falls, Harrison Park, the beautiful turn-of-the-19th-century homes on the west side, the thriving downtown core and the harbour-side parks and walking paths. The slightly down-at-heel east side below St. Mary's hill probably isn't on the tour. After reading Rob Rolfe's new poetry collection, *Beyond Mudtown* (Quattro Books), you may find yourself re-thinking this oversight.

Like his other poetry collections, *Beyond Mudtown* contains Rolfe's trademark minimalist poems featuring fishing folk, sailors, working girls, factory labourers, quarrymen, domestics and stevedores. In Owen Sound's Mudtown, as the east shore area was called due to the mud which flowed down off the escarpment every spring, he mines a rich heritage of sturdy individuals who worked hard and often played even harder. While he doesn't romanticize what must have been difficult lives, he honours their contributions to the economy, social structure and culture of old Owen Sound.

Elsewhere in the collection, his love of

the wild places in the Grey-Bruce region comes through via his observance of moments of quiet beauty – the silence of the dusk as a raucous gang of blackbirds settles for the night, or a patch of wildflowers waving in the wind along a rail line. These works are almost haiku-like in their simplicity, and bear repeated readings.

Rolfe also includes a number of prose poems which appear throughout the book. Again written in simple, plain language, these pieces have the same pared-down vigour present in the work of Hemingway or Annie Dillard. Characters enmeshed in working class neighbourhoods or in the stands at soccer games are presented with an absolute minimum of editorial content and readers are left to come to their own conclusions about them. Other writers will appreciate just how difficult this is to achieve.

Beyond Mudtown is a fine addition to the growing body of literature about Owen Sound and the Grey-Bruce region and is recommended reading for local residents, visitors and lovers of good writing everywhere. **M**

1969 REVISITED

by Arnie Clark

Reliving the music of the 1960s and the early 1970s, continues when the 1969 Revisited classic rock show takes the stage, Saturday, November 9, 7:30 pm at the Hanover Civic Center (443 10th Avenue, Hanover). Presented by Bognor Jam and Grey Roots Museum & Archives, proceeds from the show are earmarked for the growth of Moreston Heritage Village located at Grey County's Grey Roots. The seven piece '69 band features the sounds of one of rock's greatest eras. The show, which has enjoyed several sell-outs, will take you on a musical journey with tributes to such rock icons as Janis Joplin, Jefferson Airplane, Led Zeppelin, the Who and more. Tickets (\$25) are available at Grey Roots (519-376-3690), Fromager Music in downtown Owen Sound (519-371-3690) and Bluewater Radio in Hanover (519-364-0200). **M**

Moreston by Candlelight

December 14, 2013 from 4-8 p.m.

Join us in Moreston Heritage Village for an ol' fashioned Holiday experience!

Take a ride in an open sleigh

The historic buildings will be dressed in seasonal decor

Hear stories of Christmases long ago

Enjoy a cup of steaming apple cider and cookies

Warm your hands by a roaring fire

A truly unique Christmas experience for all ages!

6th Annual Holiday Craft Sale - November 30, 2013 from 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Holiday Family Fun Day - December 7, 2013 from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Fall Lecture Series - *Canadian History, Eh?*

Tuesdays at 2:30 p.m. from Nov 5-26, 2013

Saints & Sinners Exhibit Open NOW!



102599 Grey Road 18, Owen Sound
519-376-3690 | www.greyroots.com

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Music-Dance-Art-Theatre-Literary-Heritage

Owen Sound Cultural Awards
Nomination Deadline:
DECEMBER 9
Awards Ceremony:
February 16, 2014

NOMINATE your favourite group, event, festival, or individual artist.

Awards also include: Patron, Volunteer Service, Cultural Heritage, Lifetime Achievement. Pick up at The Library, City Hall, the Tom Thomson Art Gallery Or download nomination form at: owensound.ca/cultural-awards

106.5
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