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HALIFAX WOMEN'S
HISTORY ♦ SOCIETY

Halifax Women's History Society Monthly Newsletter

Issue no. 4, October 2016

North End Services Canteen Re-enactment and Fundraiser Tickets Now on Sale!

If you are reading this on the first day of October, there is still time to purchase tickets for this exciting event! There is no limit on the number of tickets that can be purchased. Reserve tickets by emailing hwhstickets@gmail.com or calling (902) 483-5240. Members can also purchase tickets in advance by credit card by following [this link](#).

Tickets are \$15 for a sitting at either 1:30pm (**sold out**) or 3:30pm on October 1st; more details can be found below. Gluten-free and vegan options are available.

FORM NO. HWHS 16

WE'LL MEET AGAIN...

Recreation of the
North End Services Canteen

Serial No. _____

Name _____
(Last Name)
(First Name)

Address _____
Number
Street
City
County

Issued by the Halifax Women's History Society

Woman of the Month: Rita Joe

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passed away when she was five years old she lived with foster families until she left to attend the now-notorious Shubenacadie Residential School. She later returned to Cape Breton's Eskasoni First Nations Reserve where she and her husband, Frank Joe, raised ten children.

Joe's experience at residential school formed the foundation of much of her artistic work. The horrors of residential schools have long burdened Canada's First Nations people, but have only recently become widely known to non-Indigenous Canadians. The abuse, racism and extreme negativity Joe faced in the residential school - and in Canadian society - was something thousands of First Nations children also experienced. Joe dedicated her life to writing about her life and experiences, explaining that her "greatest wish is that there will be more writing from my people, and that our children will read it. I have said again and again that our history would be different if it had been expressed by us."

Joe published six books of poetry and an autobiography: *The Poems of Rita Joe*, *Song of Eskasoni*, *Lnu and the Indians We're Called*, *Kelusultiek* (meaning "we speak", this was an anthology that included a number of Joe's fellow female Mi'kmaq writers), *Song of Rita Joe: Autobiography of a Mi'kmaq Poet*, *The Mi'kmaq Anthology*, and *We are the dreamers: recent and early poetry*. In her writings she addresses many key moments of contemporary First Nations history in addition to residential schools, such as the OKA armed standoff, and covers a variety of topics.

In 1989 Joe was made a member of the Order of Canada and in 1992 was one of the only non-politicians to be called to the Queen's Privy Council for Canada. She was awarded an honorary Doctors of Law from Dalhousie University in 1993 as well as an honorary Doctors of Letters from Cape Breton University in 1997, and an Honourary Doctor of Humane Letters from Mount Saint Vincent University in 1998. She also won a National Aboriginal Lifetime Award in 1997. Allison Bernard High School in Eskasoni holds the Rita Joe Memorial Literacy Day annually in her honour, which includes writing contests and workshops for students and the opportunity to work with professional artists and writers.

While Joe's list of awards and honours seems endless, it is perhaps her role as the unofficial "Mi'kmaq Poet Laureat" that is the most significant. Her writing contributed to the pride and culture of the Mi'kmaq people, she provided a role model and assisted in the Mi'kmaq language revitalization initiative. She endorsed love and understanding between all people, and will long be remembered for her contribution to Nova Scotian, specifically Mi'kmaq, history.

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Happening in Halifax

Dalhousie Feminist Seminar Series

"Donor Human Milk in Atlantic Canada: Then, Now and Coming Soon?"

Martha Paynter, Dalhousie School of Nursing

October 7, 12:30-1:30pm, Marion McCain room 2021

Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society Lecture Series

"The Halifax Relief Commission and the Politics of the Canadian Home Front during the First World War"

Barry Cahill

October 19, 7:30pm, Public Archives of Nova Scotia

Society News!

Upcoming Events:

"We'll Meet Again": 2WW North End Services Canteen Reenactment and Fundraiser

October 1st, 2016, 1:30-5:00 pm

Ward 5 Neighborhood Centre, 5540 Russell Street

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style dancers, singers and bands, authentic food and baked goods as well as historically-accurate Second World War knitted scarves and hats for purchase. All proceeds go towards the Woman on the Waterfront project. Tickets will be available for \$15 and include a lunch, and tickets will be available to members for purchase by late August. There will be two sittings, one at 1:30 and another at 3:30.



Edith Girouard Nova Scotia Archives MG 1 vol. 3359



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that will be available at events for \$1 each (limited quantities available).

About the Society

Founded in 2013, the Halifax Women's History Society (HWHS) researches and makes known the untold story of the remarkable contributions that women have made to the history of Halifax. "A Woman on the Waterfront" is the Society's first project.

Membership is available for anyone who wishes to support us. Lifetime membership is \$25 for adults and \$5 for students, purchasable by paypal on our [website](#).

Women's work is too often invisible to the public, especially in the history of the Second World War, which focuses on men and rarely mentions women's volunteer work. Without the work of countless volunteers, Halifax would not have been able to meet the needs of the huge influx of people into the city or support the military personnel and their families who made Halifax home during the war. There are more than 100 cairns, steles, sculptures and plaques in Halifax. Less than a dozen are of female figures and most of these are from mythology or are symbolic. A monument — The Volunteers/Les Bénévoles — to women volunteers would honour them and provide public acknowledgement of their numerous contributions.



Newsletter Submissions

Have something you would like to see in our next newsletter? An event, news story, picture, piece of writing or historical figure that is relevant to our cause? Please send us the information and we would be delighted to consider it for next month. We ask that submissions be consistent with our mission of sharing the untold stories of women in the history of Nova Scotia and Halifax - any that do not will not be included.



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