
THE ELIZABETH BISHOP SOCIETY OF NOVA SCOTIA NEWSLETTER

Editorial

When the global coronavirus pandemic was declared in March 2020, little did we realize how immense its impact would be or how long it would last. Even with vaccination increasing rapidly, the world is still some time away from it being over. So much disruption has occurred (big and small) and for the EBSNS it was the cancellation of the 2020 Annual General Meeting. Here we are in June 2021 and the society has cancelled another AGM (Nova Scotia has been in a serious third wave for some weeks and a province-wide lockdown was imposed early in May). Even though a slow 5-phase re-opening began on 2 June, the board felt it was wise to forego meeting this year.

The Society's Financial and Nominating Committee Reports will be posted on our website in late June, on the "Events" page.

We can still share a newsletter, of course. Even with so many events and projects stopped or deferred, still virtual and actual Bishop activities continue.

Though the virtual exhibit and fund-raiser the EBSNS offered last year, "Two Arts," are officially over, the exhibit remains up on our blog. A brief note updates this project. Also, the newsletter offers a short report about a wonderful project by Nova Scotia artists Joy Laking and Susan Paterson to paint the Elizabeth Bishop House in Great Village during a residency there in February 2021. Board member Laurie Gunn provides an update about activity at the EB House this past year.

The Writers Federation of Nova Scotia hosted a "Nova Reads Elizabeth Bishop" event during National Poetry Month (April). Board member Rosaria Campbell offers a review of that lively, virtual gathering.



Later this summer Cambridge University Press will publish *Elizabeth Bishop in Context*, co-edited by Jonathan Ellis and Angus Cleghorn. A brief mention of this important book is also included in this issue.

Elizabeth Bishop and her family survived the 1918-1920 Influenza pandemic that took the lives of millions of people across the globe. Experiences of that crisis, happening so soon after the end of World War I, echo uncannily today. You can read more about the impact of this pandemic on Bishop's life on the blog at this link:

<http://elizabethbishopcentenary.blogspot.com/2020/03/pandemics-1918-1919-2019-2020.html>

The EBSNS hopes to be able to gather in person for its AGM in 2022. It will be a time to celebrate when such a convergence is finally possible again. Until then, stay safe and well and get vaccinated. And keep reading Elizabeth Bishop's poems!

The Elizabeth Bishop House

2020-21



“A Poet’s Home By The Side Of The Road” Photo by Roger Moore (1944-2021)

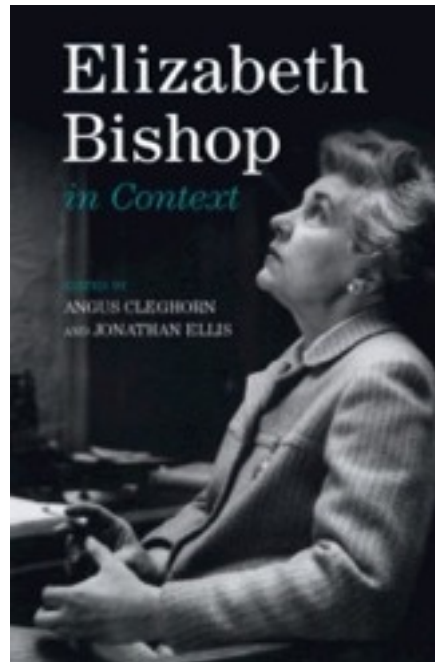
It was a very quiet year for the EB House. We had a grand total of 6 people who came and enjoyed our little house for a week at a time.

One of the highlights was having artists Joy Laking and Susan Paterson come and spend a week in February, 2021. These two established artists spent the week painting in their own distinctive styles. They painted scenes looking out the windows; they painted scenes of the interior of the house; and one very cold day they even attempted painting outside. You can view their beautiful work on the Elizabeth Bishop House Facebook page.

We were very sad that our handyman Jim Hudson died in the autumn of 2020. He was such a wonderful fellow who always came when we called and fixed whatever needed fixing. We had to have the upstairs bathroom sink taps replaced this winter and we were able to get a plumber that Jim would have recommended.



Joy painting the beautiful blue scilla on a very cold April day in 2021 at the EB House.



Elizabeth Bishop in Context is a collection of thirty-five essays by Bishop scholars from around the world (including EBSNS board member Sandra Barry), co-edited by Jonathan Ellis, a U.K. Bishop scholar and academic, and Angus Cleghorn, a Canadian Bishop scholar and academic. It will be published later this year by Cambridge University Press. You can see more about this book at the following link:

<https://www.cambridge.org/us/academic/subjects/literature/american-literature/elizabeth-bishop-context?format=HB&isbn=9781108495974>

The EBSNS has asked Tristan Beach, a Bishop scholar from Tacoma, Washington, to review this important new book for our blog. This review will appear sometime in July or August, so keep watch on the EB100 blog for what will be an excellent assessment of the vast array of perspective and voices.

The EBSNS was formed in 1994 to celebrate the life and work of the poet Elizabeth Bishop. The society seeks through its various activities and projects, to promote the appreciation and study of Elizabeth Bishop as a Nova Scotian writer. The EBSNS publishes an annual newsletter and holds its AGM in Great Village in June of each year. For more information about EBSNS and about membership, visit our website <http://www.elizabethbishopns.org> You can also find more information about Elizabeth Bishop on the EBSNS blog www.elizabethbishopcentenary.blogspot.com You can also visit our Facebook page “The Elizabeth Bishop Society of Nova Scotia” <https://www.facebook.com/EBSofNS>

During a week in February 2021, Nova Scotia artists Joy Laking and Sarah Paterson stayed at the Elizabeth Bishop House. Their project, to paint the house and the village. In their own distinctive styles, they captured the essence of Bishop's childhood home, inside and outside. A post about their residency can be found on the EB100 blog: <http://elizabethbishopcentenary.blogspot.com/2021/04/at-elizabeth-bishop-house-great-village.html>. Joy and Susan have kindly given us permission to share some images of their paintings. You can learn more about Joy at: [Welcome! | Joy Laking Gallery](#) and Sarah Paterson at: <https://www.susanpaterson.ca/>. These accomplished artists have interpreted the charm and vitality of this historic house, so important to lovers of Bishop's work and to the wider literary world.



"Gt. Village" Joy Laking



"EB Kitchen" Joy Laking



"EB Bells" Joy Laking



"After the Storm" Susan Paterson



"EB Bedroom" Susan Paterson



"Sunrise" Susan Paterson

"Once when Lucy went out to get wood from the woodshed she didn't come back for fifteen minutes. Emma, suddenly realizing how long it had been, ran outside. Lucy, with no coat or shawl, stood holding on to the side of the house. She was staring at the blinding dazzle the sun made on the ice-glaze over the next field. She seemed to be humming a little, and the glaring strip made her half shut her eyes." Elizabeth Bishop, "The Baptism"

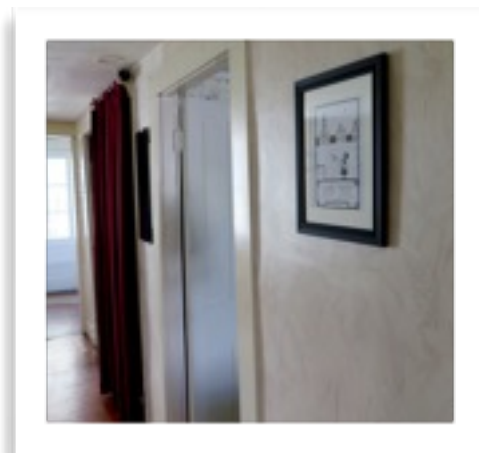
An exhibition "Painting the Elizabeth Bishop House" by Susan Paterson and Joy Laking will be on display in Gallery One at the Fraser Cultural Centre in Tatamagouche from June 18 until July 7. The works will be also be available for purchase.

“Two Arts Visual Update”



In 2020, because of pandemic restrictions that prevented the EBSNS from holding its Annual General Meeting and curating an in-person exhibit, the society presented a virtual exhibit, “Two Arts,” Bishop inspired drawings by artist Natallia Pavaliayeva. The EBSNS offered framed and unframed prints of the images for sale as a fund-raiser. The society raised over \$1,000. The EBSNS thanks Natallia for her tremendous support in allowing us to share these images and to raise some money. The society also wants to thank all those who purchased prints. We know that Natallia’s whimsical and wise images will bring delight to all those who have them.

Since the pandemic is still with us and Nova Scotia is only slowly coming out of a third wave lockdown, and since the AGM is once again cancelled, the EBSNS wants to let members and the wider world know that the virtual exhibit remains part of the EB100 blog and there are still some prints for sale. All the information you need about the exhibit and how to purchase prints is on the blog. All the images remain online to be viewed. Check it out at this address: <http://elizabethbishopcentenary.blogspot.com/p/two-arts.html>



One of Natallia’s framed prints was donated to the EB House

National Poetry Month - Nova Reads Elizabeth Bishop

by Rosaria Campbell

Those who were lucky enough to sign on to the “Nova Reads Elizabeth Bishop” session on April 14 were treated to a lovely end-of-winter celebration of Bishop’s work, selected and read by six well-known poets, writers, and Bishop enthusiasts: Brian Bartlett, Virginia Konchan, Annick MacAskill, Sam Sternberg, Margo Wheaton, and Rita Wilson.

Many of us are a bit “Zoom weary” as we go into the pandemic’s second (and hopefully last!) year, but the Bishop reading allowed people to read or participate from the comfort of their living rooms (and for some, at quite a distance), and was a real treat for those who know and love Bishop’s work. The mix was rich and diverse, with selections from Bishop’s better- and lesser-known poems, as well as from works about Bishop -- a “virtual dip” into her life and work at a time when live readings are difficult, if not impossible. We heard selections from both her Brazil and North American works, but I am sure many who signed on were thinking of the shore that Bishop called home, and that informed so much of her poetry and prose. It suffered more than its share in 2020. It was beyond comforting to hear her words read with such love, and to see in the chat room the comments of the audience. As always at Bishop events, it was good to “see” old friends from the Bishop world - a sure sign that when things get back to normal we will be gathering in-person to celebrate the words she gave us!

A special thank you to the Writers Federation of Nova Scotia for sponsoring the event, and to Andy for hosting such a personal and seamless virtual reading!

