

THE IPT BOOK WORM 4

Hello Fellow Readers!! ('fellow' being non-gender specific)

Being a worm, the past few weeks have involved burrowing in the soil and celebrating spring with balcony flowers. This included, after reading about how important pollinators are to the climate's well-being – and ours – a further burst of herb-buying to call in the bees, bats, butterflies and other assorted flying things. Is that why there are so many bugs lurking around the balcony.?

Soil washed off fingers, your friendly book worm took a trip to the OPT Library to search for interesting reads. With July 1st looming – well, almost – and the beginning of the holiday season the worm indulged in a Canadian search for beach, balcony, cottage, dec etc. This includes books to relax with, whether novel, bio, auto-bio or headliner, plus ideas of a few more places to visit, courtesy of Lonely Planet. For those of us avoiding the exorbitant cost of those Lonely Planet destinations – well stay home with a good book!

FAMOUS CANADIANS

"The Eatons" by Rod McQueen, 1998, described as "the rise and fall of Canada's Royal Family." They were an icon, a part of Canada's consciousness, for 128 years, one of the most private businesses in Canada. The book tells of the creation and decline of the dynasty over four generations, enjoying a lifestyle 'beyond belief.'

"Truth Be Told," autobiography of Beverley McLachlin, 2019. Born in Alberta, McLachlin studied law in the 1960s (rare for a girl) and graduated top of her class. This was followed by a long career in the law, culminating as the first woman Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, and presiding over some of the more challenging debates of the time – same-sex marriage, euthanasia and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

CANADIAN NOVELS

"The Very Marrow of Our Bones," Christine Higden.

In 1967 three women disappear from a working-class town on the Fraser River. There is panic and murderous gossip, but no evidence of what happened to them until Bette finds a note from her disappeared mother,

intended for her father. She keeps it a secret. One of the other women's husbands is arrested.

For 40 years the daughter, Lulu, searches. At 50, together with another of the daughters, she learns more. The book is described as '*hopeful and lyrical,*' and '*intriguingly and lovingly told,*' as it explores isolation and attachments bred by childhood secrets.

At 480 pages, it'll keep you busy

"*Sylvanus Now,*" Donna Morrissey, 2005.

Sylvanus is a young fisherman working the Atlantic waters at the edge of Newfoundland's fishing banks. He has dreams and plans. So does his partner Addie. It is the story of their love – and the sea - at a 'moment in history' when there will be a cataclysmic change in their lives.

It is said of Morrissey that she is "*.. almost certain to set new boundaries in fiction in Canada.*"

"*The Bishop's Man,*" Linden Macintyre,

This book feels familiar, I think it was recommended a while back. However, in keeping with Canadian content (and the Maritime flavour - he is a Cape Bretoner), this also begins a review of books written by a trio of well-known Canadian journalists, all of whom have contributed to, and explored Canadian's sense of national identity.

The bishop is a Christian 'anti-hero,' a troubled man torn between his pastoral responsibilities, his religious faith and his own human needs. It includes a serious examination of the theme of sexual abuse of children at the same time as having "*the page-turning energy of a thriller.*"

"*Off The Record,*" Peter Mansbridge, 2021

Finally, an Ottawa boy! This is Mansbridge's own story of his journey, from an unlikely start, to becoming one of Canada's most celebrated and respected journalists. It covers his 30 years reporting on national and international news, as anchor of the CBC's national flagship and as chief correspondent.

"The Road Years," Rick Mercer, 2023

Last, but never least – this is Mercer's second book, a 'memoir continued' of life on the road.

Here is Rick, doing what he loves, meeting Canadians across the country, from all walks of life, with all manner of powerful stories – and being hilarious and a little crazy while he does it. It includes some of his wildest stunts and the people with whom he does them. They include growing a 'bee beard' of thousands of bees at a honey farm; voluntarily being tasered by the police; wild bobsledding in Alberta; paragliding with Jann Arden for the show. It includes amazing, and very funny accounts of his antics with the famous and not so famous and particularly his love of drumming and rock music and sharing it with some of its very best of its creators – Rush, the Tragically Hip....

You will read of Mercer dubiously chatting with Justin Trudeau in the bushes, how Paul Martin loaned him a swimsuit to swim in the 24 Sussex pool and how Stephen Harper played a duet on stage at the NAC with YoYo Ma.

It's wild and crazy, endlessly funny – as you might expect, and a wonderful tonic. Make that a gin and tonic!!

For those thinking of wandering away from home shores, try the latest Lonely Planets on the shelf: Crete, Trinidad 7 Tobago, The Caribbean Islands... ..Funny no-one took Albania yet, it is a spectacularly beautiful country – mountains, ocean, Italian food – and those old communist-era look-outs buried half underground, looking like sliced-off tops of mushrooms.

Finally, don't forget, if you run out of IPT Library books/entertainment, the Ottawa Public Library has shelves of donated books – a great selection – for \$2 a pop.

Happy Canada Day!