

Literary salon gathers at King's

by Margaret Little

Over four hundred people gathered at King's College Friday, November 16 to celebrate the Fourth Annual Literary Salon sponsored by the Writers' Federation of Nova Scotia (WFNS).

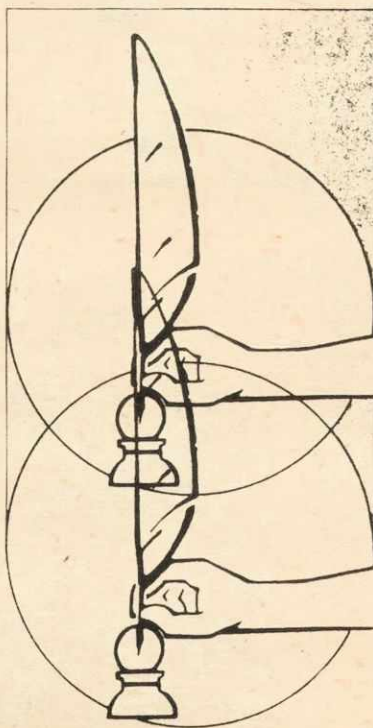
The annual salon is an evening in which professional and prospective Nova Scotian writers meet to browse through new literary works and exchange ideas with fellow enthusiasts. Philip Milner, president of WFNS, said: "It has been a good year for writing in Nova Scotia . . . Over one hundred books were published" and two major periodicals, **Atlantic Insight** and **Halifax Magazine** were established.

WFNS has 500 active members and 500 others participating in its contest, promotions, and workshops. H.R. "Bill" Percy, first president of WFNS, said the federation's purpose is twofold: "One, to reach out to all who want to write and two, to make services available to those who are already established, professional writers." Percy said the federation's structure and services must remain

flexible in order to accommodate the needs of the two groups.

WFNS has established services to advise and assist writers at all stages of their career. The federation is always seeking ways to improve the age-old problem of writer recognition said Percy. WFNS sponsors an annual writing competition and other awards to encourage new talent. This year 25 Nova Scotian writers won over \$2,200 in the Fifth Annual Writing Competition. The federation also produces periodicals such as **Guide to Canadian Writers' Markets**, and **Writers' News** (a WFNS newsletter issued eight times a year) to inform Nova Scotian writers of common concerns and possible solutions. Workshops and resource centers are also organized by the federation to encourage the writing community, and offer advice for legal and financial problems. Specific services such as manuscript reading, typing and photocopying are also sponsored by the federation.

The federation is funded by the Cultural Affairs Division of the Nova Scotia Department



of Recreation. This covers essential operating expenses and programs. WFNS also receives funds from the Canada Council for special projects and the Nova Scotia

Division of the Atlantic Lottery.

Milner said Louis Stephen, Deputy Minister of Culture; Allison Bishop, Director of Cultural Affairs; and Bill Percy have been very active in helping Nova Scotian writers. Percy was instrumental, said Milner, in the founding of WFNS in 1975.

Percy said the provincial government "wanted to support cultural activities and needed a body to relate to the writers." There were national writers' unions such as the Canadian Authors Association and the Writers' Union, said Percy, but no provincial union had been created. An interim committee of 10 people was established and Percy was elected as chairman. Today the committee represents over 600 members said Percy.

Any practicing writer resident in Nova Scotia is eligible to be a member of WFNS. Within the wide membership of the federation a "nucleus of professional writers" called the Writer's Council was created. Only members of this council can be nominated to the Executive Committee which governs the federation

on behalf of the members between annual meetings. "The definition of a professional writer is constantly in question," said Percy. A Standard's Committee has been established to deal with this particular problem.

The government has supported the Nova Scotia writing community through the creation and promotion of WFNS said Milner. This year the provincial government has set up a Nova Scotia publishing industry. Previously, Nova Scotian writers published their books outside the province "for no other reason than because there was no way to publish them here . . . for example Bill Percy went to Newfoundland to publish his books" said Milner. Milner believes this situation will change with the department's block grants to established Nova Scotia presses and other grants to publishing projects from independent publishers.

N.B. All entries to **Gazette's Poetry Contest** (which ends **November 29**) will be submitted to WFNS' Annual Poetry Contest with authors' permission.

Gingers' hosts benefit

by George Evans

Over \$2,500 was raised at a benefit at Gingers' on Monday, Nov. 12 for the Cystic Fibrosis Association. This was a relative success despite unfavourable weather conditions and what was probably insufficient promotion. According to Kevin Keefe, co-owner of Gingers', they had hoped that their establishment would have been packed all day, instead of just in the evening as was the case.

Ginger's had been undergoing major renovations for several months previous to the benefit. Renovations were being done in order to provide a more viable environment for varying types of entertainment. Ginger's may well be the first Tavern/Beverage Room in the area to provide a cabaret atmosphere. The benefit held on Monday gave the people at Gingers' a target date for which they had to have everything in order. Kevin Keefe feels that everything went well for their first year and is sure that by next year they shall have everything running smoothly for the following benefit.

Special thanks are owed to Rufus Stuart of Speak Easy Audio. He came in on the previous Saturday and volunteered his services in setting up the sound system for the benefit. As a result over fifty musicians had access to a sound system which allowed them to give their best to the people who came down to Ginger's.

Entertainment included, the Bill Stevenson Band, Jarvis Benoit Quartet, Ladies Choice Bluegrass Band (who will be back at Ginger's Saturday afternoons), Kevin Head with Bruce Chapman and Jinx

O'Neill, Michael Forbes, Russ Kelly, Kevin Roach and co., James Thurogood, as well as a refreshing change of pace with **Theatre or What's** presentation of "None of the Above".

The atmosphere at Gingers' was one of total elation. It was evident that there is nothing like having a good time for a good cause. Ginger's decided to have a benefit to raise money for the Cystic Fibrosis Association when approached by the president of the Association. They could not say no to a man of such total dedication, which stems from the fact that he himself has two children who have been diagnosed as having Cystic Fibrosis.

The music was all dynamic and the audience was one of the most responsive to be seen in the Metro area for months. Indeed one of the most captivating performances of the evening was that of the **Theatre or What**. Their comedy routine is one of the first such performances to be witnessed in a tavern environment in many years. Kevin Keefe remarked, "It was the first time that I saw everyone in Ginger's actually stop everything they were doing and saying in order to pay complete attention to a performance. Everyone simply took the time to stop and laugh."

As a result the people at Gingers' have decided to lay aside Tuesday nights as an open forum for comedy routines. Anyone interested in participating is invited to contact Kevin Keefe at Gingers'. This could provide a great outlet for some of the closet comedians in the area. Everyone needs laughter, so get involved!



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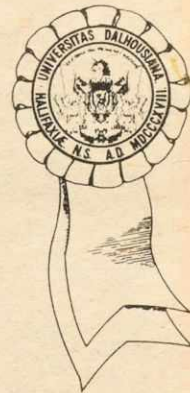
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