



Listen up and be amazed: That's the art of storytelling
Écoutez et laissez-vous émerveiller : voilà l'art du conte

PRESS RELEASE

CONTACT: Marion Gruner, StorySave Project Manager
Guelph, ON
519.400.7821
storysave@storytellers-conteurs.ca

STORYSAVE TO CELEBRATE LAUNCH OF 14TH CD: The Work of Master Teller, Flora Zaharia

Lévis, Quebec (July 2, 2015) - StorySave, a program of Storytellers of Canada - Conteurs du Canada (SC-CC), is pleased to announce the launch of its 14th CD, ***Atsinikssini: LEGENDS OF MY KAINAI PEOPLE*** by Flora Zaharia.

The CD's official launch is at the National Storytelling Conference in Lévis, Quebec: *Where Languages Meet* 2015. This is the 23rd Annual Conference of the SC-CC, held from July 1 to 5. The CD launch takes place in beautiful Lévis, at L'anglicane, 31 rue Wolfe, on July 2nd at 8pm and is open to the public.

The StorySave Program was established by SC-CC as a means of enhancing storytelling's living contribution to Canada's oral and literary heritage through the recording of voices of elders from the Canadian storytelling community for reproduction on and distribution through multi-volume CD sets, and the audio website. Tellers selected for inclusion are those who tell out of very particular repertoires, and have something unique to offer.

Flora Zaharia (Sikotan) is a Kainai (Blood) elder from Alberta, now living in Winnipeg. For many years, Flora worked to record and preserve the stories of the people on her Kainai reserve. Through this work and her own performances, she has made invaluable contributions to the storytelling world.

Now at 87 years old, Flora's StorySave CD stands as a testament to her artistry as a teller. Her captivating stories come from her family, her community and from traditional legends handed down by her mother and grandmother. Only now as an elder storyteller is Flora sharing these legends, because, she says *"it is important to me that other people have a better understanding of our culture and history through these stories."*

For more information, including the purchase of Flora's CDs and those recorded by previous years' tellers, please go to the SC-CC website and visit the StorySave pages: <http://www.storytellers-conteurs.ca/en/storysave-recordings.html>

Flora's recording will also be available for download through CD Baby, beginning on July 2nd. See CDBaby.com or go to storytellers-conteurs.ca to find out more.

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BACKGROUND

The purpose of Storytellers of Canada / Conteurs du Canada (SC-CC) is to function as the national representative for those involved in maintaining and practicing the oral tradition of storytelling across the country. SC-CC is dedicated to furthering the art of storytelling and bringing the diverse peoples of Canada together through story. SC-CC seeks to promote, support, and contribute to the growth of storytellers' work, and to ensure the continuing development of the art of storytelling as an integral part of Canadian culture. Most of SC-CCs work is carried on by highly dedicated and hardworking volunteers from all across Canada, working on a very limited budget and supported by a small paid staff.

The StorySave Program was established as a means of enhancing storytelling's living contribution to Canada's oral and literary heritage, through the recording of voices of elders from the Canadian storytelling community for reproduction on and distribution through multi-volume CD sets, and the audio website. Emphasis is on the creation of finished products of a highly professional standard. Tellers selected for inclusion are those who tell out of very particular repertoires, and have something unique to offer. StorySave's long-term objective is to ensure a permanent and vital production list which is fully representative of the art of Canadian storytelling at its best.

Each year nominations are welcome from all storytellers who have made a significant contribution to the storytelling world. Only those nominees who have developed a marked personal style to the craft of storytelling, including but not limited to their vision, technique, interests, history, and specific repertoire will be considered. To date, StorySave has recorded the voices of fourteen tellers (reference StorySave's "Teller" Biographies – attached).

Donations help StorySave to record tellers and keep their voices vibrant and heard.



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STORYSAVE TELLER BIOGRAPHIES - 1

Kate Stevens (2002) “At the age of 75, as I look back on half a century of involvement with Chinese literature, I am bemused. There was little hint in my early life that I would turn into a Chinese scholar. New England born and bred, I hardly seemed fated to wander. In fact, with a BA in physics and a job at a Long Island laboratory, I seemed set for a scientific career. But in my suitcase was a book from an English lit. course – Ezra Pound’s translation of Confucian classics, with facing Chinese character text. In my spare time, with a dictionary, I began to work my way back and forth: Chinese to English to Chinese... it was wisdom and fun; physics was abandoned.”

Joan Bodger (2003) Joan lived fiercely; she lived with wit, humour, candor and commitment. She continued to work and tell out of her fundamental concern with the interplay between the old, old stories and ritual, the old, old stories and landscape, the old, old stories and ordinary life. In 1989, she started to lead an annual tour to King Arthur’s Britain. This was a tour of exploration and discovery. It was developed so that, through the visiting of ancient sites, others might find that fundamental concern within themselves.

Louis Bird (2005) Omushkigo Elder, Pennishish, was born in a wilderness camp in Ontario's Far North. He grew up in a World of traditional hunting and fishing, listening to the stories of his Elders. Concerned for the heritage owed to future generations, Pennishish began to record the voices of those who had lived the old ways. The work has continued to grow and now forms the basis of the Omushkigo Oral History Project. Pennishish describes the stories he tells as "textbooks," encompassing a complete system of ethics, a fullness of spiritual belief: everything required for successful living in a harsh land.

Carol McGirr (2006) Founder of the long-lived Fireside Epic series, Carol’s impact on Canadian storytelling has been profound. Through her courage in telling from the oldest, longest stories she has brought courage to others. Productions of The Iliad, The Odyssey and the Kalevala in Ottawa, Toronto and Vancouver have all had Carol’s inspiration at their hearts. For her work with saga, she has been given the honorary name Carol Karlsdottir by the Icelandic-Canadian community. She believes “storytellers come and go. It is the story that lives happily ever after.” From this comes her commitment to “Staying out of the story’s way.” Her repertoire of other saga material, of myths, folktales and literary stories from around the world is legendary. She has appeared at storytelling events across the land.



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STORYSAVE TELLER BIOGRAPHIES (cont'd) - 2

René Fumoleau (2007)

Born in France in 1926, Rene Fumoleau came to Denendeh (Northwest Territories) as a young priest in 1953. Travel to Rádeli Kóé (Fort Good Hope) involved a long boat journey down Dehcho (the Mackenzie River) into a new world. Through all of the years, his attachment to the Dene peoples deepened. He celebrated the strength of their ancestral wisdom and committed himself to their desire for change. René published *As Long as This Land Shall Last* as a contribution to the struggle over land claims; directed two films, *I Was Born Here* and *Dene Nation*; he also took thousands of photos, now housed in the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre in Yellowknife. René began creating stories of his experiences in 1988, writing them first in two books of poetry, *Here I Sit* and *The Secret*, and then telling them at events and festivals across the land.

Jim St. Clair (2008)

The folks in his part of Cape Breton know Jim as a teacher, mentor, storyteller, and most of all, a friend. His knowledge and wisdom are freely given to anyone who asks. Researchers come to his door looking for information on their ancestors, and find not only the facts, but the story behind the facts. He has traveled Cape Breton many times over as a volunteer for numerous organizations, encouraging and inspiring the people involved. His stories, told in a deep and resonant voice, weave together local anecdotes and oral narratives with historical details of time and place, bringing the past alive for Cape Bretoners and visitors alike.

Marie Anne McLean (2009)

Marie Anne McLean has been storytelling with TALES - The Alberta League Encouraging Storytelling since 1986. She has collected stories from Veterans of the D-Day Landing in World War II and of the depression experiences of her grandparents in Scotland and on the Canadian Prairies. She tells original stories of people in towns such as Thumbprint and Weed Creek in rural Saskatchewan. She loves to tell of these little places that have helped to form our individual and national characters. She also has a special fondness for Celtic stories.

Alice Kane (2010)

Alice Kane was born in Ireland in 1908. Moving with her parents to Canada in 1921, she was educated in New Brunswick and at McGill University in Montreal before beginning a career with the Toronto Public

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STORYSAVE TELLER BIOGRAPHIES (cont'd) - 3

Library, where she had a major interest in fairy tales. After her retirement in 1973, she taught Children's Literature at the University of New Brunswick, and then began a second career as a professional storyteller in association with the Storytellers School of Toronto. She has been a featured performer at many storytelling events, including the American Storytelling Festival at Jonesborough, Tennessee. Her rich oral heritage is remembered in *Songs of an Ulster Childhood*, edited by Edith Fowke (1983). *The Dreamer Awakes*, a collection of her best-loved stories, was published by Broadview Press in 1995.

Lorne Brown (2011)

Drawing on his legendary vast repertoire, Lorne Brown sings and tells us old ballads, family stories, ancient legends and well-loved folktales. In both English and French, he makes us laugh and cry, challenges us to think, surprises us with little known facts – did you know that *When You and I Were Young, Maggie?* Is a Canadian song from Hamilton? Lorne takes us fishing on a famous logging river, entertains us with recitations, and has us singing along with his banjo. Lorne intersperses haunting tunes on his alto recorder with lullabies and literary tales, offering a collection of all that he holds dear: family, nature, the moon, the importance of friends, the almost spiritual experience of group singing, a respect for the past, and a love of Canada.

Mike Burns (2012)

With the telling of *Mac an Iascaire* – An old South Kerry hero-tale, Irish born Mike Burns, embodies such wisdoms. As Mike puts it: “When my friend, Tony Montague, first heard me tell *Mac an Iascaire* twenty years ago, he said it threw him back to the Paleolithic and the cave paintings of France. Lord knows how old it is. May it live twice as long into the future. I have always especially loved shape-shifting and transformation stories. They speak to me of how magical and mutable this world is, full of strange possibilities. This is my favourite one, in its original language, Munster Irish, in the English of South Kerry, and in my broken Quebec French.”

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STORYSAVE TELLER BIOGRAPHIES (cont'd) - 4

M. Jennie Frost (2013) My family (both sides) came to Edmonton in 1906. I discovered archaeology at age 11, studied Classics at university, and taught Latin in school, university, and adult extension classes for 20 years. When I began storytelling in 1996, I leapt at the chance to interest a wider audience in the stories of ancient Greece and Rome. Storytelling also allows me to share the folk and fairy tales I've loved since I first started reading, as well as poetry and stories from literature. Performing for adults at Fort Edmonton's Halloween Spooktacular gave me a taste for horror stories, and meeting the epic tellers of Taylor Lake, Ontario and Vancouver, British Columbia further broadened my storytelling horizons. I've published prizewinning short stories and poetry, and one book *The Courtship of Hippodameia* (Mellen, N.Y., 2005). I've been President of both TALEs Edmonton and Storytellers of Canada - Conteurs du Canada.

Celia Lottridge (2014) Celia Lottridge grew up with stories; hearing them, reading them and then telling them herself. She began telling stories as a children's librarian and teacher librarian but it was when she settled in Toronto in the late 1970s that she came to know other storytellers and storytelling became central in her life. Celia is also a teacher of storytelling and the author of many books which relate to storytelling. But it is telling stories that Celia loves most. "When I tell a story, it lives for me and I hope it will live for a listener and, perhaps be passed on by a new voice." In this recording, you will find three groups of stories from places close to Celia's heart.

Jan Andrews (2014) In 2012-2013, StorySave designated Jan's CD as a special project. Deeply influenced by Homer's tales, Jan has been telling, writing, and producing storytelling projects from his work for years. *Two Women of The Odyssey - Nausicaa and Penelope*, is Jan's beautiful telling of the stories of two of Homer's most iconic characters. The originator of the StorySave project, Jan Andrews is a passionate and celebrated storyteller and StorySave and SC-CC is very proud to launch this first instalment of Jan's 3 CD collection.

Flora Zaharia (2015) Flora Zaharia (Sikotan) is a Kainai (Blood) elder from Alberta, now living in Winnipeg. Flora tells traditional legends as well as personal stories, and has worked for many years recording the stories of the people on her Kainai reserve. Through this work and her own performances, she has made invaluable contributions to the storytelling world.

Next Teller (2016) To be announced at the 2015 Annual SC-CC Conference.

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