



Penguin Group (Canada)

100
YEARS OF
ANNE



For Immediate Release – Adrienne Clarkson, Roy MacGregor, Carolyn Weaver to judge national letter writing contest; CanWest Raise-A-Reader, Canada Post, Tourism PEI to sponsor

January 24, 2008 – Toronto – In celebration of the 100th Anniversary of Anne of Green Gables, Penguin Group (Canada) will launch a national letter-writing contest on February 9, 2008, inviting Canadians of all ages to write to Anne Shirley, telling her in 500 words or less, what she means to them.

The letter-writing contest, an initiative sponsored by Penguin, in partnership with Canwest Raise-A-Reader, Tourism PEI, and Canada Post will open on February 9, 2008, and close on April 30, 2008, marking the publication of three official 100th Anniversary books from Penguin. The books include the highly anticipated prequel, ***Before Green Gables***, by Governor General's Award finalist Budge Wilson. Also to be released from Penguin are ***Imagining Anne: The Island Scrapbooks of L.M. Montgomery***, an elaborate collection showcasing Montgomery's extensive scrapbooks, orchestrated for the first time in one single volume by Montgomery scholar Dr. Elizabeth Epperly, and a special 100th Anniversary Edition of L.M. Montgomery's original ***Anne of Green Gables***, containing a new introduction from two of Montgomery's grandchildren.

The contest is open to residents of Canada. Twenty letters will be selected randomly from four age categories and five will be forwarded to a national jury for adjudication. **The national jury** will be chaired by Canada's twenty-sixth Governor-General, the **Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson**. Other jury members include bestselling author and *Globe and Mail* columnist **Roy MacGregor**; Rogers *Fine Print* Host **Carolyn Weaver**; **Robert Waite**, Senior Vice President, Stakeholder Relations and Brand at Canada Post; **Scott Anderson**, Senior Vice President, Content for Canwest, and **Kate Macdonald Butler**, L.M. Montgomery's grand-daughter.

Contest entries will be judged on four criteria: each worth up to 25 points: originality, spelling and grammar, relevance to subject, and style. The winner in each age category will receive a \$2,500 travel voucher from The Travel Store for travel to and from Prince Edward Island, courtesy of Tourism PEI. The winners will be invited to visit Charlottetown and Avonlea village, and will receive complimentary tickets to *Anne of Green Gables The Musical* at the Confederation Centre. Winners and runners-up will also receive a library of Penguin's 100th Anniversary editions, a commemorative stamp to be issued by Canada Post, and a commemorative coin to be issued by The Royal Canadian Mint.

In accepting the appointment to chair the national jury for the letter writing competition, Adrienne Clarkson said:

"I am delighted to help celebrate the 100th anniversary of *Anne of Green Gables* by chairing a panel of national judges. It's a terrific idea and I look forward to reading the letters. In my memoir, *Heart Matters*, I write about how Anne helped me, as a little immigrant girl, become a Canadian. Anne is the most important "character" in my life! Count me in!"

"My family is so pleased with these celebrations," said Kate Macdonald Butler. "Imagine my grandmother's most famous novel still in print, in a beautiful new edition 100 years after its first publication, her early scrapbooks published in a stunning new collection and an imaginative new prequel written by one of Canada's finest writers. I'm so excited about the letter writing contest and can't wait to read the entries."

Contest entries for the letter writing contest can be submitted directly on the official website, www.100yearsofanne.com or mailed to:

Anne of Green Gables
c/o Avonlea
PO Box 100 Station K
TORONTO, ON M4P 0A7

Contest entry forms will also be available at participating retailers including Indigo, Overwaitea, Amazon.ca, CanadaPost.com, and fine bookstores across Canada. Over 300 book displays ship from Penguin's warehouse this week.

"We are proud to be connected with this initiative," said jury member Robert Waite on behalf of Canada Post, "which is both a celebration of reading and writing in general, and a means of honouring a timeless story by one of Canada's best loved authors. We have been a long-time active supporter of literacy and we believe the National Letter Writing Contest will inspire Canadian youth to put their best writing efforts forward – and perhaps stir within them an appreciation for the art of letter writing. Additionally, a competition that involves the writing of letters will definitely help to build momentum and create synergy for the *Anne of Green Gables* stamp issue we will release on June 20, in honour of the book's 100th anniversary."

"Anne symbolizes the power of creativity and imagination, optimism, determination and of course, the beauty of our gentle island and its culture," explains the Honourable Valerie E. Docherty, Minister of Tourism for Prince Edward Island. "With all the exciting events we have planned, we're looking forward to welcoming more visitors this year."

Penguin is also offering a \$500 cash prize to the bookseller with the best dressed *Anne of Green Gables* window display, in addition to a retail event kit that includes the contest entry form, special recital invitations and programs, posters, recipes for raspberry cordial and pound cake, and how-to instruction sheets for Victorian crafts, waltzing and scrapbooking. As well, Penguin is providing 200 event kits to Girl Guides of Canada, who are issuing a national 100 Years of Anne challenge to their members. Guides who complete the challenge will earn a special 100 Years of Anne crest.

Anne of Green Gables has sold 50 million copies worldwide in over twenty different languages since its original publication in 1908. The prequel, *Before Green Gables*, announced in October, 2006, will be published by Penguin internationally. Japanese rights to the prequel were sold to Shinshosha Publishing for publication in June, 2008.

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