

Hamilton Mountain Writer's Guild *Newsletter*



August 2024



“A short story is the ultimate close-up magic trick ~ a couple of thousand words to take you around the universe or break your heart.”

- Neil Gaiman

Welcome to our August newsletter!

The Anthology Team presents the Submission Guidelines for Book VII, alongside a foreword by Alexander Stepaniuk.

Bob Nothnagel provides an introduction to his newly published, “Tales From The Dark Side” accompanied by an insight into his writing journey.

If you would like to contribute to our newsletter, or if you have any comments or suggestions, please email Linda at: lindalambert33@gmail.com

Happy Writing!

In this newsletter
you can expect:

Schedule
August 2024

Anthology VII
Foreword

Anthology VII
Submission
Guidelines

**Tales from
the Dark Side**
Bob Nothnagel

**Bi-Weekly
Recap**

Schedule: August 2024		
August 7	Anita Joldersma	Talkin' 'bout Writin'
August 21	Liam Oneill	Anthology VII: Substantive Editing



Foreword to Anthology Book VII

The Hamilton Mountain Writers' Guild released their submission guidelines for our upcoming anthology in support of a local food bank, Neighbour to Neighbour. Manuscripts should evoke 'neighbours' in some way, whether it be your literal next-door friend or someone you used to know. Neighbours can be in different rooms in a house, different thoughts in one's mind, nearby friends, enemies, or lovers. They can be two cities, two countries, or even two galaxies spinning through space. Anything that includes one thing close to another (physically, emotionally, or metaphorically) qualifies, which should give everyone plenty of freedom to write their piece.

Anthology submissions will open on January 1st, 2025. Guild members are encouraged to take their time this Fall and work with friends and beta readers in order to make their work the best it can be. In January, you will have the option of submitting your piece to the Anthology as well as entering the Anthology's writing contest.

If anyone has any questions, feel free to send an email to: anthologyhmgw@gmail.com

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NEIGHBOUR



2024 HMWG Anthology Submission Guidelines

Eligibility

- All entrants must be active full members of the Hamilton Mountain Writers' Guild

Submission Guidelines

- For the 2024 contest, our short story theme is **NEIGHBOURS**. Submissions can be any genre as long as they touch on this concept in some way, implicitly or explicitly.
- Submissions must be original, previously unpublished pieces
- Submissions must be either short stories or pieces of narrative poetry, up to 2500 words in length
- The guild requires first publication rights for pieces which are accepted into the anthology and retain collective copyright. Individual copyright returns to the author after a month.
- **Submissions are to be sent to anthologyhmg@gmail.com**

Submission Restrictions:

HMWG anthologies represent guild values. The HMWG Anthology Publishing Team reserves the right to disqualify any entry found to be unsuitable. The following content is expressly prohibited:

- Content glorifying or advocating for unlawful activity, such as illegal drug/weapon manufacturing or use, terrorism, assault, or other criminal actions
- Offensive content, including but not limited to anything promoting hate crimes or discrimination against any group, such as by their race, colour, nationality, culture, religion, disability, sex, gender, or age
- Illegal or infringing content, including anything which breaks copyright, trademark, or privacy laws, such as plagiarized material.
- Special characters or symbols, including legal symbols (for example, ©).
- Depictions of intense, disturbing violence
- Pornographic content, including sexually explicit material
- Self-promotional material
- AI-generated content

Format Guidelines

*Please note that judges will be receiving **only your submission**, and no additional information (such as author details, etc). This is to ensure a blind, unbiased judging process.*

- **If you are opting out of the contest, clearly state so in your submission email**
- Submissions should be double-spaced, up to size 12 Times New Roman (or similar font) and saved in either .doc, .docx, or .pdf file formats
- Only English-language submissions will be accepted
- Your manuscript should contain only the title of your piece. Do not include any personal details on or in the submitted file
- Ensure that your name, address, and phone number are in the body of your email

Submissions open January 1st, and close April 1st.

On 'Tales from the Dark Side', by Bob Nothnagel

Tales from the Dark Side includes 300 pages with 5, more novellas than short stories, all which delve into the darker thoughts of characters. Come on. Admit it. We all have a dark side.

Where do I get my ideas from? Everyday occurrences. Then they get expanded. Some take a lighter side. Some take a darker side. This is a collection of my darker stories.

I think everyone has discussed around the campfire or somewhere about how to dispose of a body. I live in an apartment building condo and the topic came up. How would we get the body downstairs, etc? Hence the beginnings of the idea for 'Analysis of a Crime'. I'd also read somewhere about making mistakes during a crime, remembering only some of them, and only being able to fix a couple. I massaged the numbers to fit the scenario and the story unfolded.

There is an interesting story behind the idea for 'Obsession'. I have been biting my fingernails for 60 years (No, not because of a bad childhood). Then, it was recommended that I get Invisalign to straighten my teeth. During the eleven months I wore them, I wasn't able to gnaw on my nails. My habit was broken. My nails grew, and I needed to clip them. With great pride, I borrowed my wife's clippers, and after a brief demonstration of their use, I trimmed my nails. I figured I had to keep them as souvenirs and the seeds of a story were planted. It expanded and became a little darker until the final product. Writers get ideas from anywhere. A story from a broken bad habit. I still haven't bitten my nails since that time.

I must admit, I got the idea for 'Confession' from Kevin Spacey's performance in *The Usual Suspects* when his character was interviewed by the police. I wanted a character who frustrated the police and remained one step ahead of them. I like bringing elements from my other stories. You may remember references to 'Investigation' from my first book, *Tales of Adventure, Murder, and Mayhem*, which is available on Amazon (Blatant plug intended). There may be more adventures for Trevor and Gary in the future.

Gryphon was introduced in my first book in the story 'From All Sides'. I liked him and thought I would tell his backstory in 'Graduation'. Originally, I had a short story with snippets of his upbringing, but it was suggested I do something bigger, so I placed those snippets as the background to his first kill. I wanted to take an average young adult and change him.

'The Heirs' is a longer piece that I wanted to try as a stepping stone into novels. It is an age-old topic of a dead relative trying to control others through his will but with a few twists.

What got me into writing? I've always had a wild imagination and been on the creative side. I remember in grade school, for homework, we had to come up with one of those K-Tel infomercials for an imaginary product. I came to school the next day with no less than nine of them and I got to read them all.

During the last few years of my military career, I was in the training section of my unit. One of my duties was to write up the scenario for training maneuvers. I used my imagination to create different scenarios instead of the mundane 'Blue' army against the 'Red' army.

One of my hobbies is geocaching, which is an activity in which you use a GPS to find containers hidden in the woods. There is a website to get the coordinates for the containers and when you find them, you can log that you found it on the website. geocaching.com. Often participants will host an event where dozens of geocachers gather and talk about their experiences. My events are somewhat different. With my events, we have an added activity. After some chat, the participants are handed instructions and they head out into the forest to either solve a murder mystery, find the

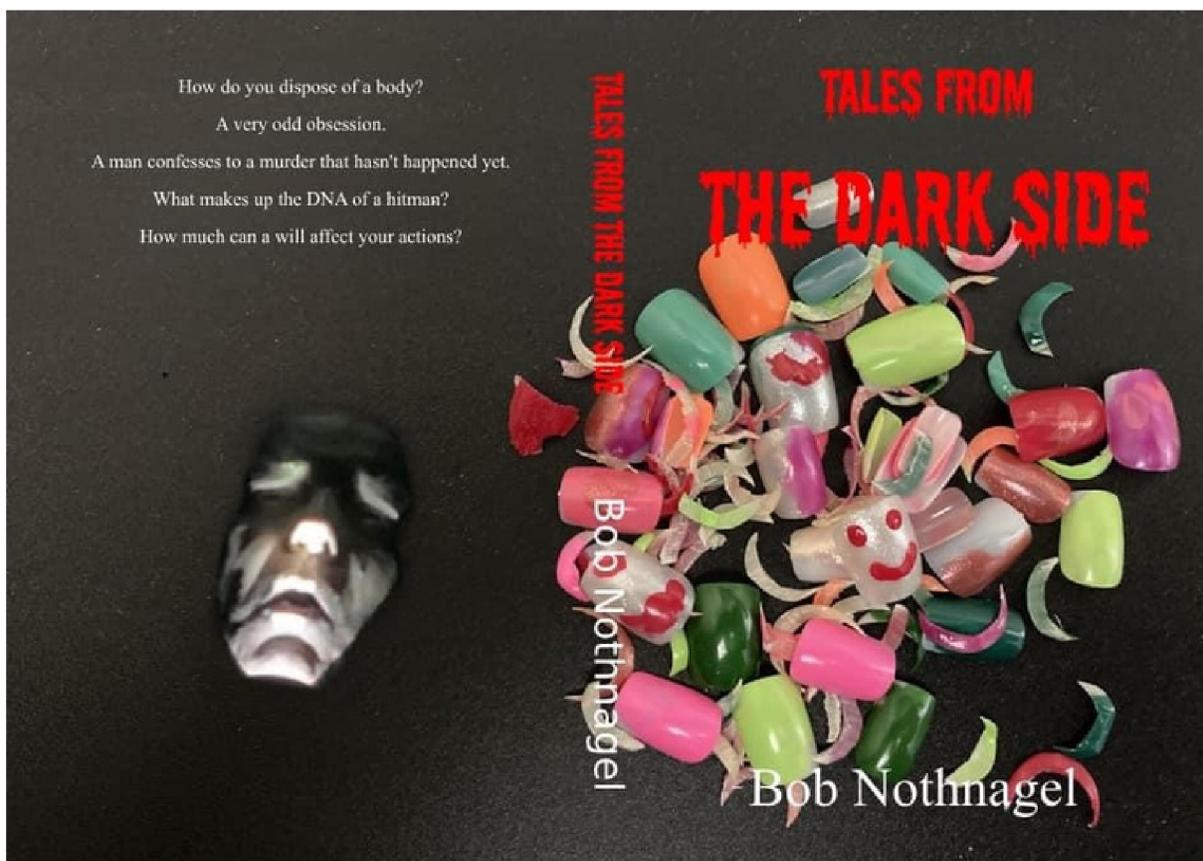


missing person, search for a downed satellite, etc. I leave clues throughout the forest to help them figure out what they need to do. I often have friends and family in the woods to answer their questions. Like I said, I like to be creative. I enjoy putting these events together. If guild members wanted to participate in an event such as these, I would be happy to set one up.

In 2016, I seriously began to write. I started a fantasy / science fiction novel. The task was a bit daunting, so I began searching for writing groups in 2018, when I found the Hamilton Mountain Writer's Guild. I switched to short stories mainly because they gave me instant gratification unlike my longer projects. Over time, I've honed my craft (I hope) and gotten better (I think) with the help of the Guild and my writing group.

I now have two self-published books, contributed to one of the guild's anthologies, and helped with Team 5's anthology, and my fantasy/science fiction novel has expanded into a trilogy, in which 2 and 1/3rds of it is written.

Writing is fun. Writing is fulfilling. Writing is creative. Can it be frustrating? Maybe. One of my mottos is: If you're not having fun, you shouldn't be doing it. So, grab your pen or keyboard, have fun and start creating. If you're not writing, you're probably getting into trouble. ■



Bi-Weekly Recap: July 2024

Last month, we had two bi-weekly meetings.

On July 10th, Liam Oneill presented and expanded on the SWBST Strategy, which, as Anita pointed out, is a helpful tool to keep in our writing toolbox. Among the great advice he gave us one stood out for me and that was to utilize writing prompts. "Even if it's garbage, work on it! Practice!"

On July 24th, Edward Martins-Berki introduced us to 'Dreaming by the Book' by Elaine Scarry, which explained the imaginative process and the mechanisms of creating mental imagery. A very interesting topic and a book worth reading, if you haven't done so already!



Hamilton Mountain Writers' Guild



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