

?Human books? are ready to be checked out this Saturday



(Musicians Norbert Kraft and Bonnie Silver Kraft, pictured above last November with MP Lois Brown upon Ms. Silver's receipt of the Diamond Jubilee Medal, are among six Aurora residents who will be "human books" at the Aurora Public Library this Saturday. Auroran photo by David Falconer)

By Jeff Doner

Check out a ?human book? this Saturday at the Aurora Public Library.

The Library will host the Human Library as part of Culture Days. Culture Days is a national event that was established to raise awareness, participation, accessibility and engagement of Canadians in the arts and cultural life of their communities.

Aurora is known or having a plethora of artistic talent and will be offering many different human books at this year's event.

If any of these human books interest you, you can place a hold on them for a set amount of time to ask questions and really get to know about what they do.

Dierdre Tomlinson

Dierdre Tomlinson has two main interests in her life: looking after her large gardens in Aurora, and writing.

?I take part in various groups and the open mic events are interesting,? she said. ?First of all the most frightening thing in the world would be to talk in front of a big group of people, but I've been doing it for three years now and I really enjoy it. It's good to have an audience for the poems and stories that I write.?

The British-born Tomlinson writes a lot of short stories and poems and said some people find it funny that when writing fiction, she usually writes in the voice of a man.

?It could be a young teenager or a grumpy old man, but I never wanted to be a man in my life,? she laughed.

But it's not just about fiction to her, another passion is to just keep an eye on what's happening around her and write about it.

?When you're going on a car journey through Toronto there are so many odd things that happen that can be beautiful or humorous. I love the shapes of the landscape and how the crops can be cut in great big curves and seeing the animals just drifting about in the

fields. I've also written an incredible amount of memoirs, because my life has been incredibly lucky from the sort of humble start I had growing up on a road in London. We were poor and so was everybody else around us.?

She's not exactly sure about what to expect with the Human Library, but is very much looking forward to the event and meeting some new people.

Teresa Cook

Teresa Cook has spent her life in the fashion industry. She currently owns a jewelry and accessory store in Aurora and has gained some notoriety for her work.

Originally from the UK, Cook's work has developed a bit of a celebrity clientele that includes Sigourney Weaver, Rebecca Hall, Forrest Whitaker, Parker Posey, Eugene Levy, Joan Collins and Natalie Cole.

?I guess someone would check me out because I've been in this business for over 10 years and have some celebrity cache,? she said. ?I make a lot of jewelry, so I'm guessing there will be a lot of questions regarding all that and what inspires me.?

Admitting that she has never participated in anything quite like this, Cook is excited to answer questions from anyone interested.

?I don't really have any expectations, but it's fascinating and it will be interesting to see who checks me out. Hopefully it won't be so one-sided and I can ask them some questions too,? she said with a laugh.

Norbert Kraft and Bonnie Silver

Norbert Kraft and Bonnie Silver have definitely carved their legacy in classical music, performing, teaching and producing on an international level.

Silver thinks that their unique career path is what will intrigue people into ?checking them out.'

?During our career as classical musicians we've enjoyed three major career shifts all in the classical world and all of which have been really fascinating for us, so we're prepared to open the book of our lives to these three career avenues that we followed in our profession.?

They also toured the international circuit for 20 years and think people will be interested in what stories they brought back with them.

?I think people usually want to know if it's glamorous or fun or if we meet famous people. People can come and find out a little bit about that,? she said.

?I also think the current facet of our career as classical music producers will be interesting to people. What a producer does is probably the big thing people will want to know, but we can talk about any of their particular interests, whatever they would like to know, pick our brain's a little bit. We're there for them and we're really looking forward to that.?

Gerry Fostaty

When he was an 18-year-old sergeant at a Canadian Forces Base in 1974, a live grenade accidentally got mixed into a box of dud ammunition, killing 17 teenage boys and injuring over 50 others.

Nearly 40 years later, Fostaty has dug deep into the horrific events of that day and explains the after-effects on the survivors in his new book.

?I've written a book and it was a memoir, but I guess somebody at the library read my book and invited me to come be a part of the

human library,? Fostaty said.

He isn't sure what to expect from it, but is hoping that people are interested in asking him about his book and how he fits into it.

?Frankly, I love talking about the subject and I'm actually currently working on a project to try and help the victims of what happened. What we're trying to do is have these guys taken care of as far as their needs with their physical injuries and their psychological injuries as well, because it has never been taken care of and it has been about 40 years now. I'm working with a committee that is trying to do that and the book is a little bit a part of that.?

Fostaty grew up in Montreal and has lived in Aurora since 1987. He was an actor prior to becoming a writer.

Brock Weir

Comparing certain aspects of his trade to an archeological dig, Brock Weir has been mining for stories in Aurora for four years.

As editor for The Auroran Newspaper, Weir said the Human Library sounded like a good opportunity to meet people within the community.

?I've had the chance while with The Auroran to interview just about every one of my fellow books. It's certainly humbling to be among that group and I'm not sure what I'll be able to bring to the table other than to talk about my own experiences covering the community, but it's a fun group to be a part of.?

Admitting that he has gotten used to being on the asking end of an interview, Weir is intrigued about the prospect of being on the other end and figures he'll get some questions about community reporting.

?One thing that I always like about covering Aurora is that people are always sort of quiet about what they actually do and achieve, so it's kind of like a bit of an archeological dig to find the stories within the stories,? he said.

?If you go into an interview with a subject, sometimes you walk away with something completely different than you were expecting. I hope that the people that sign up for human library find the same thing with the six of us that are participating.?