

MARKET MUSINGS

By Jan Freedman

The Aurora Farmers' Market and Artisan Fair is about to host its last Indoor Market of 2017 at the Aurora Armoury on Saturday, December 9, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. This Market will be our final one at the Armoury now that, reportedly, it has been leased to a post-secondary institution.

Just in time for our season's end, I have two final new vendors to tell you about. These two ladies make up the WordSmiths, long-time writing and critique partners. Now that they are published, they enjoy touring book fairs and markets together to share their passion for writer's craft with others.

Nanci Pattenden began crafting stories in 2000. A juicy crime story in an old newspaper will inspire her to create a page-turning Victorian murder mystery. She might even come up with a good paranormal story. A displaced native of Aurora, Nanci attended school in Aurora before moving to Newmarket by way of the former city of York and Janetville.

In addition to writing, her main hobbies are cross-stitching and genealogy. Nanci has received two genealogy certificates (Canadian and English), completed the Creative Writing Certificate program at the University of Calgary and is awaiting her final grade for the Creative Writing Certificate from the University of Toronto. Her interest in genealogy and local history led her into the world of writing. Her first writing course was through Continuing Ed at Huron Heights SS. There she met several other writers and they formed a writing critique group. Although the members changed several times before they disbanded, she met MJ Moores who has become a life-long friend.

Nanci went on to join the Writers' Community of York Region, and is the current Secretary and Events' Coordinator. She also serves on the Board of the York Region Genealogical Society. She doesn't travel much but her favourite destination is the UK, where her last trip sparked a story idea, yet to be written.

MJ grew up with a gypsy-like single mother who had difficulty settling down in one place so they moved seven times before MJ branched out on her own. Since then, she's moved another seven times and is currently living in her 'forever home' in Caledon with her husband and son.

She attended Mayfield's School for the Arts where she was accepted into the Regional Arts Drama program. She attended York University for Theatre Production where she minored in Creative Writing and received her BFA. While she loves improvisation, acting was never really her passion; she used drama to help her better connect with the characters she wrote about, and spent more time writing potential one-act plays for the Sears Drama Festival than she did trying out for big roles. However, musical theatre has always been a draw for MJ thanks to her love of singing. She even tried out for the very first Canadian Idol!

While singing is still one of MJ's passions, she also likes to dabble in home décor, scrapbooking, sewing, amateur graphic design and good old-fashioned roller skating. During her nine year stay in Newmarket, she met a number of supportive writers, including Nanci, and has become a champion for the Writers' Community of York Region of which she's currently the Board Coordinator. MJ has always had a huge heart and finds it difficult to say 'no' whenever a friend or new writer is struggling with some aspect of the craft or the business. Both MJ and Nanci invite you to visit their table at the final Indoor Market to chat and get to know them.

This final market will be Christmas-themed and there will be Christmas music from Lawrence Moule and his band, Take 2. This is your last chance to shop with your favourite vendors until May.

Thank you to all the Farmers' Market vendors, the Board and our loyal customers for another great year and we look forward to a new and fabulous season in 2018.

A special thank you to Brock and The Auroran for the privilege of having this column to talk about the Market, one of my favourite things to do. Happy Holidays to all and we'll be back in May 2018!

See you at the Market!