**WRITING CLASS OFFERINGS 2021**

**Bobbie Pell**

**WRITING FROM THE HEART**

What does it mean to “write from the heart” in today’s world? By examining personal definitions of this phrase, each writer will learn to deepen characterization, to interweave emotional threads into exhilarating plot lines, and to examine imagery to relay mood. Short exercises, storytelling works by national tellers, and journalling methods expand student’s writing horizons. In-class writings will create drafts ready for fictional scenes, non-fiction articles, poems, or simply personal use.

**BALLADS - SCOTTISH AND ENGLISH POPULAR NARRATIVES**

Delve into the ancient stories of honor, betrayal, mystery, comedy, and true love sprinkled throughout the literary legacy of the British Isles. The class will focus on the European ballads collected by Dr. Frances Child and American variations collected by Cecil Sharpe and Dame Olive Campbell. Poetic form and structure of balladry as story, song, and poetry will be taught so students may create their own narrative ballads or expand ballads into fiction.

**CREATING HISTORICAL FICTION**

Interested in journeying back in time, even less that 30 years? Historical fiction, ever popular with a wide spectrum of readers, call for writers with a sense of adventure and an insatiable curiosity; these writers then create believable situations and characters for the society presented. In this course we will venture into efficient techniques for researching your areas of interest, subtle ways of introducing accurate research into fictional plot lines, and layering deliberate imagery.

**EXTRAORDINARY WOMEN IN CELTIC FOLKLORE**

Meet Bloudewedd, the Welsh Bride of Flowers, whose discovery of passion released her soul and the Irish immortal Macha who bestowed healing on the broken yet cursed the men of Ulster. By discovering the timeless truths brought to light by these and other legendary women in the Celtic culture, we will create original myths. By following the classic hero’s journey, we will delve into issues still relevant for today’s woman. Personal style (word choice, syntax, dialogue) will make each piece unique.

**NORTH CAROLINA LEGENDS AND GHOSTLY APPARITIONS**

Learn about some of North Carolina’s unusual residents and regional mysteries. Discover the curiosity of the Brown Mountain Lights, the vanishing lady of Jamestown, and the couple from the Outer Banks whose love transcended death! Bring a legend from your area and learn to write on of your own as we examine the makings of these marvelous tales. Fictional elements will focus on building drama /suspense, creating ironic twists, and inventing intriguing dialogues.

**DRESSING THE PLOT: DESCRIPTIVE WRITING**

Once the plot is set with realistic characters, the reader must be able to visualize the actions clearly with their imagination blending with the author’s impressions. Usage of descriptive sensory details to create vivid pictures in the reader’s mind adds depth to any good story, making it even better! Learn to choose deliberate images by employing your personal favorites from the myriad of classical fictional techniques in addition to creating emotional threads to the overall work.

**POETRY: THE WONDERS OF NATURE**

Take a walk in the woods or breathe in the fragrance of a nearby waterfall. What do you see? How do you feel? What images meander through your mind in the presence of these natural settings? By listening to published poets and observation excursions, learn the power of the written word by expressing those thoughts and more in simple forms of poetry. Elements of poetry such as alliteration, symbolism, metaphor, and allusion plus various forms written over the centuries will be explored. Focus on writing of poet **Mary Oliver**.

**STORY STRUCTURES**

Beginnings. Middles. Endings. Have one but not all three? Learn to create a well-balanced plot through pacing narration and active scenes, dialogue and reflection. Examination of the narrative arc, connective themes, and emotional threads will layer the story in deeper ways. Focus on critical plot questions can help you avoid extensive revisions. Appropriate for personal narrative, short fiction, and novel writers.

**TRANSFORMING FOLKLOR INTO FANTASY FICTION**

Grand adventures, treacherous deeds, true love, and magic - what more could a story want? Folklore, fairy tales, ghost stories, and ballads give all this and more. To modern readers who crave more details than the oral tradition offers, writers will learn how to create believable characters, fantasy worlds, intricate plots, and recurrent imagery based on folkloric motifs and supernatural elements where characters (whether mortal, magical, or animal) may wander into realms of wonder! Appalachian emphasis will come from ballads/works collected by Olive Campbell while European Celtic roots will also abound. All writers welcome.

**CELTIC FOLKLORE AND THE HERO’S JOURNEY**

Grand adventures, treacherous deeds, true love, and magic - what more could a story want? In this course, we will use the mythic Hero’s Journey outline to explore how Main Characters interact with villains, accept aid from allies, discover personal inner depths, and rise victorious over final obstacles. Writers will learn how to create believable characters, intricate plots, and recurrent imagery based on folkloric motifs and supernatural elements. Completed story projects may be used for storytelling performance or book formats. Appalachian connections made through European roots through Celtic traditions, myths, and ballads. All writers welcome.

**FOLKLORE FOR THE CLASSROOM**

From universal truths, dastardly villains, charming heroes, and magical beasts, the realms of Folklore offer unlimited opportunities for the writer’s imagination. To enrich student understanding of the deeper layers of these tales, this class will explore a variety of writing activities such as faerie tale improvisations, character monologues, dramatic scripted scenes, and vivid imagery building. Students can apply techniques to grades K-12. So bring your favorite stories, your wildest dreams, and take a journey into your own imagination. All levels welcome!

**POETRY: SCOTTISH CONNECTIONS**

Combine the charm and beauty of the Folk School with the powerful words of famous poets and what do you get? Inspiration! Take a walk on woodland trails or breathe in the freshness of a nearby stream to sharpen your observation skills then transform the imagery into dramatic poetry By sharing works by classic Scottish poets such as Robert Burns, Robert Louis Stevenson, George MacDonald, and Sir Walter Scott, uncover stylistic elements such as alliteration, symbolism, metaphor, apostrophe, assonance, inversion, satire, symbolism, and allusion.

**READER’S THEATER: FOLKLORE RETELLINGS**

Come create exciting folklore retellings for the dramatic Reader’s Theater, suitable for all ages. This scripting format allows storytellers and writers alike to produce vibrant, original works through storytelling alchemy: transforming traditional oral/written tales into dramatic read-aloud performances. This class will take you through the steps of choosing a world folk/fairy tale then infusing the story with fictional techniques: dramatic irony, clever humor, sensory imagery, twisting plot lines, and intriguing dialogues. Instructor will provide folklore collections, but students are encouraged to bring their personal favorites. All levels welcome!

**LEGACIES: CREATING FAMILY HISTORIES**

Sit. Talk. Listen. Families have much to share with each other, impacting the lives of both the teller and the listener. By writing down these memories, generational tales live on. Learn to look for the universal thread, the “shared nugget” which allows these stories to create ripples of connection within your family circle or even beyond. Crafting well-balanced narrative and active scenes, realistic dialogue, vivid imagery, and emotional threads will be the focal points for this course. Allow your heart to bloom on the page!

**CREATING UNFORGETTABLE CHARACTERS**

*The man walked outside. The tall, thin man walked outside. The tall, thin man with tight brown curls listed to the right as he walked outside.* How do we create realistic characters, drawing clear images in the mind of the reader? Knowing your characters beyond the page by creating back story, observing character types in the real world, charting emotional and psychological pathways, and building on classical models allows modern writers to take their imaginary friends to places of wonder on the page. Strong character development is the key to persona success!