

Notice for the Perth & District Historical Society Meeting

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Clara's Rib: The True Story of a Young Girl Growing up in a Tuberculosis Hospital The Most Serious Challenge to the Health of Early Canadian Families

While Canada celebrates its 150th anniversary, we are cognizant of the fact that health care has changed dramatically in the past 150 years. Some deadly diseases have been virtually wiped out, and we now live in an era where cases of mumps and measles are so rare that the few cases that surface make the headlines. But even with such strides, a disease that remains of great concern in Canada and worldwide is one that many of us believe was eliminated - tuberculosis. Known since early Greece, TB (aka 'Consumption') was the leading cause of death in Canada in 1867 - an infectious disease that killed such European luminaries as the Bronte sisters and Robert Louis Stevenson. It took until the mid-1900s to bring the disease under control in Canada - with the last of the TB sanatoria closing in the 1970s, having touched many Canadian families. In recent years, TB has continued in certain communities, including First Nations and high immigration areas, and still considered one of the deadliest diseases in the world, particularly in developing countries.

Anne Raina, our speaker for May 18th, knows very well how insidious and ravaging tuberculosis can be, and, along with many health care professionals, is concerned with complacency about the disease. In 2014, she received the Canadian Lung Association's *Heather Crowe Award* for raising awareness of lung health, through her book, *Clara's Rib*, and many speaking engagements.

Anne Raina is the youngest of ten children. Her father and seven of her siblings spent years in the Royal Ottawa Sanatorium (San) for the treatment of tuberculosis (TB), in the 1930s, '40s and '50s, before the days of wonder drugs. Anne's father entered the San when she was six years old, and died shortly after she turned eight. Her eldest brother, John, died of tuberculosis at eighteen, and youngest brother, Billy, died at age four of TB meningitis. Anne's sister, Clara, entered the TB Sanatorium in 1939 at age twelve, and was discharged in 1952 at twenty-six. *Clara's Rib* is based on the extensive daily diary notes that Clara kept while in hospital, and focuses on her years growing up there and the medical treatments before drug therapy.

Anne was born in Ottawa's Billings Bridge area, grew up and completed school in Kemptville, and has lived in Ottawa since then. She and husband, Grant Cameron, own a four-season cottage on Black Lake near Perth, where they spend as much time as possible, and treasure their friends and neighbours. Anne has two children, Kelly Anne, in Ottawa, Mark McGahey, who moved to Perth two years ago, starting an editing business, and a stepson, Stefan, in California.

Anne is in demand as a speaker by schools, historical Societies, and other community groups,

a keynote speaker to TB conferences, and, yearly, to first year medical students at Ottawa U. She has recently published four children's books, including *The Kangaroo with The Wooden Shoe*, and is currently working on her mother's biography. She is also a member of the *Ottawa Story Spinners* who publish a book of short stories each year, and are now working on their sixth book in the series entitled *The Black Lake Chronicles*. (anneraina.ca)

Please join us for this presentation at Perth's Royal Canadian Legion,
home of the Hall of Remembrance, 26 Beckwith Street E., Perth, at 7:30pm (Toonie
donation).