

BERTON HOUSE WRITERS' RETREAT APPLICATION

(APPLICATION DEADLINE: OCTOBER 2, 2009)

Professional Canadian writers who have published at least one book and are established in any literary creative discipline (fiction, non-fiction, poetry, children's, play/screenwriting, journalism etc.) may apply for residency. A committee will review eligible applications and invite writers who represent a range of practice, genre, and geographic location.

Name _____ Telephone-home _____
Address _____ Telephone-work _____
Town/City _____ Fax _____
Prov./Terr. _____ E-mail _____
Postal Code _____

Professional Information

Please tell us a bit about who you are and your writing.

Genre: (poetry, fiction, non-fiction, children's, playwrighting) _____

Answer the following questions:

1. Why do you want to stay at the Berton House Writers' Retreat?
2. What do you expect or hope to do while there?
3. How does the residency at Berton House fit in with your goals and ambitions as a writer?
4. Indicate your three preferences for residency dates of choice:
January, February, March
April, May, June
July, August, September
October, November, December

Attach the following:

1. A brief resumé of professional writing and up to two reviews (List major works published or produced by title, discipline, publisher, and date and any relevant awards or past residencies).
2. A five to ten page writing sample.

For further information please write to Berton House Writers' Retreat, c/o The Writers' Trust of Canada, 200-90 Richmond Street East, Toronto, ON, M5C 1P1 or contact James Davies at jdavies@writerstrust.com or 416.504.8222 x.245.

BERTON HOUSE WRITERS' RETREAT INFO SHEET

What is the Writers' Retreat?

Berton House Writers' Retreat provides a unique opportunity for professional Canadian creative writers to work in a remote northern community. The writer is housed free of charge in a cozy two-bedroom bungalow on 8th Avenue in Dawson City, Yukon. The residence is the actual boyhood home of author Pierre Berton. This program was inspired by Pierre Berton and is organized by the Writers' Trust of Canada, in partnership with the Canada Council for the Arts, Klondike Visitors Association, and Dawson City Public Library.

The program is intended to provide writers with an opportunity for a retreat setting where they may concentrate on their work or to just get away and recharge. It is also an opportunity to become familiar with a part of the country writers might otherwise not experience. The program began in 1996. Since then, Berton House has hosted more than 40 writers.

Who is the Writers' Retreat for?

Professional Canadian writers who have been published at least one book and are established in any creative literary discipline(s), including poetry, fiction, non-fiction, children's, play/screenwriting, journalism, etc.

When is the Writers' Retreat?

There are four available placements for writers every year, each lasting for three months.

What does the Writers' Retreat provide?

The Berton House Writers' Retreat offers writers time in a comfortable, remote location to pursue projects that advance their personal artistic development. Writers do not have to work on projects with a Yukon or northern theme.

Writers are housed in the Berton House at no cost in rent or utilities. A three month honorarium of \$6,000 is provided along with travel costs to and from Dawson City.

Berton House covers the expense of a telephone, however, writers are responsible for their own long-distance telephone expenses. Writers are also responsible for their own personal expenses (e.g. food, paper supplies). A high-speed cable internet account with email is provided as is a printer plus software for (Mac/PC). Writers are responsible for bringing their own computer or laptop and any necessary software.

Pierre Berton initiated the Berton House library. The collection includes some very interesting and useful northern-themed books, which have been supplemented by recent copies of Berton House's own writers-in-residence.

What are the Writers' obligations to the program?

The writer has very few obligations while in residence, however we strongly encourage the writer to interact in the community if he or she wishes. The writer is expected to perform a public reading in Whitehorse and in Dawson City. As well, the writer is to provide three copies of a recent book to each of the following libraries: Dawson Public Library, Whitehorse Public Library, and the library in Berton House. Writers are encouraged to:

- hold writing workshops in the community and/or at the schools and colleges
- feature their work in local and national newspapers and on local and national radio stations
- avail themselves for interviews with local and national media
- travel to other communities (Berton House budget allowing)
- interact with the public and the local literary community

About Berton House

Berton House is a two-bedroom bungalow, located across the street from Robert Service's historic cabin and just up the street from Jack London's cabin. Berton House has a furnished kitchen, dining room/study, living room, bathroom, and two bedrooms. The house is fully equipped with bedding, linen, kitchen appliances, and cooking utensils. The house has a telephone, internet, computer printer, radio, CD player, and television.

Children and spouses are welcome to accompany writers during their residency. However, writers are responsible for all costs (including travel) associated with their families.

Please note: Berton House has a no smoking and no pets policy.

A little about Dawson...

Dawson City is a small historic northern community at the confluence of the Klondike and Yukon Rivers, home for thousands of years to the Han People (now known as the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in). Dawson is the site of the 1896-1898 Klondike Gold Rush that brought tens of thousands of fortune-seekers from all over the world. Mining remains one of the town's main industries. Tourism is the region's other major industry.

The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in recently settled its land claim and has joined six other Yukon First Nations in governing their own affairs through self-government.

Dawson City is located about 500 km north of Whitehorse, the capital of the Yukon. Its winter population is about 2,000. In the summer, the population swells to over 3,500. Dawson has a reputation for friendliness and rugged charm.

Residents of Dawson City are actively engaged in a growing and robust cultural community. The community balances summer cultural tourism events with artistic activity during the rest of the year. The Klondike Institute of Art and Culture presents an annual film festival, visual arts festival, and delivers arts education programs, art gallery exhibitions, and performing arts presentations throughout the year. KIAC has a visual artist-in-residence program which draws

***The Writers' Trust of Canada
200-90 Richmond Street East, Toronto, ON, M5C 1P1***

visiting artists from Canada and Europe. The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in operates a cultural heritage centre which engages its members and the public in training and productions that promote and develop traditional and contemporary First Nations culture. The Dawson City Music Festival is renowned for showcasing local and national musicians. The Dawson City Museum has a large historical collection and a reference library with 7,000 photographs and records for genealogical research.

Autumn begins in mid-August at this northern latitude and temperatures can go down to below freezing during the night even in September. The weather can turn extremely cold in October and November when the daylight hours shorten drastically. Due to the remote location of Dawson, fuel and food costs may seem rather high.

Dawson City is connected to Whitehorse by a major highway. There is air service between Dawson and Whitehorse. There is a school (K through 12) and a childcare centre in the community. Further information on Dawson City (a map, attractions and a service guide) is available on request and the internet has a number of informative sites.

In Dawson, there are good local services for writers and residents though writers who require extensive on-site library resources, big-city medical services, and a large urban atmosphere are reminded that these are not available in a small community like Dawson; if you require that level of service for your everyday life, this may not be for you.