



The Lakefield Literary Festival has an exciting line-up of six amazing authors attending our event's this July. Over the next several weeks the Festival has partnered with the Lakefield Herald to introduce you to our authors and their books which will be featured over the weekend of July 17 and 18. All tickets are on sale now, available online and at Happenstance Books and Yarns in Lakefield. For more details, visit [lakefieldliteraryfestival.com](http://lakefieldliteraryfestival.com)



# A Look at the Lakefield Literary Festival Authors

## Walking With Beth by Marilyn Simonds

By BARRY MUTTER

Walking With Beth is more than a memoir, it is more than a poetic testimony of friendship, and it is more than a soulful connection between two like minded women. It is, as stated in the epigraph, what it is to be immortal. It is written much like a personal diary that reveals the deep seated intimate thoughts of a sensitive writer. Each thought and each event is in the moment, in the "now". Saint Augustine defined eternity as a "now that does not pass away". Simonds writes about a series of "nows" that will not pass away. She introduces the reader to moments with her friend Beth that will last forever. The reader cannot avoid connecting with Marilyn's moments of revelation. Marilyn Simonds exquisitely illustrates those moments she shared with Beth. Whether they were together or apart the connection between Beth and Marilyn Simonds was a spiritual one and transcended both time and space.

The physical connection with the two women only began in earnest during the pandemic. In 2020 Marilyn contacted Beth. They agreed to meet, but not indoors. Their relationship began with a walk together in the neighbourhood that Beth lived in. There was a thirty years difference in their ages. Beth had reached 100 years of age and Marilyn was 70 years old. They were both, in the past, aware of the other but had not formed a personal bond. After their first walk together both women knew they wanted to know more about the other. There was an emotional connection. Both wanted to share lifetime experiences and thoughts

Conversations with  
My 100-year-old Friend

## Walking with Beth

Marilyn  
Simonds



they had experienced in their multi-faceted lives. It seemed like the conscious, and unconscious thoughts, each woman was privy to were simpatico with the other woman. This was the beginning of a friendship that penetrated to the core of each woman. It was a soulful experience.

What makes this book so enticing is the emotional connection any reader could, or should, experience while going through it. The language is poetic. The life experiences are real or, to put it another way, normal. They have each enjoyed good lives. Both have been active living their

lives. Each woman is staring into the last chapter of their life; one through age and one through a medical condition. The connection with each other, however, seems unending. The reader cannot help but to be encapsulated. We are all going to experience this chapter in our lives, but are we going to enjoy it as much as the friendship that these two women share: the friendship without an end.

There are many vignettes in this book that should be included in a review. There are life experiences that each woman has either experienced or shared with the other that could bring a smile or a tear to the reader. There are familial losses and revelations of children, spouses, friends, etc. that deserve recognition within a review. However due to limited space the one statement that sums up an overwhelming sense of a theme for this "diary" occurs at the end of a chapter in the last phase of the book. It is a simple moment when Beth and Marilyn were sharing some thoughts on an art form Beth had created with some coloured stamps:

"We need something to embrace these days," Beth says the next time I call. "We no longer live in a world that is caring. We don't care about institutions or the climate. We are not on our knees before nature."

I think of the shopping bag I was handed in a consignment shop recently. Emblazoned on the bright yellow cloth was the slogan: To Love Yourself is the greatest Revolution.

Really? The greatest? Has our self-obsession come to this? .....

And I think: To be alive in the world is the greatest revolution.

*Marilyn Simonds will be at the lakefield Literary Festival on July 17 at 7 p.m.*

*For more information on authors, moderators, and tickets for the Lakefield Literary Festival, visit them online at [lakefieldliteraryfestival.com](http://lakefieldliteraryfestival.com) OR at Happenstance Books and Yarns*

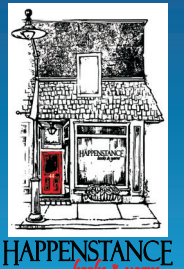


LAKEFIELD  
LITERARY Festival

Books and Tickets available at Happenstance Books & Yarns

Walking with Beth will be featured on July 17 at 7 p.m.

Tickets also available online at [LakefieldLiteraryFestival.com](http://LakefieldLiteraryFestival.com)



Terry McQuitty



Terry McQuitty



Terry McQuitty

The Lakefield Horticultural Society spent some of that hard earned money they garnered over the May 24 weekend with their annual plant sale to beautify Lakefield gardens. The volunteer crew showed up en masse at Cenotaph Park on Thursday for morning "Planting Day". Everyone is encouraged to enjoy the wonderful gardens planted and maintained by the Horticultural Society throughout the village.