

Poetry Series

Deanna Samuels
- poems -

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Deanna Samuels()

Just a few years ago I found I was able to express myself in verse, finding inspiration from walking, vacations, nature, seasons, people and the world around us. My current portfolio of over 250 poems and verse which can be found on will gradually be added to this site. Please do go into and read my poems on this site, many are very inspiring of events in real life. I tend to add a new poem or two about every month. Do please visit me again and look forward to any comments you may make. Thanks

Deanna

A Blanket Of Autumn Glory

Autumn is now upon us
Foliage changing
Changing to its burning bronze gown
Gone are summer's lush succulent greens
Leaves are rapidly drying up
Losing their life-giving succulent juices
Gradually crinkling and shrinking
Becoming crisper and more fragile
Their thinning veins strain
Reaching out to its furthest tip
Giving nourishment from what is left
Finally, in their own last moments
The dying leaf gives over to its fate
Breaks away from the now brittle stem
Floats and flutters down, down far below
Lands atop of earlier fallen foliage
Becoming just a part of a growing heap
Spreading out over the grassy mounds
And strewn upon paths and ground
Laying as a blaze of orange, reds and golds
As a blazing blanket
A blanket of Autumn glory

Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 15th October 2019

Deanna Samuels

A Clear Blue Sky

Sitting, nay, lounging on Deck 10 on an at sea day of Zuiderdam
There was nothing to do but rest and look around
The day was hot as ship sailed south east upon the Caribbean
Peering out from sun protected niche through clean glass panes
The ocean was blue as sparkling sapphires with slight swell
Gentle white horses rode atop the modest waves
Above and beyond, the sky was an azure blue and cloudless
Stretching to the horizon of the expanse of the distant sea
Nothing in the air to mar the unbroken deep blue hue
Not a gull, a plane or even a far ocean liner's funnel
Only the gentle rumble of the ship's engine broke the silence
Save the swishing of the hull swiftly cutting through the water
At present, the ship completely alone in this enormous ocean
Under the vast cover of a perfectly cloudless clear blue sky

Written on The Zuiderdam on cruise in Caribbean - 19th January 2017

Deanna Samuels

A Crisp Cold, Cold Day

What a beautiful but crisp cold, cold day
Not a cloud could be seen in the clear blue sky
Minus 17c below but with a cruel, cruel wind chill
Abnormally freezing for the last day of the year

Outdoor celebrations have already been curtailed
Too cold, they say, to bring performers in to sing
Won't, of course stop the forthcoming midnight cheers
The hugs and kisses hoping for a better year

Today has brought families out in their thousands
To the local ski and sled runs for lots of fun
And with the soft newly fallen snow
Will give kids big and small plenty to enjoy

Ponds now frozen and safe for folk to skate
Twirling on ice, showing off spins in partake
People wrapping up with many clothing layers
Keeping warm among the other players

One feels a buzz in the cold, cold air
The anticipation, the excitement
Of the looming magical hour
That hour will not be too long
Crowds count down the seconds
Before the midnight hand strikes
Crystal balls complete their fall
The New Year is welcomed in
Happy New Year to all

Written at Courtice, Oshawa, Ontario - Midday - 31st December 2017

Deanna Samuels

A Damp, Dreary Day

A damp dreary day
Driving towards Port Hope, mist hung low over the fields
A sky of mottled slate grey
Air filled with drizzly dew
Buildings appeared cold and forlorn in this miserable scene
Not a hint or glint of sparkle on wet running windows
Vehicles driving with full headlights to appear more visible
Road signs difficult to decipher from 50 yards
Distant trees and bush fully lost within this heavy shroud
Nearer trees appeared sad, flat and lifeless
Their bare boughs dripped from rain that enveloped them
Roadside banks gave no relief, they too, swampy and dank
Later, returning along the lakeside road
Mist hung over to almost the water's very edge
Waves seem to creep out from below the low-lying cloud
Eerily rolling up and over upon the damp sandy beach
A small flock of gulls patiently waited at breaking waves
Eager to snap any tasty morsel from within the frothy water
The day slipped into afternoon and evening
Ending as it had begun, damp and dreary

Written in Durham, Ontario - 21st December 2018

Deanna Samuels

A Drive And Surprise In The Country

A drive in the country on this crisp sunny sparkling day
Snow laying on the vast expanse of fields beginning to melt
Leaving patches of bare faded brown stalks of a harvest long gone
Countrified roads and lanes that were recently awash with a frosty icing
Transformed to a clear and dry surface from verge to verge
With sun shining above, wended through this late winter country scene
Before long, came to the small town of Orono
Firstly driving alongside turn of the century brick and gabled houses
Handsome and prestigiously built and lovingly cared for
Arrived presently at centre of town - a surprise!
It was almost, just almost, as though time had stood still
Save that of the latest style of today's vehicles parked along Main Street
And tell-tale signs of street and sidewalk modernity
Businesses with old fashioned store fronts made up the heart of this country town
Several antique shops, a general store of a hundred years or more
An assortment of merchants to service and supply the townsfolk
AND - lo and behold - a Dutch Bakery! A genuine Dutch Bakery
What a perfect time to sample a pastry and cup of refreshing tea
Walking into the store, aromas swirled of multitudes of freshly baked goods
Immediately evoking gastronomical juices to the highest degree
Display cabinets were filled with mouth-watering delectable edibles
Tarts, buns, gingerbread, shortbread, cheesecake, jam filled doughnuts
Turnovers, brownies, maple twists, squares and fairy cakes of flavored icing
Varieties of fresh white and whole wheat breads lined two rows of shelves
Another storing yummy gateaux, fruit pies and to-die-for tortes
The contemplation of making a choice of pastry took several minutes
Finally, a decision made, still ogling all the other choices that could have been
One apple toffee tart square and one very gooey chocolatey brownie
An Orange pekoe and a speciality lemon chai tea completed the order
A tea room was open upstairs reached by a moderately steep wooden staircase
Pictures and artifacts lined the stair walls, most were available for sale
The room upstairs doubled as a tea room and shop with general paraphernalia
Small kitchenware utensils, tea cozies, tea towels and some cookware
An extensive selection of knickknacks, many in the blue and white Delft design
Clogs too, as ornaments or made as wearable footwear in soft or leather material

The room also contained chair and small tables covered with wine red tablecloths
Windows overlooked the Main Street giving sight of the town shops opposite

Sat down and enjoyed the choice of pastry and a good cup of tea
Not a morsel was left, not a crumb, both squares utterly delicious
Soon, it was time to go and be on the road once again to head back home
What a delicious way to complete a delightful drive and surprise in the country

Written in Durham Region and Richmond Hill, Ontario - 9th March 2019

Deanna Samuels

A Drive Into Cottage Country

Not a cloud in the sky as we drove northwards to cottage country
Sundrenched towns and villages quickly passed on route
Noticeably, the strain of the long hot summer is taking its toll
Much of the foliage showing stress from high temperatures and lack of moisture
A sparkling lake appears to our right, hardly a ripple moves its shimmering waters
Narrow river nearby, a charming marina, packed with an assortment of small craft
Sailing boats, motor boats, rowing boats, canoes, a dinghy or two
All appearing ready and awaiting their owners coming to use on this long lazy weekend
Maybe, not wanting to think of the morrow, only one more day away from everyday life
Then, yes, the inevitable laborious slow fender to fender crowded roads to get back home
Further on, an unusual town name, Coboconk, it too with marina and a weir fully open
Without a doubt, a holiday spot, shops and cafes to cater for those at leisure
Our drive takes us into the throbbing heart of cottage country, lakes and rivers abound
Cottages, a traditional summer getaway for thousands of city dwellers to escape those towns
The majority of cottages are for the warmer months, not set up for a Canadian winter
Though many are built for year-round use, with adequate heating and access to the door
The Cottage when referred to, could mean anything from a simple small modest cabin
A fixed module in a trailer park, a mediocre bungalow to a spectacular sumptuous mansion
Most prized is a cottage by a lakeside, having its own mooring dock and even boathouse
Such is a description of what can be deemed as 'going to the cottage today'
Onward we drive, further north, foliage becoming more coniferous
The sign of Haliburton County and Minden Hills reached and then gone by
A single lane road now, much less traffic using, twists and turns around low lying hillocks
Excitedly, breached into the lower Canadian Shield
The Canadian Shield - also called the Laurentian Plateau

Exposed pre-Cambrian igneous rock, forming the core of the North American
Continent

Pines and firs abound as far as the eye can see, a few pools of marshy land
between

Barnum Lake soon passed by, an interesting sign indicating turtles crossing gave
a smile

Town of Haliburton, a busy town with stores to suit residents, cottagers, holiday
makers alike

Drove half way round Lake Haliburton, neatly edged by cottages and boats along
the shores

Almost at our final destination, a local graveyard passed - no, not that
destination!

Going along the rolling tree-lined country road enhanced even more the last half
mile or so

Rounded a fairly steep hilly bend, new street signs erected since a previous visit
Slowed down and carefully turned into a secluded drive - have at last arrived

Written en-route on drive to Haliburton and in Richmond Hill, Ontario - 6th
August 2018.

Deanna Samuels

A Drive Through The Bleak Snowy Countryside

A drive through the bleak countryside gave a feel of icy cold
Fields swathed in swirls of recent snow fall
The narrow roads becoming almost a lane banked up on either side
Yet, on second glance, the scape was raw and beautiful
Untouched by human footstep or grazing farmyard cattle
The miles of country lay before, unchanging as each flake fell
Fields separated by low fences were almost lost under the windswept drifts
Tree banks for endless miles holding on to that white fluffy mass
Their boughs weighted down from such extra load
Passing by a deep ravine, caught sun rays shining through the spindly pines
Revealing a clearing, giving an eerily look of misty gold haze
Beyond the fields and wooded land the vista gave way
Opening up to one of the Great Lakes of Canada, Lake Ontario
On this cloudless day, the waters of the lake sparkled deep blue
Calm, with little swell as though it too enjoying the windless weather
There also, at water's edge, the mighty Nuclear Energy Plant of Pickering
Serving the wider communities throughout the area with their daily energy
While a little further inland a redundant, never used coal fired plant
Obsolete, as overtaken by legislation on ban of such production
Deeper into the country a few farm houses to be seen
Almost from such distance looking half buried beneath the recent snowfall
Given away only by the smoky streaks emitting from chimney stacks
Passed by small hamlets, they too almost hidden behind banks of snow
Care taken at unprotected rail crossings, listening out for sound of moving train
Reaching goal of Port Hope, a true small town maintaining tradition at its best
A flourishing small theatre with many live shows for townsfolk to enjoy
Individual stores and shops keeping local businesses alive
All the while, very few people about on this cold and crispy day
Turning now in westerly direction, surveyed the on-coming vista
Once more, the snow covered wide open spaces and wooded scene
Lake Ontario continuing to shimmer to the left
Motoring at moderate speed, merged onto busy highway and homeward went

Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 8th January 2017.

Deanna Samuels

A Gunman Strikes The Danforth

What a poignant evening, a vigil, an hour or more of complete togetherness
Several thousand people from all walks of life, coming together at such short
notice

Wanting to show their support to the victims of the July 22nd massacre on The
Danforth

A shooter went berserk firing at random from Alexander Parkette to Bowden
Street north

Gunning down innocent folk, out enjoying the warm evening and atmosphere of
Greektown

Two beautiful young accomplished girls of 10 and 18 were slaughtered in his
rampaging wake

A dozen or more dining on patios, standing in an ice cream parlor - shot - for
what sake?

A neighborhood disrupted, an action of disbelief on an unprecedented scale
What makes a human lose their cool, to take the lives of others goes beyond the
rule

Who knows what goes on behind their private scene, in their heart, in their soul
What disturbance has transpired to warp a mind to hate and such a path to take
Now, at this moment, at this hour of seven, neighbours and strangers come to
enjoin as one

Forming a candle-lit procession, minds and thoughts in unison with heartfelt grief
and sorrow

Slowly, very slowly, silently and, as if in defiance, wending their way along the
gunman's path

Culminating, congregating, a huge throng of peoples embrace the flower-filled
parkette

Prayers for the lost lives and those wounded, 'Hallelujah' played and soulfully
sang by all

Alexander the Great Parkette, a friendly Greektown meeting place, now, a square
of remembrance

Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario following attending the above vigil - 25th July
2018.

Deanna Samuels

A Hidden Gem

Deep in the mid-south of the US of A
A town can be found that makes for a great day
Snuggled way up high in the hills of the beautiful Ozarks
Every evening open for fun and plenty of laughs and larks
Sparkles and illuminations brightly light up the sky
Each neon beckons for patrons to come enter and occupy
Whatever the show, it has its own glitter and zest
Performers and outfits are some of the very best
So many to choose from with over a 100 at last count
Often privately owned and generationally family paramount
Plenty of restaurants of great variety and fast food abound
No lack of shops and outlets as they all surround
Museums and fun fairs and outside attractions
Stay busy for most times though some with winter contractions
B and Bs, hotels and motels to suit every pocket
Serviced by real friendly people and not automated robotics
Large churches for gospel worship filled to capacity each Sunday
Even more so at high season and on a special public holiday
When it's time to leave this fun filled town
There is some sadness to leave such jeweled crown
Where in the Ozarks can this gem be found with abundant potpourri
Why, Branson of course, on Route 76 in the north of West Missouri

Written on the way home from Branson - 19th November 2018

Deanna Samuels

A Soft Breeze

A soft breeze swept through the open window
Creating coolness to their warm embrace
Their gentle caresses betrayed their true feelings
Of a deep and passionate love for the other

Another breeze swept through the open window
A colder blow than before, enough to give a chill
With gentle haste, the two pull the coverlet upon them
Bringing warmth and comfort, yielding slowly to sleep

Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 15th April 2017

Deanna Samuels

A Spark Ignites Within

From a word passed on, contact made, a meeting set, the time had come
Nods of recognition, introductions to each other, a friendly handshake
Two cups of coffee ordered, sipping those, talking lightly, unfolding a little
A furtive look, not to intrude, both keeping comfortable in their space
But suddenly, for her, from a moment's glance, time for an instant stood still
An unfamiliar emotion of so long ago, a spark, a spark ignites within
It was not expected, she, almost taken aback, what was that strange feeling
In unknown territory now, kept conversation going, children, grandchildren
But there was that look again, excitement stirs once more
How could this almost stranger so quickly take her heart
This guy who sits before her, an academic, highly respected in his field
Where is their commonality that they can find to share
Lifestyle, hobbies, activities told and yes, they find a major suit
He, a noted song and music creator, she, a writer of much poetry
He sang to her his latest score of sad demise of Leonard Cohen
Dining-out of similar choice, respect for their religious faith
And as they spoke, found many same interests along the way
That look, that glance again, her heart stood still once more
He seemed content, happy and relaxed to be with her
In that busy coffee place, with almost every table filled
She was oblivious to all around and felt they were the only two
There was music in the air, but no sound was ever heard
A spark, a spark so deep within her had been ignited
Will it grow and glow and turn to fire or, in time, simply burn to ember

(Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 1st December 2016) .

Deanna Samuels

A Whirlwind Of A Month Or Two

A poetical travelogue

It has been a whirlwind of a month or two
A time of new experiences, laughter and happiness all the way through
From Niagara Falls and the region's wineries to New York Penn via Amtrak
Four of us had a ball touring the sights and sounds of The Big Apple
From Tootsie to Ground Zero, to Staten Island and The Dead Duck pub
Open top bus rides of down town, Harlem and Strawberry Fields
Dizzy's and eateries of all cuisines, Bloomindaes, Fiddler on the Roof
Homeward bound, a few days to plan big July event, prepared for UK and France
London visits to family and friends; obligatory stop at Boots and M & S!
Brighton for the day, loving respects and prayers to long gone Mum and Dad
A photoshot opportunity at bench in memory to parents on Hove Promenade
Last day in UK, a very special family celebration of younger member
Flight to Paris to join Seine River Cruise; a tour of Paris included
The Eiffel Tower, Louvre, Arc De Triumph and fire damaged Notre Dame
All of Paris before us, the monuments, exclusive stores, wide boulevards, history
Cruised towards Normandy with docking stops at quaint towns along the way
Visited castles and chateaux, some tumbled down, others in their glory
Highlights; the Monet gardens at Giverny where the artist lived and painted
Renowned for green bridge, water garden, weeping willows and water lily pads
At Rouen, a farm and countryside tour, tasting creamy cheeses and delicious
cider
In the late evening, a spectacular light-show against Rouen Cathedral
Rouen, where Joan of Arc tragically met her fiery death in the Old Market Square
One 12th century glorious edifice partly carved into cliffside at La Roche-Guyon
Used as a bunker by infamous general during WW2 as Allies advanced
Chateau de Malmaison, an elegant historic manor house purchased by Empress
Josephine
Where Napoleon Bonaparte spent his final days in France before his exiled death
in St Helena
The décor was sumptuous and opulent, stunning original furnishings in his
mahogany study
The main highlight of the whole river cruise, a day trip to the Normandy Beaches
The poignancy, the emotion of Gold, Juno and Sword Beaches
The history of those dark days, the rows and rows of white memorials of lost
lives
Only the week before, thousands joined the services held to commemorate that
time

The 75th Anniversary of the D-D landings, a day carved in the history books of man

The world hoped never again, but nothing learned, so many conflicts since
Retracing waves to Paris back down river, more chateaux and town visits
Docked once again in le Pecq; a Paris night tour ensued

A sparking Eiffel Tower; lit up monuments and famous buildings

Such a wonderfully illuminating end to a perfect and informative great river
cruise

With a three day extension together with group of ten, our tour of the Loire
Valley began

Firstly, en-route a visit to Chartres Cathedral, took advantage of a melodious
organ recital

A stop at Cave de Vouvray Winery with a tour of their extensive cool caves
Hundreds of thousands of various varieties of bottles of wine were stored to age
or mature

Arrived at Chateau des Sept Tours Hotel, a fifteenth century stair turreted edifice
Void of elevators or mod-con air conditioning, somewhat stifling in room, made
do with fans

Settled in, viewed the extensive grounds and pool area; dinner with group in the
Terrace Room

The following day, two full days of touring The Loire Valley began

Firstly, the 16th Century Chateau Villandry, breathtaking vegetable and flower
gardens

Laid out in a meticulously designed low maze-like hedge setting

Then the Chateau de Chenonceau, outstanding reproduced furniture and decor of
that day

Chateau du Clos Luce, a large mansion, the last visit for us that day

This is the chateau where Leonardo de Vinci spent the last three years of his life
Quite awesome to walk around living rooms of this exceptionally renowned artist
and inventor

Knowing, acknowledging he had stepped those very same boards 500 years ago

The next and last day of touring, we visited the extraordinary Chateau Chambord

A 15th century massive structure built by Francois 1st as a luxurious hunting
lodge

In that time, was in middle of swampland and claimed hundreds of builders' lives
to disease

Unbelievably, Francois 1st used the lodge only about 80 times throughout his
entire reign

The building is breathtakingly remarkable, with many turrets and exquisitely
furnished rooms

An outstanding feature of it, is its centrally built double-helix marble staircase

Leaving Chateau Chambord, returned to Paris to Hyatt Regency Etoile for last overnight stay

The evening gave opportunity to take in the Paris nightscape and local stores
Took our time to relax over a quiet meal in air-conditioned restaurant opposite
The Hyatt

Followed by an hour or so of entertaining jazz by ten piece group in Hotel
Concorde nearby

A late morning direct flight from Paris to Toronto, in time to attend grandson's
graduation.

Those were amazing, wonderful, exhilarating, informative weeks, but wait, more
to come!

A few days to catch up and continue final preparations for early July celebration
Guests flew in, family dinners, a surprise visit of brother and wife from California
The big event, a pool party and special birthday day came, guests arrived
People mingled, joyful of the lovely warm sunny afternoon, a number swam
A duo of violins played popular classics, lots of refreshing cool drinks, wine and
nibbles

Birthday tea and cutting of spectacularly unique iced cake depicting back garden
and pool

More mingling, guests enjoying the relaxation and catching up with friends
Dinner served with a Greek theme, folk singer Rick Fines played guitar, sang his
songs

A highlight too, Gary sang his new song accompanied by Rick - You're So
Beautiful

The evening gradually ebbed to an end; time for guests to make their way home
What a great celebration, what an amazing day, what a wonderful memory
Yet still - even more to come! A few more fantastic days with brother and wife
Family lunch on Monday at the CN Tower Revolving Restaurant, espied all of
Toronto

Tea on cafe patio in Queen Street, Jazz at the Rex Hotel, dinner with family at
home

A pre-scheduled lunch Tuesday with hiking friends at Scaddabush, our visitors
joining the group

Drove to the McMichael Gallery, Kleinberg, featured Group of Seven and
exhibition of Maud Lewis

Stratford on Wednesday, Billy Elliot, a great show, lots of energy depicting the
'70s coal mining strike

The evening took us to Tomo's, Richmond Hill for dinner, met family there, a
great few hours

Thursday was farewell day, though not before meeting family at Bagel World for
brunch

Drove brother and wife to Pearson Airport; sad goodbyes, slowly they walked

into Departures

Suddenly, it was all over, all those weeks of planning, partying, holidaying, being on a high

It was time to go home, clean up, put things away as though nothing had happened in between

But something had happened in between, in between, there was Niagara Falls and Wine Country

Amtrak, New York City, London, Brighton, Paris, River Cruise, Loire Valley, birthdays, surprise visitors

Great outings, dinners, company, pool party and the best ever special birthday celebration

Wow - What a whirlwind of a month or two!

Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 16th July 2019

Deanna Samuels

Adirondack Mountains

Heading north from New York City took Highway 87
Decided a change of scene to see small town life on West 9 by Hudson
Circled around Albany and passed Glen Falls, drove into Adirondack Park
Mid-afternoon shadows highlighted pines, winter trees still bare

The Adirondacks, a magnificent U.S. National Park, an area of 6 million acres
Of those, 3.4 million are privately owned, the remainder by New York State
Adirondacks, the largest publicly protected area in the United States
Greater in area than four other U.S. major parks combined

The Adirondack Mountains, Mount Marcy being the highest peak at 5,344 feet
Commanding the High Peaks Wilderness area, rock structure of more than 5
million years

A biome area of coniferous forests thickly covered with spruce, pine and
deciduous trees

Wetlands of swamps, marshes and bogs, home to amphibians, birds, grasses and
moss

Proudly boasting over 3,000 lakes and ponds and 1,200 miles of rivers within
A spectacular 2,000 miles of amazing hiking trails to suit all levels of expertise
Beautiful and practical lakeside areas available for motorhome or camping
vacations

Amenities, cafes, restaurant and general stores nearby for everyday needs

Plenty of hotels and b & b's to suit all pockets

Many found alongside quiet, serene lakes or nestling in valleys with spectacular
views

The Adirondacks offers more than 5,000 miles of roads and 3,000 miles of
snowmobile trails

Allowing the motorist freedom to venture and wander, embracing great views at
every turn

Our passage continued on route 87, the road swift and true

Diverted at Lake George to Route No.9 to split onto 28

The ride was delightful, pines on either side, little other traffic

Ski and winter resort facilities having closed already for the season

Passed through the previously busy of a few weeks ago, quiet towns
Neatly encircled alongside treed sparkling lakes and rocky landscape

Snow patches lingered upon the forest floor protected under thick pines
Huge overflowing unthawed ice chunks clung to roadside rocks

Motored over and around that local mountain scene
Some peaks covered in pines and firs, others rocky and stark
Dipped into valleys and dales of gradients both steep and shallow
Noticeably, no sightings of wildlife or grazing herds and flocks

Diverted from route 28 to 30 North, the day waning, drawing in
Long Lake came into view, a quiet serene lake, a hotel beside appeared
A perfect time to break for a meal and overnight stay
Booked into The Adirondack Hotel, a place of yesteryear

A perfect choice, view overlooking the tranquil lake
Full of history and lore, clean, warm and friendly
An excellent tasty meal served by their friendly and attentive staff
Time at the bar to watch Bruins and Leafs, a good end to an exciting and
explorative day

A continental breakfast prior to departure set us on our way
Continued on 30 North, drove passed Tupper and Paul Smith Lakes
Beheld many varying sized cottages snuggled amongst the trees
The journey becoming less hilly and mountainous

The terrain gradually transformed into a pretty plateau with trees to enhance
Passing by homes and local stores, scenes of everyday rural life
The Adirondacks slowly disappearing from our rearview mirror
Reluctantly drove away from those magnificent Adirondack Mountains

A poem travelogue written while in the Adirondacks and at Richmond Hill, Ontario
- 23rd/24th April 2018.

Deanna Samuels

An Eerie Lake Ontario Scene

On driving to the shore of Lake Ontario, a few miles east from Whitby
A most eerie, unexpected, unearthly scene was there to behold
The lake water was steaming, a rapids white water appearance beyond
While above, a long narrow translucent cloud had formed

Could only deduce was a phenomenon of current arctic weather conditions
The sky clear and blue, bitterly cold inland with a thick covering of new snow
While the water temperature was likely higher than the freezing outside air
With reaction of creating swirls of steamy puffs merging into overhang cloud

A gaggle of Canada Geese were paddling amid this steamy choppy water
Keeping safely and snugly together save one bird, a short distance away
Suddenly, with an urgent stir, their wings unfolded, flapped loudly, then rose
Flew up into a single skein line, leaving far behind the one lonesome goose

And thus continued as we watched, that strange phenomenon of steaming lake
water

The clusters of white puffs floating up, melting into the translucent smooth cloud
Giving the onlooker an eerie feeling of an unworldly mysteriously veiled scene
A marvel, a wonder of nature playing out in the midst of a cold, frosty winter's
day

Written at Richmond Hill and Courtice, Ontario - 6th January 2018

Deanna Samuels

An Emerald Gem In The Ocean

Peering from the stateroom of Zuiderdam, out over the briny sea
There before, a small island, lush green foliage length and breadth
An emerald gem nestling, oh so quietly, without fuss or glare
While soft waves rippled and broke upon the gold sandy shore
The waters surround, turquoise and tranquil as befits a hidden cove
Calm and clear, the transparent shallows unable to hide its sandy secrets
The horizon beyond this emerald isle of Half Moon Cay was easily seen
A darker green denoting there, a deep depth and expanse of sea
In reality, this idyllic location of man-made fun, pleasure and brew
Yields the emerald gem in the ocean but an oasis for an hour or two

Written on cruise on The Zuiderdam visiting Half Moon Cay -
16th January 2017.

Deanna Samuels

Another New Year

Another New Year has slipped into our lives
Turning over more quickly as each twelve months go by
We celebrate with champagne and favorite dishes
Making resolves, but often, most hardly finishes
Firework displays move along world time zones
Starting down-under ending way out on Pacific sandstones
Millions see the blaze of lights and flashes
A good feel factor to start New Year bashes
Yet, in the morning has anything changed
From night before, toasts and promises exchanged
Has the World suddenly turned over a whole new leaf
Renouncing debilitating conflicts of wars and defeats
Becoming more conscious of those used and abused
No, the World wakes up to the cold light of day bemused
The fun and thrill of the previous night's revelling done
Now back to same grind, no new revolutionary ideas spun
Or has there, has a new flame been ignited
Out there, somewhere, a spark that grows to be united
Surely, that is the hope of another new year
The hope that a new year brings peace without tear or fear

Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 1st January 2019

Deanna Samuels

At The Edge Of Spring

It was almost Spring like on the afternoon of 17th March
High winds of two days past had calmed to a gentle breeze
The sky, a brilliant clear blue without mar of cloud
Leafless trees barely swaying in the soft and friendlier wind
A week of low temperatures had slowly risen higher
Thawing the grey packed ice along curbside and path
The country drive across quieter roads at top of town
Revealed for first time this year, fields devoid of winter snow
Grass, a stubbled brown but hints of green seeping through
Roadside ditches wet and boggy, a few more days for drying out
Ponds and small lakes defrosting from crystalized ice
A thin layer of water quickening the breakdown of mottled surface
Cattle grazing lazily where firmer ground was found
Munching slowly, softening the tough stalks of old dried hay
A few horses freely galloping around the field
Happily stretching legs from winter stable need
A small flock of birds swooping and resting on naked tree boughs
Their crisp early chirping, refreshing after long winter away
A few older houses appeared at edge of bound town, yards tidy and neat
New developments next encountered, saplings not yet a year
Rows upon rows of sameness, without differential character
Maturity will come, though a decade would go by
Occasional large banks of hardened snow piled up along the way
The main town streets encroached, tidied and swept befitting such place
Almost at journeys end, duly arrived at planned destination
Felt elated and fulfilled to have witnessed a wide scope of early Spring
Plenty of nature's activity and wide panoramic vistas on this countryside ride

Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 17th March 2017

Deanna Samuels

Autumn's Entrance

What a glorious summer these past months have been
One of the best that has ever been seen
Long days of warmth and continuous sun
People relaxed in free time and fun
Sweeping away their cares and their woes
Enjoying discovery of new scenes and plateaus

Hardly noticeable at first, the days draw in seductively
Easing into long silken indigo eves of warm tranquility
Suddenly - it happens - without trumpets or fanfare
The first signs of change from late summer's finale
Overnight, trees mysteriously transform to orange luminance
Proclaiming fair notice of the impending Autumn's Entrance

(Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 29th August 2016)

Deanna Samuels

Baltic Cruise

Preface to travelogue

Disappointment

A poem by Deanna Samuels - 13th May 2016

Oh! What a shame, what a disappointment

After months of planning and plotting together

Building up excitement and expectancy

The thrill of a new adventure, of the unknown

Calamity happened a few days before setting sail

My friend dislodged back and was unable to cruise

So there was I without my companion

No one to share, to talk with, to shmooze

Commiserations and regrets we had for each other

Each feeling the let-down that had come to pass

What else to do but take the plunge, go it alone

To put on a brave face, to head out on one's own

A journey taking me to unfamiliar lands

New experiences, sights and encounters

To meet with strangers, to mix and mingle

Making the best of just being a single

Journey to Amsterdam - 13th May 2016

Journeyed to Toronto Pearson Airport by taxi and GO bus. Checked luggage in with Air Canada. Lots of time before flight was called to Amsterdam. Overnight flight was good and comfortable.

All Aboard - Celebrity Silhouette - 14th May 2016

Amsterdam. Arrived about 11am. Usual customs and carrousel. Met Celebrity shuttle representatives in main Hall. Luggage taken, would be delivered to cabin on board which was a big bonus. Shuttle drove to Silhouette, through downtown Amsterdam. Unloaded us, where waited in large checking in boarding hall. Very crowded and were seated in zones to await turn to a check-in representative. Took about one and half hours to get called and checked in with representative and received SeaPass card which is the cabin key, security exit and entry onto ship and for any purchases made aboard. There must have been at least twenty booking-in stands. Proceeded onto ship from enclosed gangway at about 3pm, located the elevators and made way to cabin on deck eight. Luggage had not yet arrived. Checked Celebrity trips as an alternative to the hop on/off ones that I had already booked. Muster, which is obligatory for everyone, was sounded at 4.30pm and I proceeded to Essemble Room. Following Muster, checked at Shore

Excursions Desk regarding trips and maître dee for a 6.30pm dinner. He noted request and advised to come for 6.30pm. Once back at cabin, my luggage had arrived. Checked again all the trips on the on-Shore Excursion list as against those I already booked. Changed for dinner for 6.30pm. At the main Grand Cuvee Restaurant, an enormous two tiered restaurant on two decks with several hundreds of tables, all beautifully laid out for dinner, many already occupied. I was placed on an empty table, so was a bit disappointed but about 15 minutes later, two ladies were seated, two Marias, an aunt and her niece from Hamilton and Montreal and we started a pleasant conversation. Dinner served, I had grilled salmon. Following dinner, went to Shore Excursions Desk and booked four alternative shore trips in place of the hop on/offers. Emailed Ann before wifi gave out for her to ask Kim to cancel out the four cities where we had booked the hop on/off trips, not realizing at that time, that it was too late to cancel for a refund. After dinner, 9pm show, in the Silhouette Theatre with singer Leanne Mitchell in Adele style mode, very good three quarters of an hour. Extremely tired. Went to cabin. Hung clothes up and away in drawers. Showered and went to bed by 11.30pm. Finally fell asleep.

Day at Sea - 15th May 2016

Woke up, almost 10am. Up and got ready and went for late breakfast in The Oceanview Café, Deck 14. The Oceanview Café is the main buffet style restaurant which can accommodate hundreds and hundreds of passengers at one time. The choice of food is endless, all created and baked or cooked on board. It is open from very early morning for breakfast, through lunch, late lunch, afternoon tea, dinner, late dinner and to the early hours of morning for late evening snacks. There are numerous choices of fare for most of the day, including traditional, Chinese, Indian and many other popular international cuisine dishes. There are no reserved seats, just find a place and sit down. A great way to meet up with other passengers. Met ladies from Mexico, Sara and friend. Afterwards, a presentation talk in Celebrity Central 4, Beyond the Podium, on Public Relations by Jamie G honing in on City of Macon on covering crime there as a former media consultant. Tried seminar Around the World afterwards in same location but just a pitch for cruise selling by Celebrity. Went for light lunch, salad. Sat with three guys from a group of 52 from Vancouver. Afterwards, did a bit of line dancing in Grand Foyer, the main central gathering area at mid-ship, laid out with lounge chairs, bars and speciality small café stands, surrounded by elevators and open layers of decks, again with lounge chairs, cafés and bars where one can see all the way down and up. 3pm make-up artist demonstration at the Spa, bit of a waste of time, then trivia with three girls in Essemble Lounge. That was fun and got the brains going. Relaxed in lounge to bring diary up to date. So far, an amazing mixture of people from all around the world, some 53 countries represented either from staff or passengers.

Tonight, chic dinner, very smart but not too formal. Formal dinners appear to have been abandoned. No wifi at all, put in plane mode last night. Feeling alone and lonely - even with two and half thousand people around! Dinner. Had conversation with those at same table. After dinner, show 'Life' in the Silhouette Theatre, young and refreshingly modern. Afterwards, went to see movie in Celebrity Central 4 - '80 Homes', sad, about repossessing homes, quite depressing. 12 midnight, to room and bedtime.

Warnemunde, Germany, first port of call - 16th May 2016

Silhouette docked at Pier 7. Had breakfast in the Oceanview Cafe. Proceeded through ship security and went off ship to explore town. Warnemunde is 10 miles from the main town of Rostock which has 200,000 inhabitants and 800 years of history and tradition. Warnemunde itself, is a small seaside resort, situated on the Warnow River with wide sandy beaches and was very busy with holiday makers as well as cruise ship passengers. Had decided not to take tour of Berlin as had been there before as had toured with late husband in early nineties. Walked into town just a short distance away. Could see from stateroom balcony prior, the town and lay out. Walked around the local area, over a bridge passing market along one side of the river, then some small local shops, tiny town center square, a guy singing an opera aria accompanied by an accordionist - actually, he, the singer was quite good. Went through a park which had a somewhat life size voluptuous naked young women's bronze statue standing near the entrance which could have done with a good clean up. Came out onto the board walk. Went over sand dunes to have a look at the beach, wide, lots of high flying kites. Further short walk to the busy riverside pathway and sat down in sheltered spot along that pathway. Boats selling tours and food alongside. Very busy with people walking by. Opposite bank, was that market seen earlier when crossing the bridge. Rested, decided to go back to Silhouette. Once back on board, wanted to explore the bowling green while weather pleasant. Disappointed as bowls were only small plastic bowls and a small white jack. For those who know me, for the past number of years for an outside activity, my current passion is lawn bowling. Tried to play a game but equipment not suitable for real lawn bowling. Gave up and went to room for a rest as was tired after an hour or two of walking about Warnemunde. Lunchtime at the Oceanside Cafe, a wide variety of dishes to suit about every taste. Went to the enclosed solarium and had a good rest, watching people swim in pool. Had tea in café and sat more. To room to change for dinner. View from my balcony also showed a wider panorama of the local industrial areas and a lot of windmills. Dinner. Show at the Silhouette Theatre with resident singer Christina giving performance of 'Just Adele' which was very good and general house ensemble show 'Beyond Broadway' which was ok. A little later, went up to Sky Lounge, deck 14, where German Oom Pah band was playing traditional Oom Pah music.

Lively and reminded me of when touring in Germany in the 1990's. At 10.15pm went to Celebrity Central Four and watched James Bond movie 'Spectre'. Afterwards, back to stateroom and bed.

At Sea Day - 17th May 2016.

Up latish and had leisurely breakfast in Oceanview Cafe. Went again to Shore Excursion Desk to try to change St Petersburg trips. Not able as all booked. Public Safety talk by Jami G. in Celebrity Central 4. Lunch, very busy there as was an at sea day with no excursions so a full house. 3pm at the Silhouette Theatre - Leanne Mitchell, opera/pop singer gave special matinee performance, very good. Following the show, went to Ensemble lounge and played trivia with two other girls. Walked around the shops area. Back to stateroom, rested and sorted papers. Listened to jazz in Grand Foyer, Ray Brown, son of Ella Fitzgerald. Pleasant. Changed for dinner. Dinner. Spoke with couple who had been to Berlin trip that day. They had found it a long journey (two hours) and the sightseeing rather limited and rushed. At 8pm, a Talk on Tallinn in the Celebrity Central 4, covering our next port of call. Interesting and gave a good overview of what to expect. Spent a few dollars at the casino slots. Returned to room and prepared for Tallinn tour next morning and so to bed.

Tallinn, Estonia - 18th May 2016

Silhouette arrived early in dock. Beautiful day, just a very slight chill. Up and then breakfast. Now ready to meet tour for 10.15am. Met in Silhouette Theatre. Tour number called, got off ship and alighted on tour bus. Arrived on outskirts of Old Town. Tour will be of the Old City on foot. Founded in 1,154 AD, the Old Town of Tallinn is walled and has been kept remarkably intact and unchanged over the past 600 years, while the new city all around it, is modern and filled with parks, museums, hotels and all the latest amenities for the people befitting the capital of Estonia. As an added interest, Skype software was created by three Estonians in 2003 in Tallinn. Guide Dea walked us around the Old City of Tallinn, relating history and pointing out buildings of interest. Lastly, took us to outdoor market in large square and then by a store called Hausen, which was remarkable as was kept entirely in 1500's mode. Every item that was sold - shoes, candles, dresses, pewter items, even food preparation, was how it would have been made with the ingredients or components available in the 1500's, down even to the W.C's. A most interesting experience. Then into main church for concert. String quartet of three violins and a viola. Was very good, played eine kleine nachtmusik. Church is also a museum. Had a look round the general open market in the main old town square with the 20 minutes free time. Made way back to group meet-up and then to bus and returned to ship. Cabin to refresh and rest. Went to Oceanview Café on 14th deck for tea and scone. At 5pm attended Helsinki history with maps and talk by Jack Hardy in the Celebrity

Central 4. To room and changed for dinner. Nice table with interesting people, all Americans. Left by 8pm to attend Destination Highlights orientation of St Petersburg in Celebrity Central 4. Attempted again to change St. Petersburg tours, no luck. Went to show in the Silhouette Theatre at 9pm. 'White Magic', excellent card magician, his deft of hand was spectacular. His assistant performed amazing body contortions. Following that, played a short while at casino slots. To room and prepared for next day for St Petersburg. Then bed.

St. Petersburg - 19th May 2016

Breakfast. Oceanview Café as well as the ship were fairly empty by the time I got there as many passengers had already left for morning or all-day shore trips. Day started with rain but gradually cleared up. Walked around the ship and shops. Went to room. Had a rest, prepared for afternoon shore trip - 'Local Life Experience' which will include using the metro subway and visiting a local Kuznechny Russian market. Made way out of ship and through Russian customs which was extremely formal. Very quiet in waiting area. Checked ticket time and found I was a whole hour too early! Sat in custom hall waiting area as too much trouble to go back through customs and then to come back again. The whole long waiting hall was lined with booths full of tourists' memorabilia gift items, including thousands upon thousands of Russian Dolls, babushka dolls of all different sizes and colorful paint designs. It quite put me off! Played bridge on iPhone to pass the time. Time came to board bus. Were handed personal hearing transmitters. These proved amazing when out on the tours as one could hear the tour guide's commentary without having to be one step behind so not to miss any interesting details. This particular tour was 'See how the ordinary Russians live'. Were bussed a short distance to nearest metro, got off bus and made way by crossing over local main streets. Very busy with traffic and people. Made way to Metro. Guide gave us a Metro token and we got on descending escalator. It was a loooong way down, I believe guide said was third deepest in the world, the first and second also in St Petersburg's Metro not very far away from where we were. Fairly fancy designed station, older style but very grand for a local metro station. Really crowdedly busy with everyday folk. Our Group of about 50 alighted on subway train through four separate doors of same carriage to ensure to keep together. Changed trains at next station but there was a long way between each stop. Emerged out of Metro to suburban area. Walked along typical mundane streets and into the local produce market. Plenty of fruit, meats, poultry, fish and vegetables. From there, made way to a revered local church and from there walked a few blocks to a pleasant tea place and had coffee and cake which gave a pleasant rest. General street surrounds were solid buildings of six to eight stories high, some with shops beneath, encompassing apartments, the normal living accommodation for city residents. Our tour was complete and the bus picked us up just around the corner from the tea place. Made way back

to ship during which time, guide Alexandra told us of the buildings we were passing, especially along the main Nersky Street. That was a most interesting and enlightening suburb island of St Petersburg. Arrived back at ship, returned through the Russian customs and walked onto ship. Once on board, went to room and changed for dinner. At dinner, interesting ladies to speak with. Quickly finishing dessert, rushed to Silhouette Theatre for 9pm to see the show of Cossacks dancing - 'Cossacks Stars'. Excellent singing and dancing, Russian style. Most popular with the audience, who called for several encores which the performers were quite happy to give. Made way to room and prepared for early rise next morning as have two separate tours in St Petersburg. And so to bed. Wake up call for 7am. Hermitage Museum and Panoramic St Petersburg views tomorrow.

St Petersburg - Hermitage and Panoramic Views - May 20th 2016

St Petersburg is the second largest city in Russia, situated on the Neva River at the Gulf of Finland on the Baltic Sea. Was founded and built by Tzar Peter the Great in the early 1700's. In 1924 in the turmoil of history, its name was changed to Leningrad and in 1991 reverted to its original name of St Petersburg.

Arose at 7am. Quick breakfast in Oceanview Cafe. Met up with other passengers in Silhouette Theatre. Tour number was called, exited ship, went through Russian customs and to the bus. Drive to The Hermitage. Saw a good view of the city skyline driving on opposite side along Neva River with commentary from guide regarding the buildings we were passing. Arrived at The Hermitage, a huge impressive building, painted in cream and green, its dimensions even larger than that of The Louvre. Entered the building at the rear and passed through impressive corridors to a main stairwell heavily decorated in gold which quite took my breath away. There are dozens and dozens of stairwells at The Hermitage, I believe in the 200's. The opulence of decorative motifs in gold was overwhelming throughout that whole area and beyond. Saw famous works of art by the most renowned painters. Arrived at the Gold Room. Not what I was expecting to see. Thought to see a room of opulence in gold, as per the advert depicting the gold room. However, it was rooms of gold ob d'ja and precious metals and stones, artifacts collected by Katherine the Great and other Tzars and high royalty that was used in those by gone days or were gifts to the throne. The Hermitage guide gave a detailed description of many of the items seen in the display cases, their history, stories behind them, which tzar or tsarina used them and other descriptive narrative of items. Found a little too intense and was there for an hour, really wanting to see the art and sculpture. Finally the Gold Room tour was over and was then taken by our guide Tamara to see the art of famous painters and sculptures. Rembrandt, Bottecelli, Van Dyke and more and more. It was almost over whelming to see so many famous original art in one building,

let alone in one large hall! The tour came to an end and shortly, returned to bus. Further narrative of passing known buildings. Returned to port, alighted and refreshed up and waited in bus area for afternoon Panoramic tour of sbug at 1.15pm. At 1.15pm boarded bus, had same guide Tamara. Away we went, Tamara pointing out all the well known buildings and palaces as we passed by, so many, my mind or memory could not take it all in. Stopped at Spilt Blood Church, the easily identifiable building with the gold and colored domes to view and take photos. Stopped at Tzar Peter's small, undistinguished, unimpressive house by river. Took photo. Went to store opposite and bought Babushka pencil sharpeners for my grandchildren. On bus again and stopped on opposite side of river at boat bollards and walked down to edge of river. Wonderful view of The Hermitage on the opposite side of the river. Took selfie for Facebook. Viewing complete, bus gradually made way back to ship by 5.40pm. Back through Russian customs. Room and dressed for dinner. Dinner. Spoke with some more interesting passengers. At 8pm went to Destination Highlights Helsinki talk, then a quick stop at room and on to the show 'Pearl' in Silhouette Theatre. Opening 20 minutes outstanding, resembled divers swimming in turbulent waters, but rest of show mediocre. Went to see movie 'Truth' in Celebrity Central 4. Very good. And so to room and bed.

Helsinki - May 21st 2016

Helsinki, capital and main city in Finland. Overlooking the Gulf of Finland and the Baltic Sea. The town of Helsinki (or Helsingfors as it was then known) was founded by King Gustavus Vasa of Sweden in 1550, to which Finland belonged for many centuries, as a new trading post. Many years and turmoil of war passed when Finland was annexed to Russia in 1809. Finland declared its independence from Russia in 1917.

Arose and dressed then realized my timing was wrong and rushed a quick breakfast before meeting at 9am to have Helsinki tour. First stop, through the city and gardens to Sibelius Sculpture. The sculpture was very large and like a lot of stainless steel organ pipes of varying lengths welded together. Quite an impressive piece. Took photos for Facebook. Rest of tour around the city, the guide explaining buildings and town and history. Nothing too overwhelming. Arrived at harbor and market, 20 minutes free time. Bought china thimble. We all assembled, boarded tourist boat for tour around islands. Weather very pleasant and quite sunny. On the boat tour, general information, including about the fortress and large sauna buildings. Returned to harbor and walked through enclosed market to bus. Boarded and while returning to ship had further explanations of buildings and history. Back at the ship. Had lunch then went to Harbour gift shop shed quite nearby to our docked ship and bought items and returned to ship. Rested up. Prepared for dinner. Pleasant company, two from

South Africa and two from Pennsylvania. Went to talk on Destination Stockholm, our next port of call, in Celebrity Central 4. Freshened up and went to Silhouette Theatre for show - Nick Page. A singer and great performer, opera, pop, drums, piano. Wanted more and so did the audience. Unfortunately, because he had left his cabin carry-on case and music on the flight when coming in that morning, firstly, he needed to shop in Helsinki for a new suit and outfit and secondly, he was only able to work with the resident band with a few pieces of music he had on him so was not able to do more numbers to the disappointment of the audience. However, he had given an amazing performance in the circumstances and the audience well forgave him. Following that, walked around ship shops and bought a few items. Went to room, prepared for next day - Stockholm. Sat and watched movie on TV. Hollywood take during the 1950's McCarthy communist accusations. Very good. Learned a bit more about those times. Prepared for night.

Stockholm - May 22nd 2016

Stockholm, capital and largest city in Sweden. East of Helsinki on the Baltic Sea. Stockholm is situated on an island amongst twenty other islands. Often called the Venice of the North. Stockholm was officially established in the middle of 13th century, to develop a commercial center at that time, under the rule of Denmark. By the 16th century, that rule was overthrown and Gustav 1st Vasa became King of Sweden with Stockholm as the center.

Arose quite early and watched the scene go by as ship sailed passed the many islands approaching Stockholm. It was really beautiful. Arrived at Stockholm dock. Had breakfast and for the Stockholm panorama tour, waited to be called for bus in the Silhouette theatre. Time to board. Bus took us to Stockholm pier, only a short drive. Royal Palace and other buildings in view. Alighted on launch and had a one hour canal cruise passing by Stockholm's National City Park. Well known sites pointed out. Took photos of the parks and gardens which were all public. Following launch cruise, on bus again for Stockholm tour and many well known places pointed out such as City Hall as well as local and Swedish history related. Was not all that exciting, although we did pass the Nobel Prize Museum. I think that after seeing so many different buildings and churches during the past few days, they gradually got mixed into a blob and the mind could not differentiate or take any more. Returned to ship by 1.15pm. Refreshed and went for lunch in the Oceanside Cafe. Feeling tired, decided to go to cabin and had a pleasant rest on balcony, enjoying the warmth of the sun and stayed there until ship departed at 4pm sharp. Always so smooth, hardly aware ship was moving away. Planned to further sit a while on journey out to continue to watch island scenery go by and then go to talk by Jamie G on subject of Murder before dinner and looking around. Went to Jamie G talk Celebrity Central 4. Following

that, returned to stateroom and prepared for dinner. Dinner. Some company that I had met before, two new people. Following dinner, did some slots. Up by \$20 so left. Went to show in Silhouette Theatre. Violinist Mary Lee, quite a phenomenal player of classical, jazz, pop, great virtuosity. Oddly, I had come across Mary that morning who was waiting for the elevator going up with all her luggage while I was coming down for the bus tour and having recognized her, wished her good luck for the evening performances and was looking forward to seeing her act. Back to stateroom, watched a Pitt and Jolie film, so boring, fell asleep.

Day at Sea - May 23rd 2016

Arose without a rush. Breakfast in Oceanview Café and then to 'Ocean Ahead' in Silhouette Theatre, with Staff Captain Ioannis about the running of the ship in all of its aspects. Very enlightening, amazing what goes on behind the scenes to ensure the safety and comfort of the ship and its passengers. Went to The Faberge Egg talk and how they were and are still made. Saw examples of them in the ship store and took photos. Such exquisite items. Walked around. Sat in library and edited some photos and deleted others. Back to room. Lunch in Oceanview Café. Lovely day, sat up on deck on lounge and relaxed for two hours. Very warm and sunny. Back to room, dressed for dinner. Formal Chic this evening. Sat with two couples from British Columbia. After dinner, 'Destination Copenhagen' talk and guide and then, went to Silhouette Theatre for the evening show. Sat next to people met day or two before. Good show by Celebrity Company on an Around the World theme called 'Cosmopolitan'. Following that, in Qsine suite, karaoke talent show and finals. Fun to watch, some quite painful to listen to! Afterwards, went to room and prepared for night and read instructions regarding disembarkation for Thursday. Got ready for Copenhagen tour for next day. Bedtime.

Copenhagen - May 24th 2016

Copenhagen, capital of Denmark is located on two islands, connected by bridges. A busy cosmopolitan modern city, famous for the Tivoli Gardens, Ann Frank House and The Amalienburg Palace of the current monarchy to name a few and of course, the famous statue of The Little Mermaid.

Up and had breakfast in Oceanview Cafe. Tour for 11.15am so no rush. Walked about the upper deck, beautiful day, took pictures of Copenhagen from the top most deck. Assembled for tour as usual in the Silhouette Theatre and when tour called, went through ship security and boarded bus. Drove through local areas to the harbor and the first stop was Amalienborg Palace, official residence of the Monarchy of Denmark. Alighted from bus and made short walk to the palaces and large square. Saw changing of the guard. There are four palace buildings

within the square, one where the Queen resides, one where her son resides, the third and fourth are administrative and government offices. The Queen, Margarethe II, reigning since 1972, was not in residence as there was no flag flying but her son Crown Prince Frederik, was in residence as his flag was flying. We were told that they live as simply as possible, the children go to a state school and the prince himself drives them to school. From the palace square, went to the boardwalk pier, attractive fountain and a gift shop. Opposite, across the river, was the new large concert hall, The Koncerthuset, renowned for its amazing acoustics. Walking the short way back from the boardwalk, joined the roadside path, had a further glimpse of The Amalienborg Palace Square on our way to re-join our bus. The roads around were very busy, traffic taking a lot of time to filter through. Saw the Hop On Hop Off bus stuck in the jam. Back on the bus, the panorama sight tour began. Passed the main railway station, countless amount of bikes parked, thousands and thousands of bikes. We were told that from the entire population of Denmark, each resident owned almost two bikes each! All the road systems are laid out for bikes. Our bus drove around Copenhagen, passed the Tivoli Gardens. The funfair was in full swing, with apparatus whizzing people up and down and round and round, hanging them way up high and then dropping down at fast speed. I was happy to be sitting comfortably on the bus! We were then off to see The Little Mermaid. Our guide told us that she really was little. As I had seen the Little Mermaid statue several times before, I was aware of its size and would therefore, not be disappointed by its dimensions. When we arrived nearby just prior to the Little Mermaid site, there was a large square stone war memorial with carvings of people on each side remembering those who had fallen during the last war. Atop was a bronze open winged angel statue. The figure was very beautiful. Walked to the water's edge on the Langelinie Promenade in the outer harbour area and there she was, The Little Mermaid, just down from the pathway embankment a few yards out into the water, sitting slightly sideways on top of a large boulder, surrounded by large smooth rocks. A perfect pretty mermaid, created in bronze by Edvard Erikson in 1913. Took photos at various angles and posted one to Facebook while still had a signal. There were many times during the cruise that there was no signal at all to use www. After seeing The Little Mermaid, walked back to the bus and once again had another view of the War Memorial. The guide told us that the small marina nearby, was very exclusive and there was a 10 year waiting list to get a mooring there. Bus returned us to ship. Had a quick rest then a late lunch. Lovely and warm and sunny so rested on lounge on upper deck till nearly dinnertime. Back to room, changed and went to dinner. One couple whom met two days prior and one new couple not met before, both came from Western Canada. Pleasant conversation. Afterwards, watched dance competition in the Grand Foyer, which was quite fun then to the Silhouette Theatre to see 'Tenors of Rock'. Some numbers very noisy but the group were

very good, though not quite my cup of tea, but very popular with the audience. Following the show, watched a short masquerade parade and dancing in the Grand Foyer and went to room for a while. Decided to go to casino and play slots for a bit and almost immediately, won a watch just by putting my card into the slot. Nice modern watch too. By 11.45pm called it a day as now very tired and returned to stateroom and prepared for the night.

Day at Sea - May 25th 2016

Up, had breakfast in Oceanview Café. Returned to room and dealt with most of packing. Had lunch. Final session of Jamie G's Crime Prevent in Celebrity Central 4. Returned to room for a while. Went to Silhouette Theatre as Professor Jack Hardy was giving a talk on the Vikings and how they influenced the world around the 1000's. Very good coverage, relating that the Vikings had occupied and changed the face of the whole of Europe in the hundreds of years that they were the master race, but gradually fell away as they assimilated into the culture and country where they were occupying. Returned to room and changed for dinner. Met up with Wayne and wife and their friends at the dinner table, so it was nice to speak with familiar faces. After dinner, went to Celebrity Central 4 for Quiz against Crew and Passengers which was a bit of fun and then proceeded to Silhouette Theatre to await the show for that evening. Firstly, Amy Lee, the amazing violinist and then Tenors of Rock who sang 'Queen' songs, which I liked much better than their previous night's performance. Both acts were excellent and the audience demanded several encores from the Tenors of Rock, who appeared to be very happy to do so. Retreated back to room for last packing of main suitcase as needed to place it outside stateroom by 11pm. Achieved that. The next time I would see the case should be at the airport before going to the check-in. Showered and prepared last items. Arranged wake up call for 5.30am. Bed.

Arrival in Amsterdam and returning to Toronto - 26th May 2016

A few hours of restless sleep. Up before alarm rang at 5.20am. Dressed, last items packed away in carry-on luggage. Went for breakfast in Oceanside Cafe just before 6am. Was already fairly busy but not packed but very soon got really crowded as more and more passengers came in for breakfast before disembarkation. Returned to stateroom and collected my carry-on luggage and proceeded to Celee Four Restaurant to wait for shuttle to take to Schiphol Airport. My turn arrived and got on bus which drove to Schiphol Airport via the outskirts of Amsterdam so there was no opportunity to see the city sights again. Arrived at airport and had to wait at the entry door area for half an hour while the guys were unloading hundreds of cases from the large moving van which transported the luggage from the ship to the airport. Finally got my case. Went to the checking-in, which was quite a walk to find but had to wait there in a long

line up for over half an hour because Air Canada did not open their section till 9am. After that, went through security and then through passport control. Walked to gate D57 - the furthest gate away - took almost half hour to get there and was walking very slowly by the end. At 10.55am, sat in boarding area completely exhausted and waited to board. When boarding time came, got on plane and took my seat. Young guy from very northern Holland sat next to the window. I had aisle seat. All passengers aboard but there was a delay because of mechanical problem so plane lost its original slot to take off. Waited an hour and then finally, flight took off. Flight was very good. Was even served a pleasant salmon lunch and later on in the flight, a tasty mushroom crepe. Landed at Toronto Pearson Airport. Through customs and collected luggage from carousel. Time would give me enough time to just get to Q stop at Terminal 1 for the 4.20pm GO bus to Richmond Hill. Called Sally to let her know. Bus departed, very heavy traffic on 427 but eased once on 407. In the meantime, had texted Sally that bus was running a bit late. Arrived at Richmond Hill Viva bus terminal at 5.10pm. Sally was there waiting for me which was such a bonus. We put my luggage in trunk and she transported me back home to Baif Boulevard by about 5.30pm. The Cruise and vacation were over - a most interesting and enlightening journey for me, as related above from my daily journal - now to get on with unpacking and getting back into normal life.

(Written as daily diary on Baltic cruise 13th May to 26th May 2016 and edited during June 2016 in Richmond Hill, Ontario.)

Deanna Samuels

Being A Widow

Only a widow will know what you mean
To lose that dear man, you were one of a team

To be part of a group that know only couples
The comfortable feeling of being a double

Then suddenly life changes and one is a single
The doubles are gone, its more difficult to mingle

And as you adjust to that widowhood scene
One looks for new friends with much the same dream

But its never the same with those years that one shared
The secrets, desires, the hopes that were paired

But life will go on with what path you ere choose
Fulfil all those goals, your dreams not to loose

(Penned at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 6th April 2011)

Deanna Samuels

Boston Environs And The White And Adirondack Mountains

Boston, how quickly a week goes by
A journey to Boston through the blaze of Fall
Historical towns and cities to enthrall
Six days of culture and a lighter frivolous visit thrown in
Bus trips and walking tours to see and learn from every hour
Magnificent opulent furnished mansions of Newport, Rhode Island
Their background history, the magnates that owned them
The Old Quarter full of museums of Arts and Culture
Touro too, the oldest surviving synagogue in North America
The story of its founder members, of its use during civil uprisings
To the bewitched town of Salem and what it has spawned
The Witch House with some reality and House of the Seven Gables
Plymouth, history of The Pilgrim Fathers landing on American soil
Their beginnings, their hardships, their suffering, their endurance
A Harvard tour and of its foundation almost four centuries ago
The secret that the famous John Harvard statue is not of him
A student may be at creating time, descendent from a past president
Delightful evening attending the Harvard Bach Society Orchestra
Superbly playing Mozart's Posthorn and Price Symphony 1
Book a seat and the entrance is free, performances not to be missed
A whole day duo bus tour of Boston and surrounding locales
The history of this interesting city, Boston Common, Fenway Park
Beacon Hill Monument, the Naval Yard and Boston Tea Party
The years taken infilling land from the sea using three hills to succeed
Roads, tunnels, bridges, Financial District built on these new acres
Journeys to historical towns of Lexington and Concord
Sites of the American rebellion against the British troops in 1775
Where Paul Revere made his famous ride of warning
Eventually leading to the independence of the American peoples
All this and more in an exciting and inspirational jam-packed week
Leaving Boston behind on a bright Sunday morn, pointed car north
Headed towards the White Mountain range of New Hampshire
Enjoyed the countryside and magnificent Fall colors along the way
Mountainsides full of deep orange and red tones, tinges of bronze
Rivers at full depth bearing white water flow and quieter streams
Overnight in a pre-booked quaint country lodge at Woodstock
A meal at the local Greek eatery, the popular bar pub being too full

Waking to a sunny morning, drove towards The Green Mountains
A pleasant range to drive through with interesting towns to stop by
Onwards through the countryside, passing rivers, villages and farms
Arrived at Chimney Point, crossed Bridge Road over Lake Champlain
Joining the 185 and 22, looked forward to reaching main goal
The Adirondack Mountains
What beauty awaited to arrive on such scene
The Autumn colors breathtaking, the peaks at their best
Roads curving round Mountains with Ess bends enroute
The ride was just glorious every moment a treat
Arrived at the town of Long Lake on the lake of same name
An overnight stay at the Adirondack Hotel besides Long Lake
A second time there as the service and location so good
Views of Long Lake never fail to please
With meals in the evening, delicious, hot and filling
One precious free day, a drive to the famed Lake Placid
The winter Olympic sites and museums of '32 and '80 made for inspiring tour
A training complex for current and past teams quite spectacular
The town of Lake Placid is strangely curved around Lake Mirror
An all year-round resort with emphasis on winter sport
Ample time and opportunity to explore a few miles north
To actually see the much larger Lake Placid with own islands inset
Was calm and sparkling, private golf courses and houses encircled
Disappointedly, no sighting of any unwelcome or threatening monsters!
Returning south, a view of Tupper Lake and town
Thought to explore The Wild Center natural history museum, was closed today
A bonus though, came across an old synagogue of the very early 1900s
Prominent corner property, well preserved and in active use to this day
Returned on the forested hilly roads to Adirondack Hotel and Long Lake
Another pleasant unrushed dinner and interesting conversation in the bar
Comfortable overnight, awaking to a sunny morn, packed and away
North on 30 and 3, enjoying the Adirondacks and changing scenery of Autumn
Gradually and sadly leaving them behind from the 56 and on to 37
Rode on 37 to number 12 with good views of the St Lawrence River
Onwards to Collins Landing and the high Thousand Island Bridge
The bridge to bring us back once more to our beloved Canadian soil
Route 2 through Gananoque and Kingston too, made our way home
A great eleven days of interesting tours, visits and magnificent scenery

Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 14th October 2018

Canada Day Heat 2018

PHEW! Was it hot!

Decision to go out or not

So many events too good to be missed

On this Canada Day Anniversary of 151st

The temperature rises as the morning goes by

Way up in the nineties, there is no deny

Off to the pool, crowds go to cool

Do as little as possible, that is the general rule

Canada Day celebrations, a huge draw to the many

Speeches and officialdom kept to the minimum

Umbrellas and parasols, hats with wide brims

Keep sun off to protect head and upper limbs

Malls are crowded, people take in the cooler air

Shopping, lunching, letting day go by, resting in chair

Outside, the heat is so intense

Popsicles, cold colas and ice cream are no defense

Cinemas too, with air conditioning, are extra busy

Relaxing recliner seats replace that outside sizzle

Our Maple Leaf flags hang limp on poles of white

No breeze to unfurl to fly with pride to sight

The hot day wears on with events into the late eve

At last, some small relief as the burning heat recedes

The peoples of Canada gather expectantly, excitedly at appointed locations

Watching the finale of Canada Day with spectacular firework presentations

Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 1st July 2018

Deanna Samuels

Clanking Chains

He came through the doors shackled in long heavy chains
Head bowed low as in deep shame
Wrists and ankles manacled with wide metal rings
Clanking as he moved slowly over the hard Emergency Room floor

Dressed in baggy bright orange prison sweats
His face forlorn as though there was no hope of forget
Flanked by a four-man force of guards
Weapons bulging, hidden within their protective leather garb

One wondered; what on earth had this young man done to offend
Because, on lifting his head, his countenance clearly showed he was a young
man
What crime could have deserved such heavy guard
Which warranted all limbs to be restrained and tied

As the group made their way toward the triage door
The young prisoner again bowed his head down to look at the floor
Maybe being ashamed to pass by so many waiting patients
Staring at him in his present humbled state of being and fate

This bizarre quintet enters the triage room, door is shut tightly behind them
Muffled voices, a normal examination and process begins
Procedure completed, the unusual group emerged constrained
The forlorn prisoner quickly transposed to ER ward, dragging his clanking chains

The waiting patients quite stunned at this unfamiliar scene in the ER Room
Talked quietly amongst themselves recounting, hardly believing what they had
seen
Of the manacled, bowed head young man in bright orange prison apparel
Walking through the ER doors, encumbered by such restraining heavy clanking
chains.

Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 30th December 2017

Deanna Samuels

Deep Into Autumn

On this clear cloudless day in mid-November
The deciduous trees are almost bare
A few bronzed fading leaves still hang on
The rest have fallen, lay upon the ground
Cultured lawns green and lush still require a trim
Wild meadows dissolving into a greenish brown veil

Waters of the many lakes glisten in the late autumn sun
Trees on banks appear taller, reflecting their nakedness
A few ducks enjoy the quieter water without ripple
Holiday makers gone, no more canoeing or splashing
Farm animals grazing and lazing in the yet grassy fields
The last few weeks before the winter snow and ice sets in

Pretty summer cottages closed for the on-coming winter
Year rounders accruing supplies to face a blizzard onslaught
Scrubland has lost its greened untidy scrambled froth
Last foliage drooping, falling into the dark dank marsh beneath
Pine and fir trees now appear bright and rich in winter green
Coming into their own as sun rays shine deeply between

The Great Canadian Shield has transformed, seems more open
More uncovered, uncluttered as the autumn season closes
What a beautiful day to have a drive, so deep into autumn
Upwards and onwards to Ottawa through the Rideau valley
To witness and experience the theatre of this late season
Scenes that are there to witness and open for all to see.

Written enroute to Ottawa through the Rideau Valley - 15th November 2017

Deanna Samuels

Desolation Of Countryside

Desolation of countryside at this time of year
A transformation in such a brief moment in time
From greens and flaming reds and gleaming golds
Skeletal boughs and branches now outline the sky
Landscape covered in patchy snow from winter's first fall
Laying high on the hills or deep into the woods
Canadian Shield granite banking road appears cold and uninviting
A blanket of white lays over as a crystal coverlet
Lakes and ponds so quickly transformed, skimmed with an icy sheet
Streams and narrow rivers run chillingly and sluggishly
Gurgling over pebbles and rocks through low lying meadows and dales
Dried summer crop stalks well-ploughed into field as nutrient to the soil
No sight of a farm herd, deer, scurrying creatures or domestic pet
Cottages and small homesteads look forlorn in this wintry scene
Bereft of uplifting colorful gardens of summer seasons' blooms
As deeper winter approaches, all this scene observed will itself transform
Transform under one thick stark blanket of snow
Leaving no delineated countryside visible
Save that of manmade structures and the rise and fall of hillsides
Softened with gentle relief from taller heavily laden pine and fir trees
Reaching up and stretching out their heavily snowclad limbs
Whatever the hardest of the depth of winter brings
Nature in Spring will surely melt it all away
Bringing forth a refreshed countryside and once again become alive

Written in Ottawa and Richmond Hill, Ontario - 25th November 2018

Deanna Samuels

Disappointment

Oh! What a shame, what a disappointment
After months of planning and plotting together
Building up excitement and expectancy
The thrill of a new adventure, of the unknown
Calamity happened a few days before setting sail
My friend dislodged back and was unable to cruise
So there was I without my companion
No one to share, to talk with, to shmooze
Commiserations and regrets we had for each other
Each feeling the let-down that had come to pass
What else to do but take the plunge, go it alone
To put on a brave face, to head out on one's own
A journey taking me to unfamiliar lands
New experiences, sights and encounters
To meet with strangers, to mix and mingle
Making the best of just being a single

Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 13th May 2016

Deanna Samuels

Disappointments

Disappointments - it comes to us all

Disappointments are there, lurking
At some time in our life there is disappointment
Often there are many
Most, we surmount, persevere, gain strength from that blow

Disappointments come in many guises
When a passionate plan has not worked out
Recalling the hours of thought, study, energy used, just to see it dashed
Rejected in a matter of moments, hardly glanced at or considered by receiver

Disappointments when high hopes of promotion do not materialize
When a good friend lets you down when most in need
The dream home so perfect for your lifestyle, lost, out-bid
A well-earned momentous occasion for accolade that falls flat and meaningless

Disappointment felt when a favorite team has lost
A vacation so long awaited turns out to be a nightmare
Investments giving poor return or collapsing altogether
Buying a lemon of a car

Disappointments too, when health lets one down
Not able to function as in our youth before
No more tennis or golf or sports and activities that were so loved
New wonder medications falling short of hoped for cure

Disappointments come through many channels
A broken romance, a marriage failure
A child not rising to one's own expectations
Business endeavor not blossoming, not becoming successful

Disappointments when nature takes a destructive course
A home or life times work destroyed, ruined beyond repair
A loved one tragically taken too early
The grieving almost too painful to bear

Disappointments, yes, there are many
Fighting through the adversities and misfortunes of life

Eventually healing, soothing the hurt, the failure, accepting
Coming from such depth helps to make a person stronger, more resilient

Disappointments can also turn into success
Rising from that abyss, pushes one to keep on trying, never giving up
Time can be a friend as time often heals, eases the pain
The fuzz gradually dissipates, a new way or venture takes form, works out

Disappointments handled with heed can be overcome

Written at Richmond Hill - 10th May 2018

Deanna Samuels

Divorce - Who Wins?

Who wins when a divorce erupts
Who of the couple comes up top
Months of arbitration, letters to and fro
Does little to alleviate the pain, the aggravation they go through

And what about the children?
What of them
Torn between two parents they equally love and share
How can they choose to be on whose side
Knowing that soon, there will be a great divide
A choice that may make or mar their life's ambition
Of what they learn, how best to make this transition

Professional costs rise as each day goes by
Claims and counterclaim make it a tie
Hearts are broken without solution
Little will to come to amicable resolution

When settlement is finally reached
Each has reluctantly made a yield though easily breached
More consultations follow to propose a draft
Final conciliation contrives to bring grievance to last
Both blaming the other for such small compromise
With differences settled, who gained from this strife and despise
As two lives go down different paths
Putting once was into the past

Not the divorcing couple who have each gone through hell
Nor the children whose home they can no longer tell
It is the lawyers of course as they pipped up their hourly fee
They are the ones who win, using their skill, once clients agree

Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 28th May 2017

Deanna Samuels

Do Not Wait

In dedication to Murray Lampert, a loving family man to the end.

Do not wait until it is too late
Let all you love your thoughts relate
Treasure each day with family and friends
No one knows when life will end

We are all so busy with this and that
Our time is limited to keep on track
But are we neglecting the ones most dear
Are we there when they shed a tear

Perhaps redefine is what we should heed
Adjust our time for those in more need
Make space for whom we so mostly care
Nurture our children, be there to share

Life is finite, it is not forever
One cannot gauge the time together
Lighten up, put all that hassle aside
Take a slower pace, make an easier ride

Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 23rd November 2017

Deanna Samuels

Early Morning Walk - The Oak's Lily Lake

The early morn drew me into its fold
Soft warm air enwrapping my whole being
The slightest of breezes enhanced my gait
Surrounding quietness was almost eerie and overpowering
Walking, reached the long oval lily lake in The Oaks
The early sun shone upon the smooth calm water
Ducklings swam making ripples in their wake
The glass like water barely disturbed
Disappointingly, lilies not in bloom at this time, no buds to be seen
At water's edge, thick with algae and rotting cut grass
A few large snail shells, some occupied, lying upon its surface
An ibis takes flight sweeping across the lake
While a tall stiff pelican looks on over his domain
A sudden splash of a frog beneath a lily pad, then silence again
The reeds and palm leaves wavering gently in the occasional breeze
Whispering through the nearby taller trees
Espied a family of ducks eyeing an ibis at water's edge
Waiting his leave when they too, could take to the water
The calmness of the morn was as a dream
The air had warm freshness at this earlier hour
Moving along the footpath, passed from the lake
The street, gardens and houses have no lack
Large and elegant in the Spanish style,
Each blade of grass manicured to equal height
The palms and trees of various variety, green and full
Their leaves and fronds glistening in the early morn sun
Coconuts in their hard green shiny shells lay abandoned to where they fell
Pink, Red orange and mauve blossoms at this time
The metal sculpt boy with his two pet dogs
Forever sitting beneath the flowery bush and short palm tree
Onwards towards the house once more
Passing familiar doors and gardens
That corner house now fully constructed and lived in
Still appears slightly out of mode with design of rest of street
Quietness still pervades the road on this holiday morn of Boxing Day
Suddenly, an exclusive momentary once in a time sight,
A woman bringing in her dog from outside
wearing but her bath towel wrapped around
Walking now at brisker pace enjoyed once more the full neighborhood scene

Time now to get on with day, get back to the house as tomorrow away
What a wonderful hour's walk this has been
The warmth, the sights and scenes
Of familiar places within The Oaks

Written while walking in The Oaks, 26th December and completed on flight
between Fort Lauderdale and Toronto - 27th December 2016.

Deanna Samuels

Family Strife

What happens when there is misunderstanding, family strife
How does it happen, what word, what action occurred
Often, no more than an innocent or insensitive comment
Barely noticed, but for some, so hurtful, fiercely resented

The wound builds up in the mind out of all proportion
Grows as a monster from such original small root
Once embedded, so deeply consumes
Hard to dislodge, disassemble to logical conclude

The fog, the cloud around diminishes a simple solution
If only to ask the meaning, the reason, the intention
Of the underlying thought, how it came about
Why it was said, done, at that moment of doubt

For years, the grievance festers, unforgiven, unforgotten
Into the next generation the feud exudes, permeates
Elder's word of mouth keeps family closed, cousins apart
Cheating the young, unyieldingly, without change of heart

Many years go by, the aged mind becomes dim and dark
No recall, no memory of why or when began that family break
Death occurs, first and second cousins reluctantly, hesitantly meet
Observe each other, see similarities of face and stature, family traits

The fascination of who is who, which line of parentage they claim
The cousins are abuzz, why have they been kept so long apart
Not knowing each other, not growing up to be a whole family unit
They meld together quickly, happily, making up for lost time

The question is sought, when, why, how did the family strife start
No one knew, not even uncles or aunts had an answer to impart
What a waste, a tragedy, two generations of family united lost
From a deed past, a word spoken, not speedily amicably resolved

(Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario, on 2nd August 2016)

Deanna Samuels

Flight 93 Heroism And Memorial

It too, was like ours, a cloudless sky, the morning bright and blue
Late summer and early autumn encroaching, easing into the Fall
Foliage rapidly changing from green to shades of tan and burning gold
As with our morning, relaxed on a comfortable organised bus tour
Theirs too, started as an uneventful, normal everyday flight from Newark
The first miracle occurred; a twenty five minute delay on runway
Thus causing in due time the doubtless change in course of history
Into the air United Flight 93 rose, making its planned route to San Francisco
The seven crew and cabin staff carrying out their scheduled flight routine
Without warning, forty six minutes from take-off, four terrorists struck
Entered the cockpit, overwhelmed flight crew, took over controls
Turned Flight 93 round over east Ohio towards the Nation's Capitol
Flight crew, cabin staff and thirty three passengers were herded to the rear
All yet unaware of the catastrophic events that had already unfolded elsewhere
Quickly though, with frantic phone calls to loved ones down below
Revealed true horror of The Pentagon and fate of Twin Towers in New York
The second miracle began to crystallize, be formed, take shape
Understanding their precarious situation of this hijacking and certain death
Passengers and crew swiftly devised a plan - avert plane from intended target
The group united, stormed to flight deck, hammering and banging on locked door
The hijackers, taken by surprise at this sudden outburst of struggle, panicked
Knowing it would be but a few more seconds before door was breached
Deliberately flipped the plane, thus Flight 93 was coasting upside down
In this mode, it plunged to the ground at the frightening speed of 563mph
Crashing onto the open Pennsylvania countryside at an angle of 45 degrees
The impact so great, made crater 15 foot deep before bursting into ball of flame
All aboard perished in that instant moment, little but fragments of their bodies
remained
But their brave heroism averted unknown, untold disaster - The Capitol at
Washington DC
There we were, 15 years later, overlooking the site, that tragic site of sacrifice
A United States National Memorial in Pennsylvania for all to visit, to see and
revere
The field of impact now laid to lush green grass, a lone large boulder marks
ground zero
Surrounding fields, thickets and woods beyond lay untouched, immortalized too
Safeguarding even the minutest remains of those downed heroes, their final
resting place
A long easy zig zag path takes visitors down through the natural wild nature

habitat

Reaching base, the Wall of Names, white granite pillars, each hero's name engraved on one

A low walled walkway Memorial Plaza of black granite overlooks impact site on right

At intervals, hewn shelves carved within, photographs displayed, flowers for those gone

Walkway's end, a visitor shelter with plaza; Stands recount the tragic event of nine eleven

Most poignant, heart wrenching of all, photographs of all passengers and crew of Flight 93

They were real people, just like us, with lives and families, snuffed out in a single heartbeat

With heavy sadness, retraced steps along Memorial Plaza; a second visit to Wall of Names

Slowly walking up zig-zag path, my thoughts reached out to touched families for their grief

Black granite walkway to Visitor Centre portrays final yards of flight of that fated plane

At its very end, a panoramic Overlook of whole tragic scene lay before; a moment to reflect

Now a peaceful countryside view, almost belying the tragedy of 11th September 2011

We who were visiting, were able to go on our way, not so the heroic souls of Flight 93

(Mainly written following visit to Flight 93 National Memorial in Pennsylvania on 15th October 2016, completed at Richmond Hill, Ontario) .

Deanna Samuels

Flight Delay

What a delay there has been today
Cold fresh blasting gusting winds have had their say
Several hours to wait as plane is late
Pushed back as inward flight held up in northern State
Patiently we sit as the hours go by
Some passengers stand while others lie
More and more come to departure gate
So full, not much more room at this rate
An announcement; flight is called for a southerly direction
Soon, space is eased, seats no longer at such premium
At last our scheduled plane flies in, draws up to exit ramp
Those travelers alight, soon it is our turn to finally decamp

Written at Newark Airport, New York - 21st January 2019

Deanna Samuels

Flying To The North With Porter Airlines

Flying to the North with Porter Airlines

Directly from Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport

Certainly, as now experienced, a much easier and more pleasant way to go

Parking a synch with well signed road approach

A short walk through parkette and into state of the art entrance terminal

Efficient and smooth people movers take over any strain

While journeying through the well-lit tunnel under Western Channel

Escalators and elevators swiftly elevate to spacious check-in hall

Found plenty of computer screens with simple to follow instructions

Once boarding pass printed, onwards through security without much ado

Beware though, if only with carry-on luggage

Keep liquid containers and sprays to permitted amount or they are lost!

Into the well-appointed designed waiting lounge

Good comfortable seating arrangements laid out

Flight status message screens every few yards

Plug-ins for re-charge of every modern day device

Clean accessible washrooms, water fountains nearby

Nice surprise too, complimentary snacks and refreshments to enjoy

Freshly prepared sandwiches and desserts for those with keener appetites

Good clear announcements for flight calls, keeping passengers informed

Once flight boarding called, commenced with minimal fuss

Cabin staff welcoming all with wide friendly smiles

Helped passengers to settle into allotted seats

Plane commenced down runway and then up and away to Thunder Bay

A smooth flight ensued; more complimentary refreshments served

Made for a nice experience and seemed to quicken the flight

Looking through porthole, an overview of approach to Thunder Bay

Revealed a number of small islands surrounded by ice

The main coastline though, free of any winter snow

Enabled Lake Superior to show and be seen at its best

Landing very smoothly at this Northern airport

Onwards to landing gate, deplaned within minimum of time

More smiles on departure by cabin staff wishing travellers a great day

Gave a feel good factor to whatever venture planned that ahead lay

Flying to the North from Toronto City Airport was completed and at an end

Made all the more easier, comfortable and pleasant

Going with the care, attention and efficiency of Porter Airlines

Written while at Thunder Bay and completed at Richmond Hill, Ontario
27th March 2017

Deanna Samuels

From Green Into An Autumn Blaze

From almost full green to autumn reds, golds, browns and bronze
Took only an hour for the late summer fading green of south Ontario
To unfold into a glorious autumn blaze when crossing to the State of New York
The day started misty and damp, the 401 busy but uneventful
A stop though, for coffee at McDonald's was like a zoo
Crossing the Border on Route 137 Thousand Island Bridge was just a breeze
By stealthily circumventing a 401 traffic jam via a few side roads
Once over, there appeared an immediate change, the sun was shining
Air much clearer, foliage already displaying rich autumn fall color
Headed south on the motorway of 81, veered off to Watertown
Making for a more pleasant leisurely drive on 12 South
Quieter towns passed through, Copenhagen, Lowville and Lyons Falls
Along the way, Mennonite horse and buggies gave relief from motorized traffic
Bright red painted barns, farms large and small, fields of fading corn
Village squares, war memorial tributes and the huge Kraft factory site
White painted bungalows, turn of the century brick four story edifices
Varieties of stores and business open for everyday town and country folk needs
In the distance, the Adirondack Mountains command the horizon
Nearer by, fields of greenhouses, large lots with farming gear and machinery
All of this scene while enjoying the blaze of autumn colors for this time of year
Must now head south to Utica to take Expressway 90 for a speedier journey
Need to reach overnight stay at Latham near Albany, before full darkness sets in

Written on route to Albany, New York State on 6th October 2018

Deanna Samuels

Frozen In Time

Snow and ice-rain fell that early morn
Into the day it rarely paused
Relief mid-day followed by sheets of freezing rain
Covering over every exposed surface seen

Nothing was left untouched
Temperature fell lower, a thick coat of ice formed
Tree boughs weighted down
Wires and cables overhead sagged and snapped

Roads converted into skating alleys
Pathways a treacherous hazard
Salting trucks came out in full force
Spewing out their small crystal salt rocks

Evening came, another spate of icy rain
Enveloping all within its fall
Vehicles dripped with hanging icicle shards
Side streets and pathways almost impassible

The night came over, homes lost power
Dawn breaks; a scene like no other to behold
A landscape frozen in time
No movement of nature or animal life

Foliage, tall or small encased in thick coat of ice
Tree limbs stiff without movement
A brisk breeze blew through but not a waver
Boughs and branches still as if held down by chains

The naked bark heightened in eerie outline
Shimmering, stretching to the very twig ends
While drooping lower, unnaturally burdened
With heavy layer of frosty snow gleam

The general scene fared no better
Grass verges and parklands appeared as ice rinks
Covered over with sheets of thick lumpy ice
From freezing and thawing and freezing over again

Overhead telephone and electrical cables sheathed
Sagging very low with weight of icy burden
Bus shelters, lamp posts, traffic lights, benches
Garbage bins, mail boxes, all heavily encrusted
Main roads were cleared, icy slush piled up along curb edge
Pathways cleaned and made safe to walk upon
That sets the scene till late afternoon; slight thaw occurs
Ice melts from overhead wires, large drips fall on heads and cars

Encased trees and bushes weep, trickles down to roots below
Quickly those tears re-freeze when reaching iced sheet beneath
The evening slowly darkened into night
Temperature fell, foliage again becomes encased, frozen in time

A new dawn; the morning scene is much as day before
But alas, passing by the woodland trails - a sorry sight
Snapped and fallen misshapen splintered trees
Not able to withstand the brutal ice-rain of day before

There too, another uncanny look about the frozen scene
The foliage appeared as covered in a coat of frosted icing
With a generous garnish of sprinkled fine sifted sugar
The morning remained cold and the icy wind blew

Afternoon came; temperatures rose; sun appeared and shone
There was a slow thaw, drips fell on roads and paths below
A theatre show to see; three hours went by, came out - behold
Frost and ice had melted away, foliage no longer frozen in time

(Penned at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 24th - 26th March 2016)

Deanna Samuels

Frozen Rain Drops

It was not a good day to start a journey
Frozen rain drops were falling at steady speed
The driveway and streets were a sheet of slippery ice
Rooftops and garages shimmered with frosty glaze
Icy pellets pitter pattered against the window panes
Slowly slithering down onto the narrow window sills
Building up small ridges of rough ice mounds
Trees and foliage looked forlorn, cold and miserable
Enveloped in a glaze of frozen iced water
A journey now, today, in this awful weather to undertake
Some urgent business to attend, something that cannot wait
The roads were treacherous and unpredictable
Compounded by heavy almost white out snow blasts
Thick icy sludgy tire tracks made difficulty in changing lanes
Speed, there was no speed
A steady careful pace and befitting distance kept by all
Washer fluid refilled three times and still more needed
Such was the extent of icing up to keep windshield clean
Great relief when arriving at destination and finding parking
A few minutes only to spare and prepare
With business completed, weather too uninviting to stay and linger
Cancelled overnight hotel and plans to explore the local scene
Headed car back in home direction keeping to quieter rural road
Eying all the while the bleakness of the countryside around.

Written en-route and Courtice, Ontario - 6th February 2019

Deanna Samuels

Halloween, October 31st 2019

The day went as forecasted
Wet and dreary
Very wet
Very dreary
It was not cold though
Neither was it warm
It was clammy, damp and dank
It was such a shame
For the days before 'twas dry and sunny
Not hot as had been during the long summer months
But warm enough for just the need of an autumn sweater
And it was a shame on this wet and dreary day
For today, from tots to whatever age admitted
Was dressing up day
Dressing up to go on trick or treat
The build-up for weeks had been looming and growing
And the day had finally come
Yes, it was that time again
A once a year time
When all the ghouls and pixies come out to play
Moms and Dads lovingly watch on from a few yards away
Their kids walking up a ghostly lit up path
Bats and witches flying above
Greeted by a handful of treats from happy householders
Such is the reward for braving past the tombstones and gnomes
The gruesome cut out pumpkin shells lit up from within
Children dressed in every manner of costume
A simple white sheet with cut out for eyes
An extravagant outfit fit for the Queen of Witches
And there were the dress-ups of cardboard boxes and pussycats
Numerous Satans and storybook characters
The latest horror movie beings and the sweetest of fairies
Yes, what a shame it was so wet and rainy
All the players were soaked to the skin
But did they care?
No, it was all part of the game, part of the fun
For today is Halloween, who cared about the weather
Who cared if it was wet and dreary
Who cared if the makeup was smudged, running down each cheek and happy

face

No, no one cared about the rain

The goal was to be out and have lots of fun

Count up how many chocolate bars and trick or treat gifts collected

Out numbering all those other kids around

And from the last creepy castle door knocked upon

Home time with a huge sack of goodies

Slip out of the falling apart soggy costume

Or peel off the wet clinging material that was once a recognizable outfit

A warm bath, hot meal and time to count up the spoils

Yes, that is the fun

The fun, glee and spirit of Halloween.

Written at Courtice, Ontario - 31st October 2019

Deanna Samuels

How Soon

How soon

How soon will this country graveled road be lost to tarmacadam
As yet so far out into the sparsely inhabited farms and rural homes
Fields abound each side producing food crops for the population
Lush green meadows for cattle and sheep to graze and roam

Numerous trees and bushes align the generous sized fields
Small ravines and copse fit snugly within the scenic pastures
Rivers and brooks run lazily around the sloping grasslands
Winding their way through hamlets, fields and forests

Yet, a mile away, such was similar countryside so short a distance
Development crept in and invaded those nearby places
Countless hectares already lost under cement and concrete
That land, that glorious land, has disappeared, obliteration its fate

How soon

How soon then will this quiet country road and all about it stay
From the speed of development it would seem not too far away
The official white and yellow notice boards bear the grim news
Applications have been made to build, build, build in profuse

Nearby residents will protest and try to have their say
Perhaps a few minor revisions will be stingily granted to sway
Then targeted area will soon be churned up to prepare for new town
The serenity of this country graveled road will then become undone

Written between Richmond Hill and Courtice, Ontario - 2nd March 2018

Deanna Samuels

Is It Meant To Be?

From the first date they knew each was top rate
Something was there for the other to care
It was as though it was meant to be for him and she
Waiting for the right soul to make them a complete whole
And now the past months prove it was the best move
Friendship has onwards grown to love each has freely shown
A true understanding of one another's busy multi-tasking
The journeys backwards and forwards to their homes far apart
Getting to know the another's near family making good amity
The future awaits will their souls now become true mates
Entwined for ever to share the rest of their lives together
Abide and wait a while as they take their time to stay on trial

This is a follow-up poem to Spark Quarto poems by Deanna Samuels
Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 7th March 2017

Deanna Samuels

It's A Long, Long Time

It's a long, long time from when I was a mum of little children
Oh - How the intervening years have so quickly flown
One moment it seems, such a short time ago they were tots
Scampering about, playing with favorites such as kitchen pots

The growing up years of school and uni
Now almost a haze in my thoughts and memory
Those moments on tenterhooks to know if they did well
To follow their dreams for life's work, perhaps even attain a Nobel

Happy memories, the joy of their marriage and settling down
To welcome grandchildren, a high light of one's own life's crown
Be part of their rearing, their happiness, their sorrows
The cycle repeats with familiar school routines and final diplomas

The years pass so quickly - oh how they have passed
Approaching my four score, what in life have I grasped
Be true to yourself, your family, your friends, your fellowman
It's a long, long time, should we be so blessed, to be on hand

Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 15th March 2018

Deanna Samuels

Landscape Of Snow

Snow reached to the horizon and beyond
Each field covered with a thick white blanket
Skeletal trees appeared as black charcoal sticks
Standing against the bright white background
Undulating hills and vales stretched out untouched
Not a foot step to mar the pure virgin veneer
A scene that only winter can bring
Such is nature's beauty, a landscape of snow

Written while driving through countryside of Durham, Ontario - Afternoon of 17th
February 2019.

Deanna Samuels

Last Day Of Summer 2019

Even now, summer does not want to give up its glory

Late into September, sunny days spread their warm rays

Autumn is but one short day away, yet summer will not yield

Trees have barely begun to change their rich green colors

Hanging on to their summer shades and sporting full leaved dress

Though, here and there, maples flaunt a tinge of orange blaze

Not wanting to be outdone to show off their leaves and amaze

Road side golden rods in abundance proudly display their full bloom

Cornfields a rich golden brown, their fruit of cobs long harvested

Awaiting to be ploughed into the ground to nourish the soil

Herds of cattle munch the long sweet grass growing in the fields

Lying down in groups, enjoying these last warm days of summer

Folk taking advantage of the warmth, out in force at their leisure

Getting extra wear from shorts and tees and lighter summer gear

Ensuring every moment counts before this late summer rolls away

And yet, even as the night hours draw in earlier and earlier

Summer just does not wish to yield and end

Has gone into a mode of Indian Summer code

Why not! Let the late summer have its way

For soon, autumn will descend and have its day

Written on drive to Scugog, Ontario - 22nd September 2019

Deanna Samuels

Last Of The Melting Snow - Or Was It?

29th,30th,31st March 2019

29th March 2019 - Afternoon

Not a cloud in the sky on this breathtakingly sunny day
The warmth could be felt all around
The last of snow and ice melts rapidly from the ground
Fields and forest beds now fully exposed with hint of green
Trees and firs reaching upwards to take in the sun's rays
Leaving behind the cold and gloom of winter past
The whole landscape is breathing a welcome of relief
To at last spring into action to anew the growing season

30th March 2019 - Evening

But wait!Have we thought or spoken too soon?
Is that a snow flake drifting down upon the windscreen?
A dozen or more and suddenly, a sky full
Large fluffy flakes
Swirling and drifting in the early darkness of nightfall
All evening and into the night, snow fell relentlessly
We were certainly beguiled the day before
Was this Nature's early April Fool's joke?

31st March 2019 - Morning

As dawn broke and the early morning light awoke
Behold!
A thick blanket of snow lay upon every surface in sight
Roads, paths, roofs, garden lawns, fields, cars
Where ever one turned, snow was all around
Boughs of fir trees drooped with such extra weight
Soft and white, without flaw, the scene was winter once more
And - the snow was still falling, continued into late morn
Relented mid-afternoon, eased, clouds cleared, sunshine

31st March 2019 - Evening

The big melt once more began

Pools of water gathered on uneven ground
Drains, downpipes and eaves overflowed
Gushing water gathered momentum
Soon, large sized patches of road and lawn became visible
Cars were being cleaned off, driveways and paths swept
A lesson learned - Nature cannot be taken for granted
It decides when winter is done!

Written in Courtice, Durham Region, Ontario - 29th - 31st March 2019

Deanna Samuels

Legend Of The Twin Peaks

Long, long ago, there was a tale
A tale now so remote and pale
In the mists of time a story almost lost
Of passion, adventure, bravery, to a hero's cost

It had been said in those days beforehand
Of a far away place deep in the hinterland
A legend of a wondrous lost twin peak
Of the many adventurers which did it seek

It was told of the steep sheer face
Barren of all foliage, impossible to pace
Surrounded, protected by a forest of entwined thicket
So dense, impossible to penetrate through and within it

It was also told of magical unknown seen creatures
Living aloft the twin peaks' dense plateau features
Of strange distant muffled sounds
Dissipating into the atmosphere high above and surround

With this mystery tale of twin peaks wonder
Our hero found himself enticed to encounter
Journeyed to the far distant village of that story of old
To hear for himself, the legend that was being told

Encountering numerous hardships on the way
Our hero reached his goal following many a day
The villagers welcomed him amongst their midst
Strangers from the outside world as rare as a total eclipse

Eager to know of his enquire
Brought instant fear to their eye
With great trepidation waved direction he should make
Couched with warnings of the dangers ahead that he would undertake

The headman relayed of the few who had dared in the centuries gone by
Not one had returned to tell of their try
Our hero's senses now heightened by the chief's words of importune
Eagerly sets forth to seek his goal and fortune

With fresh provisions, soon left the village far behind
Deeper into forest he made his way, the path was not kind
The terrain became unyielding with tangled bracken
Forced his way through dense thicket to slacken

All the while, perpetual rain soaked his very being
His foot slipping with every step leading
Resting only where it would appear safe within
Slithering snakes slid by, insects bit deep into his skin

Wild animals at night held back by a flickering flame
Not knowing what or how close they drew or came
Onwards he trampled, bleeding, drenched, determined to surmount
Days and nights passed, too many to count

Weary with hunger, overwhelming tiredness, days without sleep
Weaker and weaker, his being fell into complete deplete
Struggling and tripping at every step he took
Each foot dragging, making ridges along his route

Fever ultimately struck his frail emaciated body
For days, he lay upon a small dry patch of mossy boggy
In and out of consciousness, his malady raged
Barely alive, saved by dripping dew drops overflowing upon his face

Finally, the fever broke and soon our hero slowly awoke
Surveyed his situation, condition and current yoke
Sustenance his major task, dug for grubs, found juicy berries
Gradually, our hero's strength returned, insect bites free from scabies

Determined to press on to seek the legendary twin peaks
He trudged on, the journey continued, went into weeks
Slowly, a change in terrain began to be seen
The rain forest eased into deciduous green

Relief from the damp and wet surrounds was a dream
Long dry days followed, a few light showers in between
Our hero foraged for edible fare from bush and tree
Sleeping on high bough, away from water holes where wild life roamed free

Overhead, the forest continued as an impenetrable canopy

Sunlight unable to penetrate through the densely knitted trees
Though getting weaker, further days were spent upon his heroic journey
Suddenly, the thick forest cleared to an open plain luxuriantly lush and turfy

There before him, still many miles away, our hero saw his long sought quest
The quest that was of folklore tale with no one alive to attest
Two colossal mountainous twin peaks of equal breadth and height
Rising from a ring of protective forest dense and bright

The walls of each peak gave an appearance of being smooth and vertical
Culminating with table top summits, green foliage atop plainly visible
Even from his weakened state, our hero's joy was complete
The final proof of twin peak lore was real, the myth now truly beat

With renewed vitality and strength of mind, our hero treks across the plain
A few hours passed, reached the twin peaks protective forest domain
This proved to be even more dense than the first previously encountered
Slowly, arduously, cut through tangled vines and bracken, never floundered

Knowing his prize, his goal was so near
Kept his spirit high, his mind clear
Every part of his body was alert, alive
At the joy, the conquest he was soon to derive

At last, emerging from the forest edge, looked up, our hero shuddered
Hundreds of feet of sheer perpendicular grey granite wall, devoid of rugged
A shiver went up and down his spine
Thinking of the hardships endured to reach this very shrine

To prove a legend so lost in the annals of time past
Surveyed his next tumultuous task
There were no climbing footholds to be seen
Nothing else to help that he could glean

Impossible to ascend this sheer forbidding grail
When his strength was spent and body so frail
Knowing too, he could never return home
This place, this place, will prove to be his tomb

Our hero knew defeat when standing there
His spirit heaved and left him bare
But wait, as his soul left his body and arose high into the air

A strange birdlike creature swept by, squawking that he had won his dare

No one he thought, as he drew his last breath, would ever know of his heroic feat
Of his lone venture and triumphant defeat

And yet, somehow, his story, his tale above has passed on by unknown speak
Of a traveler, a hero who fought his way to the legendary magical Twin Peaks

Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 21st August 2017

Deanna Samuels

Life Awakens To Nestling Seeds

The moist morning's dew fell upon the fertile soil
Awakening life to seeds nestling in the earth below
Tiny delicate veins grew within, broke through outer shell so thin
Spreading, as stronger roots reached out into surrounding ground
Grew longer, firmer, tiny embryonic cells emerged along its length
From which, small, fragile green shoots sprung hesitantly forth
Becoming sturdier, bolder, growing taller, small buds appeared
Each pod getting larger, fuller, tighter, straining outer skin
Reaching breaking point, unable to contain the precious content
Bursts open to reveal the hidden treasure as new blossom unfurled
Blooming into a glorious full petalled radiant fragrant flower
And as the season is fulfilled of fading color and dying power
Plant seeds become hardened and dried, their final waterloo
Falling to the earth beneath, awaiting morning dew to start life anew

Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 4th February 2017

Deanna Samuels

Loneliness Of A Crowd

Hundreds of people surround, but there is still loneliness
Some tete-a-tete and small talk, with no relief of lonely thought
Joining in with gaiety, there is still that feeling of being alone
No one to share the day's activity, comment on new scenes seen
Every luxury to hand, being waited upon to every need
Does not negate the emptiness of one's most inner feel
People appear to be kind, to condescend, to stay a while
But they too, are wrapped in their own schedules and agenda
Hustling and bustling to carry on with their planned busy day
A week goes by, no friendships made, new faces each dinner time
Hellos; where are you from; how many cruises have you made
Day trips taken to see the sights, each couple or group go together
Slipping into the single way, keeping own company most of day
Accepting that it is what it is, not minding so much as time goes by
Leading to a state of seclusion, hiding loneliness within a crowd

Deanna Samuels

Lost

Lost

Lost in a quagmire of new developments
Long time familiar country fields and meadows
So recently bordering along quiet grass lined lanes
And could still be said to be in the middle of nowhere
Alas gone!
Disappeared so quickly, buried beneath a thick layer of new concrete
In every direction the eye falls on
A mushroomed cemented jungle has appeared
Recently named streets, ways and avenues
Host rows of characterless sameness, two, three or four storeys high
A maze of brand new addresses created in so short a time
Panic - almost!
Suddenly lost, deep within the bowels of this recently built city
For a city it is
Not one or two or even twenty streets
But dozens upon dozens on an unknown map
No familiar landmarks to set the way straight
Sheer luck, perhaps, a main road is found
Though that may have only recently been paved with no directions to guide
New towns planned to be complete within themselves
The developer's bane to use their precious land
Legislation provision for schools, malls and community places
Buildings springing up relentlessly across the land
Eating up the once abundant food producing farmland
Outstandingly beautiful, undulating countryside, leveled beyond recognition
Wildlife displaced without due thought or mercy
Their dens, lairs, holes and burrows, bulldozed into oblivion
New residents wonder
Why?
Why their overfilled bins are pried open by cleverly manipulating raccoons
With discarded scraps readily eaten by hungry foxes and other displaced
creatures
That is the new way of everyday life
In these soulless non-descript new residences of today
But wait!
Hope
A decade would pass, these new estates will have seasoned
Maybe taken on local character

Newly planted spindly saplings then grown into sturdy trees
Lawns and gardens matured, filled with blossoms
Houses gently weathered, that newness faded
Appearing to have been erected there for many a year
Becoming integral
Becoming another suburb lost within the whole growing greater city conurbation

Memories though
Memories in those passing years, one will miss the countryside of old
Those long meandering leafy shady lanes
The rich green lush meadows where once herds and sheep grazed
Vegetable crops and yellow cornfields with sweet succulent cobs
The olde worlde farmhouses with white picket fences
All long gone
Lost
Lost forever
Lost under girders, rebar and jungles of brick and mortar

Written at Richmond Hill and Courtice, Ontario - 9th February 2018

Deanna Samuels

Love, What Does Love Mean?

Love, what does love mean?
Love means everything
Love means everything in life
Love means respect for all without strife
Without love, a void would be felt within each heart
Each heart would breathe but miss a beat
Love is a feeling that it holds for humankind
That not one being is left behind
Love is a bond between mother and baby
A bond so strong, there is no room for maybe
The love of a child is a lifetime of glory
Their wonder and wide eyes when reading a bedtime story
Those days will stay for the whole of their lives
Of the love that was given without reserve
Love is being there when there is a need
A stranger, a friend, a family, to help and to heed
Love is to be strong and take the strain
When those dear and near are in so much pain
Love is for someone you hold so dear
Every moment of every day, want them so near
Love is for one's country and the loyalty to proudly hold
The refuge it gives to live in peace is worth more than gold
Love means forgiving, forgiving of an unkind word
Perhaps said in anger, without thought, feigning unheard
Love is going beyond the call of everyday duty
Giving aid and comfort from a disaster of fury
Love is for helping the sick and the needy
For those living alone without care and so feebly
Love is also for a pet that is loyal and true
Returning its love, showing it is loved too
Love is for the freshness of the countryside
Walking, breathing in fresh air it abundantly provides
A heart full of love is a heart full of goodness
Spreading that blessing with hope when there is distress
A life filled with such love will fulfill all dreams
Love - these are a few of what true love means

Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 13th November 2018

Deanna Samuels

Lovers Reunited

The train pulls into the station
Passengers alight
Look around to see what direction to take
Some go at a brisk gait
Others a slower pace
The station platform gradually empties
But wait, there is a loner holding back
Looking, seeking out a familiar face
A hand shading his eyes from bright sun light
He carries a worried look upon his brow
Suddenly, his countenance changes
Changes to a huge smile, an enormous grin
His arms rise, stretched out in front
Walks forward briskly, he has seen his goal
It is her, his own, his only true love
She walks quickly towards him
His steps turn into an urgent run
They come together with a tight loving embrace
Each looking into the others eyes
The love between them undeniable
Holding one another tightly
As though never again wanting to be parted
They kiss lovingly, deeply, taking their time
Slowly, reluctantly, they unfold and pull away
Smiling, hold each other at arms-length
Looking longingly at each another
Gradually, tightly entwining their fingers
Not wanting to be apart, not even for a moment
Deliriously happy they are once again as one
He slips his arm around her waist
They walk slowly towards the nearest exit gate

This poem was inspired by a scene I witnessed when the train I was on pulled into a station.

Written on train from Oshawa to Ottawa - 19th February 2019

New York Traffic Chaos

A pleasant walk, or so I thought
Turned into a self-preserving episode
New York streets at the best of times
Transforms to an everyday parking lot confine
A few steps from First Avenue to Second on 48th
Found the whole street choc-a-bloc and at a standstill
Horns beeping, blowing, trumpeting at the highest decibel
Police vehicles attempting to weave in and out but fail
Yonder, but still well in sight, emergency lights flashing to no avail
A complete standstill on street from end to end
Road works too, did nothing to help this trend
Raining lightly falling even more a mar and not long before
A heavy thunder shower turned puddles to small lakes
Walked along footpath of Second, crossed and continued to 51st
All the while, nose to tail traffic on Second never easing
The blaring of horns and sirens never ceasing
A slight calmer relief along 51st to Third
Behold, yes, more traffic chaos but in reverse direction of Second
Pedestrians jostling the pathway was just as busy as one street lower
Walking along 3rd Avenue, buildings canopied and under construction
Diversions made around these sites, wet and muddy underfoot
Crossed over 52nd continued to 67th street with all this chaos about
Wove in and out of tail to tail traffic at each corner
Umbrella held low against the wind and drizzly rain
Grateful to reach pinpointed destination and made transaction
Distance had been much further than at first anticipated
On retracing steps, a good sign, the rain had eased
Traffic as busy as before, sirens and hooters blaring away
One final but worthwhile mentionable obstacle to overcome
On one main street, cars, busses and taxis had become interlocked
Blocking solidly both the Avenue and Street
Nothing could move north or south or left to right
Pedestrians waited at white walking signal as could not cross
Twice, thrice, the signal went by, right of way fully blocked
Time, I thought, for action at this crazy traffic situation
Took life in my hands, raised and waved umbrella to be fully visible
Weaved around, behind and in front of almost interlocked vehicles
Walked, well, rather, crept through that scene of utter chaos
Continued to encounter jammed up traffic and blaring sirens

Slowly returned to base of stay with breath of relief
But - no sympathy there on relaying my tail of woe
Was told that that was just a typical New York traffic chaos day!

Written while in New York - 25th April 2019

Deanna Samuels

New York Whirlwind

A whirlwind of a long weekend
But - what a weekend! What a whirlwind!
Pre-booked set of shows and concerts
A full program - and yet - with some more surprises
Arrived mid-Wednesday at very busy Newark
The 777 taxi awaits, whooshed me off to Manhattan
Alighted at relative's condo; an hour or two to catch up
Taxied to restaurant, our third party already at table
Delicious dinner partaken, assorted freshly cooked meats
One of the tastiest meals for many a long time
Thursday came; met with cousin at Times Square
Though, at first, which Times Square was meant?
She at one, I, at the other, waiting outside McD's
A phone call soon sorted out the problem
Restaurant chosen, a build your own salad prepared
Three hours later after exhausting our news
Bid farewells beneath the New Year's crystal ball
Thursday evening; a concert at Carnegie Hall
An extra special treat - and who to see and hear?
Violinist Itzhak Perlman and pianist Evgeny Kissin
How better can it get, they made it look so easy
The performance most memorable, many encores ensued
Thursday ended well - and how could it not?
Friday; the fourth member of our party flies in
A lone walk on 2nd and 3rd Avenue to make a purchase
Hence from which, my 'New York Traffic Chaos' poem created
Later, dining in on delicious smoked salmon and veggie deli
A taxi of foursome to Brooklyn's Polonsky Shakespeare Center
An exciting introduction to this newly found theatre
Modern and compact, catering for a New Audience
The play this evening - The Tragedy of Julius Caesar
A magnificent, mesmerizing awe-inspiring performance
Modern dress and energetic choreography did not detract
Gave a more realistic understanding of this 2000-year old scene
Thought - has anything ever changed in cutthroat politics?
Saturday; a morning of worship and reverence, restful afternoon
Dining in once more on fish and veggie deli; a taxi to The Met
A night at the opera - La Traviata was exquisite
The staging soft and delicate yet, at times vibrant and loud

Intricate lighting changes to meet the mood of scene
Placido Domingo has not lost his appeal, a privilege to attend
Sunday came; a leisurely morning - but now what to do?
Nothing planned - can't waste the day - whisked through reviews
Booked 'INK' for the evening, a good write up given
But what of the afternoon? Already it was 1.45pm!
Perhaps matinee rush tickets to the musical 'Kiss Me Kate'?
Four pile into a taxi to Studio 54; oh dear, only one ticket left!
"Wait on the side", we were told - "you never know";
Sure enough, one more ticket came up, bought the two
Time was now pressing, already it was 2.50pm, show was at 3
Now what to do! Decided the two ladies to proceed inside
The guys to go to sports bar to watch the hockey game
A few minutes later, a message saying two tickets sold off
All four were now seated, though in separate areas of theatre
In conclusion - was it all worth it?
Yes! What a great show, the dancing and singing superb
Shakespeare's 'Taming of the Shrew' within, never played better
A taxi to Manhattan Theatre Club, a speedy dinner nearby
'INK', a biographical recount of London's Fleet Street of 1969
With young Rupert Murdoch taking over THE SUN newspaper
Riveting and brought back many a memory of those days
Well, by then, we admitted - we were all theatred out!
Taxi, returned to condo to pack for an early next day start
Goodbyes to our great hosts, will see them again soon
Sunday; early morning, 8am, 777 taxi to Newark Airport
Our great showtime visit weekend over - what a whirl
What a New York Whirlwind!

Written in New York City and Richmond Hill - 30th April 2019

Deanna Samuels

Not A Moment To Blink

Not a moment to blink
Not a moment to ink
The page is all bare
Not a minute to spare
But now a respite
Some time to at last write
Emerged from great travel journeys
Steeped in culture and showtime memories
Suddenly, it has become all quiet
Just normal everyday stuff, gone back to a diet
Taking advantage of this restful interlude
Admin catch up and shopping for food

Written in Richmond Hill, Ontario - 30th July 2019

Deanna Samuels

Not An Inch On Finch

How could a City Council not foretell its growth
With so many obvious signs right in front of all eyes
The extension up to Finch stopped there almost 40 years ago
The plaque clearly states that fact, the date - 29th March 1979
Listing Mel Lastman as Mayor, four Controllers and fourteen Aldermen
Since then, not one inch on Finch has been extended from that day
And this is true at the other end at Downsview
What were the City Council doing in all that time
Allowing new developments to be built north of that line
Not extending the subway before each division was planned out
The negligence appears quite unparalleled without doubt
Budgets should have been set up for such contingency
Developers contributing to the cost of expansion
During those past 40 years, it could and should have been a no brainer
Yet, not one inch was laid north on the Finch sub-line
As each new development grew, chaos took over upon the roads
Congestion increased 10 fold to pool travelers to mid-town
Ferrying to the Finch sub-way to travel to down town
Why weren't bells ringing and dinging ten, twenty, thirty years ago
The obvious growth becoming worse and uncontrollable
During those years, it would have been less difficult to extend the line
The years went by and still no progress
Not an inch was laid further on Finch sub-track
Divisions kept growing without control
Council willy-nilly stamping the developer's plan
Not recognizing the congestion without new road infrastructure
Divisions kept growing, infills on every square yard of land
Stretching past Steeles and deep into Richmond Hill and beyond
Congestion so chronic, main local arteries clogged as a parking lot
Hours lost standing stationery, exhaust fumes spouting out
City and town officialdom have already let two generations down
Allowing developers to build ad infinitum, uncontrolled
Without adequate vital transport system being met
And yet, they are the ones in receipt of undeserved fat pensions
While the people of Toronto struggle with inadequate gear
And still not an inch on Finch
But wait - at last forty or so years on - a wake-up call
Big talk of subway extensions around the town
Some expensive and disruptive band aids as interim help

But all planned above the ground
Bringing with it more chaos, noise, more congestion
As main busy roads ripped up and laid to new lanes
Town noise By-Laws disregarded with grant of long term special permits
Whole neighborhoods deprived of a good night's sleep
While cranes and diggers work the hours from late eve to 7am
Even with all that interim work planned, it is not envisaged
That subway extension will go beyond Yonge and Seven
And not be in place for another twenty years or more
Meaning, yet another generation will be let down
And still, not an inch on Finch
Money, as usual is always spouted as being short
But true visionary plans and developers compulsory involvement
Would have avoided this vast gridlocked GTA scene
With Toronto's subways the pride of the town
But, in reality, from March '79 to December 2016
Not an inch on Finch has been built

(Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 6th December 2016)

Deanna Samuels

Not Enough Time

How many times have we spoken those words
Rushing and bustling, doing our daily chores
Such important matters we consider so keen
Thinking back, wondered where we have been

Running for trains, planes and busses too
Why do we leave so little time to do
What is so urgent that we leave it so late
Then when arrived are in a breathless state

Not enough time to reflect on the past
Of times we enjoyed, to savour, the day goes so fast
To remember the moments of those loved ones gone by
And the time that they gave without question or cry

Have we time to lend an ear, a desperate plea for help
A few minutes spared to listen up, given without real heart
Is our time so precious that we cannot pause to stop
To heed our troubled children, too shy to spill their worried plot

Not enough time to consider those in real need
To go out of our way to do a good deed
Time to think of the children in lands far away
Mistreated, malnourished, thousands dying each day

Too little time taken to understand why there are conflicts and wars
They happen elsewhere and thankfully not at our doors
Glancing at devastation from natural disasters we see on our screens
A few dollars donation keeps our conscience clear from the screams

When is the time taken to dig deeply and more fully
Into the years of unhappiness under the power of a bully
Do we take time to be aware of widespread human trafficking
More rife than at any time; slavery, child soldiers, prostitution

Not enough time spent to study tiers of political doctrine
Handing without question too much power to those who govern
No time to acknowledge that wild life being decimated, becoming extinct
And countless domestic animals used, abused, euthanized in a wink

Do we give time to think of Earth's finite precious gifts that abound
Gorging them relentlessly; rainforests hewn, nature unsound
How long can we survive in the annals of time
When our time is used up in a charred airless land

It is now that we must find the time to preserve
The time for us all, the time we deserve
Stop a while, stop; plan what can readily be left out
Not enough time will ease; find again what life is about

(Penned at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 13th November 2013)

Deanna Samuels

Ode To David Bowie

He gave imagination and pleasure to generations through three
Rising as icon, spreading his artistry as growing branches of tree
Yet, with all that creation, he was but a frail human after all
As each one of us whatever acclaim, in turn must duly fall
The mightiest, the most illustrious who make their indelible mark
Each has their day, their time is up, the bright light becomes dark
But great legends such as he live on through the years and decades
Leaving an album full of musical memories, his legacy slow to fade

'Penned at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 17th January 2016'

Deanna Samuels

Oliver The Sphynx Cat

Oliver the Sphinx Cat has come into my life for a while
What a change a small feline can make in one's domicile
From a neat tidy place my whole flat is askew
With grey litter bits and scratch pads to name just a few
Throw-overs on furniture to keep safe from sharp claws
Chachkas re-assigned to upper shelves or to drawers
Food is a no-no to be left on table or counter
One leap and he's there sampling whatever to encounter
His appetite voracious, would eat every hour of the day
Though strictly controlled and overall two tins on his tray
Sleeping often, wherever and whenever it suits
On top of warm dryer or under soft woolen boot
Even deems to use blanket in cozy micro fleece bed
Cleverley using soft puffy rim to lay down his little head
He appears to go roaming around wherever he fancies
A favored place at window, long looks to whatever presented
His almond shaped eyes are large, sharp and bright
Tall pointed keen ears, long tail, a nose and mouth just right
Oliver's form is sleek, smooth and all fuzzy grey black
Gives of his warmth and complete love without lack
After going out and returning back to the house
My place used to be as quiet as a mouse
Now I'm greeted with chortles and splurge of excited mews
Sidling round legs, crawling over my shoes
So long a time since I have had that company pleasure
Now it is great coming home from an outside leisure
Watching late movies has become far from lonely
My Oliver curled up, gazing at me so fondly
He does not ask for much, some petting and strokes
Maybe a hug and some tickles under stretched throat
When he so deems, he will visit me at night
Keeping me warm, snuggling up, leaving by light
The pay-off out-beats any duties of requisite care
Like litter box clean-up or a few smuts here and there
Oliver, always popular with friends as he sheds no fur
Makes them feel welcome with cuddle and purr
They first think it strange that he is so naked
But all too soon he has them charmed and infatuated
My usual routine has been turned upside down

But this new life in my life is a priceless crown
And for the time I have charge of this new little friend
Oliver the Sphynx Cat can be sure of my good loving tend

(Written on 23rd November 2016 at Richmond Hill, Ontario)

Deanna Samuels

Oliver The Sphynx Cat Goes Home

Today is the day to take Oliver home
Boarded with me for ten months or more
He made his niche on sofa and tome
His company at all times never a bore

His friendly nature was a joy to behold
With lots of cuddles and kisses to give
Shy at first in strange surround, soon became very bold
Settling in to my place, sensed this is where he will live

No doubt about it, he soon ruled the roost
Roaming around each room at his pleasure
Oliver had favorite chairs to sit, look out and be amused
His very demeanor relaxed, taking everything in at his leisure

Oliver had his routine of eating and sleep
Nudging when hungry, devouring each single morsel
As soon as had done, under blankets he'd leap
No sight or sound from him for hours was his normal

His welcoming meow as soon as I opened the front door
Gave me much joy as I petted my light-footed boy
With his stretching and purring he showered his adore
One could not but help stroke and pet him some more

Friends looked after him when I was often away abroad
Quickly stealing their hearts with his sweet loving way
Even at Petsmart when needed to put him to board
Became quite the favorite of kitty staff with his seductive sway

Special thanks and gratitude goes to both Joy and to Sally
Great friends who took Oliver into their stride to feed and pet
And a special big hug and thank you to my dear friend Gary
Who allowed Oliver to roam throughout his home without fret

The hour has now come to start Oliver's journey back home
Then onwards to new family who will love and adore him to bits
Of course, I will miss him, but knew he was on a long term loan
Content though and assured that Oliver will make another great hit

Written at Richmond Hill - 23rd September 2017.

Sequel to Oliver the Sphynx Cat poem dated 23rd November 2016.

Deanna Samuels

On Deck For A Cause

Just completed a 5k walk around Deck 4 on Zuiderdam
An amazing cause in memory of those struck by cancer
For all the friends and family who succumbed, lost the battle
For those who have struggled, fought the fight, survived
The walk was for all of them, keeping them close to our heart
To remember the times they were with us and with us still
Fondly thinking of their memory, many cut down in their prime
A hundred passengers or more walked Deck 4 this morn
To fight for the cause, give hope and finally conquer

Written on The Zuiderdam on 24th January 2017.

Deanna Samuels

Ottawa - Preparing For Canada's 150th Birthday

Ottawa - the capital of Canada is electrifyingly ablaze
Thousands of flags and bunting all the craze
Streets bedecked in maple leaf red and white
Giving a celebratory feel for all in sight
Parliament Hill and the Centennial Flame
Share their grounds with marquees for the acclaimed
The revered statues of notable figures have had a clean-up
Shining and gleaming from dawn to sun set
The Parliament edifice, itself a majestic icon
Appearing even more grand with such festivity around
Tiered seats are erected and huge viewing screens
The Hill is crowded with people from seniors to teens
Babes in moms arms, dads pushing prams
Toddlers running wild, frisky like lambs
Students by the hundreds are milling about
Supervised by teachers hoping no kid is left out
Everyone wanting to get in on the act
To have a taste of what is to come, to celebrate
A gigantic stage already prepared for Canada Day
Many renown performers are well on their way
Shops and stores are fully engrossed in the mood
Full of tourist displays in eye-catching Canadian hue
Museums, public buildings, awash in long flowing banners
The red and white color gives vibrancy to the mode of aura
Excitement and anticipation is growing as each hour goes by
Will surely burst into shouts of joy and pride on 1st of July

Inspired and written in Ottawa - 27th June 2017

Deanna Samuels

Passing Soul Mates

There's a gut feeling when it's over and finished
A feeling of emptiness, the spark extinguished
That first meeting seemed to be filled with promise
Is this the passing soul mate for the final years
Some casual dates, a friendship formed
With closer moments, attachment slowly grows
Relating private visions opens up what one can share
Musical evenings, dancing and special concerts
Movies and theatre, even a flutter on the slots
Museums, galleries, malls to explore
Walks along the beach or forest trail
The weeks, some months go by, togetherness
Friendship deepens into something more
Feelings aroused, heart flutters thinking of the other
A sense of comfort, breaking inhibitions down
Inner thoughts divulged, desires shared
A duo holiday taken, returning, merging into one
Living together, coming to know those daily habits
Relaxation, perhaps presence is taken for granted
Time goes by, routine takes over, boredom sneaks in
Each day, the hours feel longer, minutes dragging
Something has gone, been lost on the way
Two hearts no longer beat or meet as one
No interest made when home to greet
That is the time of emptiness, knowing it is over
The flame, the spark extinguished
Friendship has withered, died, taken its course
The passing soul mates stayed a while
Now they part, each to their separate way

'Penned at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 17th February 2016'

Deanna Samuels

Quietness At The End Of A Busy Day

A busy day ended, the harmonious strains of birds twittering
Fills the air of the expanse of woods surrounding
The Château des Sept Tours proudly stands amid the grounds
Seven turrets proudly adorn the fifteenth century edifice
Thick green ivy creeping and clinging to the stone walls
Covering over the shuttered windows, darkening inner halls
Well-kept lush green lawns encircle the aging building
Tall oak trees already sport their growing summer fruits
Pines and fir trees stretch out their boughs towards the clear blue sky
Golfing rounds are drawing to an end of a long day
Helpful carts placed in their overnight parking bays
A gentle breeze hardly makes a ripple on the nearby pool
No one taking advantage of a swim and keeping cool
Large orange umbrellas give shade for poolside cafe's chairs and tables
From where the writer sits to write this real lifetime fable

Written in the grounds of the Chateau des Sept Tours, Loire Valley, France - 24th
June 2019

Deanna Samuels

Rain Fell As Never Before

Rain fell as it had never fallen before
Clouds black as ink had hung low for hours over the land
Enveloping even the shortest of maturing tree
Vision could be measured by the length of an arm

That day started as any day normally does
Sun arises from behind the horizon and distant hills
Lighting up the clear blue sky as it rose slowly, higher and higher
Until the whole scape below sprang into daily life
Townfolk emerged from their homes and abodes
Started up cars to drive to place of work
Children lined up at street curb to await school bus
Mums and tots walked slowly to the local shops
Farmers seated on tractors ploughing the fields
Cows earlier milked, turned into lush green meadows to graze
Morning mail being delivered, newspaper vendors on street corners
A normal hustle and bustle for both town and country folk
By then, the morning sun was warm and welcoming
Trees in full bloom dressed in their green best
Birds chirped their morning chords, cattle lowed, sheep bleated
Countryside peaceful, corn swayed in the light breeze
All around was quiet, almost too quiet
As though something terrible was about to break
Slowly, very slowly at first, dark clouds began to form
The light breeze of before changed quickly to a brisk wind
Litter bins were blown over, contents strewn about
Clouds continued to gather, combined into one
Not a glimpse of previous blue sky was left in sight
With the bright sunlight gone, visibility was dulled
Darker and darker, blacker and blacker
Ever more threatening the massed cloud became
Wind changed rapidly to heavy gusts and then to a gale
Those first drops of rain fell as a gentle coin sized splatter
Nothing to panic about, a few umbrellas went up
However, people began to look towards the darkened sky, became alarmed
Suddenly and without any further warning, the heavens opened
A deluge began like no other before
People scattered quickly wherever they were
Running to find cover, any cover to escape such fall

Even those first few moments, were soaked to the skin
The clouds became even more dense, descended lower, visibility almost gone
Rain fell as sheets of torrents without stopping, without relief
Crushing, drowning all low-lying shrubs and buds
Majestic trees drooped, shuddered under such weight
Lightning followed simultaneously, lit up the sky
Reminiscent of old silent black and white flickering cinematic relief
Thunder too, rumbled without pause, crashed, rolled its angry tones
Hurricane force winds arose, blew through town and country without mercy
Uprooting, snapping trees; blowing off roofs; sign posts and poles ripped away
On and on the storm ravaged the land, creating chaos of unfathomable damage
Enraged the lakes with pounding waves; moored small craft smashed to pieces
Displaced the shore shingle, drove beach sands up and over on to higher ground
People huddled together in whatever shelter they had found
Though many a refuge had succumbed to the violent force wind
All waiting, hoping, praying for the deluge, the winds, the storm to ease
Hours had passed with the storm never ceasing, never abating
Then, a most tiny glint became visible on the far, far horizon
Slowly, very slowly, became brighter with a tint of blue across the distant sky
The black rain clouds above eased into dark grey
Torrents reduced to a heavy rain then turned into a drizzle
Rays of sun broke through from beneath the far clearing clouds
Mercifully, the terrible storm had almost blown over
Gale winds calmed to a fresh cool breeze
Remaining clouds above broke up and floated away
A warming sun now fully shines upon all the land below
People emerged from whatever refuge taken
Breathed a sigh of relief to be alive
Surveyed the flooding, extensive damaged caused to town and country
Acknowledging it would take many months to repair, replace, put right
Knowing, accepting that by working together the task would be done
Making their town, farmlands, countryside whole again

True to nature, the flood waters abated
Foliage and grasses perked up, began to revive
Rivers and lakes diminished, returned to a steady flow
Town and country slowly slipped back into a daily routine
Everyone had become as one, undaunted, faced and overcame the aftermath
The aftermath of the most unrelenting, cyclonic storm that they had ever known

Poem written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 11th September 2018

Deanna Samuels

Reaching Into The Clouds

Up, up, up, we drove higher and higher
Turning the bend, visibility was lost beyond
Carefully forwarded into the low-lying cloud
A cloud fully resting upon the mountain road
The way was lost within a thick moist haze
Blocking all sight of scene of the autumn fall
Slowly edged forward at the slowest of speeds
At last, feeling like hours, the peak was reached
Then, just as suddenly as when entering the cloud
Down, down, down, we cautiously steered
Emerged gradually from the mist and haze
The road now embarks on an even steeper incline
Runaway truck signs with lanes appear
The valley road betwixt two mountains widens
A river runs besides; an abandoned old timber mill
White water spilling into Harriman Lake
Onwards around the valley bends, the river flowed
Gradually, houses and stores appear, a filling station
Drove into the town of Wilmington
A busy town center, a crossroads for all directions
Headed forward, onto our destination of Boston
Passing over the Hog Back mountain
Portrayed a magnificent view of the east
Autumn will very soon come into full glory

Written en-route to Boston, USA - 7th October 2018

Deanna Samuels

She Walked

She walked
She walked before the light
A brightness unseen before
Mysterious and misty
Undefined
Without end to the right, to the left and above

She walked
She walked towards the light
The brilliance becoming more intense, blinding at each step
Beaconing
Pulling her towards its very edge

She walked
She walked into the light
The density overwhelmed her very being
Peace
Peace enshrouded
Her mind submitted to the forces about

She walked
She walked within the shroud of light
The mists enveloped her body, her very soul
Death
Death was about her
She felt it, fought with all her might to push away

She walked
She walked, she stumbled, clawing herself from the light
The mist clung on, but slowly ebbed, gave way
Breath
Breath swelled within her
Filled her lungs, blood quickly ran through her veins

She walked
She walked through the cloud that had held her, the cloud of light
Her eyes opened, the sun shining brightly upon her
Life
Life had returned

Cheating the jaws of oblivion, she triumphantly walked out from death's fight

Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 3rd April 2018

Deanna Samuels

Sheila Tennen - A Friend Just Lost

Sheila Tennen, a friend just lost
Lost to the ravages of that silent disease
Crept in without warning
No initial pain to detect its lair
A light cough gave rise to flu or cold
Antibiotics could not hold
Gradually the body became weaker, broke down
Diagnosis, medications, treatments follow
All too late, the cancer had embedded itself within
Spread beyond repair
Took its toll
Sheila is no more

What a waste
Sheila did nothing but good
Did not deserve this untimely end
Volunteering throughout the town
Hardly a program missed her magic touch
A loving wife, mother and bubbly
Devoted to her family and little Jackie
Always with a smile and helpful hand
Embracing her faith, sharing with others

Today, Sheila was laid to rest
Her family and so many friends around her
All were subdued, shocked at her rapid demise
Mournful at her loss, weeping could be heard
Comforting prayers read and kaddish recited
As her casket was lowered into the ground
Even the heavens were overcome with grief
Its tears poured down without relief
Never to be forgotten in our hearts and minds
Sheila has gone now, laid to her eternal peace

Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 1st May 2017

Deanna Samuels

Snow Is Falling Once Again

Oh dear! Snow is falling once again
Sneakily covering over the recently clearing fields
Creeping in without great fanfare or ado
It's as though the snow does not want to end
But then, one day soon, nature will deem it to

The scene today is dull and grey, whatever way the gaze
Even the trees appear to have a look of doom and gloom
Waiting and waiting to bring their leaves to bloom
No, regrettably, the time is not right for that yet to occur
A month, maybe two will go by, before new buds uncurl

Every few hours a fresh flurry flies quickly by
Concealing dangerous iced patches for the unwary foot
Kids get precious extra hours on their rickety sleds
Laughing, having fun, whizzing down a local small hill
Meanwhile, the snow continues to fall and fall and fall

Observed and written in Durham Region, Ontario - 11th March 2019

Deanna Samuels

Snow Sweeps In

The morning was clear and bright
Sun peeping out from a few clouds of white
The view uninterrupted from the dining room window towards the Ottawa River
Beyond that, the Canadian Museum of History
Giving a clear picture of that intriguing curved edifice
As the minutes ticked by, a strange eerie change began
A thick hazy wall of white was creeping towards the river
Sweeping over the buildings in its path, enveloping them within it
The museum disappeared, the bridges and river disappeared
That white hazy wall crossed the river into the very heart of Ottawa
Immediately becoming a heavy snow fall covering all in its path
Visibility almost gone in every direction
Large snowflakes fell swirlingly and then, almost as suddenly as it had begun
Rolled away, stopped, leaving the air as clear as it was before
Roads and paths were left a little damp from the already melted residue
As though the sudden sweep of blustering snow had never occurred

Written in Ottawa, Ontario - 29th November 2018

Deanna Samuels

Snowfall Over A Winter's Night

Not an inch of ground or roof without a flake of snow
All night long those lacy crystals fell
Winds blowing them around never abating a steady flow
Until morning light revealed layers and mounds of fluffy swell

The scene around was truly stirring
Fir trees heaved with fresh white snow
Their boughs stretched out with beauty deserving
No longer eclipsed by summer foliage in their full glow

A white pure horizon as far as can be seen
Dazzling and shining in the early morning light
Blanketing all mars on every surface of scene
A momentary pause before invasion of modern might

Too soon, the busy day of men, women and children will start
Ploughs will clear away the snow covered streets and roads
Paths will be trampled upon as kids and cars depart
Alas! The last moments of tranquil beauty very quickly erodes

Written at Courtice and Richmond Hill, Ontario - 15th December 2017

Deanna Samuels

South West Ontario Scenes And Changing Seasons

Preface:

South West Ontario, an area of almost 36,800 square kilometers
With a general rural population of about two and a half million
Surrounded by three of the Great Lakes, Ontario, Erie and Huron
With the added bonus of beautiful Georgian Bay atop to enthrall
A region of industry, education, abundant farms and Niagara Falls
Its coastline brimming with friendly vacation towns and villages
The piece de resistance City of Stratford, superb theatrical productions

SUDDENLY, the countryside has changed
Within a few days the lush green has turned to yellow and orange
Summer has rapidly turned its tail
Autumn replacing with swift derail

BUT WAIT, the season has not yet fully transformed
Meadow grasses still retain their place but with easing emerald
Though now golden leaves litter their firm blades
Windswept and appearing as smoldering burning cascades

Small and large farmsteads seen from afar appear naked and undressed
The crops around them stripped and harvested, perhaps to make bread
Dried faded yellow corn stalks being cut down and stacked
Remaining stumps ploughed into soil for mulch-enriched impact

Cattle and sheep remain grazing in grassy but muddy green fields
Horses romping, a llama farm open, though best use booted flat heels
Rows of almost ready Christmas trees being grown for festive season
Two months away yet for final height and width for decoration reason

Small towns and villages framed behind the autumn shades
Hedge rowed fields abound with late autumn crops and hidden glades
Many unusual sights seen on roads throughout the countryside
Rusting old farm gear, cemetery stones in pyramid style side by side

Orchards bereft of all summer fruit, long gone to market
Though sweet pepper pickers bent over endless rows to make their target
Heaps of pumpkins passed over, missing out the fun of Halloween
Logs stacked and ready for winter fires, a saving on propane gasoline

Fir trees beginning to come into their own as deciduous foliage falls away
Countless turbine windmills turn their vanes whatever time of night or day
New industry of greenhouse production covering acres of flat land
Mitigating the loss of closure of a onetime mainstay for many hands

Busy summer coastal resorts have transformed almost into ghost towns
The lively beach shops, cafes and ice cream parlors have all but closed down
Leaving the year-round residents of the areas in a more tranquil mode
To enjoy the quietness of the winter season in their own content and abode

A sprinkle of snow dusted the land north near the Blue Mountain ski resorts
Giving undeniable signs of looming changing season to cold air and icy sports
Before too long, the autumn hold will concede to winter's fast approach
Another chance for more exciting scenes of season's change to broach

Written in Richmond Hill, Ontario - 31st October 2017

Deanna Samuels

Spark Quarto

A SPARK IGNITES WITHIN

1st December 2016

From a word passed on, contact made, a meeting set, the time had come
Nods of recognition, introductions to each other, a friendly handshake
Two cups of coffee ordered, sipping those, talking lightly, unfolding a little
A furtive look, not to intrude, both keeping comfortable in their space
But suddenly, for her, from a moment's glance, time for an instant stood still
An unfamiliar emotion of so long ago, a spark, a spark ignites within
It was not expected, she, almost taken aback, what was that strange feeling
In unknown territory now, kept conversation going, children, grandchildren
But there was that look again, excitement stirs once more
How could this almost stranger so quickly take her heart
This guy who sits before her, an academic, highly respected in his field
Where is their commonality that they can find to share
Lifestyle, hobbies, activities told and yes, they find a major suit
He, a noted song and music creator, she, a writer of much poetry
He sang to her his latest score of sad demise of Leonard Cohen
Dining-out of similar choice, respect for their religious faith
And as they spoke, found many same interests along the way
That look, that glance again, her heart stood still once more
He seemed content, happy and relaxed to be with her
In that busy coffee place, with almost every table filled
She was oblivious to all around and felt they were the only two
There was music in the air, but no sound was ever heard
A spark, a spark so deep within her had been ignited
Will it grow and glow and turn to fire or, in time, simply burn to ember

THE SPARK BEGINS TO BURN

12th December 2016

Two weeks have passed
Further dates made since couple first met
Each time their feelings grew stronger, greater
Similar thoughts between the two were clearly there
A natural bond was felt with unknown power
Deeper thoughts were found profound

Trivia became an interesting match of wits
Visits to the other's home arranged
Talking points on family, arts and craft
Each drawn to the other as a magnet
It was quite apparent to them both
The spark that had been ignited within her
Had too, been ignited within him
The sparks between them now freely burn

THE SPARK NOW A BURNING FIRE
26th December 2016

Two more weeks have passed, the feelings have grown
That first flush of bliss following
Each declaring their growing love for the other
The spark, that ignited spark, has glowed into a burning fire
A fire of desire, a fire of desire with growing deeper love
Each sharing their inner feelings to one another
The bond tightens, uniting as each hour passes
The fire continues its burning path
Is this the path of love that will last and last
Will this late love of fire continue its burning flame
Only to be extinguished with slow passage of time
Or is the flame being fed by steady warmth and growth
Reaching higher and higher as the two become ever closer

THE SPARK BECOMES A FLAME OF FIRE
31st December 2016

A further week goes by
The spark has ignited into a love of flaming fire
A love so deep within, has reached into an unfathomable abyss
Each wanting, needing the other to fulfil a height of ecstasy
Not known to them before the two became entwined
It became quite clear that they had become united
So close were they together in mind, body and soul
So late in life, each had found their long lost soulmate
Where will this journey go
What lies ahead, what does the future hold
Let time unfold and take its course

Uncovering more discoveries of the other
Allowing the two lovers to enjoy their new found paradise
To know without reserve their love will remain a flame of fire

Deanna Samuels

Spring Awakes

Those first Spring buds are finally appearing
Branches and bush have shadows of greening
Weeping Willows are rapidly transforming
Their long drooping fronds more heavily hanging

The chirping of birds appear louder at each cheep
As returning flocks take up their nesting feat
Hibernating creatures awakening from their long winter sleep
Scurrying and foraging to find nourishing sweet meat

Fields of grass miraculously change from scrubby brown to green
Turning to a lush soft haze for sheep and cattle to glean
Spring is awakening, spreading out its fresh dream
Bringing new life, hope and happiness across its wide scene

Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 25th April 2017

Deanna Samuels

Spring Erupts

Spring has erupted into a glorious season
Slow to start, wary to open
A few days of warmth came rolling by
Gave confidence not to be so shy
Buds burst, quickly, urgently unfurled
From the tightest of curled
Revealed the greenest of green as on a spree
Displaying thickness of dress upon each tree
Intoxicating blooms unfolded at their freshest
Colors vibrant, full of crispness
Ragged grass transformed to soft and lush
To shades of emerald as a velvet plush
Front lawns prepared for summer flora
To give delight at each aurora
Meadows ploughed tidily, ready to sow
Tractors on hand with seed bags in tow
Roadsides abundant with flowers of hue
Soft mauves and yellows, pink, green and blue
Birds have arrived from distant lands
Building nests to rear their young, be on hand
How splendid it is that Spring has now erupted
Bringing freshness anew as nature intended

Deanna Samuels

Stateroom Balcony Peace

It is so peaceful to sit out on the warm stateroom balcony
For a while, away from the hustle and bustle of the busy ship
With waves swishing and whishing by
The Atlantic Ocean as blue as blue can be
Calm, with little swell, a few sea horses here and there
The line of horizon between sea and sky unbroken
No ships, vessels or rigs to mar
Above the horizon, the sky is a soft powdery blue
A few small white fluffy clouds floating high in the sky
The sun shines brightly and unbroken across the whole vista
No other sound is audible save that of the moving waves
The privacy on the stateroom balcony was of pure peace

Written on ms Zuiderdam - Sunday 22nd January 2017

Deanna Samuels

Stillness

Stillness, hardly a breeze, not a cloud in the sky
The blueness above penetrated through the skeletal trees
Without losing any of its deep, deep hue
Fir trees stood tall, almost motionless
Their deep wintergreen gleaming in the bright sun's rays
Days old snow lay upon the ground glistening
Roads well cleared by snow ploughs recently making their rounds
Everything now so quiet and still
Not even an occasional bird whistle to break the silence
Most flew away before winter came to seek warmer climes
It will be another month or two before a trill is heard
Snowdrops and bluebells lay under a deep mound of snow
Their buds will not be seen till that frozen frost has melted
Such peacefulness, such tranquility
Just to sit and embrace these rare moments of stillness
Before the next expected winter storm sets in.

Written in Courtice, Ontario - 16th February 2019 - 2pm

Deanna Samuels

Stolen Scenes

For three long years my view has been obstructed by a crane
An incessant blot on the nearside landscape is a bane
Two buildings built of the group of three
Erected now, completed, 20 storeys, facing Yonge Street
A gradual obliteration of what one used to see and know
The third, where ugly crane has stood, is fast agrowing
A block of cement and glass horizontal to my main scene
Will shortly obliterate the panorama look I love to view
More tall blocks have arisen or rising high along the way
The street transforming into edifices of a mountain pass
Developers have taken over, regardless of city needs
Uncaring for local residents, shutting out any rays of sun
Who watch their locale sink beneath more concrete slabs
The OMB, no sympathy there, has their own agenda
Over-rules town council desires and objections
Rubber stamps new higher and even higher rise blocks
Or crowding in three storey rows of mediocre town housing
Using every lot of land that used to be kept fallow
All the while, the crane is still there, my view will soon be gone
And then what happens, more congestion on the streets
Developers take their cut, steal our scene, leave more confusion
Retreat to their place of residence of country peace, tranquility

Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 18th April 2017

Deanna Samuels

Suddenness Of The Storm

The storm came unexpectedly, creeping in surreptitiously
Dark clouds gathered as an angry crowd brewing and stewing
The sky blackened without break in shade or canopy
From horizon to horizon, darkness pervaded completely
Silence fell, not a sound, a whisper, a twitter of bird
As though an expectancy of doom, all breath was held

Suddenly, without preamble warning, lightning flashed
Herculean fans of jagged bright streaks zapped above
Illuminating the land below with eerie ghostly shadow
Of subdued black and white in silvery haze bold relief
The waiting thunderclap followed almost instantaneously
So ear shatteringly loud, drowned out all audible sound

It was as though the heavens wanted to scream and shout
Bringing comfort as disembowelling all troubles and strife
For a few split-seconds, numbness penetrated all surround
As though nature itself needed time to recover, catch breath
The momentary calm over, thunder and lightning came again
Flashing and noisy but lacking same urgent fervency as began

The storm raged through its anger, darkness still hung over
The heavens opened, rain and hail fell with great ferocity
Flattening delicate plants, swelling gentle brooks into torrents
Pelting down roofs into gutters, rain barrels fill to overflowing
Low-lying roads disappeared, transformed to swift running rivers
Gardens and fields submerged, unable to absorb such deluge

Hours passed, rain eased, clouds lightened, quietness overtook
Chinks of sky appeared, a few trills from birds slowly rousing
It was over, the storm had abated, receded, moved on
Leaving the land below water logged, soft and spongy
And yet, refreshed, regenerated, revitalized, renewed
Emerging boldly, bravely, from the suddenness of the storm

Written by the author at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 7th June 2016

Deanna Samuels

Summer Is In Full Swing

Summer is in full swing
Trees are bursting with their ripening fruits
Cornfields of rich green, sprouting orange brown tufts
Cobs swelling quickly within in the unbroken hot sunshine
Grain crops growing taller and fuller by the hour
Fields of potatoes and root vegetables maturing quickly
Harvesters will soon be at work taking in their yield
Strawberries and raspberries at their peak
Black and red currants making their short-seasoned debut
Gardens at the height to display their beautiful blooms
Every shade of color and species variety on show

Long hot lazy days for kids to splash and bathe in wading pools
Keeping cool, having lots of fun while Moms heedfully watch on
Sunbathing and children making sandcastles on sandy beaches
Treats of ice cream cones and fruit flavored cooling iced lollipops
Free festivals, funfairs and lively concerts for all in local parks
Carnival processions ribboning through main towns and cities
Thousands lining streets to wave at decorated floats as they go by
Paddling boats gently bobbing on ponds and slowly moving rivers
Sailing and motor craft lazily drift upon the lake's softly rising waves
A café patio at day's end to sip a long thirst-quenching refreshment
Summer, what a wonderful warm and relaxing time for everyone

Written driving (not me)through Durham Region - 5th August 2019.

Deanna Samuels

Summer Won't Let Go!

Summer just does not want to leave
Though autumn close upon its sleeve
Long gone mid-October, the sun remains with great warmth
Keeping back the usual chills so late in current month

Only now, the Canadian maple turning to a fiery glow
Those luminous trees standing majestically in field or street row
Remaining summer foliage reluctant in their change to autumn dress
Basking in the late summer sun's warming caress

Shorts and T's still popular and continue to be worn
Though some now showing signs of being frayed or even torn
Patio meals remain popular and appear to be in full swing
Diners relaxing, enjoying last warm rays of evening singe

Farmers working overtime, harvesting with dry surround
Bringing in bales of golden corn neatly bound
Perhaps for some crops and fields could be their last grow
As developments encroach with concrete overspill, overflow

Farm animals sleep and lazily graze in the fields
An abundance of tall succulent grasses still yields
Horses frolic in wide open meadows and roomy paddocks
Happy with such freedom, stretching hoof and fetlocks

Harvest fairs extra busy, dry and bathed in glorious sunshine
Plump orange pumpkins bring out crowds in weather so sublime
Outdoor games and golf delay their gates from winter closing
Every day a bonus with extra playing hours they duly bring

The forecast still, at this very moment of time
Tells that the barometer is holding steady to this prime
Everyone, get out and about, take advantage of this Indian Summer autumn
Before the grip of winter overtakes and these balmy days are long forgotten

Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 21st October 2017

The Command Of Lake Ontario

At this moment looking outwards towards Lake Ontario
Glints on the blue water sparkle as the sun appears from behind high white
clouds
Portraying the lake with a calm and serene appearance
Not believing it could behave as wildly as a ferocious angry roaring lion would
And yet, uncountable times, its waters rise with rage and fury
Rolling and beating down on the lakeshore of sand and rock
Today though, the waves are tempered to the gentle ripple of rise and fall
Barely splashing the shoreline with timid embrace and soft caress
Those gentle waves break over the pebbles and stones on the shore
Washing down, cleaning away the past day's grime to bring to shine again
The trees overlooking the calmed lake are at their most magnificent of summer
In full leafed velvet greens of the most vivid hues
Enhanced by tall yellow wild flowers and shrubs thickly scattered round and
about
Meadows of deep emerald edge the lake line in complete contrast to the blue
water
Corn cobs growing in abundance swelled by nature's heavy rainfalls and summer
warmth
The lake appears to master all these creations molding them for its own
enhancement
A host of multicolored hollyhocks give additional beauty and adornment
Gulls swoop over the low swell hunting for sweet meats of sustenance
All this panorama, this action, this beauty, captured with but a glance of a few
moments
Lake Ontario, a living, exciting, ever changing lake is of such command and
presence.

Written while passing the lake shore of Lake Ontario near Port Hope - 31st
August 2018 - about mid-day.

Deanna Samuels

The Fresh Snow Fell

The fresh snow fell quietly, stealthily throughout the night
Soft, fluffy and white
It lay upon the cold frigid earth
Covering the imperfections of the ground beneath
Boughs of trees almost became lost with such heaviness of fall
Firs and pines transformed to an end of year season's joyous ball
Long dried-up autumn and summer weeds and flowers
Appeared taller and prouder, boasting a crown of frozen crystals
With snow persisting throughout the whole long day
A promise of a new winter scene along each path and highway

Written at Courtice, Ontario - mid-morning 12th February 2017

Deanna Samuels

The Hospital Waiting Room

Waiting in the hospital waiting room revolves a person into another world
Everyone waiting is so serious, thinking to themselves - why is the wait so long?
A scheduled appointment time was for an hour ago, now it's way passed that
The silence is so loud, a twitter or even cough or sneeze would bring relief

People sit and stare before them not wanting to catch another's eye
That would mean a smile, a hello and then asking what brings you here?
Conversation is not wanted, just anxious that their name be called
Get on with the appointment, to know what they will soon be told

Lots of patients look down at iPods and phones to while away the time
Fingering on key pads, playing quiet games to avoid breaking the silent air
Their tension eases as the minutes tick by, though not really fully relaxed
As all the while, aware, at any moment, their name could be called next

The wait continues to feel endless, nerves begin to rise, patience on the wane
A sudden stir, a door opens, a nurse appears, a person's name announced
They exit quickly though quietly, to wherever told to go - then silence again
More waiting, another stir, a given name is called, the long wait is finally over!

Written while waiting in a hospital Waiting Room at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 22nd
June 2018.

Deanna Samuels

The Laze Of The Day

A cruise vacation on an 'At Sea' day
There is nothing to do but laze
Looking out to sea, all there is to seek is distant haze
The joy of relaxing away from the grind
Gives real pleasure, invigoration, peace of mind
Whatever has been left behind will surely be there upon return
So while away, enjoy the break, there is nothing in your command
Learn from interesting shore excursions, people's from other lands
Brought to you without great effort, let your mind expand
When day trip over, just step back aboard
Enriched with new adventures, experiences, memories you will hold
The secret is, relax on long 'At Sea' days, rejuvenate
The days go by, the cruise is over, only left with new journeys to relate

Written at sea on The Zuiderdam - 18th January 2017 - 12 noon

Deanna Samuels

The Mist

Mist hung closely to the damp dank ground below
The thick haze enshrouded the countryside completely
Firs and pines barely outlined within the murky grey fog
Emitting an image of a smudgy silhouette blur
Deciduous trees portray skeletal impressions
Their boughs branching out as undefined flowing veins
Snow blanketed meadows and produce fields
Stalks of last season rise through the untouched white coverlet
Rows of telegraph poles fade into the mist beyond
Wires strung between hardly discernible
On-coming vehicle headlights a hazy dissipated dimness
Tail lights an undefined blotchy redness
Best to keep a good distance between
Road signage not visible until almost upon
Relying now on Google Map to guide the way
Keeping close eye on the befogged yellow lines of centre road
Guiding between the middle and edge side lanes
Houses and farms almost invisible passed along the way
Enveloped within this blanket of fog and haze
Speed reduced to a safe and moderate velocity
Regard taken to heed the invisibility of the surrounding conditions
Onwards through this hazy cloud, this mist upon the ground
Moving forward with especial care and homeward safely bound

Inspired and written between Bobcaygeon and Richmond Hill, Ontario
19th February 2018

Deanna Samuels

The Night Sky

The evening air was crystal clear and warm
Not a cloud above to mar a perfect night
Drove from the town lights to the wooded countryside
Tall trees stood dark and mysterious along the road
Not a breath of wind to stir movement of their branches
Then it happened, the tree lined road suddenly ended
Their close darkness fell back into the blackness beyond
Without warning, behold, the night sky came into full view
I looked up and gasped, astounded
The sky above was ablaze with countless sparkling stars
Every part appeared to have a diamond glittering
From the tiniest carat to the magnificent Koh-i-Noor
The millions, trillions of stars shining took my breath away
Never have I seen the night sky so clear, bright and defined
My mind was blown away, filled with wonder
The wonder of creation
The wonder of our night sky

Seen in Durham Region, Ontario and written in Richmond Hill, Ontario
24th August 2019.

Deanna Samuels

The Oaks - A Farewell

The Oaks Development in Boca Raton

A place I have written about and from so many times

The Oaks, for me, have come to an end

My family moved out from there at the weekend

No more of my walks by the glistening lily pad lake

Or strolling by the bronze garden chair and boy with pet

Will miss the lake shore abundant with spoils of nature

Large empty snail shells; ibis by the water's edge

Reeds, thick and rooty, home for leaping frogs to hide

Swans and ducks wading, a stork aloof upon one leg

The clubhouse grounds and famous tennis courts

With superb pool, restaurant, spa and cabanas

Wonderful mature palms and trees in front and back yards

Spilling over to the roadside, giving shade from midday sun

Gardens full of year-long colourful blooms and foliage

Landscapers and pool guys on weekly duties

Even scurrying lizards and occasional grass snakes

I will miss them all, even the blot on the landscape house

All this has given me so much pleasure and leisure

To walk about, take in the scene, relax in the moment

Now I am looking forward to seeing the new home

To explore the new locale and neighbourhood

There is sure to be lots of new adventures to be found

Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 8th June 2017

Deanna Samuels

The Sun Gleamed Upon The Calm Lake

Yesterday, the sun gleamed upon the calm lake
Loons waded silently through the tranquil waters
Their wake barely making a ripple as they moved forward
Bathers lazily laid upon the narrow sandy beaches
Soaking up the ceaseless warm rays of the sun
A few motor launches whisked over the becalmed lake
Stirring up waves which reached rocky or sandy bank edge
Causing many small craft to choppily bob up and down
Though safely moored alongside private docks and jetties
An occasional small float plane landed smoothly on the water
Glided gracefully upon water surface to its owner's mooring
The day progressed unrushed into the early evening
A pleasant slow relaxing motorboat ride around lake ensued
The air was warm and windless, quietness pervaded
Espied neighboring cottages of modest build to luxury abode
Large lots and tiny plots edged the lake, upkeep kept with pride

Today, what a change overnight as the new day broke into light
Mist lay upon the lake waters reaching to the far banks beyond
Trees were almost enveloped in an eerie white haze
The lake, now devoid of any wild life or sailing activity
Tied up motor craft, paddleboat and jetski dripping and damp
Stillness and serene quietness evoked the whole nearby scene
Lily pads afloat as tiny islands harbored frogs in nearby small bay
An hour passed, mist gradually lifted, dark clouds gathered
The deluge started slowly, gathering momentum
Soon, the rain fell steadily, easing off for short intervals
Still, the heavy fall continued, almost without stop
Morning went by and into the noon time, two meals partaken
Board games played as interesting activity to pass the time
At last, mid-afternoon, clouds parted, a glimpse of sun appeared
The lake and surround cleared its air, returned to former beauty
With calmed scene, alas, time to go home, but with sunshine above

Written at Halliburton and Richmond Hill - 17th August 2019

Deanna Samuels

Through The Emergency Doors

It never ends, patient after patient enters through the doors
The Emergency Room portal never stays closed for long
Each patient coming in anxious for their own condition and cure
Some more urgent, more acute, requiring immediate action

Nurses and doctors work at a steady calming pace
Assessing and diagnosing every individual's need
Triaging first then registration take their course
Patients wait in anticipation for the call of their name to heed

The time of waiting is often uncertain, sometimes even frustrating
Every day is busy with every type of accident, illness or ache
Each case taken in rotation, sooner or immediate if life threatening
Whatever the problem, all are treated with dignity and respect

Visitors for patients and who assist those who come to ER
Are shown every courtesy to locate a dear one not well
A few taps on new system and a click here and there
Quickly reveals where patient can be found and then can tell

Seven days a week, twentyfour hours a day
Around the clock Emergency Room coverage never stops its fight
Staff are on duty for whatever medical cause or affray
They are there for each person's plight at any time of day or night

With the holiday season looming, ER staff will be rushed off their feet
But nevertheless, they will still be there to listen, help and care
Thanks for such dedicated folk ready at any time for a medical seek
And whatever ailment is found, they will tend to and mend and repair

Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 14th December 2017.

Deanna Samuels

Thunder Bay - A Flying Visit

Thunder Bay, a name on the map
Somewhere unknown to me - up North along the top of Lake Superior
Even the name and locale emitted cold and snow
A place most Torontarians would never envisage or be inclined to visit
However, out of the blue, an unexpected opportunity came!
Strike while the iron is hot and there was I, transported

Arriving at Thunder Bay Airport, small by comparison to Toronto Pearson
Though very modern and well laid out
Having all the facilities needed for today's busy travellers
Walking outside, the air was refreshing and clear and pleasantly crisp
Perhaps, just a hint of becoming mildly warm - already I was puzzled
Had expected six foot of frozen winter snow but most of it had disappeared
Only a few patches here and there that lay under unmoving dark shadows
Hire car collected, drove without hassle onto wide well maintained main roads
No traffic jams anywhere to behold, a pleasant change from busy Toronto

Thunder Bay was born from four townships merging, Fort William and Port Arthur
Together with the smaller towns of Neebing and McIntyre
All a few miles apart, uniting together in 1970, now a bustling bristling city
Fort William, on the Kaministiquia River, in history part of fur trade of 1500's
Port Arthur named in 1870 in honor of Prince Arthur, son of Queen Victoria
Each town evident of Finnish heritage, home now to a multi-cultural society

My two day fully comprehensive personal tour oversaw the sights
The domination of The Sleeping Giant peninsula in the bay
Pulled one's eyes constantly to the magnetism of its quiescent view
Most poignantly, overlooking the water, the larger than life Terry Fox statue
His monument stood high on a hill with Lake Superior as majestic backdrop
Built in honor and commemoration of his amazing attempt to run across Canada
His goal sadly ending here in Thunder Bay, completely overcome by his illness
A reflective moment for me too, having recently visited St. John's, Newfoundland
Stood by the identical statue where Terry Fox started his gruelling Marathon of Hope

Thunder Bay; well-planned and designed amenities for the community at large
The 1500 seat concert hall is a gem above world others with superb acoustics
A magnificent 375-bed Regional Health Sciences Centre, second to none
Proudly serving over 250,000 residents in Northwestern Ontario

The superb college with trades centre named to commemorate Confederation
Lakehead University offering both a law and medical school within its curricula
By the water's edge, a substantial working paper mill, sadly now, the last of six
Still though, supplying The Chicago Tribune and other major newspapers

Driving around the city, there are community centers, elder living residencies
Cinemas, stadia, gymnasia, libraries, parks, shops, stores and malls
Art and handicraft galleries with emphasis on exquisite local talent
Well thought out all round facilities for its 109,000 bustling population
The waterfront area undergoing revitalization featuring new public facilities
Children's playground and splash pool, good quality restaurants, family parks
Housing, as with most cities, range from the luxurious to modest accommodation
Original of 100 years or more competing with new state of the art developments
Wonderful coast lines and inland lakes dotted with life loved cottages called
camps
Thunder Bay has every amenity and facility needed for a modern metropolis

Within a few miles and even further afield, good farmlands prevail
Farmers sow crops and tend their herds and flocks
Fresh produce grown for the local and near and wider communities
For those with the yen, horse riding and stables within a few miles of the bay

Sightseeing such as the old Fort William and scenic views of the Canadian Shield
There are countless trails for short or longer treks for walking
Opportunities to find off the beaten tracks and explore the ventures of nature
A highlight to visit is the unexpected beauty of the 40 metre high Kakabeka Falls
Its water cascading down rugged granite rock to the Kaministiquia River below
Merited second highest waterfall in Ontario, open all year round for viewing

Outdoor winter activities capture adventures not readily available in the south
The excitement of dog sleighing cannot be overlooked whisking over virgin snow
Cross country ski walks taking the visitor through the stillness of forest and dell
Swooshing smoothly on down-hill ski runs and trails for those with that extra skill
Snow-shoeing for the less energetic, ice-fishing - a popular Northern hobby

Sadly, all too soon, my short stay had quickly come to its end
Time to return home but with so many memories and much knowledge gained
Thunder Bay, a real eye opener, a lesson learned from not knowing of it before
A vibrant modern city, friendly people, lots to do and certainly, well worth a visit

Written flying on return journey on 29th March with subsequent editing at

Richmond Hill, Ontario.

Deanna Samuels

Uniqueness Of 12.12.12

What a significant date today, the uniqueness of 12.12.12
Never again will this date come along in our own three score and ten
Into the next century a hundred years must pass by
Before those unique numbers will turn round by and by
Our own lives will be long gone; fresh new youth will seek the future
What will they discover in that time, would it be good for all mankind
Will new science and technology bring them closer to peace and tranquility
Or plunge deeper into subjugation using advanced weapons of destruction
What new moons and planets may have been discovered, reached, inhabited
Has space travel become blasé, a standard everyday commuter fare
We here now at 12.12.12 can only wonder, only speculate, imagine
It is for future generations to path the way, laying trails to new adventure
To steer and guide those yet to come and thrive in a time beyond our ken
We at 12.12.2012 and all those gone before, moulded a world we live today
Maybe the peoples of 12.12.2112 might have learned from history past
Not blown each other up with one big blast, finally respecting one and all
Building a better, happier, peaceful caring society for all humanity at last

(Penned at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 12.12.2012)

Deanna Samuels

Yes, Summer Is Here!

Summer is bursting at its crest
Foliage at the peak of green best
Leaves vie to face the sun
Giving full richness to trees as one

Grass in the country and on lawn, thick and lush
Presenting shades of varied emerald as plush
Wild natural roadside plants have grown to great heights
Delicate Queen's Lace, large belled hollyhocks streaked in sunlight

Garden blooms have blossomed to wondrous effervescent flowers
Their strength and colors vibrant at greatest powers
Birds now rear their young with tasty morsels
Teaching them to sing from shrill chirps to melodious warbles

Countryside abuzz with busy bees flying
Collecting their loads from stamens to make tasty honey
Cows graze lazily in sweet filled grassy meadows
Producing rich creamy milk, perhaps for cornettos

Children too, are having great fun
Splash pools and parks open to play and run
Free open air concerts are in full swing
From jazz to blues, country and string

The fun of the fair speakers going at full blast
Fetes, Art and Craft shows, stands with tasty repast
Picnics and BBQs, pool parties to cool down the heat
Cold drinks, popsicles and ice cream go down a treat

Zoos and museums crowded with wide eyed eager visitors
Chance to learn animal habits and date of obsolete relics
An easy slow cruise along quiet flowing river
A lazy sail on calm lake waters moving hither and thither

Families occupy their quiet lakeside cottages
Ball games and high jinks exude on popular sandy beaches
Baseball, football, lacrosse played at local arenas
Tennis and golf, members meet at busy club houses

Then there's water skiing and exhilarating formula racing
A morning hike or an afternoon of gentle lawn bowling
Take advantage of tourist trips that go around the town
Discovering places of interest on ones own home ground

Yes! Summer is here
The best time of year
What an amazing profusion of exiting activities there is to see and do

Get out there everyone, enjoy every moment all summer through

Written at Richmond Hill, Ontario - 9th July 2017

Deanna Samuels