



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 5th, 2013

The Association of Book Publishers of BC announces the 2013 Gray Campbell Distinguished Service Award Recipient: Sheryl MacKay

Vancouver, BC - Ask any publisher or book publicist why Sheryl MacKay deserves to be honoured by the book community and they will say with admiration and not without a smidgen of incredulity that she actually reads the books. This may seem trite, but in a media environment where book reviews are increasingly difficult to get and critical attention to an author's work is woefully banal, and in an increasingly distracted and fast-moving world, a radio host who delves deep into the books she covers is a wonderful thing. Ask the same publishers what sets Sheryl apart and they will likely answer: her passion for books, her elegance and grace (even when turning you down), and her affection for both books and authors.

As host, producer and web-updater of *North By Northwest*, CBC's early morning weekend radio show, Sheryl reaches thousands of dedicated early-risers who are also book-buyers. Sheryl covers arts across the province so extensively and thoroughly that listeners from Dawson Creek to Abbotsford and from Tofino to Fernie have come to rely on *NXNW* to provide them with informed and current arts commentary. As Vici Johnstone, publisher of Caitlin Press and member of the Association of Book Publishers of BC board stated, "If *NXNW* did not exist with Sheryl MacKay at the helm, it would create an enormous hole for listeners who rely on her to bring them the latest in Canadian books." Sheryl goes out of her way to highlight the wide artistic tapestry of our region and she doesn't limit herself to one literary genre but covers them all: fiction, cookbooks, regional history, children's books. Even birding books and poetry, the latter often considered challenging for interviewers, are discovered on her show.

Authors are particularly thrilled to get an interview on *NXNW* as Sheryl makes them feel so at ease; perhaps it's the MA in Clinical Counselling that makes her such a good listener, but likely it's also her genuine enthusiasm and natural curiosity, not to mention her mellifluous voice.

Beyond the considerable role Sheryl plays in bringing BC books to audiences, Sheryl, through her hosting of literary festivals throughout the province (including the Denman Island Writers Festival, the Vancouver Island Children's Book Festival and the Sunshine Coast Festival of the Written Arts), promotes a love of reading, which helps us all to develop new audiences for our future. In addition, over the years, Sheryl and *NXNW*, have played a legacy role not only with her eclectic range of interviews, but also by undertaking the initiative to tape the BC Book Prize events, which form an important archive of award-winning BC writers and publishers.

Deeply passionate about books, humble about her influence on writers and readers, and a good friend to the BC book industry, the ABPBC is delighted to honour Sheryl MacKay with the Gray Campbell Distinguished Service Award in recognition of her immense contribution. The award will be presented to Sheryl MacKay at a dinner to honour her on April 18th, 2013.