



## “Bob’s Interview”

By Crime Writers of Canada Associate Bob Harris



\*Published by Winona Kent—Crime Writers of Canada 2023 Vice Chair and BC/Yukon Representative—in her CWC Regional Newsletter, May 2023 edition.

### I wish I had a recollection of time spent in Halifax, Nova Scotia. But I don’t. I was in Los Angeles.

One of the most memorable times in my life was in 1977 on the Canadian Tour with Toller Cranston’s “The Ice Show”. I was an Executive Producer, Tour Manager, box office auditor, show paymaster, and peacemaker.

**“TOLLER CRANSTON IS NUREYEV ON ICE!”**

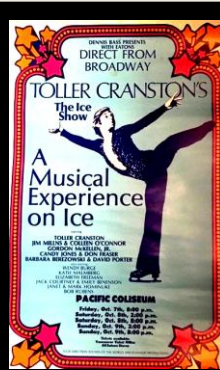
-New York Times

**“THE BEST ICE SHOW IN THE WORLD!”**

-Bob Lape, ABC-TV

**“EXCITING. INSPIRED THEATRICALNESS. SPLENDID COSTUMES AND LOVELY SCENERY.”**

-James Davis, N.Y. Daily News



The national tour poster - Vancouver Pacific Coliseum

I wrote about the tour and a Calgary backstage incident for my SFU writing instructor Ingrid Rose. When I read the piece to the class, Ingrid said that I possessed a hardboiled, pulp fiction style and sent me off to read Chandler and Hammett. That inspired me to start writing my first crime novel.

In the fall of '77, two gentlemen blessed with great style and poise influenced my life:

**TOLLER**, a sharp dressed man in black on skates and **MARTY**, a sharp dressed man in black from America, hunting a debtor in Calgary, Alberta.

I acknowledge the late skating and painting icon and the Florida man as two of three major influencers affecting my entry into the world of crime fiction. The third is Ingrid Rose.

### Bob Harris is a Vancouver writer, book promoter and publicist.

He is currently giving Emmy-winning CDN/USA film maker and CWC member **David Rabinovitch** a hand on national promotion for his October 15th release of **Jukebox Empire**—the true story of his uncle Wolfe Rabin, an aspiring tycoon who partners with a racketeer to build a jukebox that makes millions, then takes the fall for the largest money-laundering scheme in history.

This month’s interview is with gifted writer, editor, journalist, and communications expert from Halifax:

**donalee Moulton**

Marty was a charming, grandfatherly man who hailed from the dark side of money. His profession was visiting wealthy folks who owed money to The Outfit’s casinos. Markers that had to be settled. He arrived backstage at Cranston's final Canadian Tour performance looking for \$28K US. And no, dear readers, he wasn’t chasing Toller.

I have never forgotten Marty or his handshake. He has become the main character of my first crime fiction work-in-progress. *“Marty had once been a brilliant lawyer. That was before The Family called him in the 1940s.”*

#### So here’s the thing:

When the tour headed to Atlantic Canada, better known as The Maritimes in the 1970s, I was headed to Los Angeles to look up the American Producer. He held the signed contracts with Toller and his world-class cast of skaters. I was looking for a signature on a \$50K US promissory note.

Next month, I’ll reveal more of what took place in LA and my tense few hours standing on the corner of Hollywood and Vine after midnight.

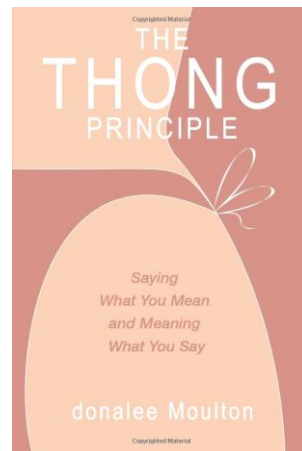
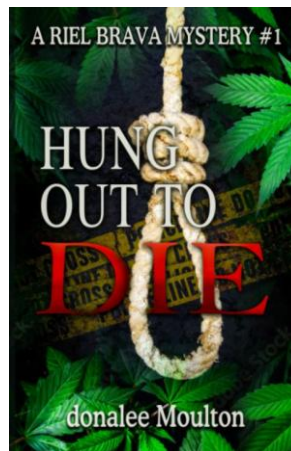
## Meet donalee Moulton

*"This interview took me back in time, pressed me to look forward, and always kept me on my toes. It was fun, it was compelling, and one or two questions scared the bejesus out of me. Which is a good thing. Thanks Bob."* donalee Moulton

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Her first mystery *Hung Out to Die* was published this spring. It hooked me big time. And her synopsis? It was brilliant. *"Fuggeddaboutit."*

She is also the author of *The Thong Principle: Saying What You Mean and Meaning What You Say*.



### **\*Our conversation:**

**Hello donalee, thank you for making time for this interview.**

I would like to acknowledge you as one of the early birds and the first Atlantic Canada author to respond to the announcement from CWC Executive Director Alison Bruce that I am now interviewing authors from across Canada for postings on the newly created "*Bob's Interviews*" category in the Author Interviews Archive section of CWC's website.

I was first introduced to your work in ***Cold Canadian Crime***, the Crime Writers of Canada's 40th anniversary anthology published in May 2022. Your short story, ***Swan Song***, was one of 21 stories selected for publication.

And this year, *Swan Song* was shortlisted in the *Best Crime Short Story* category sponsored by Mystery Magazine for the CWC's Awards of Excellence held on May 25, 2023. Congratulations on that!

**Let's begin with a brief overview of your career as a communications specialist, professional educator and journalist. I would also like to know what influenced you to choose those professions.**

"Choice" is an interesting word. It implies forethought, maybe even planning. Neither describe my career path in journalism or communications. The one constant in my life has been writing – poetry, short stories, essays, articles, books. As I was poised to begin a PhD in sociology at York University (a choice), I decided to explore job options that would let me do more writing and less research. That led me into public relations and eventually to start my own company, Quantum Communications.

In university I wrote regularly for the school paper, *The Dal Gazette*. That led me to freelancing. I discovered you could be paid for writing – one of my personal top-five favorite discoveries – and I have freelanced ever since. My background in communications, journalism, editing, and related endeavors led to requests for me to teach. I accepted those requests and discovered (yet another one) that I thoroughly enjoyed engaging with people to explore ideas and theories while building skills. I did not enjoy grading.

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### ***The Writer and Reader***

**Please enlighten me on when you think you realized that writing was your destiny, even though your website bio states "I don't know that there was one definitive moment, event, or experience that led me to conclude my life would be shaped by words."**

Growing up I wanted to be a lawyer. I started university prepared to be a lawyer. Then I was introduced to academia and research. I wanted to teach at a university and publish papers in esteemed journals. Then I had a scholarship to get a PhD. I was thrilled. I turned it down. I had a chance to go to Harvard to research perceptions of time. I was thrilled. I turned it down. Clearly something else was at play. I finally realized what I wanted to do with my life was write.

**Describe the genres you have pursued. What is your preference?**

I have published poetry and literary short stories. I have published thousands of articles in magazines and newspapers, online and in print. I have published personal essays, usually humorous. More recently, I have

published non-fiction books and my first mystery novel as well as two mystery short stories. Whatever I am working on at the time is my favorite.

### **Who and what are your influences and why? And mentors?**

My mother taught me to love language – and to respect it. She cared about words and getting the words right. She was my greatest influence.

When I was about eight or nine, a next-door neighbor tossed me a Nancy Drew book. She thought I might like it. I sat on the curb between our two houses and read the entire book cover to cover. I loved the puzzle, figuring out who dunnit, and being propelled into a world outside my own.

That same year someone gifted me *Charlotte's Web*, and my life was forever changed. Not only could words transport you to new worlds, they could become a part of your heart, change you in ways you could not have imagined. I wanted to do that.

### **As a book reader, what genre appeals to your personal taste?**

I really like mysteries. When you're busy, career focused, juggling meetings and deadlines and interviews and research and editing and teaching and scurrying to find something for dinner, there isn't a lot of time for reading. As wrong as that is, it is also a reality. So, I embraced the mystery genre and read as much as I could as often as I could. That was sheer enjoyment.

I also wanted my ideas to be challenged, my senses to be assaulted (gently but definitively), and my heart to be broken. So, I read as many novels, especially Canadian novels, as my mind, heart, and spirit could bear.

### **Do you have an ideal reading experience?**

There is no special place for me when it comes to reading. Whenever I have a chance to engage with a book, that is the most special of all places. Like a curb. My mother told the story of one Christmas when I was about five. Turkey is in the oven, tree is lit, gifts are being opened, bows and paper everywhere. It was all a little too much for me. She turned to find me curled on the couch reading. I loved that couch.

### **What books have you read recently? (What format--print, e-book)? Do you listen to audio books?**

I'm trying to reduce my screen time and I like to read before I go to sleep, so e-books are not currently my go-to. I love the idea of audio books but

have yet to delve into that format. (I fall asleep to audio meditations, and audio books would compete with that joy.)

I was a judge in the recent Crime Writers of Canada Awards of Excellence and read 43 wonderful, diverse, absorbing, and amazing novels. It reminded me to immerse myself more and more often in Canadian writing.

**How is the library in your writing space organized?**

Haphazardly, with a whiff of organization. There is the non-fiction section, the books-by-people-I-know section, my books, books on writing and editing, and everything else, which is most of the books. Trying to find a mystery or novel can be time consuming but it is time well spent. I get to scan shelves and remind myself of all I have yet to read and reread.

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***The Riel Brava Mystery Series***

***Hung Out to Die*** (published March 1, 2023, BWL Publishing Inc.)

**First off, I'm going on record by stating your synopsis is the best I've read during the past 18 months. Brilliant!**

**Please explain how writing a great synopsis is what I perceive to be an acquired skill. How did you learn it?**

There is an accepted structure to writing a great synopsis. I did not know that when I wrote mine. For which I am grateful. My background in journalism helped me hone essential skills: succinctness, flow, storytelling. Those ingredients, I think, are what made the synopsis resonate with readers and my publisher despite taking the path less travelled.

**So here's the thing: I love to read, but being a Virgo with an eye--or is it an obsession?--for detail and perfection (oh my gosh), I am generally a slow reader.**

**Your debut mystery novel is written in a style and point of view that had me burning through the pages and not missing a word faster than I could believe. The wordsmithing is golden. And so polished.**

**And no, dear reader of "Bob's Interviews", donalee did not slip me a bag of CCC weed and a bundle of rolled up cash with her manuscript. I'm straight up on touting her talent displayed in this novel.**

You are too kind. As a writer, you are always aware of what you would have done differently. It's wonderful to hear you did something well.

### **What inspired the story?**

A bath. I'm a big believer in bubbles, candles, scrubs, essential oils, and music with birds chirping in the background. Friends call this bathroom time my shrine. One night immersed in a lavender cloud I realized it was time to begin writing my mystery. Get off the pot kind of thing. That led me to a litany of possible characters and crimes. Through the mist Riel emerged. Not fully formed but outlined enough that I wrote down my ideas before I even moisturized.

### **Describe the setting, lifestyle, ethnic and personality profile of your main character Riel Brava.**

Riel, at least on the surface, is an unusual character for me. He's male. Quintessentially male in many ways: confident, fit, good looking, charming, ambitious. He also has a distinctive personality trait; he's a psychopath. The kind of psychopath that often succeeds in a corporate structure that calls for dispassion.

An American, Riel is currently living in Nova Scotia and working as CEO of the Canadian Cannabis Corporation. He aspires to return to the U.S. and run for president. First, he wants to hone his leadership skills and cement his business credentials.

Riel lives between worlds. His first name is Gabriel; his adoptive parents' last name is Brava. Riel is neither French nor Latino. In that same way, Riel is a successful man in a competitive world, but it is a world he does not identify with on fundamental levels.

### **Define the point of view in the narrative and what or who influenced your decision to implement it.**

You are reminding me that I have made decisions I was not aware of making. POV was one. Perhaps it was the path of least resistance, perhaps it was that Riel emerged fairly well formed from the bathroom fog, but it never occurred to me that this book would be written in any other voice than his. That non-decision, of course, meant from a plot perspective that Riel had to be involved in the scattering and solving of clues. That was challenging at times.

It's interesting to me that I have written a second mystery, not a Riel Brava mystery, and there are many points of view – from the main characters, from secondary characters, from suspects. It was great fun going down this POV path. But Riel holds a special place in my heart.

### **Who are the core cast of returning characters in the series?**

As I noted in the synopsis, there are characters who will undoubtedly return in future books. They play a central and secondary role next to Riel.

*Tiffany Brava.* Riel's wife and loyal supporter. Somewhere in the recesses of her mind, Tiffany knows Riel is not quite like everyone else – and she knows why. For now, that door is closed. What's openly obvious is her affection for her husband, her loyalty, and her acumen. Don't count Tiffany out as the dumb blonde. Oh yes, she's vegan.

*Franklin Raynes.* The Halifax Police Department's lead detective on this case is Black, characteristically Nova Scotian, and a consummate charmer. He can read the room and respond accordingly. He takes a shine to Riel and also realizes how helpful the psychopath can be in solving this case. (Yes, Lin Raynes is privy to Riel's deepest secret, but he doesn't admit it to his new friend – just yet.) Oh yeah, Raynes also does this thing with his left eyebrow.

*Senator John Williams.* Tiffany's dad | Riel's father-in-law is the Democratic Senator for District 19. A seasoned and senior politician, Williams is a co-owner of CCC, although it's not an asset he talks about with constituents. He's brusque, except where his daughter is concerned, and well connected, even in Canada.

*Zahra Bashir.* A practising Muslim and savvy TV reporter who's always on the lookout for the inside scoop. Bashir makes many of the other characters very nervous despite her friendly demeanor.

*David Clements.* The recreational cannabis sector in Canada is heavily regulated. Clements is the federal DOJ's contact for Riel. Their relationship is one of power and powerful expectations. Clements holds that power. Although a minor character, Clements plays an important role. He's the first person to use a special word.

There are two returning characters who surprised me: Tiffany and Marcia, Riel's executive assistant. They took on lives of their own despite my preconceived notions. Another character, the victim's son, Bran, also

became much more fully formed and essential than I had originally imagined. I'm debating whether to bring him back.

**Give me a glimpse of the research involved in developing the story.**

There were key elements to the story that had to be authentic, at least in a fictional context. I have done a lot of reporting on the cannabis industry and have had the opportunity to tour a cannabis production plant before it opened. Likewise, for years as a freelance journalist I wrote on the health sector and health issues, including mental health and personality issues. As a communications specialist, many of my clients were from this sector.

**How long did *Hung Out to Die* take to complete from concept to final manuscript readiness for submission to literary agents and publishers?**

A year. There is part of me that thinks I dicked around too much that year. There is another part that thinks that time helped to better formulate characters and plot.

**Please share your journey to landing a publication deal with BWL Publishing Inc.**

It was the Crime Writers who pointed me in the direction of BWL – thank you. I knew I wanted to try and get Riel published traditionally. Self-publishing is an unfamiliar world and despite its many advantages, I liked the partnership inherent in having a publisher. I read the CWC newsletter thoroughly and made a note of where writers were publishing. I visited these publishers' websites to see if it was a fit. BWL was a great fit.

**When can readers expect the next book in the series?**

Soon. Ish.

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***On the Craft of Writing***

(Magazine, Newspaper, Stand-alone books, and Poetry)

**If you had to write a medium length poem, the first 1,000 words of a short story, a 750 word magazine article on business ethics, and a chapter of the next Riel Brava Mystery Series TODAY, how would you plan the workload and shift your writer's mind through it?**



I'd do the article first and the poem last. The article requires (possibly) research and use of quotes from interviewees. This can take time. I'd do it, have it done, then return later in the day to edit it. The poem I'd write last but would be thinking about it throughout the day, so when the time comes to write, I have ideas and lines in mind. The short story and the chapter are a toss-up. I have freedom and flexibility with the short story. The chapter would follow from what has gone previously and the direction I've determined moving forward, so thinking about content is less of an issue. Wordsmithing is the focus.

**Briefly describe a typical week in your writing life as a crime fiction author and communications specialist.**

I am not a marathon writer. I am a sprinter. I can't sit and write for hours at a time. I break up my writing by taking a yoga class, soaking up some sunshine, checking email, doing some paid work. I do try to write 1,000 fictional words a day. Some days I achieve this. We don't need to talk about the other days.

**How do you deal with Rejection Notices on your submissions?**

As a freelance journalist, you make a living pitching ideas. For every ten you pitch, two might get accepted. The others didn't make the cut for a whole bunch of reasons that have nothing to do with you or the idea. You get used to editors saying no, and you shrug it off. A lot more goes into a book and the shrugging off is harder, but it is the same principle. You only sell if you're out there in the market. I hug the cat, do a downward dog, and send the damn thing out again.

**Please give me the elevator pitch on *The Thong Principle* (published May 16, 2022, Business Expert Press).**

*The Thong Principle* has nothing to do with beachwear and everything to do with communication. The book explores why miscommunication occurs, where writers and speakers are most likely to muddy the waters, and why we put our heads in the sand when it comes to saying what we mean.

The book takes readers through common communications problems including conciseness, elevated language, and disorganized language. The chapter, "It's Not What You Say, It's How You Say It, Idiot," delves into the issue of tone.

There is also a chapter that looks at the plain language movement and the demand for language to be understandable, not indecipherable. In the U.S.,

plain language is now the law. Here's why: While 60 percent of people can grasp the significance of the lyrics of an Elvis Presley song, only 14 percent can correctly answer four questions about the most basic components of their health insurance plan, and only two percent can understand the minutes of the Federal Open Market Committee.

This has nothing to do with the intelligence of readers and listeners and everything to do with the messages they are receiving. That's what *The Thong Principle* is all about.

And I'll leave you with this grammatically correct sentence. Any idea what it means?

A perissodactyl ungulate may be propelled toward a body of aqueous fluid, but such ungulate cannot be compelled or forcibly induced to imbibe such fluid.

**How did the opportunity develop for the non-fiction book you co-authored with Clare O'Connor, *Celebrity Court Cases: Trials of the Rich and Famous* (published in 2006, mass-market by Altitude Publishing)?**

We were approached by the publisher who was launching a new non-fiction series for the U.S. market. It was my first book and I got to co-write it with a wonderful friend.

**How long did it take to research and write? Was the book successful?**

I believe it took us six months from start to finish. But this was an easier book to write in the sense that each chapter focused on a court case or crime involving one person including Martha Stewart, Michael Jackson, Bill Clinton. It was easy to divvy up the work, and the work was less intimidating because it resembled writing a series of articles.

The book did well. Sadly, the publisher did not. Shortly after the book was published, the company folded, a situation of unexpected and large returns from Canadian booksellers we were told.

**During the 2023 Spring BookFest, you delivered a video presentation on What Makes A Great Book Title (now available on your website at <https://donaleemoulton.com/more>). In crafting an article title, please list the 4 things editors want.**

Editors are just as happy if you don't craft a title. They see this as their purview. That said, it never hurts to give it a shot. Editors want titles that (1) explain what readers are about to read (2) make them want to read it (3) make the topic interesting and informative (4) are not long or narrative.

### **What are the 3 main ingredients in a strong book title?**

*Length.* Shorter is better. Too short though, i.e., one-word titles, and search engines may overlook the book altogether.

*Memorable.* Clever. Funny. Chilling. Alliterative. Anything that says to a reader, "Open me."

*Telling.* Give readers a taste of what awaits. In four words or less.

### **What inspired the title for *The Thong Principle*?**

I have been using this title in my writing and editing classes for years. The name came to me after spending several glorious days on a beach in Mexico. As you sit under a dried palm umbrella, icy marguerita within easy reach, and a best-selling mystery novel in hand, there is little to do but enjoy life, fill your lungs with gratitude, and look up every once in a while to soak in the atmosphere. As I looked up, and walked the beach, it occurred to me that many vacationers were wearing thongs. Of course, when you see enough people opting to wear an outfit with less material than my cat's harness, it raises a very personal question: Should I wear a thong?

After a week of looking and lounging, I had my answer. *No.*

Whatever carefree attitude,chutzpah, confidence, or complacency it took to walk up and down a public beach with your ass hanging out, I didn't have it. (Still don't.) Initially, that realization surprised me and disappointed me. I wanted to be the lighthearted beach walker who meandered blithely up and down the sand without a care in the world about my bare ass, who was looking, or how I ranked on the thong-wearing scale.

I came to realize, however, that my reluctance to wear a thong was just that. Mine. It's about comfort, physically and emotionally. I am not a thong wearer. I've learned to live with that.

I've also come to realize this reality is the foundation of effective communication. While you want to look good and sound good when you share information and insights, you also want to look and sound like yourself. Indeed, it's essential that you do. Anything else will sound forced,

unnatural, and suspicious. It will raise two questions: Do you know what you're talking about? Are you being honest with me?

And that's the thong principle. It's about getting your message across in the way you intended with the information you intended actually being understood. Otherwise, why bother. You might as well stay inside the resort and order room service

### **How did the title for *Hung Out to Die* emerge? Was it your first choice in the beginning?**

As I was writing this book, a funny aside started to take place involving a word the main character had never heard before: Chunderfuck. In my mind, that became the title of the book with asterisks replacing two of the letters in the last syllable. I then built on this concept. Future books would have similar fun but profane titles: Numb Nuts, Dick Wad, Arse.

It was not meant to be. As I was starting to shop around my book, I realized the title might lead agents and publishers to conclude the book would be darker, edgier, grittier than it is. Indeed, it's quite funny. I also didn't want to turn off publishers before they even read the book. I went with a working title instead: *So, a psychopath walked into a bar*. In my mind, the book would still be called Chunderf\*\*k, an issue I would raise with my publisher as soon as I had one. Which I did. BWL was more than open to changing the title. But not to Chunder, and not for the reason you might think. Search engines don't pick up asterisks that can be confused with coding language.

Dammit.

So the book is called *Hung Out to Die*. It's a play on words, drying plants is linked to cannabis, and the victim dies by hanging. It's short, it's got some oomph, but let's face it, it's no Chunderf\*\*k.

### **If you were tasked with organizing a Halifax tour for a quartet of crime and thriller fiction writers from Malta who were looking for the city's top three historical crime scene sites, where would you take them?**

1. Halifax is defined by the ocean, so it only makes thematic sense that our journey start in Halifax Harbour with a boat ride to McNabs Island, part of a provincial park. Here we can visit military forts established as part of the Halifax Defence Complex and enjoy a hike on one of the many trails that crisscross the island. But it's really Hangman's Beach

that will intrigue us most. In the early 1800s, the British Admiralty hanged deserters here – and left their bodies on view as a warning to anyone else foolish enough to contemplate committing the same crime.

2. Back on terra firma, we'll head to the Hydrostone in the city's north end. This distinctive neighbourhood was built after the SS *Imo* and the SS *Mont Blanc*, carrying 2,500 tons of explosives, collided on December 6, 1917. The result: the worst non-natural disaster in the world's history. More Nova Scotians were killed in the explosion than in World War I. Homes were desperately needed and planners got to work creating a community with buildings made from compressed cement, or hydrostone. Today, there are restaurants, stores, and businesses in the area as well as residents. Perhaps we'll grab a bite of lunch.

We will take time to visit All Saints Cathedral in the afternoon. The church has ghostly links to the Halifax Explosion. Haligonians grew up hearing about the church organist who lost his life the morning the two ships collided. He literally lost his head through a church window – a window that still shows a silhouette no matter how many times the glass is replaced.

3. By now, it's time for supper. I'd recommend the Five Fishermen and a steaming bowl of seafood chowder. The restaurant is in an historic four-storey brick and wood building in the heart of the city's downtown. Before it was a restaurant, however, this building was a funeral home. The funeral home in 1912 where undertakers attended to hundred of bodies from the Titanic and five years later those who died in the explosion. In the years since it has been a restaurant, staff and customers tell tales of glasses flying off shelves, taps turning on by themselves, and people in old-fashioned garb disappearing when you speak to them.

**How has membership in Crime Writers of Canada and your role as Atlantic Canada Regional Representative benefitted your career as an author?**

Membership has connected me to other writers, many far more experienced, and all willing to discuss ideas and offer insight. I learn about publishing and publishers from the newsletter and CWC social media. I learn more about the writing community in Canada. I have opportunities to enter contests and to connect with great interviewers, like Bob Harris.

## **How many CWC Authors and Associate Members are in your region?**

We have 17 members in four provinces. Small but mighty.

## **Please share a few "light bulb" moments you have experienced during the two and a half decades of your journey as a writer.**

This is a tough question. There are personal "light bulb" moments and professional ones. Here is one of each.

#1 I wrote an article early in my career about an infant born several months prematurely (with only a tablespoon of blood in its entire body if I remember correctly) and the fight to save the little one. I recall drafting the article with tears streaming down my cheeks. In that moment I realized, for me, that journalism was about moving people as well as informing them.

#2 Most of the articles I wrote were for magazines and newspapers based in Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver and often trade publications read by members of professions like medicine, law, accounting. An article I wrote was reprinted in the local paper and I couldn't get over the number of people who approached me to say they had read it. This drove home the importance of having a presence in the community where you live.

## **What major milestones and accomplishments come to mind?**

Firsts are always thrilling: first article, first interview of a really famous person (Tina Turner), first interview of a really famous person who is a huge disappointment (Gene Simmons from Kiss), first class I taught, first presentation (where I was the expert), first time I was introduced as "a writer," first book, first mystery book, first interview with Bob Harris.

## **Are there writing and publishing conferences, book fairs and related events that you would like to participate in or attend during 2023 and 2024?**

I'd like to go to them all. I'd also like a crystal ball to tell me what events would be best for me. There are so many great ones like Malice Domestic and Bouchercon. Perhaps I'll start with the Toronto International Festival of Authors.

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**Thank you for this interview, donalee. I've thoroughly enjoyed my English Bay park bench moments in the Vancouver sunshine reading and chuckling my way through *Hung Out to Die*. What a book!**

**To wrap up our conversation, kindly give me flash answers to:**

**Your favourite beverage.**

Rooibos. Something with fruit.

**A notable Nova Scotia cuisine restaurant you would take the Malta writers to.**

There are fabulous gourmet restaurants in Nova Scotia, but we are known for being casual and comfortable. Diners and pubs are great places to eat and a favorite of locals. I'd take the Malta writers to Jim's Restaurant for fish and chips or an all-day breakfast.

**A memorable book you were gifted during your early childhood.**

*Charlotte's Web.*

**Your favourite Atlantic Canada landmark.**

Sadly, it is the Swissair Memorial Site in Bayswater along Nova Scotia's South Shore. On September 2, 1998, Swissair Flight 111 crashed into the Atlantic Ocean. All 229 people on board died. Before that was known, when rescues seemed possible, every healthcare professional – even those not called in – showed up at the main hospital as well as other centers to help. When it was clear this was now a recovery operation, local fishers got in their boats and started retrieval. They live with that trauma today. This memorial reminds me of the place where I come from and the people that make that place special.

**An unexpected and thrilling moment you experienced as a professional newspaper journalist.**

My dad was from Grand Bank, NL, and he grew up in an era where stable jobs in known professions were the brass ring. And he had a daughter who wanted to be a writer. He never questioned that decision and fully supported it but wasn't always quite sure what it entailed or how it could support me. I remember the moment although not the specifics when Dad and I were out somewhere, and he ran into an old friend. He turned to introduce me, and the friend said, "I know you. You're the writer." Dad beamed. So did I.



Author website: <https://donaleemoulton.com>

Quantum Communications: <https://quantumcommunications.ca>

BWL Publishing Inc.: <https://bwlpublishing.ca>

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Writing professionally as Robert H. Harris and working as a consultant to writers, Bob accepts email inquiries at: [harrisbobh@hotmail.com](mailto:harrisbobh@hotmail.com) (Profile and publicity photos available on request).