

Lucy Maud Montgomery Was A Journalist

By Cindy Venema

L. M. Montgomery was indirectly honoured at a journalism conference in Ottawa. Montgomery's association to journalism is interesting, and is another example of her success as a Canadian writer.

On October 25 and 26 The Canadian Association of Journalists hosted a conference in the Nation's capital that focused on Women in the Media. Many professional female journalists from across Canada attended this conference, including students aspiring to become "professional". From the Maritimes, five students from Dalhousie attended and one student attended from UPEI.

Many prominent women spoke at the conference including Sheila Copps and Barbara Amiel. There were also many interesting panels to attend, such as "Arts reporting and Criticism" and "New Media, New Jobs".

The conference was a great opportunity for female journalists to meet and discuss issues. And it was a great opportunity to display information about the successes of women in the media.

The Canadian Women's Press Club (CWPC) display was of particular interest to journalists from PEI. The CWPC was founded in 1904 by reporter Margaret Graham and Colonel George Ham, the publicity agent for Canadian Pacific Railways.

The history of the CWPC started with Graham approaching Ham about letting female journalists take the train for excursions to events, a privilege only male reporters had enjoyed to that point. Ham agreed, only if Graham could find 12 qualified women

journalists. And he was surprised when Margaret Graham returned to his office and gave him a list of 16 names.

On the trip the women bonded. Not wanting to lose these new connections, the ladies formed the Canadian Women's Press Club. These



16 women were the original members of the club, and they intended to keep the membership extremely elite.

Interestingly, Prince Edward Island produced one journalist who became a member of this tight group. The creator of the Island's red-haired Anne of Green Gables, Lucy Maude Montgomery became a member of the CWPC in 1910.

Besides her many stories that were produced in magazines and newspapers all over North America, Montgomery also had experience working for a newspaper, The Daily Echo in Halifax. She enjoyed her year working for the paper, 1901-2, where she was the only female employee. And eventually, after many menial jobs, she was granted the position of

editor of the society page in the Saturday editions.

Every Monday, Maud produced a column entitled "Around the Tea-Table" which she signed under the name Cynthia. This column consisted of information about photography, fashion, food and hairstyles. Montgomery found the life of a Newswoman exciting even though she had very little social time.

Her pay just covered her living and grocery expenses, so to provide money for clothing and travelling she wrote stories on the side to sell to magazines. Montgomery, who was used to writing in complete privacy, learned

how to create stories in the chaos and noise of journalists and printing presses.

Montgomery's triumph in the media world showed how women were becoming increasingly respected as newswomen. Her contributions to the field of journalism and writing helped open doors for other women, and made Societies, such as the Canadian Women's Press Club, successful.

Last week the Canadian Association of Journalists was able to honour and listen to important women in the media. Their knowledge and insights about the world of journalism were extremely interesting. Lucy Maude Montgomery and her fellow CWPC members helped strengthen this powerful force in the media: the force of the newswomen.

Memorial's Brawling Beauty Queen

By David Cochrane and Chad Luff

The Muse, Memorial University

Memorial University's brawling beauty queen has finally spoken up about an assault charge that has made her the centre of massive media scrutiny and KO'd her dream of earning the redundant title Miss World International.

Danielle House, Miss Canada International, broke her silence at an Oct. 29 press conference where she read a prepared statement, but still refused to give details about the incident on the advice of her lawyers.

"I have suffered the experiences of emotional and physical abuse prior to this incident and I wish to say that it had a direct impact in regards to this matter," House said. "When the proper time and opportunity presents itself I look forward to describing the truth as to what really happened."

The 20-year-old nursing student was charged for allegedly punching another woman in the face at a campus pub on Oct. 18. The woman, who police have said was at the bar with House's ex-boyfriend, is said to have suffered facial injuries including a broken nose and a chipped tooth.

The upcoming Miss Caribbean Queen International World pageant dealt House a low blow when they disqualified her from the pageant because of the charge. House says she will not challenge this decision.

"I must express my dismay and sadness that the decision to remove me from participation in the Miss World International pageant was made prior to my being able to describe my side of this incident," she said.

"That was to be but one special part of my year. I expect to encounter many special events in the upcoming period and with it I will have many special memories as I tour Canada throughout the remainder of my reign."

Reporters from American trash TV shows like Hard Copy and A Current Affair have flooded Memorial's campus to find out the true story of the pageant-queen pugilist.

Local news rooms have been flooded with calls from newspapers as far away as London, England, and House's picture has regularly been on the front page of tabloids like The Toronto Sun.

Through it all pageant organizers from across the country have been quick in their support of House.

"We feel that when Danielle's side of the story comes out, people will fully understand and at this point we don't see any justification for taking her crown away," said Sylvia Stark, coordinator for Miss Canada International.

Stark also said there was more to the story than the public knows. "We know the full story and we feel it doesn't matter what the outcome [in court] is -- she will keep her crown," Stark said. "We are not going to take her crown away because of someone trying to hurt her or someone trying to take her crown away."

