

Here's what the poets are saying



Corey Larocque

Poetry is a secret hobby of a good number of Niagara Falls residents, a recent contest by The Review revealed. Nicknamed So You Think You Can Rhyme, it is the paper's light-hearted attempt to find an unofficial poet laureate.

The idea came up after the Sudbury Star reported on that city's search for an official poet laureate – someone who will get a modest \$1,000 stipend from city hall to write poems for public events over a two-year term.

If Sudbury, why not Niagara Falls?

So The Review invited readers to submit limericks in an attempt to find out what kind of poetic talent was out there. Limericks, because they're easy – most people learned the format in elementary school. They're usually amusing, telling a story in five lines.

And they're short, meaning the paper could reprint the best of them.

The results were impressive. Close to 30 people submitted a total of more than 50 poems.

Last week, Balzac's Coffee on Queen Street hosted So You Think You Can Rhyme's reading night, where a group of Review readers helped picked their favourites. In cases where poets submitted more than one entry, their most popular one is included here.

The "parking poet," city commissioner David Smith, read numerous poems he has written over the years, but they're not limericks, so his most popular limerick is on the list here.

Andrew Waldie Porteus, a librarian who spoke about the history of Niagara-inspired poems, entered several of his own. Again, his most popular – called Bossy – is on this list.

Smith's poetry is published <http://theparkingpoet.wordpress.com>. And Waldie Porteus' is at www.niagarapoetry.ca.

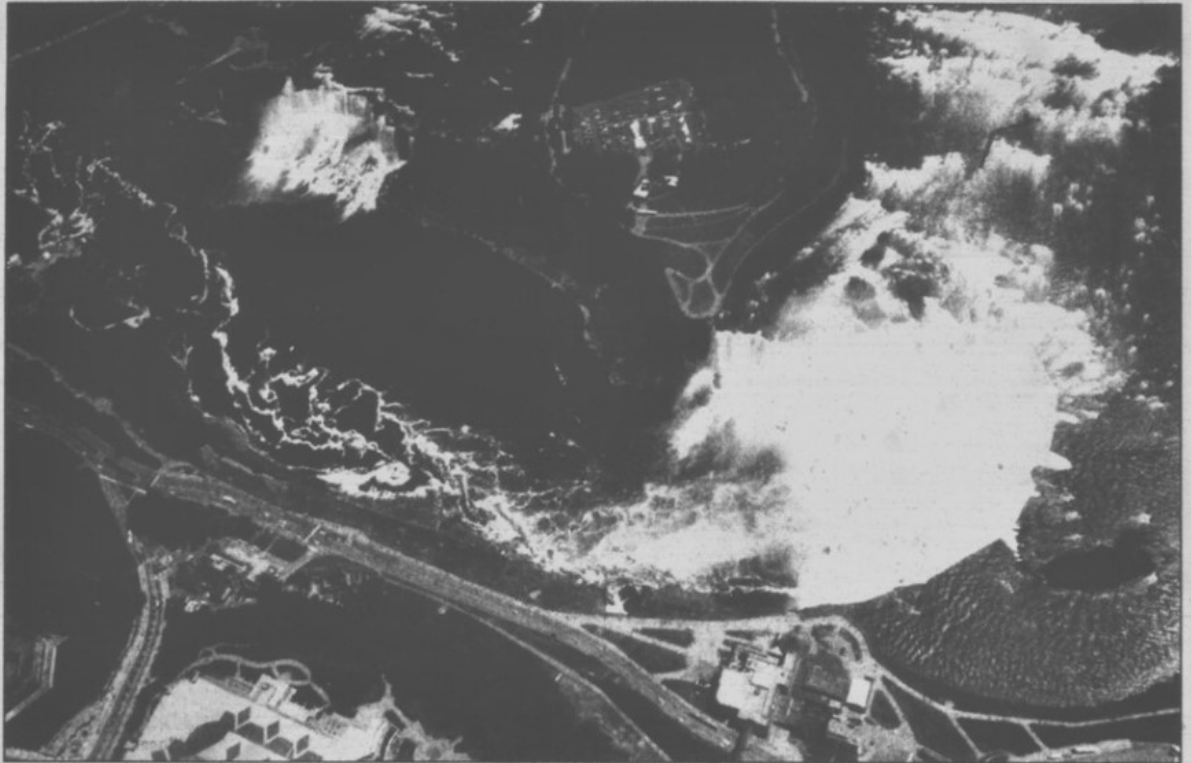
A crowd favourite was by a young downtown artist named Kris, who gave a rap about Niagara Falls. It wasn't a limerick, but it was darned entertaining. We're trying to find him to get him to record it on video so we can post it on The Review's website.

We're reprinting the 10 most popular, so readers can help us narrow it further. (All of the poems are reprinted on The Review's website).

If there's a clear-cut favourite, that person will be the unofficial poet laureate. If not, there will be a run-off of the top three and a panel of judges will choose.

Here are the 10 most popular, reprinted in alphabetical order by the poet's last name.

To vote for your favourite, email the title of it to



MATT DAY Sun Media file photo

The magical mystery of the Horseshoe and American falls, shown above, has inspired many poets over the years, as well as some who entered The Review's So You Think You Can Rhyme contest. Interestingly, so did the photo of Bossy the cow at the falls, which is shown courtesy of the Niagara Falls Public Library.

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Before Explorers and Pioneers
Before explorers and pioneers came,
Indians gave Niagara its name.
For, sound and sight displayed
Left each viewer dismayed—
Now power and beauty parent
world fame.

Betty Beam

To Avoid an Unpleasant Tryst
A young girl who'd never been kissed
To avoid an unpleasant tryst
She paddled her skiff
O'er the watery cliff
Becoming the Maid of the Mist

Christopher Ellis

Brave men
Brave men - know the type -
who have balls?
Drive stunt cars so fast and
through walls ...
Normally wear apparel
To protect, but a barrel?!
Are there any survived from
these falls?

Doug Harris

Maid of the Mist
There once was a Maid of the
river
Who ate frail tourists for
dinner.
But her lease ran dry
And no local did cry
That the mist was ever a
winner.

David Janzen

Mimi and Rose
There once was a man from
Montrose

who could get himself off with
his toes
He could do this so neat,
fell in love with his feet
and named them Mimi and
Rose

"Cornelius P. McStone"

Magical Place
In a magical place full of rain-
bows.
The spirits in the mist dance
below.
It's the wonder of Niagara
Falls.
God's gift to us all.
Promising to make your heart
glow.

Angela Murdoch

Parked at the Mall
Daredevils have been at the
Falls
1812 brought us cannon balls
Laura Secord was dear
Warned British the U.S. was
near
Now we fight to get parked at
the mall

Heather Price

The Frankenstein Museum
A museum on Clifton Hill
The fear factor is the thrill
Up and down the shops
around
Frankenstein's the eeriest
sound
Hear the buzz saw from the
mill

David Smith

Sad Story
There was a young lady
named Carol,



Who found herself in a big
barrel.
It went over The Falls
Amid many loud calls....
There ONCE was a lady named
Carol!

Win Valiquette

Bossy
A cow named Bossy took her
drink
Daily, by the Falls at the brink
She never went over.
She must have et clover
Of the four-leaved kind, or
she'd sink!

Andrew Waldie Porteus

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