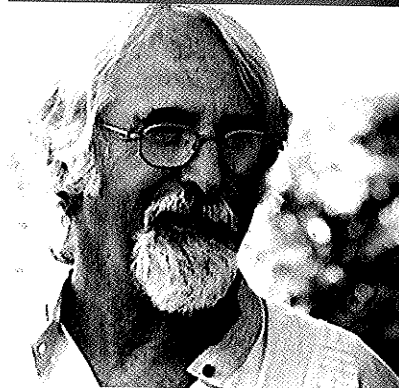


Q&A



GARY GEDDES

Recent writer-in-residence
Okanagan College, Vernon

OF THE MORE THAN 35 BOOKS YOU HAVE WRITTEN OR EDITED, POETRY APPEARS TO BE YOUR FAVOURITE. Yes, poetry remains my favourite genre, the one that has the power to get into our bone marrow and change our lives. It's the intimacy and economy of poetry that works magic on us, the concrete details that activate our senses and the subtle rhythms that nest in our ear.

YOU'VE BEEN CREDITED WITH AN ENORMOUS IMPACT ON TEACHING AND WRITING POETRY IN CANADA, IS IT GETTING ENOUGH ATTENTION IN SCHOOLS? Poetry is our first language, the one we learn at our mother's breast, listening to the rhythms of speech, unconcerned about logic or reason and all those prose concerns, a vehicle of joy that helps us build another bridge to replace the umbilical one that has been cut. There can never be too much attention to poetry in the schools, as it's language in its purest form, capable of great pleasure, comfort and power.

WERE YOU SURPRISED BY THE POPULARITY OF YOUR NON-FICTION BOOK KINGDOM OF TEN THOUSAND THINGS? I'm always surprised by the popularity of my work since I am often writing about difficult and painful materials. However, it's a great joy to know that it is being read and appreciated. *Falsework*, my new book of poems about the collapse of the Second Narrows Bridge in Vancouver, has been dramatized, set to music, included in a painting, named by Shelagh Rogers as her "favourite book of the year." The response knocked my socks off. It also gave me courage to continue writing.

WHAT NEXT? A non-fiction book called *Airborne Particles* about the effects of aid and intervention on human rights, and finding out what kind of political and environmental footprint we are leaving in Africa. —staff

HOMELESS ADULTS WITH ADDICTIONS AND MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES WILL FIND LONG-TERM SUPPORT AND SAFE HOUSING AT CARDINGTON APARTMENTS

PULSE



HOPE FOR THE HOMELESS

New supportive housing initiative launched in Kelowna

Kelowna has a new facility to help break the cycle of homelessness. Owned and operated by the John Howard Society of the Central and South Okanagan (JHSCSO), Cardington Apartments on St. Paul Street is intended to help adults with addictions and mental health issues move from temporary shelters to long-term stable housing.

"Access to safe, secure housing is a fundamental part of building a healthy community," says Kelowna mayor Sharon Shepherd. "People will receive the long-term support and housing they require to overcome their addictions."

Tenants will be provided with a homelike, supportive environment for a period of up to two years. Through 24-hour support, they will receive the life skills training and goal setting they need to live more independently.

"Cardington Apartments is not simply a way to get people off the streets, but to provide a wide range of services designed to educate and support individuals in the recovery process to move on with their lives," says JHSCSO executive director Shelley Cook.

The four-storey building consists of a common and administrative space on the ground floor and 30 self-contained bachelor units on the three upper floors. Construction was completed in September.

"Things have been going well since we moved in on September 22," says Cook. "We now have 15 tenants living in the building (as of October 16)."

The 10 men and five women "are adjusting to their new living environment," she says, adding that they are working with support staff from Interior Health to meet the goals identified through their individual program plans.

"This project is about providing men and women who have mental health and addiction issues