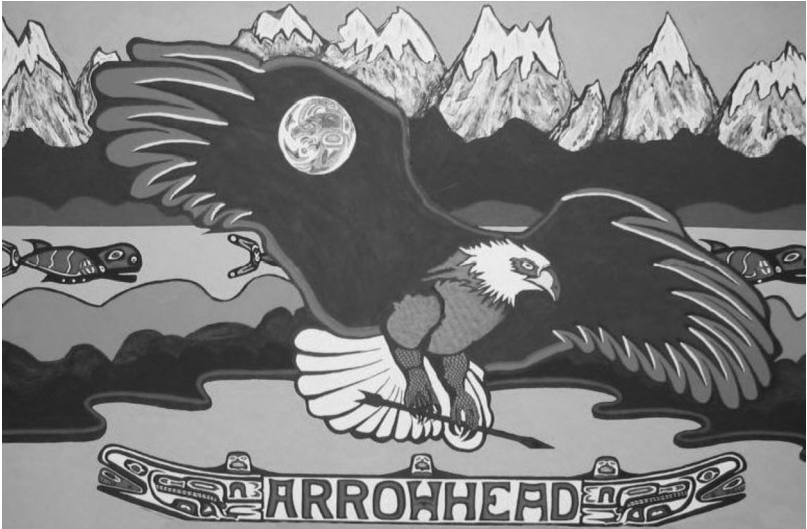


*Poems from the  
Arrowhead Clubhouse*





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Painting on front cover by Rudy Ostrom  
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## Arrowhead Clubhouse Mission Statement

*Arrowhead's mission is to support our members who suffer from a serious chronic mental illness on their journey to recovery.*

*This is done by creating opportunities through the use of our facility, support programs, our housing initiative, and our ability to build a bridge with a wider community.*



*Arrowhead Community Creative Writing Workshop*

In 2017, a group of individuals gathered every other Friday at the Arrowhead Clubhouse to explore Creative Writing ideas, styles and thoughts around a theme. We wrote together, but also on our own.

The patina of our creativity, humour, and honesty shades the pages where we laid down the power of our words for our own viewing, which we now share with you in this publication.

Core contributors were Marie, Suzanne, Melanie, & Brian. Additional contributors included Pam, Justine, Sheena, Lisa, Faux, Kristops, & Janet.

The members would like to thank the wonderful Jeanne Sommerfield who facilitated the creative writing workshops and the marvelous Jane Covernton who helped us create this beautiful publication.





## Rain/Hard Day's Night

It's been such a long winter...  
Depressed. Gloomy. Shut in.  
Rain. Rain. Rain.  
Get naked at home.  
Jump in the shower-warm up!  
Wrap up in a blue silk robe. Jump in bed.  
Read a book, Charles Dickens 'Bleak House'.  
Rain on the roof... pitter patter like Thomas the cat.  
Loud like thunder. Fearful noise.  
Safe. Comfortable. At home.

By Marie, Suzanne, Christie, Brian, Pam, Justine, Janet



## Food Bank Egg

Don't sit there! Why?  
There's an egg!  
Who laid that egg?  
A food bank egg  
From a Rhode Island Red  
Fresh from the Creek.  
The chicken was fresh, not so the egg.  
The egg is on the chair.  
The egg is everywhere.  
On the floor there is more.  
Broken egg. Rejected egg. Donated egg.  
Here it is. All cracked up.  
Brian has the plan to clean it off the floor.  
Mop & bucket—mess no more!  
The evidence is on the chair. Everywhere.  
Broken.

By Marie, Suzanne, Brian, Christie, Sheena

## Wind - This We Know

Breezy, stormy, cool, warm, gusty.  
Quiet, deafening, peaceful, exhilarating.  
Soft, stinging, pushing, pulling.

Sometimes there's no wind - less air - hard to breathe.  
Capture with sails, flags, clothes on the line,  
Birds on the wing, clouds flow slowly by.  
Blowing soft as a kitten, harsh as an insult.  
Warm as a teddy bear, or a favourite blanket.

Cold as being lonely.  
Ocean spray from sculpted waves.  
Swirling snowflakes from winter's blast.

We are buffeted  
life's winds.  
How do we survive the force?  
Our souls stand strong.  
Sturdy as an old oak tree,  
With roots deep in our  
community.

By Pam & Marie





## My Teddy Bear

Allie is...

Soft & cuddly, comforting, fuzzy,  
Held with love in my arms.  
A Prairie bear from Saskatchewan.  
A remembering gift, a happy gift.  
She is always with me!

By Pam

## Between Myself & I

I keep it in my head  
Between myself & I.  
Sadness, anxiety, questions.  
Answers? Maybe not. Pieces.  
A puzzle in my head.  
Things I'm afraid to say out loud.  
Anger- not being good enough.  
Black. 'In the End' by Linkin Park.  
Wallow for awhile. Too Negative.  
A part of you that says "Move On!"  
History. Settling the future.  
That's how it is. Me. Stuff.  
Some comfort...

By Marie, Suzy, Lisa, Melanie

Self Esteem Gives You Freedom

A reflection.  
Positive feeling about yourself.

I don't like the mirror.  
Moving forward. Find the Positive.

Self esteem increasing with age  
And accomplishments.

Like yourself. Like your morals.  
Strength. Knowing. Accountable to myself.

Action.  
Throw away the Negative.

Positive thoughts that create motion.  
Share a part of Yourself.

Pride. Content. Self-assured. Reliable.  
Consistent as the ocean.

Allowing the waves of emotion to flow naturally.  
Without drowning.  
Freedom.

By Marie, Lisa, Suzy, Melanie

*Poems from the Arrowhead / 13*

I Want YOU to See ME

The good:  
Personality  
Reluctant matriarch  
Humour  
Charisma  
Creativity  
Survival  
Beauty within  
Smile  
Faith  
Rising out of the ashes  
Hazel eyes, brown eyes  
Humanity  
Health  
Compassion  
Love  
Kindness niceness  
Loyalty  
Wellness  
Steadfastness  
Different coloured hair  
Bleeding hearts  
Warmth  
Resilience

By Marie, Suzy, Melanie, Lisa

In our garden

In our garden there would be weeds.  
Or it might be a rock garden...  
Planted with seeds,  
sand and rock in a different pattern.  
Rings 'round stones like rings 'round Saturn.

Big leaves, small leaves, mostly green.  
A different mood for every scene.  
Flowers around me, I feel the peace.  
My distractions for a moment cease.  
Nature and man working side by side.  
Admiring life and taking pride.

Behind the hedge, I hear a sound...  
Rippling, lulling all around.  
Beyond my stillness I want to see;  
The cool water is  
inviting me.

In my mind, I  
make this place  
To visit when  
I need some  
space...

By Marie &  
Melanie



I wouldn't sell...

Me. I am not for sale.

However, I feely give my ...

Advice. (No charge!)

Love. Unconditional.

Gratitude. Not often enough...

Comfort.

Hugs. Not just because it's expected.

Friendship. Deeper than 'acquaintance'.

Food. To those in need.

Time. Give back to the universe the gifts I have to offer.

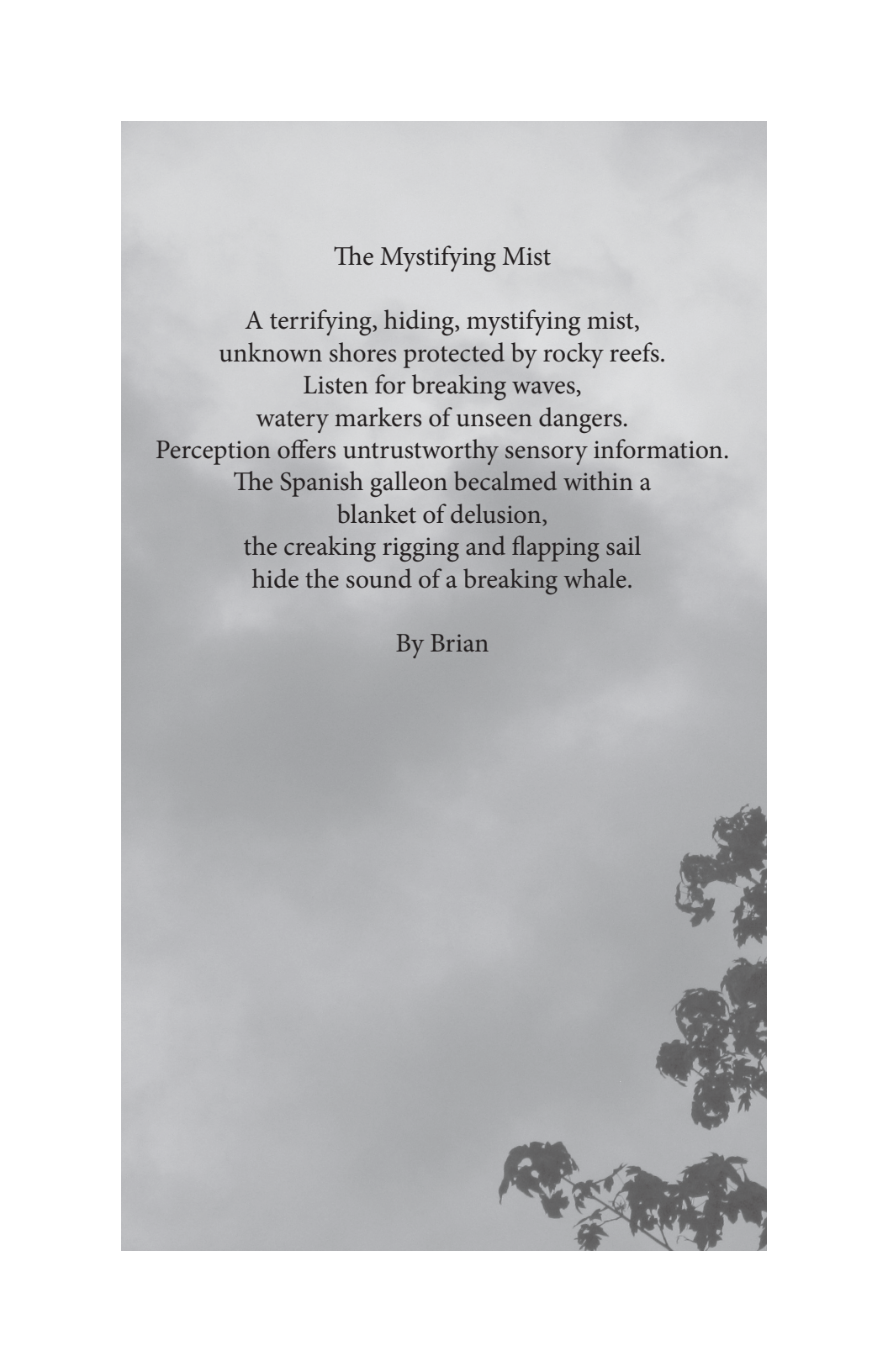
By Marie, Melanie, Suzy.



## Conscience, Go Away

My conscience talks to me:  
'I should have, I shouldn't have.'  
The language of 'should' makes me question.  
    Makes me aware.  
    Makes me think.  
    Makes me care.  
Makes me worry - the Golden Rule -  
    Did I make someone look the fool?  
    Is it fluid? Does it change?  
    All thoughts get rearranged.  
Another point of view. I have my own,  
    But so do you.  
    Conscience gives us balance,  
    But may follow another path...  
Spiralling. Feeding on itself. Landing in guilt.  
    It could be the Dark Side.  
It can polarize our thoughts, and take us on a ride.  
    It may be taught, it may be learned.  
    Do I care? Am I concerned?

By Marie, Suzy, Brian, Sheena, Faux



The Mystifying Mist

A terrifying, hiding, mystifying mist,  
unknown shores protected by rocky reefs.

Listen for breaking waves,

watery markers of unseen dangers.

Perception offers untrustworthy sensory information.

The Spanish galleon becalmed within a

blanket of delusion,

the creaking rigging and flapping sail

hide the sound of a breaking whale.

By Brian

## Change

No bother to some,  
A chance to look forward to something new.  
Depending on the path of change...  
Hateful to some.  
New schedules...day to day stuff.  
Order.  
But I like order too!  
My house in order.  
My clock in order,  
Change with the change.  
Walk from old to new.  
No room in my life for the new fridge relationships!  
Throw it out? Sometimes you have to.  
I'm not attached to my stuff -- just people and pets.  
Change can break things.  
Change can make things...  
Better.  
Moving in with Mom is a good change.  
When someone dies, it's not. It hurts.  
Change within my control is good.  
Willpower. On the path to happiness.  
Physical change -- pain -- not one good thing about it!  
...forced upon me by this falling-apart body.

by Marie and Suzy

## Mirror

The mirror is reflective,  
It can make life seem magic.  
This process is selective,  
It also shows the tragic.

Woman's beauty neglected,  
A sorrow to the masses,  
But it keeps her protected,  
From the vulgar man's passes.

A product for vanity,  
For making things clearer,  
It can affect sanity,  
If you believe the mirror.

By Melanie Elizabeth



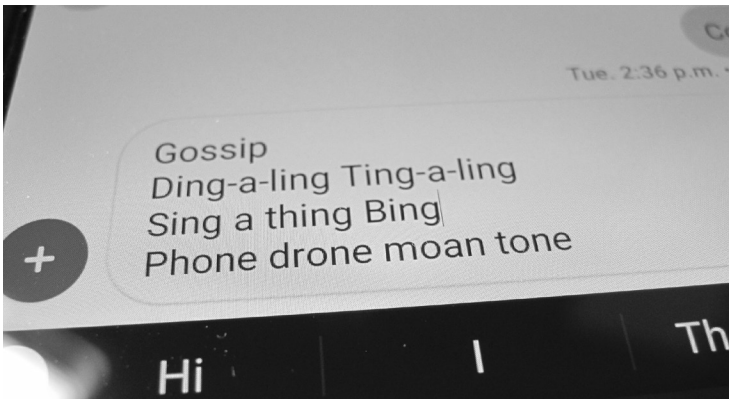
## GOSSIP

Ring-a-ling Ting-a-ling  
Sing a thing Bing  
Phone drone moan tone  
Groan in an alone bone.

Chitter bitter sitter  
Quitter litter fritter  
Ba-boom-boom  
Assume or resume

Clatter and shatter with flatter  
Matter to platter makes fatter.  
Mean bean the Queen  
Seen causing a scene pristine.

By Melanie Elizabeth



## Who's In Charge?

Might is Right. The Monsters.  
Warfare. Genocide. Human Trafficking.  
Panoramic Pandemic.  
Fear. People are afraid - Depressed - Despairing.  
Cold blue fear.  
Shut-down fear.  
False evidence appearing Real.

Courage is needed. Decide to survive.  
Nature is Nurture. Self Empowerment.  
Non-alignment creates Diversity. Creativity.  
I am in charge.  
Emotions. Thinking. Choices. Response.  
Mindfulness.

When evil becomes too much,  
overwhelming your being,  
preventing your eyes from really seeing  
the horrors around you taking place,  
fear is haunting every face.  
I reflect inwards to inner space  
to change the focus from within  
to reflect the joy found in that place.

By Brian, Kristops, Marie

## The Ride

He's ushered in with alot of care  
Hoping that everyone he will spare.  
Clawing, jumping - eyes of steel,  
Am I going ride him - is this real?  
Carefully lowering onto his back  
Don't let the rope give any slack.  
I say a silent prayer for me  
To actually another day to see.  
They open the chute and let him loose  
Riding like sitting on a bull moose.  
Bucking, tossing me from side to side  
Please, I need this seven second ride.  
My spurs don't dent his mighty skin  
I suddenly feel sick deep within.  
Through the air I seem to soar,  
Slamming down on the arena floor.  
He's coming at me while I am down  
Where oh where is that rodeo clown?  
Full speed ahead I run like Hell  
To safety where the story I can tell  
How I managed to run away  
And escape the bull who can also say  
Another one on my list of casualties  
I really wonder if they have all their faculties...

By Marie

## The Attack

Bombs go off, you hear a scream  
They think that it's all a dream  
Children running, bodies falling  
Parents waiting, they are calling  
Give my child a chance to live  
A life where they can always give

Blood is pooling by the door  
Several bodies on the floor  
Police, ambulance to the call  
They try hard to save them all.  
But for some, it is too late  
Succumbing to their awful fate

Attackers, they all are sinners  
Thinking they are the winners

But do you know what they did wrong?  
United us and made us strong

By Marie



## The Gum Incidents

The gum stuck to the sole of my shoe.  
Why is it that gum jumps and lands exactly where I'm about to place my foot? Then it comes to me: you remember in all those old comics and movies, detectives were known as “gum-shoes?”

Now, we all know there are all kinds of crimes punishable by law. But just suppose that me, with gum on my shoe, has now become an official amateur “gum-shoe.” Now, I'll try and find things that should be crimes.

Trying to look inconspicuous, I saunter along on the lookout for future law-breakers. Then, walking west, I see an elderly gentleman advancing toward me on his motorized scooter. Of course, he is smack-dab in the middle of the sidewalk. Does he move over a few inches so we can both use the sidewalk? The answer is “no.” I have to step off the curb onto the street. Future crime number one - uncovered!

Feeling quite satisfied with myself, I continue. Then, I spot it! Someone is actually allowing their beloved canine to pee on the tire of a parked car. They don't try to stop him. After all, poochie is on a leash and you can't really clean “that” up. Future crime number two - uncovered!

I'm getting a bit tired now, so I think I'll just try to spot one

more. I am just passing a local bus shelter where, sitting quite comfortably, are three big, strapping young men. At this moment, an elderly lady, pushing a cart, approaches. She is obviously waiting for the bus.

But did even one of these young men offer his seat? Of course not! So there she stood and there they sat. Unbelievable! Future crime number three - uncovered.

I can feel it now. The glob of gum is wearing off my shoe. I guess my time as an amateur “gum-shoe” has ended. But just as a reminder, the next time a piece of gum sticks on the bottom of your shoe - think of the fun you can have.

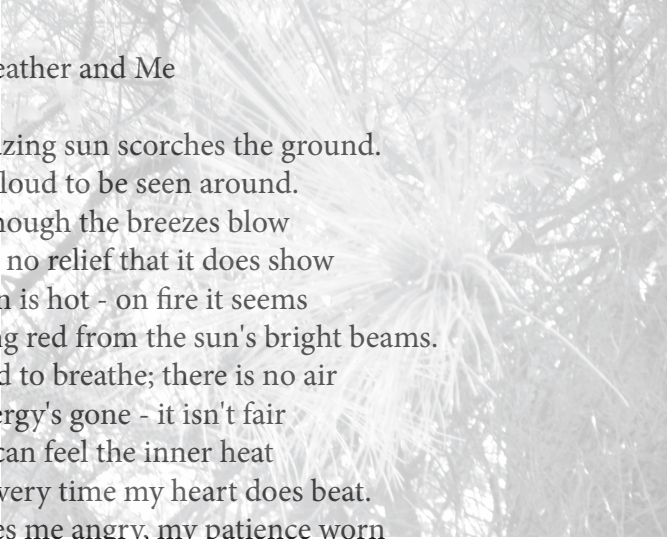
By Marie



## The Inferno

A lightning strike or just a spark  
Ignites the inferno - all is dark.  
Grass and trees, they feel the blaze  
As it travels in its craze.  
Panic's there - will all be lost?  
Homes and animals are the cost  
Of spreading, fiery blast.  
Who knows how long it will last.  
The winds blow strong to fuel the flames  
Do we know who is to blame?  
Mother Nature or simple folk  
Who toss away their precious smoke.  
For these people who lost it all  
Reach out to them - give them a call  
To help them in their time of woe  
And pray that time soon will show  
They still have heart and will to live  
Rebuild again, their strength will give  
Them hopes and dreams to start again  
Praying this terror soon will end.

By Marie



## The Weather and Me

The blazing sun scorches the ground.  
Not a cloud to be seen around.  
Even though the breezes blow  
There's no relief that it does show  
My skin is hot - on fire it seems  
Glowing red from the sun's bright beams.  
It's hard to breathe; there is no air  
My energy's gone - it isn't fair  
That I can feel the inner heat  
With every time my heart does beat.  
It makes me angry, my patience worn  
Wishing I was never born.  
I see the changes within my brain,  
My only wish - to feel the rain.

By Marie

## Know Me

Know me now, just as you can  
Maybe you'll become my biggest fan.

A friend forever I will be

In good times, bad  
times you will see.



Inner faith I have  
within

True and loyal I've  
always been.

Patience, not a  
virtue, I'm afraid  
But love for others  
will never fade

Anger does not  
often show

But can be present if I know  
Someone has harassed my friend  
And I'll defend him to the end.

There is beauty in all I see  
And I'm as happy as I can be  
But I warn you now - don't cross the line  
You may regret it - but guaranteed - I will be fine.

By Marie

*Poems from the Arrowhead / 29*

## My Perfect Canada

Canada-great land of the free,  
If I were boss, this is how it would be.  
No more hunger, pain or drugs,  
Just love and laughter, smiles and hugs.  
No matter the color of the race,  
With each other, we shall embrace.

No more homeless there would be,  
All have housing as you will see.  
Pure, clean water and pure fresh air,  
Is something that we all will share.  
Can this be fantasy for me and you?  
Not for me-it's my dream come true.

By Marie







