



a community of writers

Last Words, Writing Your Own Obituary—Create a Memoir Free of Clichés

Gather in the intimacy of Colonyhouse for two days to craft your own obituary and to bring your 600- to 900-word epitaph to life.

At the very least, save others from this emotional task and to reflect on your journey thus far, whether or not what you write ever gets published! In other words, you don't have to be a writer to participate.

On Day One we learn about the history of obituary writing, including costs (and the ways to save money and still say all that you want). We study examples of all types and lengths of obituaries, paying particular attention to unusual forms, first sentences and lead paragraphs, and to those known to have been written by their subjects. We also see the 2016 film *Obit*, the first documentary to look into the world of newspaper obituaries, via the obituary desk at *The New York Times*.

On Day One and Day Two, we write—prompts and writing exercises provided by the leader—then sit by the fireplace reading our own life stories aloud to each other. Participants are encouraged to bring a timeline of the milestones in their lives—not just a listing of accomplishments (we are not applying for a job nor writing a resume), but one with the people, places, and things who/that altered our trajectory during our ride.

Leader: Sharon Wood Wortman is a poet, memoirist, journalist, and obituary writer whose work has been published by *Calyx*, *The Oregonian*, and *Windfall—A Journal of Poetry of Place*, among many other publications. The recipient of three Regional Arts & Culture Council grants and a former Oregon Chautauqua scholar, she served as founding editor of *The Colonygram Newsletter* in 1984 and has been a lifetime member of OWC for almost as long. She is best known as the author of *The Portland Bridge Book* and for the bridge walks she led for Portland Parks & Outdoor Recreation for almost 20 years.

Dates/Times: June 18-19, 2018

Fee: \$120 for workshop, \$100 additional for Bed and Breakfast (double occupancy) at the Colonyhouse. Limited to the first five registrants. Includes snacks, handouts, and a free copy of *On Writing Well*, by William Zinsser, and *A Heaven in the Eye*, by Clyde Rice, the latter the winner of the Western States Book Award and published the year Rice turned 81. Questions? Contact Sharon at bridgestories@icloud.com, 503-330-0900.

Register online Oregon Writers Colony (<http://bit.ly/owc-obit>) and pay by PayPal, or complete form below and mail with check or money order to PO Box 15200, Portland, OR 97293-5200

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____

E-mail address _____ PHONE _____

Workshop only _____ \$120 B&B _____ \$100 Total enclosed _____

NOTE: This two day class is part of the Summer 30th anniversary celebration of the purchase of the Colonyhouse. Check the OWC website for a list of other summer classes and events.