



Wm. Delia Books

# Write Now

the monthly e-newsletter from Wm. Delia Books

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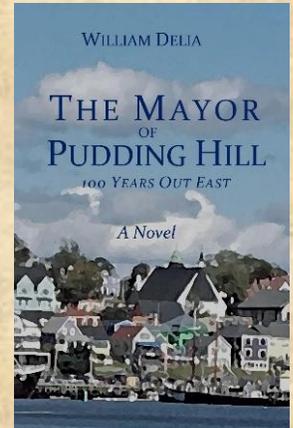
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My new novel, *The Mayor of Pudding Hill*, has just been released, and is now available on Amazon.com. While I can never choose one of my novels as my favorite, this book is special to me. As I wrote this book, the characters became so real they felt like my new best friends. I especially loved writing the man they call the Mayor of Pudding Hill—a character inspired by a man I met on a 2019 trip to Nova Scotia.

The book is the fictional life story of Albie Albertson. Albie is turning 100 years-old when we meet him at the beginning of the book. We discover that his life touched on many of the most significant events of the past century in Nova Scotia. He was a fisherman and a lobsterman. He crewed aboard Canada’s most famous ship, The Bluenose. He rescued miners in Springhill, survived Hurricane Ginny, spotted the UFO in Shag Harbour, comforted families of those who died in the crash of Swissair 111 in Peggy’s Cove and welcomed thousands of strangers “come from away” in Gander, Newfoundland on 9/11. If that’s not enough, his lady friend claims to be a survivor of the Titanic!

The book has a little history, a little adventure, a little romance and a lot of heart. I’ve included a short excerpt in this newsletter just to whet your appetite. But you have to read the book to get the full effect of his incredible man and his life.



## Current Titles – Available on Amazon.com or from the author

<p><u>Novels</u></p> <p>Healing River  Home to the Mountains  I Once Was Lost  Truth, Lies &amp; Consequences  One Day More  Shelter from the Storm  Remember Who You Are  The Mayor of Pudding Hill</p>	<p><u>Books of Faith</u></p> <p>Jesus Told Them Many Things – Devotional  Standing on the Promises – Devotional  Waiting for the Light – Advent Study  Walking in the Light – Lenten Study—<i>New!</i></p>
<p><u>Children’s Book</u></p> <p>Bucky the Manatee</p>	<p><u>Poetry Collection</u></p> <p>On the Edge of Forever</p>

## Recent Selection

Here is the excerpt I promised from the first chapter of my new novel, *The Mayor of Pudding Hill*. The characters in this excerpt are the Mayor, Caleb MacKenzie, a journalist writing a story about the Mayor, and the Mayor's great-granddaughter Sarah Chase.

### The Mayor of Pudding Hill

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When they entered the gazebo, Caleb got his first glimpse of the Mayor. A small man, thin as a rail, sat propped up in a wheelchair. Dressed in his Sunday best, he still looked bedraggled. His thin white hair, neatly combed at one time, was now tousled beyond hope. He looked like he forgot to shave this morning and when he smiled, his grin showed more gaps than teeth. Still, there was an intensity in his deep blue eyes and an undeniable charisma about the man.

The couple talking with him said goodbye and, with a quick word of apology, the young woman pushed Caleb in front of a family with three small children. He extended his hand to the old man.

"Mr. Mayor—congratulations! I'm Caleb MacKenzie from the *South Shore Gazette*. I'd hoped we could talk for a few minutes but, with all these people, I see that isn't possible. If you don't mind, I'll snap a quick photo and leave you to your guests."

The old man grinned and said, "Whatever you say, Mr.—" he stumbled over his name.

"MacKenzie, Mr. Mayor. Now let me get that picture."

"Wait!" the Mayor said. "Get Sarah. Get my great-granddaughter, Sarah, in here too. She's much nicer to look at than me."

Before Caleb could object, the young woman who had escorted him stepped forward.

"No, Poppy. He doesn't want a picture of me, just you."

Caleb quickly said, "No. Please. That's a great idea. I'll take one of you both."

After the pictures, he stepped to the side of the gazebo and watched one person after another come forward for their moment with the Mayor. He heard only some of what they said, but clearly everyone loved the old man.

Caleb made a few notes in his notepad and then, as he turned to leave, he heard someone say something about the Titanic. He could swear they asked him about someone surviving when the great ship went down. The old man nodded, then said something about surviving the sinking of the *Bluenose* being easier.

Caleb did the math as his mind raced. *If he's one hundred today, he would have been a toddler when the Titanic sank in 1912. It could be possible. But to be on the Titanic when it sank and then to be on the Bluenose when it went down, well, that would be an unbelievable coincidence.*

He was pretty sure the *Bluenose* sank in the 1940s. The old man certainly could have been there when the pride of Canada broke up in the Caribbean.

He moved closer, trying to overhear more of what was being said.

The Mayor asked a young couple about the mines in Springhill, after all these years. They said the mines were still closed, but they rumbled as always. The woman hugged him and assured him he was still remembered.

At least a dozen firefighters in uniform circled around the old man's wheelchair while one of their wives snapped a picture. They left him with a new cap embroidered with "Honorary Chief" on the front.

A geeky looking man in his twenties posed for a selfie with the Mayor and said something about the Shag Harbour UFO incident. The Mayor gave a knowing nod, and the young man walked away, beaming.

Two women embraced the Mayor, one from each side, as one of them gushed, "All your friends in Peggy's Cove wish you the best. They still talk about all you did in '98. God Bless You, Mr. Mayor."

A while later, four men in Canadian War Veterans caps saluted the Mayor, then stepped forward to shake his hand. Caleb was sure he heard them say something about coming back to Gander, Newfoundland, next year for the tenth anniversary reunion.

Caleb was so intent on listening that he didn't notice when Sarah returned and sidled up next to him.

"Eavesdropping?" she said with another of those smiles.

"You caught me. I didn't get an interview, so I thought I might pick up a few comments for the article. It sounds like he's lived an incredible life."

"Yes, he has. Look, I know you're in a hurry," she said, "but if you can stay around a while, I'll see that you get to talk with him."

"Thanks. I think I can change my schedule."

"The speeches are going to start in a moment, then we'll have cake and things will wind down. It shouldn't be too long."

Several people took turns at the microphone talking about their experiences with the Mayor. All were flattering and all, but one, were mercifully short. Even the politicians knew enough to keep their remarks brief. Two women rolled out a cart with an enormous cake topped with dozens of candles that formed the numbers "1-0-0". Sarah wheeled the Mayor close and helped him blow the candles out. Thirty minutes later, the backyard was empty except for the clean-up crew.

Sarah waved to Caleb, inviting him to come over. He pulled a chair next to her and sat down across from the Mayor in the cool shade of a towering elm tree.

"Poppy, you remember Mr. MacKenzie. He's from the newspaper and wants to ask you a few questions. Okay?"

The old man nodded, but his eyes were glassy. He smiled at Sarah and tried to stifle a yawn.

Caleb said, "Mr. Mayor, I won't keep you, but I think my readers would wonder, what do you remember most from your one hundred years of life? Is there any one thing that you will never forget?"

The old man didn't answer for a moment, then said, "This party. I'll never forget this party."

Caleb sighed, disappointed. He wondered if he misheard what people had said earlier.

A moment later, the Mayor continued, "I haven't seen so many people since we brought the *Bluenose* home with the last International Fishermen's Cup. That must have been 1937—no, 1938."

"The *Bluenose*? You sailed on the *Bluenose*?"

"I did. For almost twenty years, right to the end."

"I'd love to hear more about that, Mr. Mayor. Maybe some of your other experiences, too. After all, not many people see a hundred years."

The Mayor yawned again, and his eyelids drooped.

Sarah said, "I'm sorry, Mr. MacKenzie. He's had quite a day. Would you consider coming back another time? He has a remarkable memory and some marvelous stories to tell. If you like, I can give you my phone number. Call me and I'll arrange for you to see him."

He said, "I'd like that. Would you be able to join us?"

She smiled again, "If you like."

Caleb walked back to the car thinking about the old man. *Could he really have lived through all that?* He glanced at his notepad. The sinking of the Titanic, the last voyage of the *Bluenose*, the Springhill mining disaster, the UFO in Shag Harbour, Swissair 111 and 9/11 in Gander? *How could one man have been there for all the biggest events in Nova Scotia's last hundred years?*

As he closed the notepad, he saw her delicate script at the bottom—*Sarah Chase 902-635-9840. Call me...*

Caleb smiled. He snatched the parking ticket from under the windshield wiper.

"Worth it, at twice the price."

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