

FLORENCE SAGE is an Oregon poet who was born and grew up in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. A child of the Great Lakes and Niagara region, she now lives and writes where the Columbia River meets the Pacific Ocean. This is her second collection, following *Nevertheless: Poems from the Gray Area*, 2014. Her third, *What to Do with Night*, is due out in 2022.



"An exquisite piece of remembrance, brimming with life, and true to life. . . The lines dance." From the Introduction by Hal Calbom, editor of Columbia River Reader Press

"I read this poem cycle with all the delight one takes in the March, Ingalls and Durrell families." Robert Michael Pyle, Burroughs Medal author of *Wintergreen*

"Pull up a chair, pour a glass of vodka, and toast *na zdrowie* to this delightful collection." Margaret Chula, laureate author of *One Last Scherzo*

GRAY AREA
PRESS

with
HIPFISH Publications
Astoria, Oregon hipfishmonthly.com



FLORENCE SAGE

THE MAN WHO WHISTLED, THE WOMAN WHO WISHED



THE
MAN
WHO
WHISTLED

THE
WOMAN
WHO
WISHED



A POLISH-CANADIAN STORY

FLORENCE SAGE

This engaging collection tells the true story of a mother and father as observed by a daughter who grew up in their busy home. The parents in the story were children of four Polish immigrants to Canada, the time was World War II and the next three decades, and the place was Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. But the vivid people, incidents and observations portrayed in these sixty-two linked poems will seem familiar to readers. This tender-hearted memoir shows the poetic nature of reminiscence, and how rich the memory can be when allowed to explore the past.

The cover of Florence Sage's new book.

If You Go

Florence Sage book signing

2 to 4 p.m., Sunday

RiverSea Gallery, 1160 Commercial St.

Signed book copies are available in the gallery and at local bookstores

Continued from Page 6

started popping up — including stories about her father's old red truck; decorating the family's Christmas tree; and gathering produce on land that's now a subdivision.

As she thought about the stories, she decided she should write them down to share with her daughter.

What came about was 92 linked poems, put together in Sage's new book, "The Man Who Whistled, The Woman Who Wished: A Polish-Canadian Story."

The stories are of Sage's parents as she remembers them. While the stories are presented chronologically, that's not how they came about, she said.

"I didn't write anything chronologi-

cally, I just let (the memories) come," Sage said.

The poems are conversational, so reading the poems feels a little like sitting down and hearing stories about Sage's parents, she said.

Sage didn't become a poet until her 50s, after she heard about a poetry reading and decided to try writing poems of her own.

"My very first poem was about my dog," she said.

Three weeks later, she was standing in front of people at a Barnes & Noble store, participating in her first open mic poetry reading.

Though she didn't start writing poetry until later in life, Sage has a degree in English literature and has written through the years, including writing for newspapers and doing public relations.

Her poems started off as a therapeutic way to get her thoughts down on paper. As time went on, Sage focused her poems on people who are at a point of confusion or choice. She has worked out their emotions through her words.

"I write poems that are stories — just tiny, little stories," Sage said.

Sage's thoughts fit better into the quick style of poetry, whereas they feel too dragged out in prose, she said. The stories about her parents formed themselves into poems, instead of longform prose, she added.

"That's just how it came out," Sage said.

Sage could have flattened the stories out into prose, she said, but she loves the format of poetry too much.

"I like that poetry has line breaks and that each line has its own integrity," she said. "You get that little bit of a picture and the rhythm it gets."

While she doesn't struggle too much to write, she said she approaches each poem like a puzzle, with the pieces that fit together to create a whole.

"Just like any art, each poem is a problem to solve," she said.

When she is writing, which is always done on her computer and never with pencil and paper, if she makes changes to a piece, she only saves the newest version.

Her newest collection of poems is her second, with another set to release in 2022.

She said her favorite poets are Dylan Thomas and T.S. Elliot.

The Illahee Apartments



***Downtown Astoria's
Most Respected
Apartment Complex
Since 1969.***

**1046 Grand Avenue
Astoria, OR 97103**

503-325-2280