



Boston Authors Club

March 2020 News

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FEATURED AUTHOR: Kelly J. Carey



How Long is Forever? Kelly J. Carey's debut picture book will be published in April 2020. In this interview, Kelly talks about the inspiration behind the book's title question, her multi-year path to publication, teaching writing workshops to kids compared to adult authors, and more.

Q: First, congratulations on the April publication of your debut picture book, **How Long Is Forever?** What was the inspiration for that story, and how long did it take you to write it?

A: The nugget that inspired **How Long Is Forever?** happened when I was a teenager. A song I loved came on the radio and I excitedly squealed, "Turn it up! This is the best song ever." My friend's Dad scoffed, "Really? This is the best song ever?" That exchange stuck and launched the interaction between Mason and his Grandpa in **How Long Is Forever?** Mason is waiting for the first blueberry pie of the season and it's taking forever. At least that's what Mason thinks, until Grandpa sends Mason searching the farm to find the meaning of forever. I loved the idea that what can seem like the best song ever to a teenager or feel like forever to an eight-year old can be very different for an older adult. By the way, my friend's father was right. Thomas Dolby's, *She Blinded Me With Science* was NOT the best song ever! And Mason is going to find out that waiting for a blueberry pie to bake is not forever.

Q: Can you talk about the path you followed during the years from the initial picture book inspiration to 2020 publication, including some of the bumps you encountered and lessons learned along the way?

A: I wrote the first draft of **How Long Is Forever?** in 2013. It went through major revisions and was under contract in 2017 and will be published on April 7, 2020.

My first step toward becoming a published author was taking a class through the *Institute of Children's Literature* in 2007. That class made me ravenous for more workshops and I found that getting out into the community of writers made a big difference in my success.

I took classes offered by Karen Boss, Editor at Charlesbridge Publishing at The Writers' Loft. Karen is now the editor for **How Long Is Forever?** I could argue that my book would have found publication on its own merits, but forming a professional relationship with Karen, and applying her teaching helped speed up the process.

Q: In addition to your own writing, you give writing workshops for adults and for children. How do you tailor your advice and workshop content for these two different audiences?

A: The kids want to start writing immediately. My workshops for kids are interactive and I guide the kids to create characters with wants, flaws and obstacles. While the kids are interested in my journey, they are more focused on their own path.

My adult workshop participants are curious about the industry and how to put manuscripts out into the world. Where the kids are focused on the actual writing, the adult workshops are more about the business of being a writer. We talk about goals, staying motivated, the mechanics of submissions, and the KidLit community.

Q: Another part of your busy life is the 24Carrot Writing website site and blog at <http://www.24carrotwriting.com/> How did you get started with 24 Carrot Writing? How does it fit with your other work?

A: 24 Carrot Writing started as a monthly meeting between four local writers. We gathered to report what we had done in the prior month and what we were committing to do in the next month. We realized that a wider audience of writers might benefit from what we were sharing and launched 24 Carrot Writing in 2014. We encourage members to set monthly writing and craft goals and motivate themselves with carrots. At the end of a year, a writer will have set 24 goals and be a 24 Carrot Writer.

24 Carrot Writing is a way that I contribute to the KidLit community but also a space to highlight the work of other creatives in the industry.

Q: You have lots of book promotion events and school visits scheduled this spring. Will you be focused on promoting **How Long Is Forever** for a while, or are you already thinking about your next book?

A: I continue to balance marketing and writing every month. I have picture book manuscripts that I am currently submitting and others that are moving along the path from initial draft to submission ready. I feel strongly that I need to keep working on new writing projects even as I'm excitedly sharing **How Long Is Forever?** I'm hoping readers love **How Long Is Forever?** and are anxious to read more of my work. And I plan to be ready for that.

Interview by Mary J Cronin



President's Message

Greetings, everyone! There's a lot of BAC news for me to report to you this month.

First, we are gearing up for two events later this spring: a book-making workshop that will be held at the Wellesley Public Library on May 31, and a special panel on telling the stories of people whose stories aren't often told that we'll be having at the Brookline Booksmith in June.

You'll also see elsewhere in this month's newsletter an announcement about an exciting new BAC endeavor: the "discovery award" contest for unpublished picture book authors. Special thanks to Nancy Tupper Ling for conceiving of this and spearheading the event

Our reading committees for the 2020 Julia Ward Howe prizes will soon commence. I can tell you from perusing the large piles of books I've accumulated that it looks like there are many worthy entries in every category; our committees will have their work cut out for them!

Our redesigned BAC website is in the final stages of production and will soon be launched. You can look for greater functionality, additional features and a new look. We will also soon be adding to our social media profile and adding BAC Instagram and Twitter accounts.

Finally, a reminder about renewing your BAC membership. BAC member dues are aligned with the calendar year and are due on January 1. For this year, if you have not already renewed your membership for 2020, please do so today. Any questions about membership can be addressed to Nancy Tupper Ling, the BAC Membership Director, at bostonauthorsclub@gmail.com.

Julie Dobrow, BAC President

RSVP for the BAC Book-Making Workshop on May 31, 2020

Join members and friends of the BAC to make one or several small pamphlet-type books to hold a poem, picture, or some small memorabilia. This book-making workshop will be held in the Wellesley Public Library at 530 Washington Street, Wellesley, MA 02481 on Sunday, May 31. No experience is necessary, and everyone will leave with something they love. All materials—including beautiful cover papers—will be provided. If you choose to handwrite in your booklet, you may want to bring along your favorite pen. Space is limited to 20, so please RSVP to martha.pott@tufts.edu. We'll communicate more details with you a bit closer to the event and if you have any questions, please write to Martha Pott at the email address above.



Calling All (Unpublished) Children's Authors! The new BAC DISCOVERY AWARD IS COMING SOON

We have some exciting news on the horizon! Come spring we will be introducing The BAC Discovery Award. This year we are concentrating on unpublished picture book authors. We have some fabulous judges lined up, and some fabulous prizes, so keep your eyes peeled here and on social media for more details.

Yesteryear at the BAC: A Neverending Sequel

I recently came by a copy of the sequel to *Notable Boston Authors: Members of the Boston Authors Club, 1900-1966*, namely, *Boston Authors Now and Then: More Members of the Boston Authors Club, 1900-1966*.

In addition to another 255 pages of member biographies, this second volume contains a cumulative list of all 787 members of the Boston Authors Club along with the year they joined. The plot below this article is a histogram of the membership over the years. Contact me if you'd like a copy of the spreadsheet.

There are three full-page black-and-white photographs in the book; one of Mildred Flagg, one of Nathaniel Leverone ("Man of Achievement") and one of James Manlius Perkins (New England Artist, Philanthropist and Patron of the Arts). In your youth you may have used one of the machines that Leverone's company, **Automatic Canteen**, sold. If not, see the picture above. The company, renamed Canteen and part of a bigger conglomerate, is still going strong today although Necco Wafers and Bit-O-Honey bars seem to have given way to craft coffee and artisanal tea. A search of the World Wide Web returns no information for James Manlius Perkins. I wonder if sometime in the future that will be taken to mean he was a fictional character.



Getting back to Boston Authors Club members, Nathan Haskell Dole and Caroline Ticknor were, according to the book at hand, editors of the 10th edition of *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations* as well as a

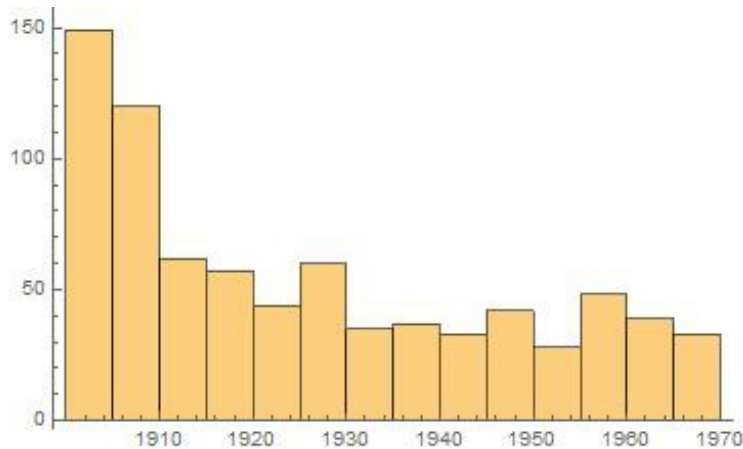
number of other literary compilations including the 20 volume *International Library of Famous Literature* and the 15 volume *Library of Oratory, Ancient and Modern*. Ticknor was the granddaughter of the founder of the renowned Boston publisher, Ticknor and Fields. (The sole entry under Bibliography in Caroline Ticknor's entry at Encyclopedia.com is ... wait for it ... *Boston Authors Now and Then*)

Both Dole and Ticknor were prolific authors in their own right. Ticknor wrote mostly on New England themes, May Alcott; A Memoir, and Literary Landmarks of Boston for example. She may be known today for her *Hawthorne and his Publisher*. Dole tended more to European themes. He translated *Anna Karenina* and wrote *Young Folks History of Russia*. They both lived in Jamaica Plain.

Some names that I recognize from my sophomore American Literature course (in which I got a B, I might add) turn up as Boston Author Club members in *Now and Then* including Booth Tarkington and Willa Cather. We'll get to these as I explore this prized acquisition in future columns.

By Scott B. Guthery

Figure 1: Year of Joining the BAC



An Invitation **FROM THE WRITER'S BLOCK** **with** **John Ronan**

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS ON TV!

To close out the 30th season of the television series, *The Writer's Block with John Ronan*, Mr. Ronan and Studio 1623 invite all former guests

and the public to a taping of the season finale at **Cape Ann Museum on Friday, March 6**. Doors open at 1:00 for the 2:00 taping, followed by Q & A. The event is free to all.

The program will be a "thank you" and celebration of all the writers and artists who have made the program possible and to honor Cape Ann for its artistic energy and talent. For a list of all the guests who have appeared on the 375 episodes in the series, go to: <http://www.theronan.org/the-writers-block/>.

This taping will feature interviews with some of the guests who appeared the first year of the award-winning series, in 1990-1. They are: Sharron Cohen, Christopher Leahy, Kim Bartlett, Sue Jhirad, and Jackie (Bigford) Fearer. The March 6 program will include clips from those early, pioneer programs.

"The series was made possible by the generous, dedicated writers and artists who work and live in our area. This is a chance to honor their talent," Ronan says. "The 30th year is a real milestone, a long run in any market, at any level. I am deeply grateful to the hundreds of guests who made that possible – and fun."

For more information, email: jronan@northshore.edu

John Ronan, producer and host of The Writer's Block, and BAC member, is a former Gloucester Poet Laureate and a National Endowment for the Arts Fellow in poetry. His most recent book, *Taking the Train of Singularity South from Midtown*, appeared in 2017. (theRonan.org)



The BAC newsletter is published the first week of every month except for the summer months. Please send news about upcoming events, awards, and new books to bostonauthorsclub@gmail.com by 3/30/20 for publication in APRIL. (no fooling!)

REMINDER Your BAC Membership for 2020

BAC membership dues are \$50 annually for the calendar year. You can join and renew online by [clicking here](#). If you would rather pay by check, please make your check out to Boston Authors Club and mail it to the following address:

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