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## Farley Mowat dead at 92

Award-winning author was also a noted environmentalist

CBC News Posted: May 07, 2014 12:59 PM ET | Last Updated: May 07, 2014 10:16 PM ET



Farley Mowat: Elizabeth May recalls her friend 8:42

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Farley Mowat dead at 92 3:16

Farley Mowat, one of Canada's best-known authors and a noted environmentalist, has died at age 92.

Mary Shaw-Rimington, the author's assistant, confirmed his passing to CBC News on Wednesday afternoon. Mowat died at his home in Port Hope, Ont.



David Suzuki on the death of Farley Mowat 5:48

Mowat, author of dozens of works including *Lost in the Barrens* and *Never Cry Wolf*, introduced Canada to readers around the world and shared everything from his time abroad during the Second World War, to his travels in the North and his concern for the deteriorating environment.

### ■ CBC DIGITAL ARCHIVES: Farley Mowat on Telescope

More than 17 million copies of his books, which have been translated into dozens of languages, have been sold worldwide. The gregarious writer was a consummate storyteller, whose works spanned non-fiction, children's titles and memoirs.

Describing Mowat as "a passionate Canadian," Prime Minister Stephen Harper touted the writer as "a natural storyteller with a real gift for sharing personal anecdotes in a witty and endearing way."

## The Buzz »



### The Simpsons exec teases upcoming death on show

by Jessica Wong Apr. 30, 2014 1:00 PM

If you're an avid TV-watcher, you'll likely have noticed the growing trend of shows killing off characters – whether heroic stars, beloved sidekicks or dastardly villains. The executive producers of *The Simpsons* aren't immune, dropping more details about the upcoming demise of a "terrific" character that's been teased for some time now.



Farley Mowat, fiery author and environmentalist, dies 2:32

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### External Links

- FarleyMowat.ca
- (Note: CBC does not endorse and is not responsible for the content of external links.)

"His legacy will live on in the treasure of Canadian literature he leaves behind, which will remain a joy to both new and old fans around the world," Harper said in a statement Wednesday.

Earlier, Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau remembered Mowat as "a family friend from my childhood" who "got along great with my father," former prime minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau, in comments to reporters in Ottawa.

■ **WATCH:** Justin Trudeau shares memories of Farley Mowat

He recalled that the writer once gave his family a dog, which they promptly named Farley, in his honour.

"Mr. Mowat was obviously a passionate Canadian who shaped a lot of my generation, growing up, with his books. He will be sorely missed," Trudeau said.

"We have lost a great Canadian today," NDP Leader Tom Mulcair said in a statement. "Farley Mowat's work as an author and environmentalist has had a great impact on Canada and the world."

■ **LISTEN:** Q essay - Farley Mowat casts a long shadow

Fellow Canadian authors Margaret Atwood and Graeme Gibson remembered Mowat as "so good-natured and down to earth."

"Farley was a great and iconic Canadian who understood our environmental problems decades before others did. He loved this country with a passion and threw himself into the fray — in wartime as well — also with a passion," the pair said in a statement.

### Widely celebrated

Mowat won a Governor General's Award for *Lost in the Barrens* in 1956 and the Stephen Leacock Memorial Medal for Humour for *The Boat Who Wouldn't Float* in 1970.

His accolades also included being named an officer of the Order of Canada in 1981 and having a public school near Ottawa named after him in 2006. He joined Canada's Walk of Fame in 2010.

Born in Belleville, Ont., on May 12, 1921, Mowat developed an early love of writing and of nature, in part thanks to his father and great-uncle: a strong-minded librarian and an amateur ornithologist, respectively, who took him on his first trip to the Arctic.

■ **CBC DIGITAL ARCHIVES: Kate Aitken: Meet the Mowats**

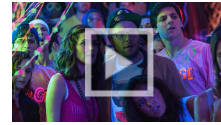
He grew up in different communities, including Trenton, Windsor, Toronto and Richmond Hill, Ont., as well as Saskatoon, where as a preteen he wrote a regular column about birding for the Saskatoon Star-Phoenix



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Award-winning author was also a noted environmentalist

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May 8, 2014 6:00 PM

Former Conservative party insider Tom Flanagan on taking back apologies and defending himself against critics.

### CBC Books



#### Remembering Farley Mowat

May 8, 2014 5:10 PM

The renowned environmentalist and

from 1930 to 1933.

At 18, he enlisted in the army to fight in the Second World War. He spent three years overseas, serving first in Italy, then in the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany. He returned to Canada in 1945, spending summers in the Arctic and winters studying biology at the University of Toronto.

The seasoned traveller would eventually live in, visit or write about most of Canada. In his later years, however, he divided his time between Port Hope and a summer home in Cape Breton.

His first book, *People of the Deer*, was based on his experience in the Far North with the Inuit people and made him an immediate celebrity. A lifelong naturalist, many of his books focus on man's relation to nature.

His 1963 book *Never Cry Wolf* is credited with helping to change the popular perception of wolves, even leading to a ban on wolf hunting in Russia after the book was published there.

The flagship of the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society was named after him, with his blessing, in recognition of his activism against the whaling industry.

## Controversial writer

Considered among one of the most widely read Canadian authors, the outspoken Mowat inspired passionate debate and courted controversy.

Though highly praised by his fans, he was also criticized for exaggerating in his writing and playing loose with facts — for instance, a devastating 1996 Saturday Night magazine cover story probed the considerable discrepancies between his original notebooks with his published works.

Still, Mowat defended himself, stating in the mid-1970s that he "eschewed the purely factual approach," but was not interested in writing fiction.

"My métier lay somewhere in between what was then a grey void between fact and fiction," he wrote.

He delivered an even stronger defence during a 1999 Harbourfront International Festival of Authors discussion with Peter Gzowski, the then CBC host who passed away in 2002.

When Gzowski challenged Mowat about the volume of facts needed in writing non-fiction, the passionate writer declared: "F--- k the facts!"

"Farley was, on the world stage, a giant," Green Party Leader Elizabeth May declared on Wednesday, emotionally noting that she had been planning to call him next Monday to wish him a happy 93rd birthday.

She also defended her longtime friend, whom she described as a legendary storyteller who never told a tale that was untrue.

"In telling a non-fiction story, you're allowed to tell a story," she said, adding that Mowat felt incredibly hurt by the negative Saturday Night article from the mid-'90s.

"He knew how to tell a story, but he also knew how to tell the truth."

## Rabble-rouser, 'kilt-lifter'

The rabble-rousing Mowat was also barred by U.S. immigration officials from crossing the border for a book tour during the mid-1980s.

The renowned environmentalist and author died at the age of 92. CBC Books shares some of his best words and interviews.

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### Selected books by Farley Mowat:

- *People of the Deer*
- *Lost in the Barrens*
- *The Regiment*
- *The Dog Who Wouldn't Be*
- *Owls in the Family*
- *Never Cry Wolf*
- *The Curse of the Viking Grave*
- *The Rock Within the Sea*
- *The Boat Who Wouldn't Float*
- *A Whale for the Killing*
- *And No Birds Sang*
- *Sea of Slaughter*
- *Virunga: The Passion of Dian Fossey*
- *Woman in the Mists*
- *My Father's Son*
- *Born Naked*
- *High Latitudes: An Arctic Journey*
- *No Man's River*
- *The Farfarers*
- *Bay of Spirits: A Love Story*
- *Otherwise*

He eventually learned it was due to an old security dossier supplied to the U.S. by Canadian officials and detailed the situation and his experiences in the book *My Discovery of America*. He also famously said that he was no longer interested in visiting the U.S. and would only reconsider "if Air Force One arrives at Pearson International Airport to pick me up."

He continued to vigorously share his strong opinions until the end, including **criticizing the recent plan to bring Wi-Fi service to some of Canada's National Parks**.

"Heaven knows he believed in the causes he adopted — and often they were unfashionable causes like the people of the North or animals or fish," according to his former publisher Doug Gibson.

"He was feisty, a fiery guy," who might tease about lifting his kilt at parties, Gibson recalled.

"He was small in stature, but a giant when it came to courage and the big issues."

Some of Mowat's writing also made the transition to film, including *A Whale for the Killing* (made into a TV movie), *Never Cry Wolf* (adapted as a U.S. drama in 1983) and his short story *Walk Well, My Brother* (which became the 2003 Canadian film *The Snow Walker*). He won a Gemini Award in 1991 for his work on the documentary *The New North*.

Mowat's survivors include his wife, writer Claire Mowat, and sons Robert and David.

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Feel like I lost a friend. Thanks for all the great stories.

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**exwriter**

I asked Farley Mowat at an authors'-reading night (organized by Elizabeth May) if he remembered a short story, titled "Liaison Officer," in his compilation "My Father's Son / Memories of War and Peace (Seal Books, Toronto, 1992). With pen in hand after signing my copy, he told me, eyes on: "Never Forget! That handsome, sly smile of his turned instantly stern. The story describes a failed Canadian armoured assault on a German strongpoint in the Italian campaign, as narrated by the liaison... » more

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**Jackotar**

Good-bye dear friend; loved our many chats

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### Stammygaster

I was surprised and very saddened to hear of Farley Mowat's passing. With a few of his books in my possession, it is ironic I have recently acquire another...People of the Deer. But my earliest exposure to Mr. Mowat came when I was teaching Grade 6. At the end of the teaching day, I would take fifteen minutes to read aloud from "Lost in the Barrens". I was hooked as well as some of my students who demonstrated anticipation and eagerness for that fifteen minutes each day. Many thanks, Mr. Mowat... » more

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### Vote Progress

Thanks for all your wonderful writing, Farley - my childhood would have been considerably less rich without Lost In The Barrens, Thwe Curse of the Viking Grave, Owls In the Family, The Dog Who Wouldn't Be, The Black Joke, etc...

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### WestCaper61

This summer when I am out fishing, I will feel the warm sun on my back and a refreshing breeze blowing through my hair. That will be Mr. Mowat saying "Your Welcome".

14 hours ago 6 Likes

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### midlifechrysler

Thanks for the great lit, Farley.

An iconic man and a hero IMHO, his life briefly paraelleled my father's. He entered WWII at roughly the same time, same uniform, same age. Hell, he even looked like my Dad.

He won my soul with his regrets about military service.

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### direwolf

a great Canadian, a great storyteller, an iconoclast, a man ahead of his time. thankyou, Mr Mowat, & look lively, your next inning begins!

16 hours ago 4 Likes

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### John Houston

I liked Elizabeth May's comment about her longtime friend, "a legendary storyteller who never told a tale that was untrue." I met him on the filming of "Never Cry Wolf" and was honoured to know him. I imagine his passing must mark the end of an era - let's hope it also marks the dawn of another era, one in which many, many more people feel the passion for making Canada a country that treats aboriginal people with respect and equality - a country that protects the fish, the animals, the bird -... » more

16 hours ago 10 Likes

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### RJ Huggins

Great headline CBC— Farley deserves better!

17 hours ago 1 Like








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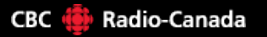
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