

## Gabrielle Roy



Photo from [Gabrielle Roy: du manuscrit virtuel](#)

[Gabrielle Roy](#) was born in St. Boniface (the opposite side of the river from Winnipeg) in 1909. She had ten siblings, all of them older.

After high school, she undertook teacher training at the Winnipeg Normal Institute and began to teach.

Later, she took up acting, joining the *Cercle Moliere*, a theatre troupe, and went to Europe, where she briefly studied acting. After spending time in France and the UK, she returned to Canada, settled in Montreal and began publishing her writing in various journals.

1945 was the year of her debut novel, *Bonheur d'occasion*. Published in 1946 in English as [The Tin Flute](#), it won the Governor General's Literary Award for fiction. The same year, 700,000 copies of the book were sold and Universal Studios in Hollywood bought the film rights.

This novel, a major departure from the typical novels of the time, realistically portrayed the harsh life of a poor Montreal family, and was popular in both English and French. It was republished as part of the New Canadian Library in 1989.

Other well-known works (English titles) include [Where Nests the Water Hen](#) (1950), [Street of Riches](#) (1956), and [The Road Past Altamount](#) (1966). *Windflower* (1970) is the story of a child with a dual heritage: his father is an American GI and his mother is an Inuit. Phyllis Webb describes it [here](#). Gabrielle Roy died in 1983.