

## JANE ROY BROWN: BIOGRAPHY

I am an award-winning writer, an editor, and now a passionate writing workshop leader. I feel called to the work of helping others tell the true stories of their lives, because throughout my life, stories have liberated me, empowered me, and imbued my life with meaning. The family tales I heard growing up in coastal Maine in the 1950s rooted me in a shared past, while books linked me to a larger world. As a teenager in the 1960s, I watched grim tales unfold on the news: body counts in Vietnam, assassinations, burning rivers. I entered Middlebury College and studied comparative religion to fathom the tragic puzzle of the world and started writing to sort it out.

After college, I began my career in Boston in the early 1980s, penning corporate video scripts and speeches. In 1990, I cofounded a small public relations company, and five years later joined the editorial staff of *AMC Outdoors*, the magazine of the [Appalachian Mountain Club](#), where I worked for nine years. Simultaneously, I studied landscape-design history at Radcliffe Seminars in Cambridge, earning a certificate in 2001. Moving to rural western Massachusetts a few years later, I began writing part-time for the [Library of American Landscape History](#), a nonprofit scholarly publishing organization in Amherst.

Meanwhile, I edited a collection of stories *While You're Here, Doc: Farmyard Adventures of a Maine Veterinarian*, by my father, Bradford B. Brown (Tilbury House, 2006) and wrote freelance stories for periodicals, winning the 2008 Lowell Thomas Travel Journalism Gold Award. On assignment to cover the restored garden of the late writer Eudora Welty in Jackson, Miss., I met Susan Haltom, who had returned the garden to its prime. Soon afterward, she invited me to coauthor a book. University Press of Mississippi published *One Writer's Garden: Eudora Welty's Home Place*, in fall 2011. The title won the Eudora Welty Prize the following year. A commissioned book, *Drawing Lessons: Forty Years of Design Education at the Conway School* (lulu.com), also came out in 2011.

During my writing career, I have continually met older adults who voiced the desire to write—family histories, personal memories, even memoirs. But when I offered encouragement, they usually said, “I wouldn’t know how to begin.” With them in mind, I launched *The Heart of Story* in 2012.