

# Vancouver Tabloid

Vancouver Retired Teachers' Association AUGUST 2018 Newsletter

## Retirement brings... TRAVEL FREEDOM!

OH, The PLACES YOU'LL go!

*Congratulations! Today is your day.  
You're off to great places, You're off  
and away!  
You have brains in your head,  
You have feet in your shoes, You can  
steer yourself, Any direction you  
choose!*

-Dr. Seuss (1990)

So wrote the great children's author, Theodor Geisel (Dr. Seuss) in his book for those young in heart seeking adventure. Inside this issue, find travel adventures, stories and challenges, including exploring a new voting system, new Scholarship Fund and AGM reports.



*"Oh, the places you'll go!" said Dr. Seuss  
and illustrated above by the Cat in the Hat.*

## Welcome Back Lunch

Why not celebrate your first (or fifth or tenth or more!) year of Retirement by inviting your "class" of retirees to join you this Tuesday, Sept 4 at the beautiful Royal Vancouver Yacht Club, 3811 Point Grey Road. Catch up with your colleagues; they don't need to be VRTA members to come. Speaker:

**Judy de Vries**, President of the RR Smith Memorial Fund Foundation and Organizer extraordinaire, will speak on **"Let's Go for an Adventure!"** including mystery tours and movie nights. On the menu: chef's choice of two main dishes, buffet salads and desserts, tea and coffee. Wine is available for purchase.

### **Pre-registration is required.**

Our Book Exchange continues: bring a book from your summer reading; and take a book or just take a book. **\*NOTE:** New cheque recipient: **RR Smith Memorial Fund Foundation**. Feel free to give more than \$40 to initiate our Scholarship & bursary fund.

### **To Hell with the Bell Lunch-Sept. 4**

**TUESDAY SEPT. 4 at 11:30 AM**

Royal Vancouver Yacht Club

Complete the registration form **ON THE LAST PAGE**  
by Tuesday, Aug 28 and send to:

**Dave Ellis**, 2086 Newport Avenue,  
Vancouver, BC. V5P 2H8

P:604 327-7734 or email [dellis7734@gmail.com](mailto:dellis7734@gmail.com)

**Pay Cheque (\*Min. \$40) to: \*R.R. Smith Memorial  
Fund Foundation"**

**LUNCH REGISTRATION ON BACK PAGE**

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## President's Greetings

Welcome to the New VRTA Year and our new executive team—see them below! I am excited to start my second term as president. Last year was a learning curve, a busy but productive year; we supported and advocated for services for our members as well as for all seniors. Our Bill C-27 petitions will be read in Parliament this fall by our local MPs.

We also had fun at our lunches and informative workshops. I encourage you to join one or more of our activity groups by contacting the leaders listed at the bottom of this page. I invite all of you, especially the newly retired teachers, to join our First Day of School Luncheon on Sept. 4 with guest speaker Judy de Vries; register as soon as possible. Save Oct. 16 morning for the workshop and meet Tim Anderson, the new BCRTA Executive Director. My vision for the coming year is to encourage more members and friends to attend the many events we offer and to suggest new activities. We want to improve our VRTA website - please visit [www.vrta.ca](http://www.vrta.ca) and use the Contact Us link to give us feedback. Launching our scholarship program is close to our heart. There is much to do but I look forward to meeting and serving you,

—Winola Chu



**New 2018-19 VRTA Executive (Back from left):** Denis Ottewell, Dave Ellis, Arnie Lambert, Art Rempel, Les Rowe, Tom Brunker; **(Middle from left):** Sheila Pither, Norma Westrom, Patricia Wright, Ali Pollard, Winola Chu, Anastasia Mirras, Diane Smith; **(Front from left):** Edie Wood, Ros Kellelt, Barb Mikulec, Elaine Anderson. Absent: Carol Perdue, Bea Raymond

### WANT TO JOIN in? New Members Welcome LEADERS for Activities

**Book Club:** Diane Smith frandia@shaw.ca—3rd Wed at 2 pm  
**Cross-Country Skiers:** Edie Wood edithwood@gmail.com—Fridays 10:10 am  
**Scrabble:** VACANT— Seeking new members  
**Strollers:** Norma Westrom normawestrom@hotmail.com— every Wed 10:45 am  
**Walkers:** Margaret Yoshida margyoshi@gmail.com—every Wed 10:00 am



### A publication of the Vancouver Branch of the British Columbia Retired Teachers' Association

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Carol Perdue, Sheila Pither, Ali Pollard,

Bea Raymond, Art Rempel, Les Rowe,

Diane Smith.

#### Volunteers

Lil Cumberbirch, Ruth Deshaies,

Ora Fraser and MaryAnn Nelson

### WEBSITE [www.vrta.ca](http://www.vrta.ca)

## Calendar

**Please feel free to join us!**

(Exec. Meet at 10:00 AM in BCTF Building)

**Sept 4 Tue.** - Luncheon

**Sept 11 Tue.** Exec. Mtg

**Oct. 16 Tue.** Workshop

**Nov. 6 Tue.** Exec. Mtg

**Dec. 4 Tue.** Christmas Lunch

**Dec 7 Fri.** Poinsettias delivery

**Jan 10 Tue** (TBC) Exec. Mtg

# AGM receives Climate Change Message



*Presenter Diana Ellis*

Diana Ellis, past chairperson of the Suzuki Elders (SE) Council and former activist as a Consultant with many organizations such as Vancouver Status of Women, the BCTF feminist cau-

cus and the YWCA, was the guest speaker at our June AGM and gave a lively speech. She described the formation of the Suzuki Elders group in 1993 under the initiative of world renowned scientist David Suzuki and the David Suzuki Foundation organization. Over 125 members nationwide participate in this group, going online or participating in salons or the various volunteer committees.

The SE Council has hosted public forums on topics such as Green Chemistry, GMOs, Alternate Energies, fashion industry and how Climate change affects our health. Diana then urged the

audience to do their part to reduce human impacts on Climate Change and help prevent some of these extreme weather events. Take actions to be educated and ACT, such as: compost food waste, buy local, plant drought resistant gardens, consider green burials. Joining the Suzuki Elders (<https://www.suzukielders.org/>) can keep one in the know and experience Hopefulness. In conclusion Diana encouraged us to work together to combat climate change and to protect the future for our grandchildren.

**-Barb Mikulec and Ros Kellett**

## AGM elects, approves policy and fund

On June 5 over 60 people attended our lunch and AGM at the Royal Vancouver Yacht Club. During the AGM portion, members elected a new executive, approved a revised set of Policies and Procedures, set up a new and separate Scholarship & Bursary fund, and approved a sleuth of committee reports. Of note, membership chair Elaine Anderson reported that our membership numbers have increased to 1366 members, boosted in part by the FREE FIRST YEAR membership offered by the BCRTA to any retired teacher who has never



*Diners (left) Jeannie Yates, Sandra Gertz and Elaine Anderson wait patiently to be called up for their buffet lunch on June 5 at the RVYC.*

joined. The BCRTA has also increased its categories of Associate membership so your spouse or independent school educator or non-educator school staff member may now join (first year free!) to receive the exclusive

members travel and lifestyle benefits that comes with the BCRTA Members' Advantage programme. The 2018 AGM reports are available from Denis Ottewell.

**- Ros Kellett**



# Should we change BC's Voting System?

As you are aware, to follow-up on an Election promise, the minority provincial NDP-Green coalition government is presenting a referendum this Fall to BC voters. The referendum campaign period has already begun and British Columbians will receive their voting packages starting on October 22, 2018.

The background to the referendum is in the BC Attorney General's report at <https://engage.gov.bc.ca/howwewote/>

The two questions on the Ballot, per Elections BC website, are as follows:

1. Which system should British Columbia use for provincial elections? (Vote for only one.)

- The current First Past the Post voting system
- A proportional representation voting system

2. If British Columbia adopts a proportional representation voting system, which of the following voting systems do you prefer? (Rank in order of preference. You may choose to support one, two or all three of the systems.)

- Dual Member Proportional (DMP)
- Mixed Member Proportional (MMP)
- Rural-Urban Proportional (RUP)

The referendum is by mail-in ballot. There will be no polling stations. Voters will have until November 30, 2018, to return their ballot.

The two official sponsors for the "two sides" of the issue are:

TO KEEP OUR CURRENT SYSTEM: No to Proportional representation in BC Society website: <https://www.nobcprorep.ca/>

FOR PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION: Vote PR B.C. Society website <http://voteprbc.ca/>

There are also plenty of "third party interest groups" who are putting up websites, explaining the differences in the three models of proportional representation and urging voters one way or the other. Many media organizations such as CBC, Global News and the Vancouver Sun, all have websites with video clips explaining the voting options clearly. No doubt you will receive many messages, phone calls and pamphlets trying to influence your vote. You should consider each of them carefully. Changing how we choose who gets to hold the power in the BC legislature is a very important decision; it is beholden for each of us to be informed and know how to vote this October-November and to understand the consequences.

## Editorial

As Editor I will now present my opinion. This is solely my opinion and not that of the Editorial Board of TABLOID nor of the VRTA executive. (See the last issue of TABLOID for Daryl Sturdy's letter in favour of Proportional Representation.)

I am a supporter of First Past the Post voting system. On election night, I know exactly who I voted for and whether they won or lost. If they lost, I don't consider my vote 'wasted'. The "losing" side forms the Opposition and becomes the government in waiting in our representative parliamentary system. I

also know who to go to for government help. The winning local MLA, whether my candidate or not, is obligated to respond to my concerns as I can still influence fellow voters in the constituency to help "oust" that MLA in the next election, if needed. I have seen PR in action in some local party candidate races and discovered that the winner is often NOT the popular choice of any voter, merely the second preferred candidate.

Lastly, I believe in the representative Party system where there are just a few Major parties who meet and debate policy at membership conventions. To stay popular, such

parties have to have a broad "umbrella" of policies to represent the many sides of an issue yet stay true to a broad mandate.

I am disheartened to read of the chaos in Germany and now Australia as those MPs have to fight it out to figure out WHO exactly has the power. FPTP makes it clearer, on the whole. Of course, minority governments can still occur but the negotiations to ensure stable government are easier to work around. Now it's up to you to consider your values and how you want MLAs to be picked to govern in BC.

**-Ros Kellett**



## TRIP OF A LIFETIME OPPORTUNITY

Do you want to learn more and appreciate the fine arts better? Become a **Vancouver Art Gallery (VAG) Associate** and immerse yourself with the many free educational programs, twice-a-month art films with discussion, artist studio visits and once @year major Art trip lead by knowledgeable guides. The higher membership fees are worth it!

For more details contact: 604.662.4711 or [membership@vanartgallery.bc.ca](mailto:membership@vanartgallery.bc.ca)



*VAG Associates explore Rodin's sculpture, The Kiss, in Paris, France in recent international art trip. Traveling as a group saves costs and fosters greater art appreciation. (Credit-Judy Lindsay)*



*Golden peacock clock in St. Petersburg, Russia seen by Diane (Credit-Russian tourism)*

## TRAVEL TO RUSSIA

My greatest memory was of a trip to St. Petersburg, Russia where Frank and I visited the State Hermitage Museum and the famous Peacock clock. The "clock" is an 18th century glittery mechanical machine that is wound up every Wednesday at 1 pm. The peacock moves its curious head, spreads its golden wings and pirouettes around. Music chimes, an owl turns its head and a rooster calls out. Such fun! It was good luck that we were there on a Wednesday as I will never forget that and the exciting Baltic cruise that took us there.

**– Diane Smith**



*Great Pyramids of Giza, Egypt seen by Ali (Credit—Traveling Canucks)*

## TRAVEL TO EGYPT

We really wanted to travel once we retired so Bob (my husband) and I travelled abroad a lot. But the most memorable trip for me was our very first one to Egypt. As a child I'd always been intrigued by stories about the ancient Egyptians. I wanted desperately to see the Seventh Wonder of the Ancient World -the pyramids at Giza-so our first trip was a river cruise up the Nile. Then we bused up from Cairo when suddenly the pyramids came into view. That took my breath away; it was so emotionally overwhelming for me that I started to cry, surprising both myself and my husband! The trip was enjoyable but the two things that I remember best are the very age of the artifacts (over 4000 years) and the ability to either touch or see them close up. When I touched the hieroglyphics on a column I wondered what the artist was thinking as he worked away and what was his life like? All the artifacts were well preserved. The ruins may be ancient yet to me they were still alive with intriguing stories!

**–Ali Pollard**



# My visit to Russia

## The TRIP of a LIFETIME!

In October 1996 I journeyed to Saratov on the banks of the mighty Volga River in the south east of Russia. Saratov remains an important port with industrial and cultural centres. My eldest son, Michael, was tasked to assist the region transform from a socialist economy to a capitalist market one; Boris Yeltsin was President. It was a time of uncertainty and turmoil, with both poverty and hope evident in local markets. You brought your own bags or liquid containers to go shopping. Poorer people were selling personal items off their arms along the streets, to make some money. Most who could afford it operated the many stalls within the colourful market.

The occasion was a happy one for me. I got to hold my grandson Sasha as he was baptized at St Seraphim Sarosky Church. This was more a Russian tradition and less about religious beliefs. That evening about thirty family and friends held a celebration banquet at the restaurant of a relative of Julia, Michael's wife. There were sumptuous assortments of food

and beverages, followed by many toasts, and dancing. When the women realized that I was a good dancer, they had me on the dance floor for the entire evening!

The Volga river was wide and so colourful as it caught the reflections from the sky and the waves churned by the winds, reflecting a

pulse of the Russian soul.

I did have a

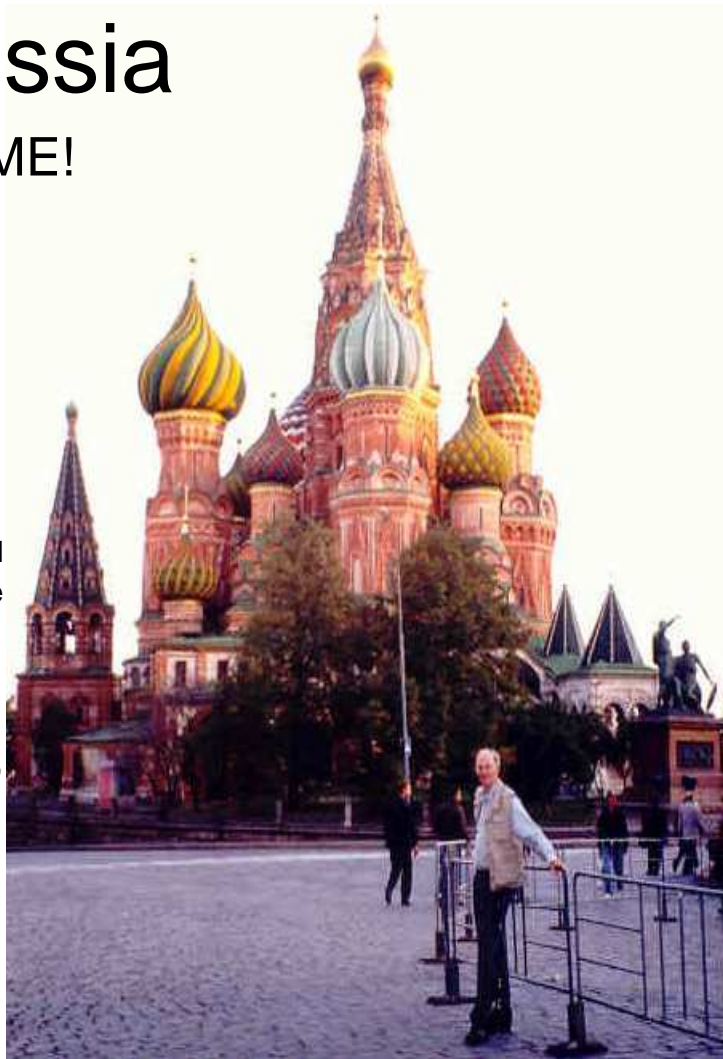
chance to visit

the family dacha (one hour from, the family apartment) and tour around, including visiting Moscow.

I will never forget this trip at this significant time in the history of Russia and my grandson and his family.

– **Denis Ottewell**

*Denis travelled to the outskirts of Saratov to help plant fruit trees in the family dacha plot (left).*



*ABOVE: Denis visited St. Basil's Cathedral (now a museum) in Red Square, Moscow. BELOW: Proud parents Michael and Julia hold baby Sasha as Denis and relatives surround him.*



# Live Stage Offerings

September to October – 2018

By Ora Fraser



[Arts Club Stanley](#) series for 2018-19 begins with ***The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime***.

The play by Simon Stevens is based on Marc Haddon's 2003 mystery novel delving into the mind of a boy with Asperger's syndrome. It opens on Sept.6th to Oct. 7th.

The [Arts Club Granville Island Stage](#) opens with ***Mustard***. It is billed as "a darkly comedic tale about growing up, moving on, and finding magic where you least expect it." It runs from Sept.20th to Oct.20th. Check ARTSCLUB.COM or phone 604-687-1644.

[Bard on the Beach's](#) season continues until Sept.22nd so there is still time to see ***Macbeth, Timon of Athens, Lysistrata and As You Like It*** (this latter extended until Sept. 28). To check phone 604-739-0559 or go to [bardonthebeach.org/schedule](#).

Broadway Across Canada presents the nine times Tony award-winning Best Musical ***The Book of Mormon*** from Sept.15th to Sept. 30th at [Vancouver's Queen Elizabeth Theatre](#). This musical tells of the misadventures of a missionary pair. Check [BroadwayAcrossCanada.ca](#).

For [The Cultch](#) offerings, go to THECULTCH.COM or phone 604-251-1363.

At the [Freddy Wood Theatre \(UBC\)](#) theatre and film students present a number of creative shows and classic works. Google Frederic Wood Theatre or phone 604-222-2678.

At the [Gateway Theatre in Richmond](#) the first play is the Canadian classic ***Les Belles-Soeurs*** by Michael Tremblay. Set in 1960's Montreal it is billed as "15 Women, One Raucous Romp". The play runs from Sept.27th to October 6th. Check [gatewaytheatre.com](#) or phone 604-270-1812.

[Metro Theatre, Vancouver](#) kicks off with the humorous 1980's thriller ***Cliffhanger*** by James Yaffe. The play runs from Sept.16th to Oct.6th. Sunday matinees are September 23rd and Sept. 30th. See details at [metrotheatre.com](#) or phone 604-266-7191.

[United Players, Vancouver](#) begins with Bertolt Brecht's masterpiece ***The Life of Galileo***. Galileo is in conflict with the church as he sticks to scientific facts rather than propaganda and prejudice. The Preview starts on Sept.6th for \$14 and runs from Sept.7th to Sept.30th. Matinees (2:00 p.m.) are on Sept.16th, 23rd and 30th. Evening performances (8 pm) are Thurs. to Sun. Contact [unitedplayers.com](#) or phone 604-224-8007.

## Travel Jokes

- 1.What travels around the world but stays in one corner?
- 2.Why did the librarian get kicked off the plane?
- 3.Why did the women's suitcase start weeping when she picked it up?
4. How can you tell that elephants like to travel?
- 5.What did the pig say on the beach?
- 6.Where can you find an ocean without water?!

### ANSWERS

- 1.A stamp
- 2.Because it was over-booked.
3. She was carrying emotional baggage.
- 4.They always carry their own trunk.
5. Whew, it's hot.....I'm bacon!
- 6.On a map!

### THEME & DEADLINE for the NEXT ISSUE -

Friday

November 2, 2018

***Looking over your  
teaching career, what  
was ONE of your  
BEST WORK DAYS?***

Photos welcome. About  
200 words.



## Why a VRTA Scholarship and Bursary?

Each year since August 2012 the Vancouver Retired Teachers Association has provided funds for a bursary to a graduate of a Vancouver Public School enrolled in the UBC Faculty of Education and since 2014 an additional bursary to one enrolled in the UBC Faculty of Nursing geriatrics program. Then in 2014, funds were expanded to cover an SFU bursary in the Education Faculty and in 2015, an SFU bursary in the Department of Gerontology. These bursaries can no longer be given as we are a non-profit member-service organization.

Thus in June 2018 the AGM approved forming a second organization, **The**

**Friends of the VRTA**, as the way to raise money for these bursaries. In order to launch this fund the VRTA has agreed to pay for the costs of the September luncheon (a service to members) in exchange for a donation by the member and his/her guests to this Scholarship Fund equal to or MORE than the price of the meal. This fund is managed by the **R. R. Smith Memorial Fund Foundation** so all donation cheques must be made out to them and a note on Memo line-**funds for the VRTA Scholarship Fund**. We hope you appreciate this initiative and will be generous.

—*Elaine Anderson, past treasurer*



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Interested in submitting a Letter or Opinion?

PLEASE send letters, advice or news items to Ros Kellett  
<roskellett@gmail.com> 604-873-0568 Include name, email address & phone number. Keep letters under 150 words; they may be edited for length and clarity.

### Our REQUEST to You

**PLEASE subscribe to the VRTA TABLOID by email and enjoy the Benefits**

**COLOURED photographs and graphics for you & hundreds of dollars postage savings for us.**

**You stay up-to-date with NEW and IMPORTANT REMINDERS of upcoming events. SEND your email address to Patricia Wright vancouvertabloid@gmail.com**

### HAVE YOU RECENTLY MOVED?

**Please submit Change of POSTAL ADDRESS to vancouvertabloid@gmail.com OR 604 929-3306**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### VRTA WORKSHOP-



**Tue. Oct 16 –The Hidden Values of BCRTA Membership**—with Tim Anderson, Exec. Director BCRTA and Johnson MEDOC reps.  
**9:45 am-Noon** Hellenic Com. Centre 4500 Arbutus St.  
Free registration & parking.  
Refreshments available.

### Pre-register:

Denis 604-526-7561 or  
dennyyottewell@outlook.com

### Not a member of BCRTA?



For a THIRD Year former non-member

retirees can join both BCRTA & VRTA for FREE in their 1st Year - Sign up at  
www.bcrta.ca  
or phone: 604 871-2260

### REGISTRATION FOR SEPT. 4 LUNCH 11:30 AM Royal Vancouver Yacht Club

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Ph: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclose cheque for \_\_\_\_ attendee(s) @ Minimum \$40 each  
Cheque payable to: **RR Smith Memorial Fund Foundation** ☐

Those wishing vegetarian entrée/special diet, check here \_\_\_\_\_

**See Page 1 for where to send. Please Register  
by Tuesday Aug. 28  
TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT  
Donations for the FOOD BANK are appreciated**