

RIVERSIDE

REFLECTIONS

Newsletter of the New Westminster
Retired Teachers
October 2020



Patullo Bridge Construction
Photo from Historical Data Base NW Library

The Executive's Comments

Eight months in and we are still in the middle of the Covid 19 pandemic. Some of us are quite happy to be the "monk in a cave", but many others yearn for the social interaction of lunches, fitness classes, volunteer groups, etc. We are very much aware that we are in the highest risk group for Covid 19, being elderly and having pre-existing conditions. Most of us are cognizant of the importance of wearing a mask, social distancing, hand washing, and keeping our 'bubble' to a minimum to avoid exposure to the coronavirus. We also tend to take every precaution when we go shopping for the necessities of life. However, staying at home 24/7 and chatting on Zoom just doesn't cut it after awhile. According to the 2016 Census data, the number of people living alone in Canada is just over 4 million. This number of single member households raises the question of social isolation and

loneliness in our society. And this was before Covid 19 came knocking on our doors. Those who live alone are not irresponsible and are aware of the risks, but staying at home after months of semi-isolation, find it's worth the risk to get out of the house and interact with "actual" people, not Zoom faces and voices. After a while these Zoom meetings just act as a reminder of the people we can't hug, shake hands with, or pat on the back. So what can a person do? Drive down to White Rock, English Bay, or the New Westminster Quay. Find a spot, sit on a bench or a tree stump, and watch people come and go, so at least you get to see 'real' human beings. Breathe in the salt air, look at the ocean or river flowing by, and remind yourself that there is an entire world outside of you home. Go out for lunch or grab a coffee at Starbuck's or Timmy's, but stay masked and physically distanced as much as possible. I'm lucky, I have a dog so twice a day we go out for walks. I see the world outside my home and I get to talk to others walking their dogs, but something is still missing. These 'talks' are all fleeting reprieves and what is missing is the intimacy of understanding that occurs when people spend time together. The gathering over a meal is that fundamental moment in time when we humans make that connection with each other. The simple act of meeting a friend for lunch or dinner makes life worth living. Consequently, do what you have to do, do it safely and responsibly, but don't let loneliness and despair deprive you of a life without hope. If you are one of the lucky ones who has a significant other, check in on those who are alone and see if there isn't room in your bubble for them. Give them hope and the opportunity for a relationship with kindness. In closing, just a reminder that hope is a powerful thing. It inspires us to do the impossible and helps us carry on during difficult times. As Samuel Smiles stated, "Hope is like the sun, which, as we journey toward it, casts the shadow of our burden behind us."

Patullo Bridge (Opening photo)

The bridge was designed by engineers W.G. Swan, A. Dixon and Alexander Lorraine Carruthers. The bridge was named in honour of Thomas Dufferin Pattullo, the 22nd Premier of British Columbia, who opened it on November 15, 1937. There was a 25-cent toll for cars to cross it, but drivers could buy a monthly pass for \$3. The toll was cancelled in 1952. One thousand workers toiled for two years to build the bridge out of 7,100 tons of steel, 106,000 barrels of cement, 63,000 cubic yards of concrete, 1.046 million feet of timber, and 2,800 piles. The total cost of the construction was \$4 million.

2020 - 2021 NWRТА meetings

September 8, (cancelled)

Hume Park picnic

October (cancelled)

Show Me the Honey by Dave Doroghy

This event is on hold with either a Zoom meeting or, when Covid conditions allow it, an in person meeting with the author.

Late November/ Early December

Baskets for Bursaries

This event is looking more and more like it will be cancelled. If we are given the "all clear", I will send out a bulletin outlining the procedures, place, and time of the meeting.

2021 Meetings

At this time, the events planned for the spring are on hold. The Executive is in a quagmire of indecision - how much time should we spend planning, just to have those meetings and speakers cancelled. We have several ideas for meetings that are ready to go, but the when and where are not in our hands at this time.

2020 BCRTA Conference and AGM

October 2 and 3, 2020

by Patricia Tanaka - NWRТА Member-at-Large

October 2 - Conference

This year all BCRTA members could attend the conference via zoom. The guest speakers were engaging and very relevant to our concerns as seniors and retirees in this strange and difficult Covid 19 year. Isobel MacKenzie was, as always, an informative and excellent speaker. She is an ideal person to be the BC Seniors Advocate. Dr. Steve Morgan, from UBC, highlighted the reasons for a National Pharmacare program. Dr. Roger Wong, also from UBC, spoke about Covid 19. He has been interviewed numerous times since the start of the pandemic.

Golden Star and Membership awards were also announced.

October 3 - Conference

This virtual AGM was very efficient. All the necessary documents were sent earlier to the delegates by email or print. It was actually a good way to have meetings since one didn't have to dress in office attire to attend and there was no time lost due to traffic problems.

There was no discussion since questions were sent in a week before the AGM and were addressed by the appropriate speakers.

Reports from each branch association were sent out earlier. Kerry Babiuk (Acting President) submitted a clear and concise report for our NWRТА.

Finance \$\$\$ is always interesting. BCRTA fees for 2020-21 will be \$42. (That was decided at the 2019 AGM.) First year membership will continue to be free. There will be a large cash outlay (\$20,000 +) for updating the technology to Windows 365 in the BCRTA office.

Substantial savings were made in board expenses since in-person meetings stopped in March. The AGM cost much less than previous years since it was virtual. However

it would have been nice to have met some of the 100+ delegates in person. Chats during breaks and at lunch is where ideas are exchanged and friendships made.

TRAVEL EDITOR

I am still looking for travel editor. It would be nice to have a regular travelogue in the Riverside. I do realize that during the pandemic, travelling is a challenge. Where can you go? Where can you stay? Do they even want visitors? Share your experience of travelling during this turbulent time. Maybe it is a day fishing on the Vedder, an afternoon at Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Gardens, or walking the trails around Deer Lake. There are many places locally that are accessible, beautiful, and allow one to be Covid safe. Please email me your story, adventure, or disaster and try to limit the size to about 300 to 400 words.



Deep Cove Pier

I have attached the BCRTA Travel newsletter, which has Zoom presentations for travel to Portugal, Ireland, New Zealand, and Canada.

DINING WITH PATRICIA

by Patricia Tanaka

If you are looking for a different dessert or coffee break treat this square is a nice change.

Pineapple Slice

Base

2 cups all purpose flour
3/4 - 1 cup softened margarine/butter (less gives a firmer base)

2 tbsp sugar (I use a bit less since the filling is sweet)

1/4 tsp. salt

Blend all the ingredients together until crumbly. Pat into a 9 X 12 inch pan. Bake for 20 minutes at 350 degrees

Filling

15 oz./ 398 ml (or larger) can crushed pineapple

1/4 c. granulated sugar

2 tbsp. cornstarch

1/4 cup cold water

3/4 c. chopped maraschino cherries

Stir together sugar, cornstarch, and cold water. Cook with pineapple on medium/low heat until thick, stirring often. I like to use a larger can to get a thicker layer of filling. Cool. Add cherries (or use them to decorate the meringue). Spread over the base.

Topping

3 egg whites

2 tbsp. sugar

1/4 tsp. almond flavouring

1/3 cup medium shredded coconut

Beat the egg whites with sugar until stiff peaks form. Stir in the flavouring. Spread over the pineapple layer. Sprinkle with coconut. Bake in moderate oven at 325 deg. until golden.

Enjoy!

Remembrance Day

I realize that this weekend is Thanksgiving Weekend and logically this would be the perfect opportunity to expound on the meaning of this day. However, Thanksgiving has already been covered in both the 2016 and 2017 issues of the Riverside. Therefore I decided to look ahead to November 11th. Remembrance

Day, or Armistice Day has been observed by Canadians since the end of the First World War in order to remember all those who fought and died in the line of duty to keep us free. Every year on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month Canadians pause in a moment of silence to honour and remember the more than 2 million Canadians who have served, and continue to serve Canada during times of war, conflict, and peace. Almost 200,000 Canadians were killed or wounded in the First World War. Another 68,000 were killed or wounded in the Second World War. During the Korean War 516 Canadians were killed, another 150 were killed in Afghanistan and at least 130 Canadian soldiers have died in other peacekeeping missions since that time. Remembrance Day ceremonies are usually held at cenotaphs, war memorials, schools and in other public places. Two minutes of silence, the playing of the Last Post, and the recitation of 'In Flanders Fields', are all part of a typical ceremony. This year a member of the NWRTA will not be laying the wreath at the New Westminster cenotaph, due to Covid 19 restrictions. It will be presented by the New Westminster Ambassadors and the Honor Roll will be read. Therefore, I would ask that, as individual Canadians we each choose an act of observance that is meaningful to us. If we do not remember the sacrifice of all soldiers is meaningless.



TRIVIA - Remembrance Day

1. Why is Remembrance Day observed on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month?

2. Who wrote, "In Flanders Fields"?
3. When did the Royal Canadian Legion adopt the poppy as the official symbol of remembrance?
4. Where should a poppy be worn?
5. How does the Legion use the money raised by the Poppy Campaign?
6. At the Battle of Passchendaele, in WW1, how many Canadian soldiers were killed?
7. When was D-Day and how many Canadian soldiers were involved?
8. Where can you find Canadian soil in France?

Covid is Not a Big Deal

(one person's rhetoric on the internet)

Some people in the United States believe that Covid is no big deal. After all it only has a 1% mortality rate.

Most of those who know nothing about the effects of Covid-19, except what they hear on such reliable sources as Fox News, often wonder why a disease with about a 1% mortality rate can shut down the entire country. Here are some actual facts and apologies to all the Trump supporters who thrive on a world of fake news. There are two problems with this question.

1. It neglects the law of large numbers; and
2. It assumes that one of two things happen: you die or you're 100% fine.

The US has a population of 328,200,000. If one percent of the population dies, that's 3,282,000 people dead. Three million people dead would monkey wrench the economy no matter what. That more than doubles the number of annual deaths all at once. The second bit is people keep talking about deaths. Deaths, deaths, deaths. Only one percent die! Just one percent! One is a small number! No big deal, right? What about the people who survive?

For every one person who dies:
-19 more require hospitalization.

- 18 of those will have permanent heart damage for the rest of their lives.
- 10 will have permanent lung damage.
- 3 will have strokes.
- 2 will have neurological damage that leads to chronic weakness and loss of coordination.
- 2 will have neurological damage that leads to loss of cognitive function.

So now all of a sudden, that “but it’s only 1% fatal!” becomes:

- 3,282,000 people dead.
- 62,358,000 hospitalized.
- 59,076,000 people with permanent heart damage.
- 32,820,000 people with permanent lung damage.
- 9,846,000 people with strokes.
- 6,564,000 people with muscle weakness.
- 6,564,000 people with loss of cognitive function.

That’s the thing that the folks who keep going on about “only 1% dead, what’s the big deal?” don’t get.

The choice is not “ruin the economy to save 1%.” If we reopen the economy, it will be destroyed anyway. The US economy cannot survive everyone getting COVID-19.

NWRTA Fall Book Reviews

by Linda King

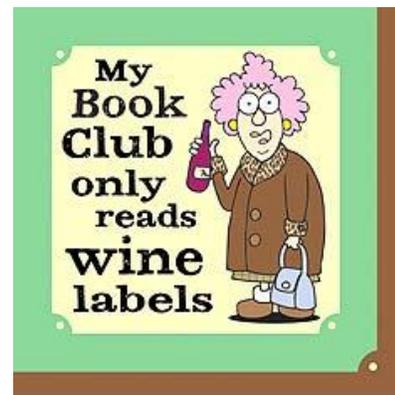
Haig, Matt “The Midnight Library”

"Between life and death there is a library, and within that library, the shelves go on forever. Every book provides a chance to try another life you could have lived. To see how things would be if you had made other choices...Would you have done anything different, if you had the chance to undo your regrets?"

Zafu, Carlos "The Shadow of the Wind"

Barcelona, 1945: A city slowly heals in the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War, and

Daniel, an antiquarian book dealer's son who mourns the loss of his mother, finds solace in a mysterious book entitled, "The Shadow of the Wind", by one Julian Carax. But when he sets out to find the author's other works, he makes a shocking discovery: someone has been systematically destroying every book Carax has written. In fact, Daniel may have the last of Carax's books in existence. Soon Daniel's seemingly innocent quest opens a door into one of Barcelona's darkest secrets - an epic story of murder, madness, and doomed love.



Straub, Emma “All Adults Here”

When Astrid Strick witnesses a school bus accident in the center of town, it jostles loose a repressed memory from her young parenting days decades earlier. Suddenly, Astrid realizes she was not quite the parent she thought she'd been to her three, now-grown children. But to what consequence? Astrid's youngest son is drifting and unfocused, making parenting mistakes of his own. Her daughter is pregnant yet struggling to give up her own adolescence. And her eldest seems to measure his adult life according to standards no one else shares. But who gets to decide, so many years later, which long-ago lapses were the ones that mattered? Who decides which apologies really count? It might be that only Astrid's thirteen-year-old granddaughter and her new friend really understand the courage it takes to tell the truth to the people you love the most.

“Some books should be tasted, some devoured, but only a few should be chewed and digested thoroughly.” Sir Francis Bacon

THINGS TO DO IN NEW WESTMINSTER

Still Not Too Much - whatever you choose to do, watch your physical distancing and wear your masks whenever distancing is difficult.



Hey Viola!
Anvil Centre, 777 Columbia Street
Oct. 15 - 25 7:30 - 9:00p.m.
Ticket on their website - \$50

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"Be careful what you water your dreams with. Water them with worry and fear and you will produce weeds that choke the life from your dream. Water them with optimism and solutions and you will cultivate success. Always be on the lookout for ways to nurture your dream." – Lao Tzu



KERRY'S TOONIES WORTH

or
One Step Away from Relevance

COVID 19 Self-test

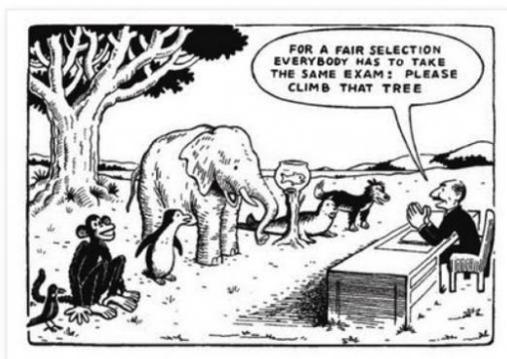
A new and easy self test for the horror of Covid 19 is making the rounds and it's simple, quick and positive (or negative if you see what I mean). Take a glass and pour a decent dram of your favourite whisky into it; then see if you can smell it. If you can, then you are halfway there. Then drink it. If you can taste it then it is reasonable to assume you are currently free of the virus because the loss of the sense of smell and taste is a common symptom. I tested myself 7 times last night and was virus free every time thank goodness. I will have to test myself again today because I have developed a throbbing headache which can also be one of the symptoms.

Mensa Convention

There was a Mensa convention in San Francisco. Mensa, as you probably know, is a national organization for people who have an IQ of 140 or higher. Several of the Mensa members went out for lunch at a local café. When they sat down, one of them discovered that their salt shaker contained pepper, and their pepper shaker was full of salt. How could they swap the contents of the two bottles without spilling any, and using only the implements at hand? Clearly, this was a job for Mensa

minds. The group debated the problem and presented ideas and finally, came up with a brilliant solution involving a napkin, a straw, and an empty saucer. They called the waitress over, ready to dazzle her with their solution. "Ma'am," they said, "we couldn't help but notice that the pepper shaker contains salt and the salt shaker has pepper. But before they could finish, the waitress interrupted, "Oh sorry about that." She leaned over the table, unscrewed the caps of both bottles and switched them. There was dead silence at the Mensa table.

Kind of reminds you of Ottawa doesn't it?



"Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid."

-Albert Einstein

Rabbit Story

So I woke up and my dog **was** laying on the back patio covered in dirt with a rabbit in his mouth. The rabbit's not bloody, just dirty. My neighbor's kids raise blue ribbon rabbits. I instantly knew it was one of theirs. I took the rabbit away from my dog, rushed inside, and washed all the dirt off it before my neighbors could come home. It was stiff but I heard some animals play dead when they are afraid but I couldn't remember which ones. I took it and placed it back in one of the cages in their back yard then I ZOOMED back home. Not 30 minutes later I hear my neighbors screaming, so I go out and ask them what's wrong? They tell me their rabbit died three days ago and they buried it but now it's back in the cage.

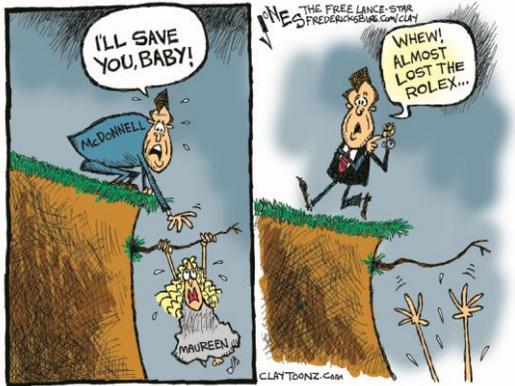
Creative Thinking

In a small Italian town, hundreds of years ago, a small business owner owed a large sum of money to a loan-shark. The loan-shark was a very old, unattractive looking guy that just so happened to fancy the business owner's daughter. He decided to offer the businessman a deal that would completely wipe out the debt owed him. However, the catch was that he would only wipe out the debt if he could marry the businessman's daughter. Needless to say, this proposal was met with a look of disgust. The loan-shark said that he would place two pebbles into a bag, one white and one black. The daughter would then have to reach into the bag and pick out a pebble. If it was black, the debt would be wiped, but the loan-shark would then get to marry the daughter. If it was white, the debt would also be wiped, but the daughter wouldn't have to marry the loan-shark. Standing on a pebble-strewn path in the businessman's garden, the loan-shark bent over and picked up two pebbles. Whilst he was picking them up, the daughter noticed that he'd picked up two black pebbles and placed them both into the bag. He then asked the daughter to reach into the bag and pick one. The daughter naturally had three choices as to what she could have done:

1. Refuse to pick a pebble from the bag.
2. Take both pebbles out of the bag and expose the loan-shark for cheating.
3. Pick a pebble from the bag fully well knowing it was black and sacrifice herself for her father's freedom.

She drew out a pebble from the bag, and before looking at it 'accidentally' dropped it into the midst of the other pebbles. She said to the loan-shark, "Oh, how clumsy of me. Never mind, if you look into the bag for the one that is left, you will be able to tell which pebble I picked." The pebble left in the bag is obviously black, and seeing as the loan-shark didn't want to be exposed, he had to play along as if the pebble the daughter dropped was white, and clear her father's debt.

Moral of the story: It's always possible to overcome a tough situation by 'out of the box' thinking, and not giving in to the options you think you have to pick from.



Fun with the English language

Dwarf

Today I saw a dwarf climbing down a prison wall. I thought to myself, "That's a little condescending".

Spelling

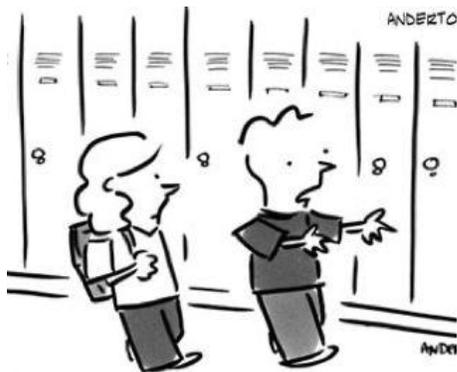
Most people write "Congrats" because they don't know the spelling of congratulashions.

Spice Rack

I relabelled all of the jars in my wife's spice rack. I'm not in trouble yet...but the thyme is cumin.

Puns

Is there any truth to the rumour that Cap'n Crunch was a cereal killer?



"Pronouns?! We haven't even done amateur nouns yet!"

Mechanic

A motorcycle mechanic was removing a cylinder head from the motor of a BMW when he spotted a well-known cardiologist in his shop. The cardiologist was there waiting for the service manager to come and take a look at his car when the mechanic shouted across the garage, "Hey Doc, want to take a look at this?" The cardiologist, a bit surprised, walked over to where the mechanic was working on the motorcycle. The mechanic straightened up, wiped his hands on a rag and asked, "So Doc, look at this engine. I opened its heart, took the valves out, repaired or replaced anything damaged, and then put everything back in and when I finished, it worked just like new. So how is that I make \$24,000 a year and you make \$1.7M when you and I are doing basically the same work?"

The cardiologist paused, leaned over, and then whispered to the mechanic..... "Try doing it with the engine running."

Remembrance Day Trivia Answers

1. This commemorates the armistice agreement that ended the First World War on Monday, November 11, 1918 at 11 a.m.
2. Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae
3. 1921
4. On the left lapel, closest to the heart
5. It is used for veterans in financial distress, as well as funding for medical equipment, medical research, home services, and long-term care facilities
6. 16,000 Canadians died and it did nothing to help the Allied effort and became a symbol of the senseless slaughter of war
7. June 6, 1944. 14,000 soldiers landed at Juno Beach and 359 soldiers died on that one day
8. At Vimy Ridge. On December 5, 1922, France granted Canada "freely and for all time" the use of 100 hectares (250 acres) of land on Vimy Ridge, inclusive of Hill 145, in recognition of Canada's war effort.