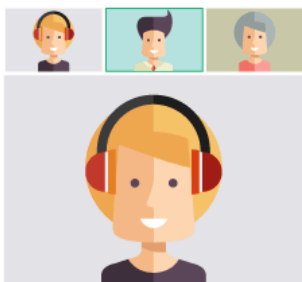


August 2021
Issue No. 1

CRTA Newsletter

President's Report - submitted by Caroline Malm

The 2020-21 year challenged all of us. Our lives have been impacted in so many ways by the pandemic. On a personal note, I am thankful for wide open spaces and WhatsApp. Both of these made the past year bearable. We walked with our Vancouver son and family in person, albeit at masked distances. We connected with our UK son and family on line with voice and movement. Missing both at home and abroad? The hugs!



Locally, the **Executive Committee** gets top marks for conducting association business via email, telephone and Zoom technology; we have endeavoured to provide useful information and updates during the pandemic. All directors performed their duties within the limits mandated by public health orders. Many thanks to **CRTA members** for your support and encouragement throughout another unusual year. We await the return of in person events so greatly missed at this time.

We very much appreciate the ongoing generous support we have received from the **CTA** and **District 43**. Additionally, as privacy legislation prevents us from accessing the names of teachers who retire in our District, we extend our thanks to the **CTA** and **District 43** for placing our information on their web sites. This year our Branch received **BCRTA** recognition for percentage increase of membership.

BCRTA has provided excellent information and advocacy for members throughout the year. Visit www.bcrta.ca for up to date provincial and branch news.

In May we sought nominations for the 2021 - 2022 **CRTA** Executive Committee. All members of this past year's committee chose to stand for nomination and will continue to serve members while we wait for an election. At this time, we are investigating both in person and virtual options for an AGM.

CRTA members Audrey Anthony, Teresa Grandinetti (President Designate), Fran Mitchell and Jeannine Silvestrone will attend the **BCRTA** online Conference and AGM sessions in September and October. I will attend as **BCRTA** second vice-president.

Stay well, everyone. Please take care now so that when we gather again, no one will be missing.

Caroline

Calendar Update



Our back to school brunch, affectionately known as "To Hell with the Bell" will be in recess this year due to the pandemic. If held, the event would be very restricted compared to our usual format. Our attendance would be limited and we would have to remain in our seats for the duration of the event. No mingling or moving about would be allowed. Meals would be served plated at the table instead of our usual buffet. Similarly, coffee, tea, juice and bar drinks would be served at the table.

Because socializing is important to our attendees, the executive decided not to proceed this year and hope that next year will bring a wonderful return to our regular format!

Audrey

Coquitlam Retired Teachers' Association

CRTA 2021 –
2022

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Treasurer's Report – submitted by Howard Spence

On July 1, 2020, our **assets** consisted of petty cash, \$70; money in the bank, \$4,504; and \$1,050 in deposits for that year's lunches, for a total of \$5,624 when lunch deposits were refunded.



During the year, we incurred **expenses** as follows: bank service charges, \$54; Christmas cards mailed to our mailing list members, and gift certificates to our life members, \$377; \$747 for newsletter postage; and \$70 for flowers for the CTA staff, in thanks for all they do for us. Total expenses were \$1,248, offset by \$3,870 in **membership fees** received from the BCRTA.

The **bottom line**: We now have \$8,175 in the bank and \$92 in petty cash, for total assets of \$8,268. We are now anxiously awaiting the day when we can schedule lunches/brunches and general meetings, and start returning this surplus to our members.

Membership/Member Contact Report – submitted by John Pope:

Numbers

Our pandemic year saw the Branch membership increase yet again. Although we had many new retirees opting to join, we also lost far too many members, as listed in the In Memoriam section of the newsletter. We look forward to welcoming 2021 retirees, who are encouraged to “test drive” the Association with a no fee introductory membership.



Contact

CRTA sent members five newsletters, supplemented by eight email “blasts” on various topics, including health issues, the COVID vaccination programme, and travel insurance. In addition, and for the first time, CRTA sent Christmas cards (via Canada Post and E-mail) to all members.

Have you changed your email account or telephone number? Please let us **and** the provincial office know: CRTA: coquitlamrta@hotmail.com or 604-461-7355.

BCRTA: Laurie@bcrta.ca or 604-871-2260 or 1-877-683-2243.

Howard's COVID Challenge – Can you add a word and an alternate humorous meaning to the list below?

1. Carpe diem (n), catch of the day
2. Despair (n), de flat tire in de trunk
3. Inkling (n), a baby octopus
4. Autoeroticism (n), what happens at a drive-in-movie
5. Amortize (v), to cause to fall in love

Definitions are to be submitted by email to Howard Spence at hwspace@gmail.com. Your submissions, and your name, will be published. Fame, though unfortunately not fortune, awaits you!

Coquitlam Retired Teachers' Association

COVID Contemplations from your CRTA Directors

Maria - COVID arrived very quickly and we were all unprepared in many regards. I told myself that history has had many challenges, tragedies, triumphs and horrors and this was another link in the endless chain of time. People have always had to dig deep and find that strength that propels them forward and this would continue. Early on I decided that I would not isolate myself from my daughter and grandchildren, obviously taking sensible precautions. So we carried on as usual and lived and learned from all the experiences together. We have been blessed and are fortunate to live where we do.

Margrete - Throughout this pandemic we have learned to appreciate our homes, whether it be cleaning cupboards, computer work, working on puzzles, enjoying our pets and of course reading. Some of us have even learned how to use Zoom. The executive was happy to send Christmas cards to CRTA members as well as gift cards to honorary members. We all look forward to being able to meet in person again to enjoy fellowship, speakers, laughter and door prizes.

Lynne - It began in March 2020 when we received calls from our sons to get home now! Amazingly, the arrivals level at YVR was almost empty. (I had imagined COVID everywhere.) Then ZOOM invitations became common from the son in Spain; phone calls, from the son in California; and visits on the front steps, with the son and daughter-in-law in Coquitlam delivering treats and grandchildren delightedly running around the yard. Using YouTube, we enjoyed church services and that daughter-in-law's graduation with her master's degree. Because I was the most vulnerable, after fifty-two years of marriage my husband began to do the grocery shopping! Could this continue? And some doctor's visits by phone?

Lynda - Yes, COVID has been hard. For those of us whose children and families live close by, we didn't see them at all unless it was in backyards or parks, sitting 6ft. apart. In order to stay in contact with my sister and brother-in-law, we met them every few weeks at a lower mainland park. We thought we knew every park in the area. However, we discovered several new ones. Meeting at these parks wearing masks and social distancing with our chairs and a peanut butter sandwich was a wonderful way to stay connected. Rules have lightened up now but we will always remember these special times during the COVID Year.

Fran - COVID -19 certainly brought my job of finding presenters to a halt, as well as everything else. Instead, I found myself focussing on things I could do rather than what I couldn't. I worked in my garden when I could and walked. I did get to know my neighbourhood very well. I found out how important it was to stay connected with friends and especially family through phone calls, Skype or Zoom. I look forward to the time when our CRTA is able to hold General Meetings again and to meet all those new retirees who retired during the lockdown.

CRTA 2021– 2022 EXECUTIVE

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Coquitlam Retired Teachers' Association

Dale - I worked in my garden because the weeds never stopped giving me something to do. I took walks to the park then enjoyed watching the parade of others doing the same. We hired a horrendous company to build a small bathroom and were saved by a handyman who finished the job. There were many phone calls with friends and family. I learned the difference between cell calls and phone calls when I heard, "Pull the phone away from your ear!" from my granddaughters. In the end, when we really needed that in person visit, we had socially-distanced BBQ's on our large deck with our immediate family.

John - On a personal note, I found that although the pandemic restrictions were frustrating, with cancelled vacation plans, Christmas without family, and the suspension of our Retired Teachers' Bridge Club play days, the enforced quarantine did provide the opportunity to attack a lot of the books on my "To Read" list, complete quite a few house repairs and upgrades, and perhaps best of all, enjoy a generous amount of time doing very little, rather slowly.

Henry - As a senior looking back, I reflect upon the fragility of life and the concern I have for loved ones and dear friends during the pandemic. It has taught me to live in the moment and to be thankful for all that I have tirelessly worked for. Science can only do so much and therefore we must keep ourselves well informed, trust the direction of our leaders and have faith in our decisions. If tragedy strikes and loved ones or friends get sick, become hospitalized and even die, remember you're not alone. There are others there for you in your time of need and grief. I appreciated all those who were there for me.

Jeannine - I have had a positive, unintended consequence because of the pandemic. Through SHARE, I was matched with a phone buddie by the name of Barb. She has become a good friend of mine just through talking to her on the phone over the last seven months. Who knew two people who would never have met before, except for the pandemic, could strike up a wonderful friendship because of it? I am so thankful for that serendipity.

Jennifer - The hardest part of COVID for me was not being able to visit my brother in Victoria. He is the only immediate family I still have. John, a retired professor, moved to Victoria in 2019, when the Ottawa winters finally got to him. I was able to visit him once before my second knee surgery, and we spent Christmas together here, but shortly after, travel restrictions went into effect. I made one trip to Victoria in July and plan on many more. I honestly think I saw more of him when he lived in Ottawa!

Audrey - The pandemic for me had positive as well as negative effects. From negatives, there must be some equal and opposite positives. On the positive side, my house became very clean at the onset of the "shelter in place" order. The veggie garden and the flower beds were readied for planting early and I was able to spend a lot of time reading. I had to learn to use Zoom which now gives me another method of communication. The negative impacts were difficult to deal with. I had no exercise classes to go to. I was not able to socialize with my friends or talk to my doctor in person. My deepest regrets were not being able to be with or hug my kids and family members, particularly on special days.

In Memoriam

The CRTA regrets to announce the passing of the following District 43 colleagues. We extend our heartfelt condolences to their families and friends.

Isabel (Susie) Kent: May 1, 2021. A long-time CRTA Member, Isabel was a retired teacher/Librarian in Coquitlam S.D. She is survived by five children, thirteen grandchildren and thirteen great grandchildren.

Gordon House: May 16, 2021. A long-time CRTA Member, Gordon was a math teacher, sports coach and principal in SD 43. He is survived by his children, grandchildren, family and friends.

David Meronuk: June 11, 2021. Dave was a teacher and coach in SD 43. He is survived by his wife, Dana, and his sons Kevin (Jennifer Seymour) and Colin (Shelley White).