Mixed blood & mixed feelings

One of the first unfettered Métis memoirs from British Columbia—a not a white-washed “as told to” biography—is Chiefly Indian: The Warm and Witty Story of a British Columbia Halfbreed Logger (1972) by Henry Pennier, a Fraser Valley logger and raconteur.

After languishing on the edges of political correctness for three decades, this rough-hewn classic has been rescued from oblivion and repackaged and retitled by a scholarly press as Call Me Hank: A Stólo Man’s Reflections on Logging, Living, and Growing Old (UTP $24.95), edited by Keith Thor Carlson and Kristina Fagan.

“About the only good thing about being a halfbreed,” he once said is, “I could buy liquor.”

Henry Pennier was the grandson of a Quebec businessman who had arrived in British Columbia in the 1870s, then left his Aborig- inal wife and their son George in order to return to Quebec. George Pennier, Henry Pennier’s father, grew up on a Harrison River homestead and married another halfbreed [Pennier’s term and spelling] named Alice Davis. Two of their eight children died.

Not long after Hank Pennier was born in 1904, his father was killed in a hunting accident. Raised on an 87-acre homestead ad- joining the Chehalis Reservation, Pennier be- came friendly with his new step-grandfather at Union Bar, a settlement about three miles east of Hope, and heard many Aboriginal sto- ries from him.

Pennier was an altar boy at St. Mary’s mis- sion school, operated by the Oblates, but he was forced to leave that school at age 13 due to over-enrolment. He attended a public school at Hope until age 15, then started logging in 1922. Two years later he married Margaret Leon, “a Harrison River Indian too except there is just a little Chinese in her,” and they had eight children.

“And all of us are halfbreeds,” he said, “not white men and not Indians either; we look Indian and everybody but Indians takes us for In- dians.” It was Pennier’s great hope that one day racial differentiations could be eradi- cated, “but I know I won’t be around when that happens.”

By the 1960s, serious logging injuries had left Pennier reliant on a crutch and cane, unemployable, but buoyed by a lively sense of humour and full of stories as a rustic philoso- pher. Although he was reduced to bingo, Reader’s Digest, television and social assistance, Pennier retained a proud sense of accomplish- ment for having worked long and hard, and for having gained recognition as an excellent field lacrosse player.

In his late 60s, while living on Nicomen Trunk Road, east of Mission, Pennier received a visit from a Welsh-born linguist professor from Simon Fraser University, E. Wyn Roberts, who hoped to tape-record some “Indian stories” for a linguistic project involving the Halkomelem language.

Pennier was congenial but not easily controlled. He basically wanted to tell his own stories instead. After several meetings and textual collaborations, Roberts es- sentially abandoned his ini- tial plan for his linguistic approach and decided to serve as Pennier’s unofficial agent.

Impressed by Pennier’s intelligence, Roberts approached Jack Richards, an editor at the Vancouver Sun, sug- gesting a weekly series featuring Henry Pennier’s anecdotes and stories. Richards, in turn, connected the Robert/Roberts duo with Vancouver publisher and photographer Herb McDonald. Chiefly Indian appeared when Hank Pennier was 68. He died when he was 91.

Pennier’s self-penned memoir, complete with some original spellings, err’d on the side of being colourful, but it provides many heartfelt comments by Pennier on his halfbreed status.

“Outside of my work I could not join the white society, socially, and if I went to an In- dian party and there was liquor involved I was taking a chance of being jailed regardless of whether I had supplied them with liquor or not,” he wrote.

“If I had an Indian in the car and also a sealed bottle of whiskey or a sealed case of beer and a cop stops me on a routine check I would be charged with having (concealed) which has several meanings like the intention of giving him a drink sooner or later.”

And all of us are halfbreeds,” said, “not white men and not Indians yet we look Indian and everybody but Indians takes us for Indians.”

INDEX to Advertisers

Arsenal Pulp Press...19
Banyen Books...35
BC Historical Federation...34
Bolen Books...38
Book Warehouse...38
Cairin Press...32
Crowne Publications...38
Douglas & McIntyre...2
Douglas College/EVENT...40
Ekstrasis Editions...31
Ellis, David...34
Fierc Choice Books...40
Friesens Printers...42
George Ruya Award...45
Givner, Joan...40
Granville Island Publishing...31
Hajgos Press...28
Harbour Publishing...44
HarperCollins...19
Heritage House...12
Hignell Printing...42
Houghton Boston Printers...42
Julian, Terry...34
Literary Press Group...27, 28
Morris Printing...42
NeWest Press...35
New Society Publishers...11
New Star Books...25, 29, 35, 40
Northstone...36
Ocean Cruise Guides...25
Oubichon Books...28
Orca Books...24
Penguin Books...16
People’s Co-op Bookstore...34
Playboys Cananda Press...50
Printers...42
Ronsdale Press...8
Royal BC Museum...32
Save-On Foods...35
Self Counsel Press...32
SFU Writing & Publishing...16
SFU Writers Studio...18
Sidney Bookrown...40
Snow Leo Press...6
Talonbooks...4
Temeron Books...29
Thomas Allen...15
Thomson, Andy...34
Tradewind...27
Transcontinental Printing...42
UBC Press...19
Vancouver Desktop...34
Vancouver Writers Festival...14
Western Canada Wilderness...37
Work Less Party...36
Yokas Coffee...37

TO ADVERTISE CALL 604-736-4011

All BC Bookworld reviews are posted online at www.abcbookworld.com

Contributors: Grant Shilling, Mark Forsythe, Sheila Morris, Joan Givner, Sara Cassidy, Louise Donnelly, Hannah Main-van der Kamp, Heather Ramsay, Barry Peterson (photos). Writing not otherwise credited is by staff.

Proofreaders: Wendy Atkinson, Betty Twigg
Design: Get-to-the-Point Graphics
Deliveries: Ken Reid

Notifications of acceptance of Canada Council and the Province of British Columbia through the Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Native Services.

For Advertising information call 604-736-4011

All BC Bookworld reviews are posted online at www.abcbookworld.com

This article is the sixth in a series celebrating enduring B.C. books.

BC BOOKWORLD

Autumn Issue Vol. No. 3
Publisher/Writer: Alan Twigg
Editor/Production: David Lester

Advertising & editorial: BC Bookworld, 3516 W. 13th Ave., Vancouver, B.C., V6R 2S3
Tel/Fax: 604-736-4011
Email: available on request
Annual subscription: $24.84

INDEX to Advertisers

Arsenal Pulp Press...19
Banyen Books...35
BC Historical Federation...34
Bolen Books...38
Book Warehouse...38
Cairin Press...32
Crowne Publications...38
Douglas & McIntyre...2
Douglas College/EVENT...40
Ekstrasis Editions...31
Ellis, David...34
Fierc Choice Books...40
Friesens Printers...42
George Ruya Award...45
Givner, Joan...40
Granville Island Publishing...31
Hajgos Press...28
Harbour Publishing...44
HarperCollins...19
Heritage House...12
Hignell Printing...42
Houghton Boston Printers...42
Julian, Terry...34
literary Press Group...27, 28
Morris Printing...42
NeWest Press...35
New Society Publishers...11
New Star Books...25, 29, 35, 40
Northstone...36
Ocean Cruise Guides...25
Oubichon Books...28
Orca Books...24
Penguin Books...16
People’s Co-op Bookstore...34
Playboys Cananda Press...50
Printers...42
Ronsdale Press...8
Royal BC Museum...32
Save-On Foods...35
Self Counsel Press...32

SUW Writing & Publishing...16
SUW Writers Studio...18
Sidney Bookrown...40
Snow Leo Press...6
Talonbooks...4
Temeron Books...29
Thomas Allen...15
Thomson, Andy...34
Tradewind...27
Transcontinental Printing...42
UBC Press...19
Vancouver Desktop...34
Vancouver Writers Festival...14
Western Canada Wilderness...37
Work Less Party...36
Yokas Coffee...37

TO ADVERTISE CALL 604-736-4011

All BC Bookworld reviews are posted online at www.abcbookworld.com

Contributors: Grant Shilling, Mark Forsythe, Sheila Morris, Joan Givner, Sara Cassidy, Louise Donnelly, Hannah Main-van der Kamp, Heather Ramsay, Barry Peterson (photos). Writing not otherwise credited is by staff.

Proofreaders: Wendy Atkinson, Betty Twigg
Design: Get-to-the-Point Graphics
Deliveries: Ken Reid

Notifications of acceptance of Canada Council and the Province of British Columbia through the Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Native Services.

For Advertising information call 604-736-4011

All BC Bookworld reviews are posted online at www.abcbookworld.com

This article is the sixth in a series celebrating enduring B.C. books.
The mermaids were aloof in T.S. Eliot’s The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock, but their sisterly songs have long enchanted Amanda Adams, a UBC-trained anthropologist who has gathered images and lore for a cross-cultural study, A Mermaid’s Tale (Greystone $32.95).

“All of us are attracted to the mermaid’s open-sea liberation,” she says. “We know how free—determined she should be.”

Adams blames the medieval church in twelfth-century Europe for transforming sirens and mermaids into evil temptresses. According to Adams, the mermaid always possessed elements of danger and moodiness, but she had not yet been acquainted “with passionate sex and an insatiable hunger for love exceeding all human limits—not until, that is, some leaders of the clergy decided she should be.”
BY JOAN GIVNER

Kidnapped Mind (Dundurn $24.99) by Pamela Richardson with Jane Broweleit and Walking After Midnight (Raincoast $32.95) by Katy Hutchison both fall into the category allegedly recommended by literary agents [see quote above]. They are compelling non-fiction narratives that revolve around turbulent teenagers.

Pamela Richardson’s story begins when her former husband gains custody of their four-year-old son. As a criminal lawyer, his legal knowledge and his influential friends enabled him to sway the presiding judge. Although this is a highly subjective first person account, written after the former husband and son have died, it seems clear that Richardson’s depiction of the arrogance and blindness of the judicial system has some foundation.

Judges persisted in favouring the father, in spite of evidence of his alcoholism and neglect. Their rulings were bolstered by reports by court-appointed psychologists who recommended that the child remain with his father even while they acknowledged the father had “a drinking problem” and suffered from Adult Attention Deficit Disorder. From “a drinking problem” and suffering from Adult Attention Deficit Disorder, while they acknowledged the father had “a drinking problem” and suffered from Adult Attention Deficit Disorder, while they acknowledged the father had “a drinking problem” and suffered from Adult Attention Deficit Disorder, their work in restorative justice has garnered various awards such as The Courage to Come Back Award and The Women of Distinction Award.

These books are not without flaws. They are frequently self-indulgent, sentimental, humourless and self-serving. Yet they have the merit of focusing attention on our legal and justice systems. Both will likely gain attention in the media, largely because both women have televisual potential—a fact exploited by the placing of their photographs on the front as well as the back flap of their book jackets. In the case of the Raincoast book, video clips of the author performing on camera were distributed to the media; in the case of the Dundurn book, the main author was described as a former television host. Their stories will generate lively discussions among readers, and particularly among earnest book club members. No doubt they both have a good chance to get onto Oprah Winfrey. But the phenomenon of which they are part invites certain questions.

The moral fables and cautionary tales of the Middle Ages, the saints’ lives, the conduct books of the nineteenth century, have always enjoyed a wide appeal. Only recently, however, have agents courted such books above literary fiction, as Mr. Levin suggests. And the displacement and devaluation of literary fiction (as of all other art forms) is a worrisome trend. It might be useful if agents were to remind their clients that along with such worthy non-fiction subjects as Parental Alienation Syndrome and Restorative Justice, they consider promoting literary fiction and risking some restorative creativity.

Whatever high-minded purposes lie behind these books—consolation, inspiration, moral instruction—they are not strong as literature. I wonder if the proliferation of such books feeds a genuine hunger in the reading public? Or does it fulfill a need created by public relations and marketing departments?

Kidnapped 1-55002-624-0; Walking 1-55724-304-9

Joan Givner has written on biography and autobiography for many years.

TELEVISUAL AUTHORS WITH TRAGIC TALES

History belongs to the survivors and those who can get on Oprah.

Katy Hutchison (above) is recovering after her husband’s murder. Pamela Richardson (right) is recovering from the suicide of her son. Both have remarried; both are going on tour.
Nine more stories from Caroline Adderson add to her growing reputation for compassionate writing in Pleased to Meet You (Thomas Allen $26.95), her fourth work of fiction since 1993. Twice winner of the Ethel Wilson Fiction Prize, Adderson has been lured into the screenwriting game of late, but continues to gain critical acclaim for her fiction. Her new book will be reviewed in our next issue.

Esther Birney was a substantial literary character in British Columbia beyond her marriage to Earle Birney, managing a long-running series of literary lectures at Brock House. A major contributor to Elspeth Cameron’s 1994 biography of Birney, which depicted him as an egocentric womanizer, Esther Birney died on July 20, 2006. A new anthology of Earle Birney’s poetry is due this fall, to be reviewed next issue.

In 2005, Trevor Carolan began co-producing a revival of the Pacific Rim Review of Books with Richard Olafson of Ekstasis Editions in Victoria. This year he has accepted a new position as the Banff Centre’s Director of Literary Arts.

Melissa Edwards has collected full-colour, quirky maps of Canada that have appeared in Geist magazine since 1995 for The Geist Atlas of Canada (Arsenal $24.95), a compendium of place names according to subjects such as meat, doughnuts, Atwood, world’s largest and hockey.

Jenn Farrell has now published Sugar Bush (Anvil $18), a frankly confessional collection of short fiction.

Paula Gustafson, who was born in Abbotsford, died on July 11, 2006 after a brief battle with cancer. As one of Canada’s foremost writers about crafts, she produced a monograph, Salish Weaving (1980) and edited two volumes of Craft Perception and Practice: A Canadian Discourse (2002, 2005) in her capacity as editor of Artichoke magazine. She was a recipient of the first Jean A. Chalmers Fund for the Crafts Award for critical writing on Canadian crafts and produced a history of the Crafts Association of British Columbia called Mapping the Terrain.

After a 25-year-hiatus, outgoing animal lover Lyn Hancock has resurrected her animal companion story, Tabasco: The Saucy Raccoon (Sono $12.95), illustrated by Lorraine Kemp, to recall how she once took her newborn pet raccoon on a cross-Canada book promotion tour. It is published by Diane Morriss, who remembered reading There’s a Raccoon in my Parka, Hancock’s bestseller about her first pet raccoon, Rocky, written back when Morris was a child.

Having completed her exhausting task of meeting and photographing more than 160 Canadian authors, Israel-based Canlit instructor Danielle Schaub has finally released Reading Writers Reading: Canadian Author’s Reflections (U. of Alberta $60) with 36 B.C. profiles, including relative newcomers Lisa Ockoul, Annabel Lyon (pictured above), Hiromi Goto and Vera Manuel and veteran standbys such as Spider Robinson, George Bowering, Nick Bantock and William New.

A two-time winner of the Vancouver Courier fiction contest and a recipient of the 2002 Maclean-Hunter Endowment Prize for non-fiction, Jenn Farrell has now published Sugar Bush (Anvil $18), a frankly confessional collection of short fiction.

Paula Gustafson, who was born in Abbotsford, died on July 11, 2006 after a brief battle with cancer. As one of Canada’s foremost writers about crafts, she produced a monograph, Salish Weaving (1980) and edited two volumes of Craft Perception and Practice: A Canadian Discourse (2002, 2005) in her capacity as editor of Artichoke magazine. She was a recipient of the first Jean A. Chalmers Fund for the Crafts Award for critical writing on Canadian crafts and produced a history of the Crafts Association of British Columbia called Mapping the Terrain.

After a 25-year-hiatus, outgoing animal lover Lyn Hancock has resurrected her animal companion story, Tabasco: The Saucy Raccoon (Sono $12.95), illustrated by Lorraine Kemp, to recall how she once took her newborn pet raccoon on a cross-Canada book promotion tour. It is published by Diane Morriss, who remembered reading There’s a Raccoon in my Parka, Hancock’s bestseller about her first pet raccoon, Rocky, written back when Morris was a child.

Having completed her exhausting task of meeting and photographing more than 160 Canadian authors, Israel-based Canlit instructor Danielle Schaub has finally released Reading Writers Reading: Canadian Author’s Reflections (U. of Alberta $60) with 36 B.C. profiles, including relative newcomers Lisa Ockoul, Annabel Lyon (pictured above), Hiromi Goto and Vera Manuel and veteran standbys such as Spider Robinson, George Bowering, Nick Bantock and William New.

A two-time winner of the Vancouver Courier fiction contest and a recipient of the 2002 Maclean-Hunter Endowment Prize for non-fiction, Jenn Farrell has now published Sugar Bush (Anvil $18), a frankly confessional collection of short fiction.

Paula Gustafson, who was born in Abbotsford, died on July 11, 2006 after a brief battle with cancer. As one of Canada’s foremost writers about crafts, she produced a monograph, Salish Weaving (1980) and edited two volumes of Craft Perception and Practice: A Canadian Discourse (2002, 2005) in her capacity as editor of Artichoke magazine. She was a recipient of the first Jean A. Chalmers Fund for the Crafts Award for critical writing on Canadian crafts and produced a history of the Crafts Association of British Columbia called Mapping the Terrain.

After a 25-year-hiatus, outgoing animal lover Lyn Hancock has resurrected her animal companion story, Tabasco: The Saucy Raccoon (Sono $12.95), illustrated by Lorraine Kemp, to recall how she once took her newborn pet raccoon on a cross-Canada book promotion tour. It is published by Diane Morriss, who remembered reading There’s a Raccoon in my Parka, Hancock’s bestseller about her first pet raccoon, Rocky, written back when Morris was a child.
Your manuscript will receive an assessment of 700 to 1000 words from Event. If you are a new writer or a writer with a challenging or troublesome manuscript, a new order (payable to Event) for $100.00 (inc. GST) to each manuscript. You'll also receive a one-year subscription (or renewal) so you can check out winning mix of poetry, fiction, creative non-fiction, reviews and notes on writing. Eligible manuscripts include poetry (8 max.) and short fiction & creative non-fiction under 5000 words. Drama, chapters of novels and journalistic non-fiction are not eligible. All manuscripts read are, of course, considered for publication. Expect to wait four to six weeks for the commentary to arrive. Event's Reading Service for Writers costs a nominal fee: attach a cheque or money order (payable to Event) for $100.00 (inc. GST) to each manuscript. You'll also receive a one-year subscription (or renewal) so you can check out winning mix of poetry, fiction, creative non-fiction, reviews and notes on writing.

EVENT—The Douglas College Review
P.O. Box 2503, New Westminster, BC V3L 5B2
Phone: (604) 527-5293    Fax: (604) 527-5095
e-mail: event@douglas.bc.ca
Visit our website at http://event.douglas.bc.ca

EVENTReading Service for Writers
If you are a new writer or a writer with a challenging or troublesome manuscript, Event's Reading Service for Writers may be of particular interest to you. Your manuscript will receive an assessment of 700 to 1000 words from Event's editors, focusing on the strengths and weaknesses of the writing with attention to such aspects of craft as voice, structure, point of view, credibility, etc. That way you'll see how one group of experienced editors reads your work.

Visit Sidney by the Sea
Just minutes from the Swartz Bay Ferry Terminal
www.sidneybooktown.ca

JOAN GIVNER

Ellen is back, this time with literary ambitions in...
Ellen Fremender: JOURNALIST by Joan Givner

Beacon Books
The Book Cellar
The Children's Bookshop
Compass Rose Nautical Books
Country Life Books
Galleon Books and Antiques
The Haunted Bookshop
Tanner's Books
Time Enough For Books

ENDPAPERS

Daaku a novel by Ranj Dhaliwal
The story of one man's journey through the Indo-Canadian gang scene
Find it here

Biblic's Co-op Bookstore
Dutchberry Books
Blackberry Books
Spartacus Books
Magpie Magazine Gallery
Chapters
Indigo Books + Music

Published by New Star Books

Ingeborg Woodcock, seen here with the Dalai Lama in Dharmsala, India, has bequeathed $1.87 million to benefit Canadian writers in perpetuity. circle. After World War II, they left the London literary scene to homestead in Sooke on Vancouver Island, partially attracted by the notion of emulating Doukhobor pacifists. The nearest Doukhobor settlement was at Hilliers, near Parksville. Not suited for subsistence farming, George and Ingeborg Woodcock lived temporarily with Doris and Jack Shadbolt at their home in Burnaby. Both childless, the two couples became lifelong friends, often sharing their Christmases together. George Woodcock proceeded to write and edit more than 120 books. As a Buddhist friend of the Dalai Lama, Ingeborg Woodcock persistently maintained her idealism after George Woodcock died in 1995. Following her own death on December 11, 2003, in accordance with their mutual wishes, Ingeborg Woodcock has bequeathed an extraordinary $1.87 million gift to the Writers’ Trust of Canada. As the Woodcocks envisioned, monies will be used to provide more than $100,000 annually to Canadian writers facing financial crises.

Coastal fishing maven Bob Jones has co-written Island Fly Fisherman (Harbour $21.95), with Larry E. Stefanyk, and co-edited A Compendium of Canadian Fly Patterns (Gale's End Press $58.25), with Paul C. Marriner. Six years in the making, the latter is a full-colour, spiral bound hardcover that was completed as a volunteer fund raiser for the Youth Branch of Fly Fishing Canada, marketed only by mail and the Internet. It prompted guide fishing author Ian Colin James to write, “Rounding up alley cats with a leaf blower would have been much easier than putting this book together, yet the authors did one heck of a job... on the book, not the cats.”

Michael Kluckner was first runner-up for the BC Historical Federation Book Writing Competition with Vanishing British Columbia (UBC Press), his compilation of watercolours and local history.

For information on this year’s competition, see advertisement on p. 34.

Having gathered his paintings of heritage buildings from around the province after several decades of widespread travels, Michael Kluckner was first runner-up for the BC Historical Federation Book Writing Competition with Vanishing British Columbia (UBC Press), his compilation of watercolours and local history.

For information on this year’s competition, see advertisement on p. 34.

Joan Givner

Ellen Fresender: JOURNALIST by Joan Givner
Arthur Black has become one of only three recipients to have earned Canada’s top humour prize three times in its 60-year history by winning this year’s Stephen Leacock Memorial Medal for Humour for Pitch Black (Harbour $32.95). Another three-time winner is British Columbian Eric Nicol. Last year’s lone Leacock nominee from B.C. was Bob Collins—self-published Summer of Wonder: The Misbegotten Romance of Hay Fitzpatrick (Stone Pillow Press).

Elsie K. Neufeld lives on Sumas Mountain, just east of Abbotsford, from where she has edited Half in the Sun (Ronsdale $23.95), a first-ever anthology of fiction, creative non-fiction and poetry by 25 Mennonite-related writers of British Columbia including Andreas Schroeder, Patrick Friesen, Barbara Nickel, Oscar Martens, Carla Funk and numerous emerging writers.

Tom Osborne’s follow-up to Foulweather is another madcap romp through the Lower Mainland, Dead Man in the Tofino, Ucluelet, Port Alberni, Nitinat Narrows from the perspective of two dogs whose owners are frequently depictured, ah, dating.

Richard A. Rajala has provided a history of logging from Bella Coola to the Nass River in Up-Coast, Forest and Industry on British Columbia’s North Coast, 1870-2005 (Royal B.C. Museum $49.95). It chronicles how and why small-scale operations tied to the needs of salmon canneries and early settlements were eclipsed by giant pulp-and-paper companies such as Pacific Mills at Ocean Falls.

Richard Goetz-Stankiewicz, whose owners are frequently depicted, narrated from the viewpoint of two dogs, including an unhappily married teacher, an abused young woman who is retreating from prostitution with a child in tow, a mother of a rebellious teenage daughter, a young widow and the long-time lover of a healer named Gabriel at the Centre for Light Awareness in Neon Bar.

Political philosopher Wladyslaw J. Stankiewicz was born in Warsaw, Poland, in 1922. “Walter” Stankiewicz fought with the Polish Army-in-Exile in France (1940) and in various Allied campaigns. He began teaching at UBC in 1957 and lectured at more than 50 universities around the world. Several of his approximately 20 books have been translated into other languages. Married to Marketa Stankiewicz, he died in Vancouver General Hospital on July 21, 2006. An overview of his work can be gleaned from The Essential Stankiewicz: On the Importance of Political Theory (Ronanale, 2001).

As a resident of Sidney, married to the Japanese-born painter Kimiko, Steve Zio has published his first novel Hot Springs (McArthur & Company, $24.95), about a former website developer named Jason who searches for new connections while visiting hot springs in England, Canada and Japan. Links to Zio’s promotional website are provided at the end of each of the 23 chapters to enhance the text with musical offerings, paintings, an interactive map, photos “and other innovative features.”

The novel includes an afterword that outlines the warning signs of anorexia and bulimia, as well as some common misconceptions about the victims of eating disorders.

Victoria poet Patricia Young’s debut fiction collection of fourteen stories for Airstream (Biblioasis $24.95) has gained her the first “Metcalfe-Rooke Award,” as editor John Metcalf shifts his focus from The Porcupine’s Quill to a new literary press, Bibiliosis, based in Windsor.

As a resident of Sidney, married to the Japanese-born painter Kimiko, Steve Zio has published his first novel Hot Springs (McArthur & Company, $24.95), about a former website developer named Jason who searches for new connections while visiting hot springs in England, Canada and Japan. Links to Zio’s promotional website are provided at the end of each of the 23 chapters to enhance the text with musical offerings, paintings, an interactive map, photos “and other innovative features.”

You can eat your Vjiats at Vji’s, the Indian restaurant in Vancouver that began as a 14-seater in 1994, or you can learn to prepare your own chapattis, pilafs and chutney from Vij’s (D&M $40), the cookbook prepared by proprietors Vikram Vji and his wife Meera Dhalwala.

The Wild Side Guide to Vancouver Island’s Pacific Rim (Harbour $24.95), an illustrated guidebook for visitors to Long Beach, Tofino, Ucluelet, Port Alberni, Nitinat and Bamfield.

When a Yankee trader tells you that you are a tough negotiator, you know you have been taken to the cleaners.

TOMMY DOUGLAS
n “Watermarks,” the final chapter of his Notes from the Outside: Episodes from an Unconventional Life (Hagios $19.95), publisher Allan Safarik recounts his friendship with poet Pat Lowther and his difficulties coming to terms with her murder.

After family members prompted authorities to investigate more closely, police discovered 117 bloodspots on the walls of the couple’s bedroom. Roy Lowther had taken the couple’s mattress to Mayne Island, having washed on both sides, but reddish stains remained.

Following the murder trial in 1977, Safarik became a common target of inquiry for journalists and media people and made numerous appearances at literary events to honour Lowther, who became venerated as a tragic, Sylvia Plath figure for Canada. “It was burnt out on the subject and tweaking my memory gave me nightmares,” he says. Rumours and misinformation appalled him, and Safarik resented the way Lowther had been turned into a “celebrity victim” by a sensational trial, so he decided to no longer speak publicly about the Lowthers.

After many years of silence, and his move to Dundurn, Saskatchewan, Allan Safarik was contacted by Anne Henderson, a documentary film-maker who was working on a project about Pat Lowther’s daughters Beth and Chris. After Safarik reluctantly agreed to participate, his tearful reunion with the daughters was captured on film.

“My encounter with Beth and Chris in Jericho Beach Park thanks to Anne Henderson set me free from my feelings of denial. I broke down in tears but I was able to talk freely with Beth and Chris on camera and give them copies of their mother’s publications that they had never seen.”

Relieved to be presented as the main authority on Lowther in “Watermarks,” Safarik has broken his silence to start anew. “In a sense we never had a chance to miss her properly,” he writes, “because we were always talking about her.”

Notes from the Outside: Episodes from an Unconventional Life also includes Safarik’s recollections of Dorothy Livesay, Milton Acorn, Anne Szumigalski, Joe Rosenblatt, Patrick Friesen and William Hoffer, along with other personal essays about growing up in Vancouver and starting Blackfish Press.

Pat Lowther (1935-1975)
Fellow activist Guy Dauncey has likened Paul George’s history of the Western Canada Wilderness Committee, Big Trees Not Big Stumps (WCWC $39.95) as “the War & Peace of the B.C. environmental movement.” Given Tolstoy’s own radicalism as a campaigner for minority interests, he might have approved of such hyperbole, as well as George’s tireless role as a defender of nature. "If this book motivates even one person who has never experienced the mystic nature of wild places like Gwaii Haanas, Stein Valley, Carmanah Valley or Clayoquot Sound to be trekking gently through some wilderness," says Paul George, "I’ll consider the book a success." 1-895123-03-8

Paul George, seen here on Lyell Island in the 1970s, has recalled 25 years of conservation struggles in a new book.

“The more I explored South Moresby (in Haida Gwaii), the more obsessed I became with saving the place.” — Paul George

Find it here
People’s Co-op Bookstore
Spartacus Books
PB Cruise Bookseller
Duthie Books
Magpie Magazine Gallery
Abraxas Books
Marnie’s Books
Miner’s Bay Books

Backup to Babylon
by Maxine Gadd

Published by New Star Books

Theatre in British Columbia

Ginny Rattay, ed. “...celebratory of off-centredness and complexity—of the edge of the British Columbia play/playwright/ theatre company. These articles acknowledge political, social, and performative borders and examine British Columbia theatre from perspectives which pay tribute to the floating of arbitrarily imposed restrictions.” —from the Introduction ISBN 0-88754-802-4 $25.00

www.playwrightsCanada.com

Lesbian Plays
Coming of Age in Canada
Rosalind Kerr, ed. “The plays that are included here serve the purpose of charting certain historically specific moments that represent a range of lesbian experiences over the past twenty years in various parts of Canada. In many ways they reflect the gradual changes that have brought lesbians into greater prominence within Canada.” —from the Introduction ISBN 0-88754-804-4 $46.00

Indulge in First-Class Fiction this Fall

Backup to Babylon

Theatre in British Columbia

Ginny Rattay, ed. “...celebratory of off-centredness and complexity—of the edge of the British Columbia play/playwright/ theatre company. These articles acknowledge political, social, and performative borders and examine British Columbia theatre from perspectives which pay tribute to the floating of arbitrarily imposed restrictions.” —from the Introduction ISBN 0-88754-802-4 $25.00

www.playwrightsCanada.com

Lesbian Plays
Coming of Age in Canada
Rosalind Kerr, ed. “The plays that are included here serve the purpose of charting certain historically specific moments that represent a range of lesbian experiences over the past twenty years in various parts of Canada. In many ways they reflect the gradual changes that have brought lesbians into greater prominence within Canada.” —from the Introduction ISBN 0-88754-804-4 $46.00

Indulge in First-Class Fiction this Fall

www.newestpress.com
Carle Hessay was a Jack London-like character who died from a heart attack while dancing at a New Year’s Eve party at the Sasquatch Inn in the Fraser Canyon town of Spuzzum on January 1, 1978. Born as Hans Karl Hesse in Dresden, Germany on November 30, 1911, he had fought against the Fascist forces of Franco during the Spanish Civil War and as a Canadian soldier in World War II. During the former war, when his ship docked in Spain, he was captured and imprisoned, but because he spoke several languages, Hessay was put to work translating letters.

“This gave him more freedom than the rest of the prisoners under their Moorish guards,” says his publisher Maidie Hilmo, “so he was able to organize a small escape party. They stole a small boat and escaped to Africa, and after a gruelling and thirsty ordeal in Africa, he finally made his way back to Canada. A few of his paintings record the Spanish Civil War, when his ship docked in Canada. A few of his paintings record the Spanish Civil War, when his ship docked in Canada. A few of his paintings record the Spanish Civil War, when his ship docked in Canada. A few of his paintings record the Spanish Civil War, when his ship docked in Canada.

Hessay also travelled the world as a seaman, became an accomplished gymnast and chess player, worked as sign painter in Langley, B.C. (after he first arrived there in 1930) and became a highly skilled painter of semi-abstract landscapes.

According to Vancouver School of Art historian Leonard Woods, Hessay was an exceedingly viciuos character, always willing to entertain by performing hand-stands or diving feats. This gleeful nature and unconventional behaviour belied his sophistication as an artist and opera-lover, and concealed his knowledge of science, mythology, ancient philosophers and the Bible. Having served as the principle speaker for a celebration of Hessay’s art in Dawson Creek in 1984, Woods has provided the text for Meditations on the Paintings of Carle Hessay (Trail: Traburni Publications & Victoria: Treelein Press $39.95), a slender coffee table book, edited by Maidie Hilmo, that reveals Hessay’s considerable artistry.

FRAZNA as a cop-out

Ernest Hekkanen’s 36th title, The Life of Bartholomew G, was about a man who becomes foolishly obsessed with Kafka. In his 37th title, Kafka, Tne Master of Yesno (New Orphic $25) Hekkanen criticizes the way scholars “have turned Kafka into an industry at universities around the world.” He concludes that “Kafka took the easy way out through tuberculosis and death rather than fulfill his promise as a truly great writer.”

Self-Publish.ca

Visit our website to find out all you need to know about self-publishing

The Vancouver Desktop Publishing Centre

call for a free consultation

PATTY OSBORNE, manager

200 – 341 Water Street

Vancouver, B.C. V6A 1S8
Ph 604-681-9161

www.self-publish.ca

HELPING SELF-PUBLISHERS SINCE 1986

24th Annual Lieutenant Governor’s Award

for historical writing of non-fiction books published in 2006 by authors of B.C. history. (reprint not eligible)

Entry deadline: December 31, 2006

Contact:

B.C. Historical Federation

c/o Barb Hynick

bhynek@telus.net or 604-535-9090

24 BOOKWORLD AUTUMN 2006
LETTERS

As a follow-up to your coverage of my book (BCBW Summer), Constantine, Christianity and Constantinople, I would like to mention that its contents debunk how The Da Vinci Code, both the novel and movie, have interpreted Roman Emperor Constantine. A character, Sir Leigh Teabing, in the real Chateau de Villette near Paris, states correctly that in 325 A.D. Constantine convened the first meeting of Christian bishops called the Council of Nicaea. But Dan Brown gives the misinformation that the Council endorsed the idea that Jesus was divine. Most scholars agree that the Council of Nicaea was called by Constantine to try and resolve the problem of the relation of the divine Jesus to God. Arius, a bishop in Alexandria, taught the subordination of the person of Christ to the person of the Father—a challenge to the Trinity.

SIMPLY put: Jesus was not co-eternal and of one substance with God but had been created by Him as His instrument for the salvation of the world. After much discussion Constantine suggested the Greek word “homoiousian” [of the same substance or essence] to resolve the issue and this was accepted by the Council. It has come down to us today as “of one substance with the Father” in the Nicene Creed used by most Christian churches.

Terry Julian
New Westminster

Dreams come true

THANK YOU is not sufficient to express how grateful I am for the full page article (BCBW Summer) about To Touch a Dream (Ronsdale), my wilderness adventure. I am also a subscriber to B.C. BookWorld. At 65 years of age I have been an avid reader since I began and, as such, when I read the article it made me want to read this book! The article was enticing. I am grateful with all my heart for the recognition.

Sunny Wright
Sardis

Da Vinci Code lacks “homoiousian” nuance

As a follow-up to your coverage of my book (BCBW Summer), Constantine, Christianity and Constantinople, I would like to mention that its contents debunk how The Da Vinci Code, both the novel and movie, have interpreted Roman Emperor Constantine. A character, Sir Leigh Teabing, in the real Chateau de Villette near Paris, states correctly that in 325 A.D. Constantine convened the first meeting of Christian bishops called the Council of Nicaea. But Dan Brown gives the misinformation that the Council endorsed the idea that Jesus was divine. Most scholars agree that the Council of Nicaea was called by Constantine to try and resolve the problem of the relation of the divine Jesus to God. Arius, a bishop in Alexandria, taught the subordination of the person of Christ to the person of the Father—a challenge to the Trinity.

SIMPLY put: Jesus was not co-eternal and of one substance with God but had been created by Him as His instrument for the salvation of the world. After much discussion Constantine suggested the Greek word “homoiousian” [of the same substance or essence] to resolve the issue and this was accepted by the Council. It has come down to us today as “of one substance with the Father” in the Nicene Creed used by most Christian churches.

Sunny Wright
Sardis

Order online at www.ubcpress.ca, or from unIPress

tel.: 1.877.864.8477 • fax: 1.877.864.4272 • orders@gtcanada.com

UBC Press
In Madame Zee, novelist Pearl Luke looks sympathetically at someone who partnered with two fraudsters and disappeared in the early 1930s. Luke does come up with some intriguing speculations about Madame Zee’s motivations, and she is adept at exploring her heroine’s ambivalence, healthy scepticism alternating with irresistible attraction to her chosen guru. In the end though, it is the evil character described in Oliphant’s book I will remember as the authentic Madame Zee, not the compassionate, misunderstood psychic Luke has created here.

Madame Zee 0-0020-0513-1
Brother XII 0-7710-4848-4
www.abcbookworld.com

For more information on the Brother Twelve, see Edward Arthur Wilson at www.oldbookworld.com

Sheila Munro regularly reviews fiction in these pages.
Ira Dilworth brought Emily Carr’s first book to the attention of Oxford University Press; he edited her later books and was her literary executor.

EMILY

THREE PASSIONS OF

"Dear Emily.

It was a ‘delicious’ visit.”

—Ira Dilworth, 1943

Emily Carr was an ardent gardener, she shared “oodles of love” with Ira Dilworth and she had heartfelt respect for First Nations.

The reasons for Carr’s prickly manners will likely never be unravelled, but Linda Morra has at least revealed the extent to which Carr yearned for, and appreciated, friendship and intimacy.

By gathering the twilight correspondence between Emily Carr and her literary mentor, Ira Dilworth, regional director of CBC radio, Morra has unmasked the sentimental side of the West Coast’s most enigmatic artist in Corresponding Influence: Selected Letters of Emily Carr and Ira Dilworth (UTP $60).

Of the more than 440 extant Carr/Dilworth letters written between early 1940 and Carr’s death in March of 1945, 195 were written by Dilworth and 250 by Carr.

“God bless you, Emily!” wrote Dilworth, while sending her “oodles of love.”

For five years the pair were devoted to one another, as if they had been lovers in the flesh. Carr’s often hasty and randomly punctuated letters reveal her intrepid and uncompromising nature.

She once told Dilworth that for a “letter to be a correspondence [there] must be a spontaneous loving outpour from one to another. How can you ‘respond’ if there is not a ‘co?’

In Emily Carr’s last will and testament, addressed to Dilworth, she concludes, “Forgive me dear for all the times I have been unreasonable or petulant.

A lack of intimacy in Emily Carr’s life has long been a troublesome subject. Was she the victim of childhood abuse? an overwhelmingly egocentric artist? a lesbian? Who did she love?

One hundred acclaimed authors at the 19th annual Vancouver International Writers & Readers Festival, including:

Caroline Adderson
Anita Rau Badami
Dennis Bock
Marilyn Bowering
Dionne Brand
Lynn Coady
Fiona Farrell
Bill Gaston
Kate Grenville
Anosh Irani
Wayne Johnston
Gautam Malkani
Colum McCann
Jon McGregor
Maile Meloy
Lisa Moore
Bharati Mukherjee
Eden Robinson
Javier Sierra
Madeleine Thien
Richard Wagamese

Presenting a world of words on Granville Island

Tickets on sale September 18 at all Ticketmaster outlets, charge-by-phone at 604.280.3311 or online at www.ticketmaster.ca. Information: www.writersfest.bc.ca or call 604.681.6330

**VANCOUVER INTERNATIONAL WRITERS & READERS FESTIVAL October 17 —22 AT VARIOUS VENUES ON GRANVILLE ISLAND. SIX DAYS OF THE WRITTEN WORD—READINGS, BOOK SIGNINGS, INTERVIEWS.**

**Author! Author!
MIRACLES WILL HAPPEN

"The key to the book was that it was unplanned, that I had no idea... where it was going," says Robert Wiersema.

BY CHERIE THIESSEN

Having established his reputation as a prolific book reviewer and event coordinator for Bolen Books in Victoria, Robert Wiersema has now published, Before I Wake, a first novel about the hellish and bizarre aftermath of a hit-and-run accident.

Karen Barrett struggle to maintain their marriage, barely able to sustain their family, almost—she inhabits an eerie purgatory until she, too, finds a way to resurrect herself. He must re-live his own traumatic past, from day to day, where it was going," he says. "I was surprised, for example, when Simon left the hospital to collapse at Mary's. Similarly, I was surprised when Henry tried to kill himself, and when he couldn't."

Writing this novel, Wiersema was amazed by the way his characters shaped the plot. "The key to the book was that it was unplanned, that I had no idea, relatively unconcerned about the consequences of her affair."

Karen has previously sacrificed herself, working during the couple's first few married years to help put Simon through law school, waiting patiently to have her beloved child. She becomes madonna-like in her devotion and forgiveness. When her husband leaves home to live with his lover, Karen is doubly devastated, but Mary, the beautiful and younger "other" woman, who works for Simon, is relatively unconcerned about the consequences of her affair.

Henry Denton, the hit-and-run driver, cannot escape the image of Sherry flying up in front of his truck; so he tries to blot out this recurring image by attempting suicide. But his hoped-for death is arrested by an unseen hand. He must remain in a living Purgatory until he, too, finds a way to resurrect himself.

Sherry should have died when taken off life support, but instead she inhabits an eerie limbo. Henry's words immediately following the accident were prophetic. "I didn't kill that little girl," he said. "I was surprised, for example, when Simon left the hospital to collapse at Mary's. Similarly, I was surprised when Henry tried to kill himself, and when he couldn't."

Many readers may be concerned that the book is too depressing, but miracles can mitigate sorrow, and, according to Wiersema, Before I Wake is mainly about forgiveness and redemption. He hopes Simon's journey back to the family, and to a new level of understanding of himself, will keep the reader hooked as Wiersema orchestrates his tale with the shifting points of view of the main characters, placing the reader outside the family, almost—you could say—looking down at them and their lives. It's ultimately an optimistic view from up here, if you don't feel dizzied zooming in and out of so many people's heads.

Magic, miracles and mirages aren't for everyone. 0-679-31373-7

Cherie Thiessen is a freelance writer on Pender Island.

Robert Wiersema's first novel about the hellish and bizarre aftermath of a hit-and-run accident.

Jack Whyte has launched a new trilogy about the original nine Templar Knights, commencing with the madness and cruelty of the First Crusade in 1088. His 456-page Knights of the Black and White (Penguin $36) follows the fortunes and misfortunes of Hugh de Payens, who, as a disenchanted member of a powerful, secret allegiance of French knights, decides to dedicate his military skills to protecting pilgrims on the road to Jerusalem, so he founds The Poor Fellow Soldiers of Christ. 0-7710-2711-7

BERNARD DEVERELL

Bill Deverell's 14th title, The Dance of Shiva, crafty defence lawyer Arthur Beauchamp reappears in Deverell's 14th title, April Fool (M&S $36.99), recently selected by the Crime Writers of Canada for the 2006 Arthur Ellis Award for Best Novel.

While his new wife decides to live atop a tree in order to protect eagles from loggers, Beauchamp is again retrieved from retirement from fictional Garibaldi Island to defend a notorious jewel thief on murder and rape charges. Deverell lives on Pender Island and near Quepos in Costa Rica.
ONCE UPON A STURGEON

Rick Hansen remembers being on the banks of the Fraser River as a boy and witnessing the spectacular sight of an enormous fish leaping free of the muddy water. Today, he’s chairman of the Fraser River Sturgeon Conservation Society and working to safeguard these “precious” fish—sturgeon—and their beleaguered aquatic ecosystem.

Maggie de Vries evokes the precocious existence of the giant white sturgeon in Tale of a Great White Fish. The heroines—Joey Sexton and Frieda Shefrin, and their be-leaguered aquatic ecosystem—emerge as “precious” fish—sturgeon. And, to a boy of 12, the sturgeon was “something to watch for, something beautiful.”

Renaë Benoit, who illustrated Goodbye to Griffith Street, captures the two-century adventure of Big Fish and the epic struggle for survival of an ancient and magnificent creature. The sturgeon is a “scarcely wondered of” in its own province. Once Upon a Crime… by Louise Donnelly is also the author of Missing Smush, shortlisted for a Governor General’s Award and winner of the George Ryga Award for Social Awareness in BC Literature.

BREACHING THE BIO-COLOUR BARRIER

I

On the spring of 1947, Jack Roosevelt Robinson stepped up to the plate for the Brooklyn Dodgers as the first black baseball player to play in the major leagues. That’s the historical background for Ellen Schwartz’s Stealing Home. And what a story! How can you not like a story about a 12-year-old removed from her loving foster parents to live with relatives she doesn’t know, a story about a half-white, half-black sharecropper’s five children, Robinson was a natural athlete, excelling in football, basketball, baseball and track. He protested for black rights during his army stint, played professional baseball in the Negro Leagues and, when the president of the Brooklyn Dodgers asked him to take part in a “noble experiment,” he endured abuse from teammates, other players and fans—including hate mail, assault and death threats. 

Half-white, half-black, knowing nothing of synagogues or Shabbes candles, and as a Yankee’s fan trapped in Dodgers’ territory, Joey also endures the whispered and not-so-whispered gossip about his mother who ran off with a trumpet player. When Joey caught wearing his Yankees cap, returns home after a scuffle, his grandfather says, “I never knew an African-American person, other than my parents’ housekeeper, until black kids were bused to my junior high school.”

Schwartz became involved in the civil rights movement and, later, delving into Robinson’s life story just prior to the 60th anniversary of that momentous baseball game, discovered, as does the reader, that the more she admired his dignity and pride under great adversity, the more she admired his dignity and pride under great adversity. Two other Schwartz titles to be released this fall include Abby’s Birds (Trade: $22.95), illustrated by Elizabeth Shefrin, and Yossi’s Goal (Orca $7.95), a sequel to Joe’s Star, which chronicles the further adventures of a Russian Jewish immigrant family living in Montreal in the 1890s.

NAN GREGORY’s I’ll Sing You One-E (Thomas Allen $16) is a novel about a 12-year-old removed from her loving foster parents to live with relatives she doesn’t know, a story about a half-white, half-black sharecropper’s five children, Robinson was a natural athlete, excelling in football, basketball, baseball and track. He protested for black rights during his army stint, played professional baseball in the Negro Leagues and, when the president of the Brooklyn Dodgers asked him to take part in a “noble experiment,” he endured abuse from teammates, other players and fans—including hate mail, assault and death threats. 

Half-white, half-black, knowing nothing of synagogues or Shabbas candles, and as a Yankee’s fan trapped in Dodgers’ territory, Joey also endures the whispered and not-so-whispered gossip about his mother who ran off with a trumpet player. When Joey caught wearing his Yankees cap, returns home after a scuffle, his grandfather says, “I never knew an African-American person, other than my parents’ housekeeper, until black kids were bused to my junior high school.”

Schwartz became involved in the civil rights movement and, later, delving into Robinson’s life story just prior to the 60th anniversary of that momentous baseball game, discovered, as does the reader, that the more she admired his dignity and pride under great adversity, the more she admired his dignity and pride under great adversity. Two other Schwartz titles to be released this fall include Abby’s Birds (Trade: $22.95), illustrated by Elizabeth Shefrin, and Yossi’s Goal (Orca $7.95), a sequel to Joe’s Star, which chronicles the further adventures of a Russian Jewish immigrant family living in Montreal in the 1890s.

NIKKI TATE GAL-ERY

Jo’s Journey by Nikki Tate (Orca $7.95) 

J o’s triumph introduced Nikki Tate’s puckish or- phan Josslyn Whyte, who was left by her brothers at the Carson City Home for Unfortu-nate Girls. She ran away, disguised herself as a boy and joined the Pony Express riders. The sequel Jo’s Journey takes Jo and her friend Bart from San Francisco to Fort Victoria and then on a perilous trek to the Cariboo gold country of 1862. “He’s one of the lucky ones. He died right fast,” an old-timer tells Jo, when a freshercess switchback out of Lillooet gives way and his pack horse tumbles down the mountainside.

Horsewoman Tate, who also pens the StableMates series and rode a portion of Nevada’s old Pony Express route, delivering letters to schools from BC kids, infuses Jo’s tale with horse lore and glity detail.

SPOILED ROTTEN by Dayle Campbell Gaetz (Orca $7.95) 1-55143-462-8

Flower Power by Ann Walsh (Sumach $10.95) 1-894549-51-1

YELLOW LINE by Sylvia Olsen (Orca $7.95) 1-55143-474-1

STEALING HOME by Ellen Schwartz (Greystone $19.95)

Tale of a Great White Fish by Maggie de Vries (Greystone $19.95)
FICTION

As the number of Canadian soldiers killed in combat in Afghanistan climbs, Canadians are asking—why go to war? That question, and what Michael Poole describes as the enduring stigma of desertion in World War I, are the basis for Rain by Morning, an old-fashioned romance of lovers in a dangerous time.

Set in the fictional town of Silva Landing on the Sunshine Coast in 1913, Rain by Morning tells the tale of a dangerous liaison between young Nathan and Leah, as their love at first sight endures against unlikely odds, parents’ wishes, war and distance.

War is hell but its nothing compared to lovers spurned, or at least delayed. Leah is shipped to a convent. In a letter Leah writes—her character and future:

“I don’t believe I take uncharitable dislikes to people, but I cannot help feeling anger and resentment toward Sister Robuchand, the Mistress of Discipline. I believe she takes pleasure in punishing us. She plays favourites, and I am certainly not one of them. She told me that I have a “rebellious and independent nature” which she intends to break. If she is right, I will be trouble and I won’t stand for it.”

Poole is particularly interested in the role of individuals in the service of institutions and country, and the ethical and moral decisions one is faced with in serving those forces. In his previous book, Romancing Mary Jane: A Year in the Life of a Failed Marriage, Poole explored the ethics and perils of growing pot on the Sunshine Coast.

As Poole mentions in his author’s notes no shortage of books have been written about World War I, but what has gone missing in action are accounts of Canadian nurses. Fair enough, but it is worth noting that Ernest Hemingway’s classic A Farewell to Arms set in World War I is the great love affair of a nurse (granted not Canadian) and a wounded soldier.

Once out of the convent Leah and Nathan enjoy a brief idyllic fling among the hidden estuaries and islands of the West Coast before returning to Silva Landing to face their uncertain future. Leah is shipped off to a nursing school. When World War I breaks out, she is sent to a hospital near Etaples, France. Nathan, a conscientious objector, takes on the dangerous work of a high flyer in a logging camp. In France Leah experiences the horrors of war. First-hand and only occasionally hears from Nathan. Her faith tested, Leah reaches out to a young British deserter she discovers while out on a bike ride and she chooses to feed him. Her actions lead to her eventual banishment from the military and nursing, but not without a fight. When she returns to Nathan, who has been injured in a logging accident, she is more determined than ever that he not go off to fight in a war she has witnessed.

Alienated by his community for remaining behind while others serve, Nathan is angrily confronted by townsfolk he has known all his life. In an exchange with Leah he indicates that his will has begun to weaken: “Look, Leah I’m just so goddamned tired of it all, sick to death of nasty looks, the remarks, having to explain myself, all that crap.”

She replies: “As chance would have it, I know exactly how you feel. You see, Nathan, I didn’t leave France voluntarily. I was thrown out for breaking the rules. I was an outcast, pointed at, scorned, just like you.”

United as outcasts, Leah and Nathan set off together in aborrowed boat. Nathan hopes to work in a gypo logging camp but the bulls (cops) are regularly on the lookout for deserters. As their despair increases Nathan and Leah hope to find some refuge on Broughton Island. Once again they are confronted with the isolation of their situation. Nathan, Poole’s character, turns down their request to hide out because her son is off fighting in the Great War. Leah and Nathan are forced to head back to Silva Landing. Nathan is resigned to going overseas until a note arrives from an old friend who asks if he would consider going into hiding in a deserters’ encampment on the mountain above Silva Landing. Poole provides the novel with a powerful and necessary twist at the end, based on an actual incident at a real deserters’ camp on the Sunshine Coast.

The characters for Poole’s necessary novel are inspired by those deserters who lie buried in an actual deserters’ cemetery, the site of a fictional encampment on a Sunshine Coast mountain.

As Poole writes in his notes, although descendants of those conscientious objectors still live in “Silva Landing,” so enduring is the stigma of desertion that World War I that their lips remain mostly sealed to this day about the events of 1918. In attempting to give voice to their silence Poole has provided us with much to think about when considering the overseas conflicts of today.

Rain by Morning is a welcome novel of ideas that only occasionally trips up on its exploration of various themes in the guise of characters.

Ambiguous Selves by Melanie Fogell

This investigation into individual identity explores notions of Jewishness in Israel and in the Canadian Diaspora. Fogell fascinates the reader with her candid discussion about life in the era of fragmentation.

ISBN: 1-55059-327-7, $26.95, pb

The Canadian Journey by William Rayner

By recounting the deeds and misdeeds of key Canadian politicians, workers, soldiers, and voters, this episodic book covers the scope of Canadian politics.

ISBN: 1-55059-313-7, $26.95, pb

Available at your local bookstore, or contact: Temeron Books Inc. tel: 403.283.0900 fax: 403.283.6947 temeron@telusplanet.net www.temenondetectiveg.com

In his first novel, Michael Poole recalls the Great War and a great love.

LOVERS IN A DANGEROUS TIME

Rain by Morning by Michael Poole

(RA77 "S SIL " $24.95)

Canadian politicians, workers, soldiers, and voters, this episodic book covers the scope of Canadian politics.

ISBN: 1-55059-327-7, $26.95, pb

Available at your local bookstore, or contact: Temeron Books Inc. tel: 403.283.0900 fax: 403.283.6947 temeron@telusplanet.net www.temenondetectiveg.com

Find it here

Crown Publications
Blackberry Books
Duthie Books
Abraxas Books
Pollen Sweaters, Lund
Marnic’s Books
Miners Bay Books
Salt Spring Books

Transmontanus 15
Aboriginal Mariculture on Canada’s West Coast

by Judith Williams

Find it here

Crown Publications
Blackberry Books
Duthie Books
Abraxas Books
Pollen Sweaters, Lund
Marnic’s Books
Miners Bay Books
Salt Spring Books

Published by New Star Books

29 BOOKWORLD AUTUMN 2006

feature review
THE SOUNDS OF GIRLS SWIMMING WITH HORSES

Elizabeth Bachinsky’s wallop of teenage angst, boredom and risky sexiness

Home of Sudden Service by Elizabeth Bachinsky (Nightwood $16.95)

A slight book that packs a wallop of teenage angst, boredom and risky sexiness, this collection is set in the back seats on the back roads of Mission, Cultus Lake and all those roads that end at Hope. It’s an unusual and highly accomplished use of form by a young poet on the subject of loose girls and the freeway culture of malls, necking, cruelty and tragedy.

Elizabeth Bachinsky demonstrates more skill in a couple of sonnets and villanelles than poets twice her age do in a couple of books. She writes: “Your faults are mine and me / yours. When we kiss, you light my vacancy. / We kiss, you light my vacancy. / Are mine and mine / Yours. When I’m with you, you feel like I have made room for us, / surrounded our sounds, the sounds of girls / swimming with horses. / How far we are from the town. / How we animate ourselves.”

Not all of the numerous teenage moons and dashes in the Fraser Valley feel stuck; there’s the kids in the title poem who awkwardly work it out, hesistant. But for every one of those tentative “gonna-make-it” kids, there are teenage moms at the Valley Mall who know pregnancy means “his loving is over.”

A chilling poem called “Wolf Lake” recounts the rape and murder of a teenage girl in the victim’s voice, so poigniant because the lake where her body is dumped is the place where she and the murderer used to swim as teenagers.

“This boy / I’d camped with / the night before / the lake so quiet / you could hear / the sound / of a heron skim the water at dusk, / or the sound / of a boy breathing.”

Most striking in this explicit collection is the contrast between the accomplished technique and the harsh realities of life voiced in colloquial language. The poet betray’s herself, posing as a tough girl with a smart-ass mouth, she unwittingly reveals the sensitivity required for finely tuned writing. Miss Fraser Valley gets out of her tacky gear and turns out to be an Alice Munro in poem guise.

Elizabeth Bachinsky: malls, necking, cruelty and tragedy

A successful long poem is an immersion, a trance, an emotional time capsule which leaves the reader changed, “been away.” This is characteristic of all good writing but the long poem form is particularly suited to the rambling nature of childhood memories. The poet/child is in no hurry to unfold details and take detours. David Zieroth begins this account with the night of his own conception, continues through early childhood to schooldays and ends with his family’s move to B.C. Taken by the hand by his young alter-ego who has “the gift of sliding time,” he leaves North Van and revisits the Manitoba farm where Zieroth grew up in the 1950s, disproving the adage, “You can’t go home again.”

Zieroth skillfully avoids cynicism and nostalgia, engaging the reader in a memory album that is not narrative, although narratives are implied, as he describes his young father as “learning unsentimentality among the rest of us.” He also recalls: “The women and their connection/with eggs of hens, ducks, geese / carrying in their / nest hands / the delicate life always close to the hurt things first/first to know.”

A halfbreed muskrat trapper and his family are “vocations / never worried about / seeds washed away/or choked out.” Loneliness, family ties, farmyard slaughter and schoolboy pranks; this is a loving but not maclish reminiscence. The undertone is an awareness of death that insures against the sentimental.

With tenderness for the boy he was, the poet returns to his sixty-something West Coast identity and has learned, “I haven’t left behind what came with me.” It amounts to an engaging and highly readable memoir.

Workers Of The World

RELAX

Workers Of The World RELAX

The Simple Economics of Less Industrial Work

By Conrad Schmidt

“It’s about how sharing work can reduce our environmental footprint.”

“... an eye-watering kick in the crotch for anyone who believes the world economic system - and its twins, capitalism and globalisation - is sustainable now or into the future.”

Matthew Burrows, Georgia Straight

Distributed by Sandhill Book Marketing. Tel: 1-800-667-3848

$15 ISBN 0-9739772-0-5, pp 143
www.WorkersOfTheWorldRelax.org

36 BOOKWORLD AUTUMN 2006
Hallucinatory when not nightmarish, richly textured and cheerfully anti-conventional, this collection of three shorter works brings back the late sixties in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside. So did New Star Books take a risk extracting these pieces from the mothballs to give them a fresh exposure? Well, no. Mostly it’s energizing to be startled by this bygone craziness. 

Who remembers the Woodward’s Food Floor? Or who cares to remember? Backup to Babylon is street-smart mythology that frequently champions the poor or the marginalized. Though concrete poetry does not give the same amount of buzz as it once did, the over-the-top rawness (influenced by the Kootenay School of Writing way back when?) is still strikingly original.

Sometimes completely unintelligible—probably purposely so—Maxine Gadd’s poems can also be evocative as in a lovely coastal poem entitled “spring moves fast now.” In another piece about coldness, this one entitled “I will sell my soul for warm hands,” the poet evokes hardships that today’s neo-hippies could not imagine.

This writing is the opposite of carefully worked finesse. Gadd is anarchic, a poet who likes to “praise bad things.” She writes:

“so i / must go for it again / for an answer/ compatible / with my humanity / before / daybreak / in the black winter night”

It’s good to have her voice recovered and collected.

Writings the Tides, New and Selected Poems by Kevin Roberts

A big book at a very attractive price (how does Ronsdale do it?), Writing the Tides covers more than three decades of varied and accessible poetry for arm-chair travelers. While not stretching the boundaries of language, Kevin Roberts is always personal and never obscure.

“Cobalt 3,” a group of poems about his experience of cancer treatment, is highly recommended reading for everyone whose lives have been touched by cancer.

“At first you’re frantic / swim madly for shore / but you’re too weak / in the tide rip’s / all mindless muscle / you tread water.”

Writing the Tides concludes with about fifty new poems: surfing and aging in B.C., Australia and Thailand. Roberts concludes, “And so we all surf, sit in rows / seek the perfect wave . . . to dance us down to some imagined shore.”
BY MARTIN TWIGG

F
irst he stopped working on Fridays at his job as a software engineer; then he abandoned his Jeep. Now Conrad Schmidt — creator of the World Naked Bike Ride in Vancouver in 2004 to protest climate change — believes work sharing will lessen our imprint on the earth and help us enjoy life more.

Schmidt's call for a common-sensical revolution, Workers of the World Relax: The Simple Economics of Less Industrial Work (Sandhill/Work Less $15), contains short essays on work, happiness and consumerism in a global economy. Its inspirational message can be condensed to: "Work less, produce less, consume less and live more."

Whether he's riding naked on his bike to garner attention for climate change, or baking a cake for the BC Progress Board to spread awareness for the benefits of a shortened work week, Schmidt typically presents his ideas in a friendly, easy to understand and non-threatening fashion. But behind each public stunt is a well-informed political philosophy that has led him to found the Work Less Party.

Without gimmicks and marketing plays, Workers of the World Relax explains how and why our cultural emphasis on production and consumption is having disastrous consequences for the health of the Earth, as well as our own mental and physical well-being. Citing the likes of environmentalist David Suzuki and economist John Kenneth Galbraith, Schmidt uses footnotes, photos and lucid prose to convince the reader how the reduced work-week can become the antidote to industrial overkill.

"As people in middle to upper income brackets work less," he writes, "more opportunities to move up the income scale will present themselves. Not only will people have the potential to earn more, less people will compete for minimum wage jobs. This will also help inflate wages. In reality, if we work less, the value of our labour increases along with wage negotiating powers."

Less time spent working can translate into more time spent eating and exercising properly, reducing stress, exercising properly, reducing stress, enabling citizenship to become more active in democracy and generating more informed public debate. It's not just fanciful theorizing. "In countries like France, Germany, Denmark, Holland and Sweden," he says, "which already in the 1970s formed reduced work weeks, there is a trend for the media to cater to well-informed readers. (Whereas) in nations with longer workweeks, the trend is for information to be presented in the form of catchy headlines and fifteen-second sound bites."

The United States is the hardest working country in the world in terms of average hours worked. Its media is frequently criticized for catering to the lowest common denominator. Many Canadians are alarmed by statistics that reveal a high percentage of Americans still believe Saddam Hussein had connections to Al Qaeda, or that he possessed weapons of mass destruction. Schmidt points out something new; the five nations with the highest percentage of people working longer than 50 hours a week are the United States, Japan, UK, Australia and New Zealand — were all willing to send troops to Iraq.

Schmidt's focus is not only limited to his "work less" maxim. He touches on energy use, transportation, city planning and comparative studies of cultural levels of happiness. While many of his points may seem familiar, such as the negative environmental effects of the cattle industry and our need for locally sustainable agriculture, some of Schmidt's arguments appear quite novel and may surprise even the most radical of activists.

Schmidt, for example, views the energy crisis as a potentially good thing. His greatest fear is not the world running out of oil, but rather the discovery of a new, cheap energy replacement that will allow us to sustain our environmentally destructive levels of production and consumption.

"Today, as in the 1970s, many respected academics are predicting that rising oil prices will result in the collapse of the economy and civilization. As usual, they are wrong. I am not saying a collapse is impossible; simply that it will likely be a consequence of cheap energy prices and not high energy prices. A rising cost of energy is a good thing."

In his modest but empowering 143 pages, Schmidt does not limit himself to the role of doomsayer, a common pitfall in much activist writing. Instead he levels constructive criticism at the myriad of problems facing our dangerously wasteful society and responds with policy alternatives that are thoughtful, well-researched and, most importantly, practical.
In 2004, my husband and I went to visit Galsan in Mongolia. From the first moment, we were impressed by the hospitality. The children had been instructed to guide and take care of us. In Ulzhanbaatar, they put us on the plane to Olgii; there we were met by another son who had spent two days coming down from the Altai to pick us up. From Olgii (elevation 1700 metres) we travelled by jeep towards the distant mountain range. We were near the Russian border, and skirmishes were common. There, a horseman was killed in a landmine. In a few valleys, borders were making her from small pouches of grass; for every blade of grass. Towards evening, we arrived in the Tsenkherkhairkhan mountain range. Towering over us, a year on a ridge at the end of a valley near the Black Lake was the 3000 metres high northern mountain. The Tuvan call it Haarakan, Great Mountain, because the Tuvan say about this part of their country, the roof of the world. The air smelt of new life, and before us lay a fine carpet of lush green grass.
Adderson achieves a remarkable effect with her prose. Its clarity is so overwhelming that it becomes intoxicating.”

— The Globe and Mail

Nine razor-sharp stories from one of Canada’s most accomplished writers.

Pleased to Meet You
Caroline Adderson
$24.95 Trade Paperback

www.thomas-allen.com
nyone who can resist the lure of Hollywood in favour of parenthood deserves some respect, so hats off to Meg Tilly for turning her back on a Golden Globe-winning career and returning to live in B.C. in 1994.

Rather than be known for her roles in movies such as The Big Chill and Agnes of God, nowadays Tilly would prefer some credit for writing a riveting and explicit novel, Gemma (Syren $15.95 U.S.), about the abduction and sexual abuse of a 12-year-old girl. Due in October, Gemma explores the dynamics between a sexual predator and his prey whose resilience has already been tested by abuse suffered at the hands of her alcoholic mother’s boyfriend.

Nabokov’s Lolita was never so bold. All-too-believable, Gemma relates a cross-country journey made by low-life kidnapper Hazen Wood with his captive, Gemma Sullivan. Wood is captured halfway through the book. After a miscarriage, Gemma must find the courage to speak out against her abuser in a Chicago trial.

This adult story contains graphic scenes of sexual and physical violence, including a rape scene with the heroine clutching her teddy bear.

Among those acknowledged by Tilly for their support are film director Mike Nichols and the Vancouver Young Adults Kidbooks book club.

Tilly also has a forthcoming children’s book, Porcupine (Tundra Books), due in 2007. It’s about a family who moves from their home in Newfoundland to the grandparents’ home after the father dies in Afghanistan. It culminates in the daughter’s realization that a family can be made in many different forms.

Tilly’s debut novel, Singing Songs, originally published by Penguin Parnam in 1994, is being reissued this fall by Syren. It’s about a young girl, Anna, trapped in a dysfunctional family, and contains a new foreword by Tilly, reflecting on how the story came to be written.

The clearest analogy for this storytelling contest model in hip-hop culture is the phenomenon of the freestyle battle,” he writes, “a live performance event that underlies the majority of recorded rap lyrics either in style or content.”

“Throughout the process of writing this book,” he says, “and while Leanne edited and co-directed the film, we both wondered whether it was a eulogy we were producing or a successful call to action. Time will tell, I suppose, but unfortunately time is running out.”

Although the migrating caribou are protected in Canadian territory, the Bush administration in Washington is eager to exploit oil supplies beneath the calving grounds within the Alaskan Wildlife Refuge. Heuer claims drilling in Alaska would reduce the United States’ dependence on foreign oil by only 4%, or approximately six months worth of oil.

Approximately sixty percent of the Porcupine caribou calves are born in the refuge area that oil companies hope to develop.

Heuer previously worked in the Banff and Jasper national parks in the Rockies, in Slovakia and Poland, and in the Madikwe Game Reserve in South Africa. A recipient of the Wilburforce Conservation Leadership Award, he wrote The Giving the Big Wild: From Yellowstone to the Yukon on the Grizzly Bears’ Trail (2002). The U.S. edition of Being Caribou won the Grand Prize at the 2005 Banff Mountain Book Festival.

Giving Chaucer a good rap: “No person I haven’t met has affected me more, or taught me more about how to exist in the world.”—BABA BRINKMAN

Geez! Given the number of people who are into rap music, why not give Chaucer a try? I think it might be worth it. I’ve always been a fan of Chaucer, but I never thought about how much rap music has in common with his work. I’m going to try it out next week and see how it goes. It could be interesting.
The photographer did his best, but Robert Strandquist wasn’t keen to smile. So we sent Tamara Letkeman over to his house to make a nuisance of herself. Here is her report from the trenches.

Robert Strandquist wonders if perhaps men have gone and buried their heads like so many resigned ostriches, leaving women to run the show.

Concurrently, Strandquist suggests western culture has reduced the modern-day male to the likes of Homer Simpson, a notorious “goof” who is an alien to his children. “Most men are like Homer Simpson. And that’s a ruined thing; that’s not a complete form. It’s a mutation of something natural.”

Strandquist believes women are generally more on the ball, but he is not confident that either sex has what it takes to bring the world forward—or set it right.

“We’re so close to the abyss,” says the soothsayer, “we’ve got to save us from ourselves. Here we are on this great ship that’s about to run into an iceberg.”

Nor does Strandquist have the answers either. “His fiction’s complaint [has] no particular object or centre,” says Gaston. “Nor does it offer solutions, so in this way it feels so accurate.” The appeal of many of Strandquist’s characters, Kaufman says, “is they’re just like you and me, and you see how close any of us are to falling through the cracks.”

Leo, the protagonist in Strandquist’s novel *The Dreamlife of Bridges* (Anvil Press, 2003), gets caught in a tailspin through the dystopian mess we’re in has much to do with the destruction of indigenous cultures by western colonialism and imperialism and extends to what Strandquist calls the destruction of our indigenous selves. It comes from the West’s penchant for trashing religions—particularly Islam. This is a sin, Strandquist says, that will come back to haunt us.

“We have no right to be so destructive when somebody’s got something that they value so much they’ll give up their lives to protect it,” he says. And then, with a wistful air, looking down at the table, brushing away invisible crumbs, he adds, “I wish we had something that we valued that much in our culture. If we did, we’d be way better off. We wouldn’t be teetering on the edge of oblivion.”

“As a comet might pass by an orbiting planet, the planet might pass by another, and it’s the third one that gets hit by the comet. And it’s a blow to this planet here.”

The colours of the world are dark these days, he says. “And if you want to paint a picture, that’s your palette. Nobody believes in anything anymore.”

Darkness is emphasized in *The Shift*, a three-part, apocalyptic short story that appears in *A Small Dog Barking*. “There’s no moon in the sky,” he says, “and that’s basically a metaphor for God: There’s no God in the sky.”

Meanwhile Strandquist does yoga, practices Zen, and is inspired by Zhuangzi, a 4th-century B.C. Taoist philosopher, whose ideas strongly influenced Chinese Buddhism.

For Strandquist, to deny the existence of God—or Allah or Yahweh or Brahma, whatever name you use—is absurd. “We blithely walk around thinking that there is no God,” he says, and because of it we are teetering on the brink of oblivion.

Darkness is never far away. Had he not discovered meditation in 1980, alcoholism might have killed him. As well, during his first two years of being a full-time writer, he was beset by terror and anxiety, constantly grappling with the question: Why am I doing this?

Brian Kaufman, Strandquist’s editor at Anvil Press, prefers to view Strandquist as a kind of soothsayer. “His stories seem to talk in the sense of parables. They’re like a warning sign telling us we’re going to hell, and we’d better do something fast.” Novelist Bill Gaston concurs, calling Strandquist a West Coast Kafka. “I guess because one senses in his work, as a sort of backdrop, an existential burden, that there’s a kind of nasty trick going on.”

According to Strandquist, this
Robert Strandquist has unleashed his third book in five years, A Small Dog Barking. He says, "We have to throw it away, throw everything away and begin again."

Growing up, Strandquist bounced around B.C. with his family, and his early education was a disaster. He failed classes. He went from a middle-class high school in Kelowna to Surrey where there were students smoking in the halls. Disheartened by his new surroundings, he started skipping classes and eventually dropped out when he was in Grade Ten. Three years later, Strandquist entered Douglas College in New Westminster and steered himself towards the arts, including writing, even though he was functionally illiterate.

"It's kind of fascinating why I chose to do something that I didn't know anything about," he says. "I would have been much wiser to choose music or engineering, which is what I really interested in. Eventually, at the University of Lethbridge, and later at UVic, he realized his course had to be writing. "It lit a fire under me that's still going today."

Now holding an M.F.A from UBC, Strandquist has banished his demons. The terror he felt upon becoming a full-time writer has dissipated, and he no longer asks himself, why am I doing this? It's as if he's come to an understanding with God, struck a deal with Him, and has every intention of holding up his end of the bargain.

"It's a reciprocal thing with nature," he says. "If you make a decision to go in a particular direction, then the impulse is yours, but all the rest of it is up to nature—or Brahma, or whatever." There is a certain kismet to his thinking, a karmic philosophy that keeps his "ass in the chair." It tells him God is working on his behalf to help him in his chosen pursuit, and so prevents him from abandoning it to do something else when things get tough.

"I've learned the hard way. You get something good happening and for whatever reason, you decide it's not the right thing anymore, and you go off in another direction and, boy, do you pay a price. So that's why I keep writing. This little voice says, just do it. So I do it."

Robert Strandquist is the guest editor of subTerrain magazine #44: Strong Words for A Polite Nation.

Tamara Letkeman is a Vancouver writer.
After deciphering the tiny italicized type in Tim Lander's self-published memoir *The Magic Flute,* the lingering impression one feels is admiration. The sophisticated manner in which the guileless Lander portrays himself simultaneously as a harmless simpleton and a gentle wise man makes the 68-year-old street poet seem like an over-grown sprite or an undiscovered Tarot card character who invites complex interpretations.

“I was an aged man,” Lander writes, “a paltry thing, travelling every week with my pack on my back, my hat on my head and my piccolo in my pocket, over on the ferry from Nanaimo, to play around the market and craft shops of Granville Island.”

For years Lander refused to submit to Nanaimo's humiliating by-law that requires all buskers to audition in front of a by-law officer to obtain a license, and name tag. Unwilling to play his penny whistle or piccolo legally on the streets of his hometown, he began busking in Vancouver instead.

“At night I would untoll my sleeping bag on a thick, soft growth of ivy under the Burrard Street Bridge, with the ever-present noise of traffic thudding above me. I reckoned that if I made a few dollars, why spend it on a cheap bed? I had no shame in sleeping like a hobo. I'd always secretly admired the 'gentlemen of the road' and by nature I'm a penny-pincher.”

While some youngsters have belittled him as a haggard version of Father Christmas on the streets, most passers-by have responded kindly.

“If you can play me some Jethro Tull,” says an Aboriginal man in a Pink Floyd t-shirt, “I'll see if I can find you a buck.” Lander replies he's just an old hippy who only plays music off the top of his head. The man gives him his box of take-out food anyway.

Another time a cop encouraged him to keep playing, even after a noise complaint was made.

Then one morning Lander woke under the bridge, put his hand in his hat and discovered his false teeth were stolen. It was a few weeks prior to Christmas and the malicious thief had ruined his ability to make his meagre living. He searched desperately in the brambles to no avail. He couldn't play his flute properly without his teeth.

“Then, thinking about what had happened… I realized that it was absolutely the funniest thing that had ever happened to me,” he writes, “and the humour of the whole predicament filled me with light.”

Lester anyone underestimate Tim Lander, or even pity him, he is perfectly capable of dropping sly references to Yeats when he's not conducting his erudite, one-man campaign to assert the validity of the humble chapbook as the purist vehicle for poets, “not dependent on the good will of the government.”

Lander remains leery of what he calls “the hierarchical filter of the Canada Council system of Approved Editors and Publishers.”

“Chapbooks can be printed in small quantities, as needed,” he says, “and they do not require a huge outlay of cash. They are cheap, unadorned, designed to be traded with other poets, and they are affordable to the kind of aficionados of poetry who attend readings, the educated underclass.”

Chapbooks have added the advantage of displaying the hand, judgement and design sense of the poet. Most of Lander's chapbooks over the years have been deftly illustrated with whimsical, minimalist sketches.

Having just published his first 'legit' book called *Inappropriate Behaviour* (Broken Jaw Press $19), he was recently alarmed to read the page proofs and realize he would soon be spreading thoughts from between six and thirty years ago.

The psychic remedy for this trauma was to release his umpteenth chapbook, *Elegy Ritten in an ORL Nite Café.* As always, it contains Lander's advice regarding copyright: “Do not reproduce without love.”

George Orwell tried to get to the root of things in *Down and Out in Paris and London.* Tim Lander tries to get to the root of things on a daily basis.

Few writers in our midst have the strength of character to run the risk of saintly behaviour, of being ridiculed as naive.

But Lander, who grew up in England, describes himself as a coward, not as a rebel. He knows he can't change the world.

“I am an old man, time moves on, and the rock musicians with their enormous amplified sound systems are telling the politicians how to run the world, and the politicians pretend to listen, smile for the cameras, and go back to their agendas. What magic, what truth can emanate from all that digital, solid state circuitry and strutting, grandstanding rock and roll tub thumpers?”

“… Still the ancient struggles will not go to sleep and the armies march away to war, to disappear like water in the sand.”

“The tide of entropy and the breaking wave of history are irresistible, but a line of music in the street can give the harassed mind a small beautiful place to dwell.”

“The magic of the flute is a small magic, like a little white flower among the pebbles by the roadside, a life-line thrown to the poor benighted people of the city in the deep heart of their suffering.”

George Orwell
After being wrenched from his home in Canada, Jack is plunged into mutiny; siege and massacre. Jack manages to make new friends, but will any of them survive?

According to Sally Rogow’s research for *They Must Not Be Forgotten: Heroic Catholic Priests and Nuns Who Saved People From The Holocaust* (Holy Fire Publishing $11.99), some 155 Catholic institutions in Italy opened their doors to Jewish refugees and made it possible for the majority of Jews in Italy to be saved from the Holocaust. In France, close to 12,000 children were saved by priests and nuns. In Poland, even though providing assistance to Jewish people was punishable by death, some priests and nuns hid Jewish children.

While Rogow documents specific cases of heroism and compassion, her book reminds young readers that Nazi racial laws deprived Jews of their citizenship, stripped them of their civil rights and robbed them of their possessions. During Kristallnacht in 1938, Jewish shops were destroyed by government troops and paramilitary units. In 1939, at the outbreak of World War II, Jews were forced to wear the Star of David. In Eastern Europe, they were robbed of their belongings and forced to live in ghettos. Beginning in 1940, Jews in all occupied countries were arrested and deported to concentration camps. By 1942, the killing of Jews in gas chambers was underway.

According to Rogow’s press material, 4,962,129 Jews were murdered, more than 1,000,000 were children. 63% of European Jews were killed. Death rates per country: Poland 3,000,000; Hungary 596,000; France 200,000; Belgium 36,800; Italy 7,630.

**Find the anchorages dreams are made of**

*The ultimate cruising guide to the South Coast of B.C.* — Pacific Yachting

Best Anchorages of the Inside Passage covers over 200 anchorages from Victoria to Cape Caution, and includes passes and ports. More than 120 maps; over 450 colour photographs and illustrations. Written by former Pacific Yachting columnist Anne Vipond and William Kelly, based on their 25 years of cruising the Inside Passage. Whether you are cruising the Strait of Georgia or Queen Charlotte Strait, you’ll find the best anchorages with this new book.

120 pages, over 500 photos and maps. Colour photography throughout. ISBN: 0-9677991-7-9 $44.95

**Basking Sharks**

by Scott Wallace & Brian Gisborne

Find it here

Mermaid Tales, Toitino

The Net Loft, Bamfield

BC Ferries

Duthie Books

Crown Publications

Miners Bay Books

Pollen Sweaters, Lund

Magpie Magazine Gallery

Published by New Star Books
The Broad Street madams moved to other locations, and Stella migrated to two properties on Chatham and Herald Streets. The opening of the Empress Hotel in 1908 brought an increase in business, but she was subjected to constant harassment for violations of the liquor ruling. She appeared in court so often that it was said Magistrate George Jay saw more of her than her customers did. He got so fed up that he hardly listened to the evidence against her. On one occasion he found her guilty more or less because she'd been found guilty of the same charge the previous month. At this, her lawyer James "Tod" Aikmen asked to have her released. There were no federal prison facilities for women anyway.

In September 1908 Stella purchased her most splendid home. This was Rockwood, designed by the architect John Teague for the pioneer brewer, Joseph Loewen. It was a 12-acre estate adjacent to the Victoria Gardens Hotel in the Gorge area. It suited her purpose very well. She could keep the Herald Street establishment but if things got too dangerous she could transfer her entire operation to Rockwood.

In spite of the grand houses, the beautiful gowns and jewels purchased during European travels, Stella's personal life was far from decorous. She gravitated to violent men and the police were called several times to defend her from the assaults of husbands and lovers. The worst incident was a shooting at Rockwood. It was probably not the accident that she and her lover subsequently claimed, and it resulted in the amputation of part of her leg. After a long convalescence, she returned to work, racing in her horse-drawn buggy between her businesses. But eventually, her businesses went downhill, debts accumulated, and she lost all her Victoria properties. Even Rockwood was registered in the names of her brother and sister.

In 1920 she returned to California and operated a legitimate boarding house. She even married again, for the fourth and last time. In spite of an outbreak of jealous rage against her sister at the wedding (the groom complimented the sister a little too enthusiastically), the marriage was a happy one.

Stella was devastated by her husband's death twelve years later. When she died at the age of 73, she was poor, lonely, and in pain. She lived alone in a small rented frame cottage with bare floors and poor furnishings. For company she had only cats and rabbits, and memories of the days when she swept to the entrance hall to greet her guests, calling out, "Company, ladies," to signal the arrival of clients.

This is a beautifully produced book full of fine photographs, many of them the legacy of Stella's personal vanity. She was photogenic as well as handsome, and adored posing in her elegant outfits on all ceremonial occasions. The pictures are also the result of the author's tireless efforts in seeking out material. Eversole spent 20 years researching Stella's life, traveling to California to meet the descendants of Stella's siblings, and gathering archival documentation. In the manner of all good biographers, she manages simultaneously to tell a life story and evoke a historical period, and to make both narrative strands very lively.

Biographer and novelist Joan Givner has written critical studies of female characters, including Katherine Anne Porter and Mazo De La Roche.

Police mug shots of the prostitutes Little Cook and Martha Roberts who both worked at Stella's Herald Street brothel.