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BC BOOKWORLD

ABOVE & BEYOND

WRITERS WHO ARE
OUTSIDE THE
URBAN BUBBLE



PEACE RIVER POET
DONNA KANE
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NELSON NOVELIST
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FEATURE INTERVIEW

“Nearly everyone is
going to write a children’s
book someday when they
have a free weekend.”

— Kidlit maven **Ann Walsh** looks at why
kids might be our most important readers.

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DIANE JAVES JONES PHOTO

Wreck Beach
as seen by
agnostic nudist
Carellin Brooks

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DEREK EVANS'
**CLIMATE
OF FEAR**

IN NORTH KOREA

P.22



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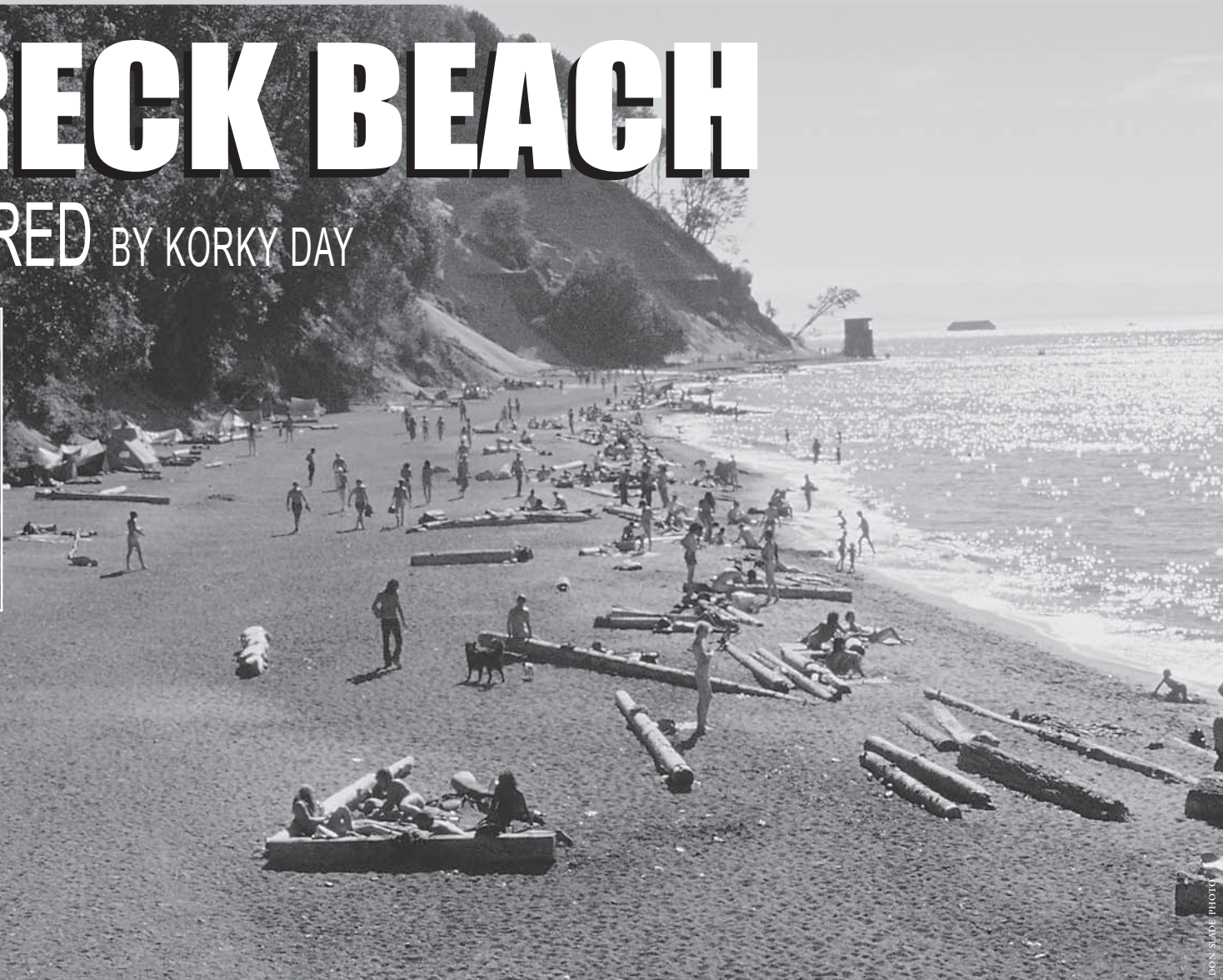
WRECK BEACH

UNCOVERED BY KORKY DAY



INSET: Carellin Brooks

Wreck Beach near UBC was 27th runner-up in CBC's contest to be one of the Seven Wonders of Canada.



DON SLADE PHOTO

Along Wreck Beach and on Vancouver sidewalks, I've been selling copies of **Carellin Brooks'** new social chronicle *Wreck Beach* (New Star \$19) because it helps people be proud of their Wreck Beach nudist community and its accomplishments.

The reaction has been mixed. Some rednecks, even on Commercial Drive, have shouted obscenities, complaining that I'm naked, despite my sky-blue skimpy swimsuit! On Davie Street others have angrily called me gay.

Many more passers-by have congratulated me, in part because Wreck Beach has done much to help free attitudes about nudity for 37 years. *Wreck Beach*—the book—is also filling a gap. Full of wit and integrity, it's a vital historical summary that supports the preservation of this freedom destination.

Although Carellin Brooks is herself a young Vancouver "agnostic nudist" (or naturist), she is mostly objective telling the ups and downs of the beach community. She matter-of-factly relates how the beach was named, why it's nude, the legality, and the politics, including the beach being a largely self-policing enclave.

Some people mentioned in the book might be a little embarrassed (including me), but their treatment is pretty fair. She goes into drugs (legal and illegal), the blonde beach vendor **Watermelon's** naked busts (her pot arrest), gay sex, gambling, strolling food vendors, relations with the RCMP (mostly harmonious), outhouses, gawkers, textiles (genital-hiders), nude enforcers, flower boxes, Bare Buns Fun Runs, Kokoro Dance performances, and much more.

Brooks' fair-minded approach might help save this near-wilderness from development. And it might even help save University of British Columbia buildings from sliding down the cliff onto Wreck Beach.

My own activism for the beach, and for nudism, goes back to when I organized the first two (and only) demos to defend nudity at Wreck Beach. Nobody has been charged with nudity (a federal crime) at Wreck Beach since our "Nude-In" on August 23, 1970. We protesters numbered 3,000 (not 2,000, as the book says). At the time I was a young U.S. war resister. Not quite as slack as Brooks writes, but it reads funny, anyway. Then in 1978 we welcomed the Rev. **Bernice Gerard**, city councillor, as she tried to exorcise the nudity out of us.

Do I claim to have "started" nudism at Wreck Beach? No. As the book explains, nudity with the First Nations is not a crime or a fetish, as it is for the invaders. They swam but had no swimsuits. Among the many revealing interviews, Brooks talks with Musqueam elder **Larry Grant**. We're reminded that all of greater Vancouver is part of Coast Salish territory (First Nations).

The indigenes' attitudes, private nudist clubs, and the Doukhobors' nude protests in BC in the 1960s helped set the stage for popularising Wreck Beach nudism in the 1970s.

You might say that the generational attitude shifts about nudity reflect a trend throughout our culture toward tolerance. That trend is prompted in large part by nude beaches, especially Canada's most famous beach of any kind, Wreck Beach.

Vancouver being home to Wreck Beach has played no small part in nudity spreading to the stage (such as at

the Fringe Festival), to the World Naked Bike Ride (which began in Vancouver), and the budding topfree movement (females legally doffing their shirts wherever males can).

As an example of Vancouver attitudes slowly regressing to indigenous-like views, the October front cover of Vancouver's *Shared Vision* magazine had a huge tasteful nude colour cover photo of **Stephanie MacDonald**, the author of their lead story on breast thermography to detect cancer.

I would have liked a similar photo of Brooks in her book, but she and her publisher have opted for posing her like a bespectacled 1940s "girl reporter," although they will provide a nude publicity shot, as seen in *Xtra West*.

Carellin Brooks has managed to cover with sensitivity even the material which is disturbing, such as the rare unnatural death.

She discusses the nudist movement and philosophy and their relation to this beach. Whereas some nudists deny any sexual motive for their nudity, Brooks doesn't buy that argument completely. She nonetheless makes it clear that social nudity is not the **Hugh Hefner** poolside fantasy that many imagine.

Brooks celebrates the triumph of people to keep a piece of the earth a near wilderness, and to create there an enduring human community of liberation and love.

Brooks explains the mounting danger of further building and paving at UBC. With such development, the university risks its people, its art and artifacts at the Museum of Anthropology, its other buildings, and its (our) investment. Even in our lifetimes, more sand slides onto the beach could bring some edifices down.

The whole peninsula on which UBC sits is mostly sand. The university planners don't always consult their own ex-

perts on that, but Brooks does. UBC sometimes consults with us, the public—largely because **Judy Williams**, the Mother of Wreck Beach, insists it does. Luckily, chunks of the cliff usually don't collapse on clear, calm days when the most people are there. However, watch out for earthquakes.

Brooks challenges the powers that be to justify the risk of continued development of UBC—classrooms, apartments, and a big, new shopping mall. The powerful will try to ignore this book, not wanting to bring attention to their weak arguments.

Right now UBC students have set up a People's Park (illegal occupation) to protest the coming commercial mall smack in the middle of campus, at the old bus loop. Visit it on your way to the beach. Maybe this generation won't be lost do-nothings after all!

Why do half a million people from around the world annually head to this beach that is just west of—and outside of—Vancouver city limits? Because it's one thing to be influenced by the media, by school, by church; it's quite another to go to Wreck Beach and be thoroughly re-educated, mentally and emotionally, through all five of your senses.

Although Brooks refused my fact-checking, she gets nothing major wrong. My detailed suggestions: www.korky.ca/nude-peace.html.

Wreck Beach is for now the only book on the store shelf focusing on our spectacular beach in the rain forest. It's a 96-page soft cover with 27 black-and-white photos and one map. The next two books I hope will be published are a big colour photo book and a book by or about Judy E. Williams, whom you get to know in Brooks' book.

978-1-55420-031-3

Korky Day, one of the early young upstarts in the collective that owned and produced the Georgia Straight newspaper, has long been an activist for nudism.

HEAVY METAL

“The collapse of the bridge was my personal Titanic.”

— GARY GEDDES

Three events in British Columbia drew world attention during the 1950s. Englishman **Roger Bannister** and Australian **John Landy** eclipsed the four-minute-mile barrier at Empire Stadium during the Miracle Mile (on August 7, 1954); north of Campbell River, engineers generated the largest non-nuclear peacetime explosion in human history at Ripple Rock (on April 5, 1958); and eighteen steel workers and one rescue diver were killed when the Second Narrows Bridge collapsed during its construction (on June 17, 1958).

In 1958, having just graduated from King Edward High School, **Gary Geddes** was working on the waterfront at BC Sugar Refinery, loading boxcars with 100-pound sacks of sugar, so the news of the bridge collapse did not take long to reach him.

“What I did not know at the time,” he says, “was that my father had been called out as a former navy diver to stand by in the search for bodies in the wreckage. I’ve carried for a long time the image of him dangling from his umbilical cord of oxygen in that cauldron of swirling water and twisted metal.”

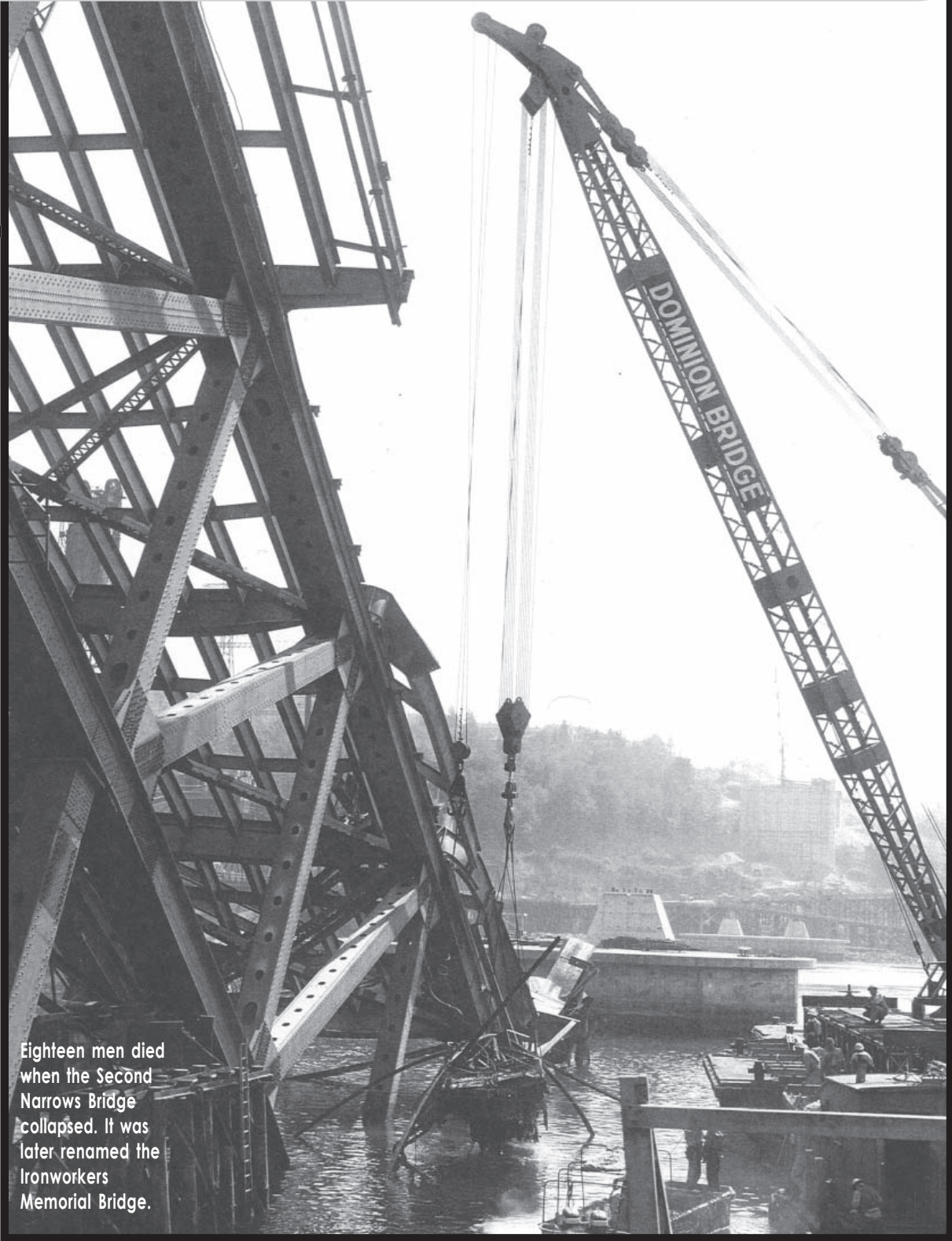


Gary Geddes and novelist Ann Eriksson were married this summer at French Beach overlooking the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

Geddes has imagined the voices of those most directly affected by the accident for an unusual collection of poetry, prose and archival photos called **Falsework** (Goose Lane \$19.95). The title is an engineering term that refers to the temporary supports that are required for a cantilevered bridge under construction.

“In this case,” he says, “a mistake was made and the horizontal I-beams were inadequate to support the weight. It was a simple mathematical error that should have been picked up by both the contractor, Dominion Bridge, and the consulting engineers, Swan Wooster and Associates.”

The Second Narrows Bridge was renamed the Ironworkers Memorial Bridge in 1994 to commemorate the tragedy. To this day many British Columbians are haunted by the event. This summer, when Geddes read from *Falsework* at the Denman Island Writers Festival, a woman in the audience recalled working as a telephone operator in 1958—and every conversation she overheard on that fateful day mentioned the bridge failure.



Eighteen men died when the Second Narrows Bridge collapsed. It was later renamed the Ironworkers Memorial Bridge.

YOUNG MACDONALD HAD A FARMHOUSE

How ex-pizza delivery man
Kyle MacDonald bartered his way into
the Guinness Book of World Records



Kyle MacDonald leaps from the world's largest red paperclip in Kipling, Sask., as recorded in the Guinness Book of World Records.

Born in New Westminster in 1979 and raised in Belcarra, B.C., Kyle MacDonald recalls in **One Red Paperclip** (Three Rivers \$17.95) how he was between jobs and relying on his girlfriend to pay the rent in Montreal when a girl in Vancouver agreed to trade her fish pen for his paper clip.

Using the internet site Craigslist, he traded the pen for a doorknob in Seattle, the doorknob for a Coleman camp stove in Massachusetts, and the stove for a Honda generator in California. Eventually snow-globe collector and television star **Corbin Bernsen** traded him a role in the film *Donna on Demand* for MacDonald's newly acquired Kiss snow-globe.

Ultimately MacDonald acquired a two-storey farmhouse from the mayor of media-hungry Kipling, Saskatchewan in July of 2006.

When he isn't gallivanting around the planet, appearing on talk shows, MacDonald is back with his girlfriend Dominique in Montreal—and not living in the farmhouse.

In Canada, MacDonald boosted his profile by remarking on CBC's *The Hour* that he wouldn't go to Yahk, B.C. to make a trade. When the good denizens of Yahk protested, MacDonald upped the stakes, like a good poker player, and vowed he would never go to Yahk unless *The Hour* agreed to broadcast from the town itself—which they did.

We have seen the future, and it is YouTube.

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Brain jumps her greatest hurdle

For young girls who want to learn how to compete at the highest level, KAREN BRAIN has become a model of perfection.

Eight months after an equestrian accident left her partially paralyzed with a spinal cord injury, **Karen Brain** started riding again.

Unable to place her feet in the stirrups, she used two small whips to direct her horse, in lieu of her legs.

As outlined in **Nikki Tate**’s juvenile biography **Double Take: Karen Brain’s Olympic Journey** (Sono Nis \$12.95), doctors discovered during a ten-hour surgery that Brain’s lung was also collapsed from the weight of the horse on top of her during her fall. Brain received a new 12th vertebrae, from her 10th rib, enclosing it in a titanium cage.

“I hear models will remove their last ribs to get a smaller waist,” she remarked, cheerfully, “so I guess I’m half-way there with one of my 10th ribs gone.”

Brain has since competed at the

highest level in both able-bodied and disabled riding competitions. She won two Bronze Medals at the 2004 Athens Paralympic Games with the mare Dasskara, and won two Silver Medals in 2005 at the Dutch Open International Dressage competition for disabled riders in Helvoirt, Netherlands with the Dutch gelding Mozart.

In 2005, Brain moved home to BC, after living and training in Germany, the US and Eastern Canada for nine years.

Having represented Canada in 3-Day Eventing at the World Equestrian Games in Rome in 1998, with her horse Double Take, and won the Advanced Canadian Championships in 3-Day Eventing that same year, Karen Brain now hopes to win a gold medal for Canada at the Beijing 2008 Paralympic Games.

1-55039-162-3



Karen Brain and her horse Dasskara in Athens, 2004

DARLENE BRAIN PHOTO



NOW AND THEN: Mary Trainer, Rick Antonson and Brian Antonson in 2007; and the same threesome preparing their original manuscript in 1972.

NUGGETS YARN SUPERSIZED

Rick and Brian Antonson first heard about Slumach’s lost gold mine in 1957. Fifteen years later, the brothers co-wrote and published one of B.C.’s most enduring tales of murder and gold, *In Search of a Legend: The Search for the Slumach-Lost Creek Gold Mine* (Nunaga, 1972), co-written with Mary Trainer. This title reputedly sold more than 10,000 copies in various editions, making it a B.C. classic.

Fast-forward another 25 years and the threesome has expanded their re-search for **Slumach’s Gold: In Search of a Legend** (Heritage House \$14.95). Without being overly didactic, the story-tellers reveal the extent to which racism might have played a significant role in the embellishment of the tale.

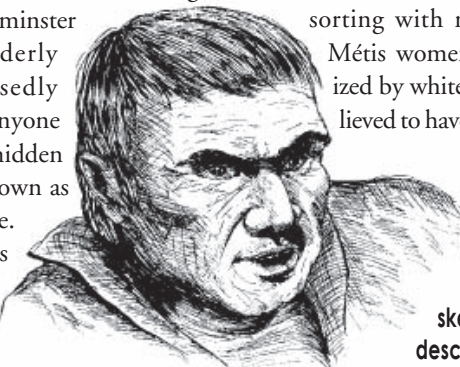
The legend of a lost gold mine in the Fraser Valley, near Pitt Lake, about 35 miles from Vancouver, only arose *after* an elderly First Nations man named **Slumach** was hanged to death for murdering a brutish Métis man, **Louis Boulrier**, also known as Louis Bee, at Lillooet Slough near the Pitt River, in 1890.

Newspapers brazenly described Slumach as a murderer long before he was caught and brought to trial. If the suspect (probably Salish) had a lawyer, a plea of self-defence might have been sufficient to save his life. Prior to being hanged in New Westminster in 1891, the elderly Slumach supposedly placed a curse on anyone hoping to find his hidden motherlode, also known as the Lost Creek Mine.

In the early 1900s an American miner named **Jackson** reportedly found

Slumach’s Mine, but died soon afterwards, leaving behind an intriguing letter that provided hints as to the site of the mine in a remote part of what is now Garibaldi Provincial Park—and becoming the first victim of the mine’s alleged curse. The *Vancouver Province* once estimated 30 people have died trying to find Slumach’s mine.

The Antonsons and Trainer note that stories of Slumach spreading his gold nuggets in local “sporting houses” and taking women into the bush with him—never to be seen again—only emerged *after* his death. In hindsight, it’s possible Slumach’s unsavoury reputation for con-sorting with non-Aboriginal and Métis women could be rationalized by white society if he was believed to have had access to wealth.



Nobody knows for certain what Slumach looked like—this early sketch is based on a description of him.

A is for Ackles

Any BC Lions fan who wants a plainspoken insider's summary of the team's operations need look no further than **Bob Ackles'** autobiography *The Water Boy: From the Sidelines to the Owner's Box: Inside the CFL, the XFL, and the NFL* (Wiley \$32.99), co-written with **Ian Mulgrew**. As the little guy who went from being Lions' first water boy in 1953 to a crony of XFL owner **Vince McMahon** and Miami Dolphin's head coach **Jimmy Johnson**, the Sarnia-born Ackles freely disses QB **Casey Printers**, sportswriter **Al Davidson** and others.



Bob Ackles

978-0-470-15345-1

B is for Baldry

After musician **Long John Baldry** ended his roller-coaster ride at age 64 on July 21, 2005 in Vancouver, his protégé and friend **Rod Stewart** acknowledged the enormous debt that British musicians owe to Baldry for bringing Black blues to England. "Not just myself but the Rolling Stones, Led Zeppelin, the Yardbirds, Eric Clapton and Jeff Beck....," said Stewart.

After two years of research, **Paul Myers** has provided a thorough biography, *It Ain't Easy: Long John Baldry and the Birth of the British Blues* (Greystone \$22.95).

C is for Christie

Gordon Christie has edited *Aboriginality and Governance: A Multidisciplinary Perspective* (Theytus \$40.95), a compilation of articles by Quebecois academics who examine the complexities of Aboriginal governance from English, French and Aboriginal perspectives.

Originally from Inuvik, Christie earned a law degree from the University of Victoria and a Ph.D in philosophy from the University of California. His mother's family is Inupiat-Inuvialuit.

Christie joined the UBC Faculty of Law in 2004.



Gordon Christie

978-1-894778-24-4



MIKE MCCARTNEY PHOTO

Liverpudlians Paul McCartney and Long John Baldry chat about music outside the Lime Street railway station in 1962.

D is for Delehanty

In response to her mother's terminal illness, Kootenay-based **Eileen Delehanty Pearkes** has written a deeply personal spring-to-winter narrative, *The Glass Seed: The Fragile Beauty of the Heart, Mind and Body* (Timeless Books \$19.95) that examines the politics of womanhood and social issues germane to compassion.

Influenced by yoga, this poignant work also explores the nature of memory and healing.



Eileen Delehanty Pearkes

978-1-932018-18-9

E is for Ellis

Sarah Ellis has won the \$20,000 TD Canadian Children's Literature Award established in 2005 to honour the most distinguished book of the year for children aged 1 to 13.

The publisher of Ellis' sixteenth title, *Odd Man Out* (Groundwood 2006) also receives \$2,500 for promotional purposes.

Entries were judged on the quality of the text and illustrations and the book's overall contribution to literature.



Sarah Ellis

0888997027

F is for Fodi

Magic, monsters and mythology abound in the stories and art of **Lee Edward Födi** who grew up in the Okanagan and now lives in Vancouver.

In *Kendra Kandlestar and the Door to Unger* (Brown Books \$20.95), a giant named Unger enables young Kendra to match wits with dwarves and a magic-wielding faun in order to untangle the truth about her long-lost family in the mysterious forbidden land of Een.



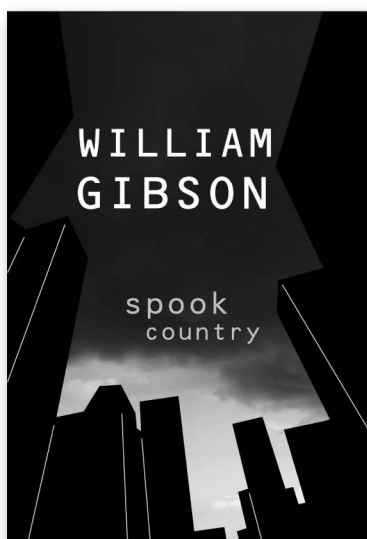
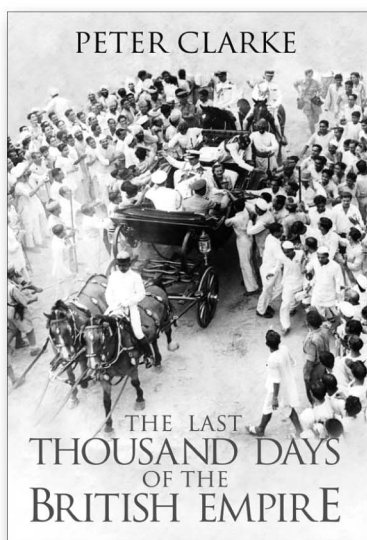
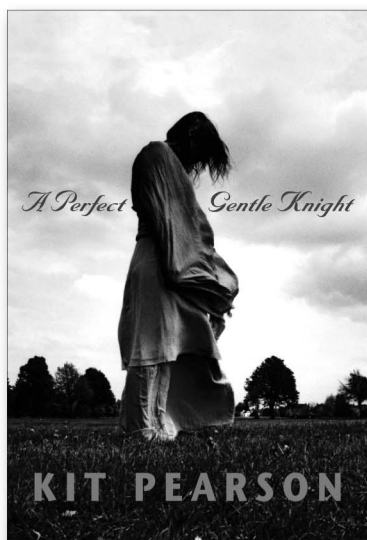
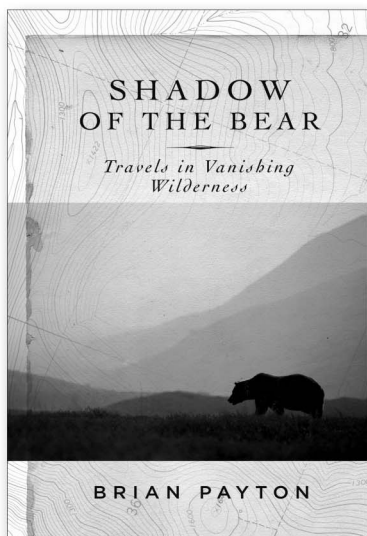
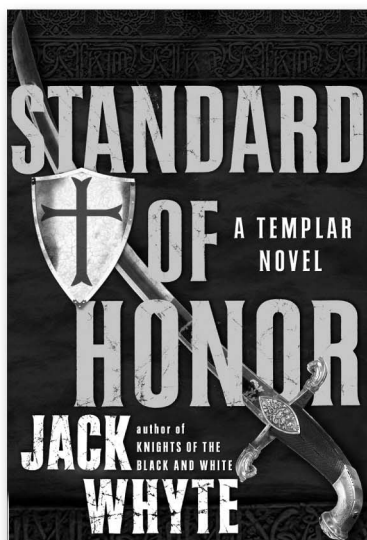
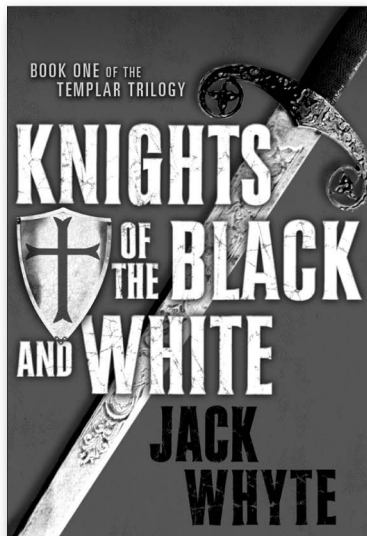
Edward Fodi

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WHO'SWHO

continued from page 9

G is for Gainer

Aerospace historian **Chris Gainer** examines why plans to build Canada's own jet fighter planes were cancelled by the Diefenbaker government in 1959



Chris Gainer

(after the U.S. gave notice no Canadian jets would be bought.) In his *Who Killed the Avro Arrow?* (Folklore \$18.95), Gainer notes the decision to halt production of the Arrow was made on the 50th anniversary of **J.A.D. McCurdy's** first powered aircraft flight in Canada. Ex-Avro engineers later played key roles in Apollo moon landings, a brain drain that Gainer recalled in *Arrows to the Moon: Avro's Engineers and the Space Race*. 978-1-894864-68-8

H is for Honjo

Born in the former Yugoslavia (Bosnia and Herzegovina) in 1948, **Ibrahim Honjo** is a sculptor and painter who arrived in Vancouver in



Ibrahim Honjo

1995. Having worked as a journalist and economist, editing books and newspapers, publishing books of poetry and organizing literary events in Europe, he now finds himself in Port Moody, struggling to re-emerge as a writer. He has self-published *Do Not Write This Down [Ovo Ne Zapisuj]* (\$15), a collection of poems in both English and the Serbo-Croatian language. 245B Evergreen Dr., Port Moody, BC V3H 1S1. Tel: 604-936-2442

I is for Irani

Set in the red-light district of Bombay, **Anosh Irani's** play about a powerful eunuch, *The Matka King*,



Anosh Irani

premiered at the Arts Club Theatre in Vancouver in 2003. His follow-up play about Bombay's most famous dancer, *Bombay Black*, premiered at Toronto's Theatre Centre in 2006. It's a harrowing tale of love, revenge, myth and magic. Both are contained in *The Bombay Plays* (Playwrights Canada \$19.95). 978-0-88754-560-3

J is for Juby

Having had a CTV television series called *Alice, I Think* made from her books about Alice MacLeod of Smithers, a teenager,

home-schooled by hippie parents, who becomes anxious about conforming in high school, **Susan Juby** has spread her wings to write a love triangle about a girl, a boy and a horse, *Another Kind of Cowboy* (HarperCollins \$17.89). Available in December, it's the story of two dressage riders, Alex and Clio. She's hot to trot for romance, but beyond his macho façade Alex is another kind of cowboy. 9780060765187

K is for Koppel

One of the West Coast's leading science writers, **Tom Koppel** has examined how scientists have learned to understand how tides work, and how



Tom Koppel

tides impact coasts and marine life, in *Ebb and Flow: Tides and Life on our Once and Future Planet* (Dundurn \$26.99).

After an opening chapter on tides and history, Koppel also recalls his own perilous encounters with tides in local waters since he moved to Salt Spring Island in the early 1970s. 978-1-55002-726-6

L is for Lane

Having received the fourth annual Lieutenant Governor's Award for Literary Excellence earlier this year, **Patrick Lane** has released a collection of new poems, *Last Water Songs* (Harbour \$16.95), including his recollection of sixteen deceased Canadian writers.

Among those recalled are his brother Red Lane, Adele Wiseman, Al Pittman, Al Purdy, Alden Nowlan, Anne Szumigalski, Bronwen Wallace, Earle Birney, Elizabeth Smart, Frank Scott, Gwendolyn MacEwan, John Newlove, Milton Acorn (known as "Uncle Miltie" to Lane's kids), the murderer Roy Lowther, Pat Lowther and Irving Layton. 155017-450-2

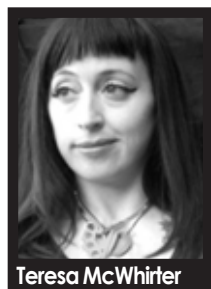


Susan Juby:
back in the
fiction saddle

Julie Morstad and
Sara O'Leary

M is for McWhirter

Teresa McWhirter's first novel about urban girls who drink too often, and hang out with male losers, *Some Girls Do* (Raincoast 2002), has been followed by a novel about a young woman named Spider who drifts through a similar malaise in *Dirtbags* (Anvil \$20).

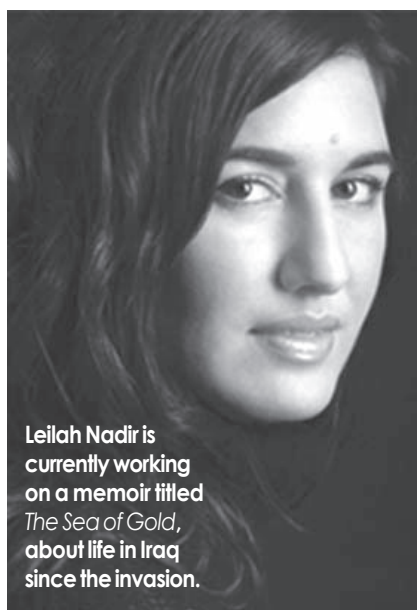


Teresa McWhirter

Sated with loud music, drugs and parties, these are not the hip, irony-driven quipsters from Douglas Coupland novels, biding their time, hoping for elevation into a higher level of consumerism; McWhirter's generation of urban drifters and outlaws are jumping over the edge of despair into pits of self-destruction. Romance is a luxury they can't afford. 978-1-895636-88-8

N is for Nadir

In sympathy with the 1.8 million people who currently comprise the Iraqi diaspora, with an English mother and an Iraqi father who left Baghdad in the 1960s, and degrees from McGill and Edinburgh, **Leilah Nadir** has written a family-fueled memoir, *The Orange Trees of Baghdad: In Search of My Lost Family* (Key Porter \$32.95), a story of Iraq by someone who has never been there. "This is a book about what loss really means," says Naomi Klein in her endorsement, "the theft of history and homeland." 978-1-55263-941-2



Leilah Nadir is currently working on a memoir titled *The Sea of Gold*, about life in Iraq since the invasion.

O is for O'Leary

Former *Vancouver Sun* book section columnist **Sara O'Leary** is the co-recipient of the \$10,000 Marilyn Baillie Picture Book Award for *When You Were Small* (Simply Read Books 2006) with illustrations by **Julie Morstad** of Vancouver. The Marilyn Baillie Picture Book Award honours excellence in the illustrated picture book format, for children aged 3 to 6.

O'Leary's previous books include *Comfort Me With Apples* (ThistleDown Press 1998) and *Wish You Were Here* (Exile Editions 1994). 1-894965-36-1

P is for Pratt

Betty Pratt-Johnson learned to dive in 1967 at the YMCA in Vancouver when there was only one dive shop in the city. First released in 1976,



Betty Pratt-Johnson

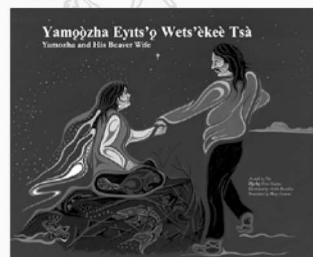
her authoritative guide to scuba and skin diving in B.C. and Washington, *141 Dives*, has been reprinted and updated many times. In 1994 it was re-released in two volumes, *99 Dives* and *101 Dives* but now it has been revised as *151 Dives* (Adventure \$34.95), available via Sandhill Distributing. "I personally have enjoyed every dive included in this guidebook," she says. GPS datum are included for every boat dive to help locate dives sites. 978-0-921009-40-5

Q is for Quaglia

Allesandra Quaglia is from Toronto and **Jean-Francis Quaglia** is from Marseilles. After the husband-and-wife team met in Nice, France, they came to Canada in 1992 and opened their first Provence restaurant in Vancouver in 1997. After opening a second restaurant in 2002 called Provence Marinaside, they have gathered more than 120 recipes, augmented by 32 colour photos, for *New World Provence: Modern French Cooking for Friends and Family* (Arsenal \$26.95). 978-1-55152-223-4

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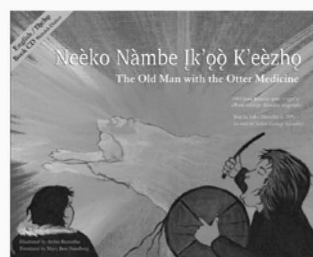


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YAMOZHA AND HIS BEAVER WIFE
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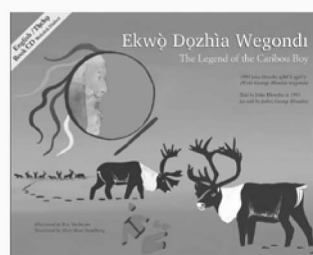


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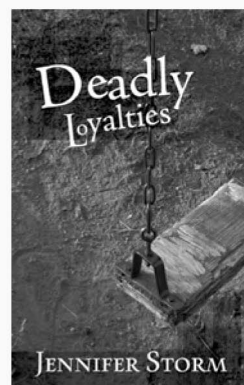
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ISBN 978-1-894778-45-9 \$21.95

SLASH CANADIAN BESTSELLER
by Jeannette Armstrong

"...*Slash* is an amazing novel by Jeannette Armstrong that is more than just a novel. Journeying with *Slash's* ups and downs is living an awesome and memorable Indigenous epic!" — Simon J. Ortiz, author of *Woven Stone*, *From Sand Creek*, *The Good Rainbow Road* and *After and Before the Lightning*



ISBN 978-1-894778-39-8 \$16.95

DEADLY LOYALTIES
By Jennifer Storm

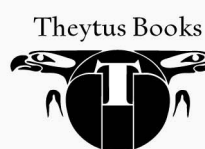
An engrossing coming-of-age story that depicts the gritty and often gruesome realities of life on the streets, *Deadly Loyalties* looks honestly at the violence and pressures that teenagers face when they try to belong. *Deadly Loyalties* is a tale of friendship, betrayal and redemption, of loyalty, revenge and survival.



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continued from previous page

R is for Russell

S. Thomas Russell is one of those non-flavour-of-the-week novelists who don't get invited to writers' festivals but will likely out-write most who do. After a series of acclaimed fantasy novels from his home in the Comox Valley, written as Sean Russell, he's altered his pen name slightly for a 500-page nautical history thriller, **Under Enemy Colours** (Penguin \$30), set in the 18th century.

As England once more attempts to rule the waves, this time against revolutionary France, the protagonist is a young lieutenant, Charles Saunders Hayden, son of an English father and a French mother, who must choose between honour and duty. For more on Russell, a lifelong sailor, visit abcbookworld.com.

9780399154430

S is for Sandborn

Calvin Sandborn, as a lawyer supervising the Victoria Environmental Law Clinic, has recalled how he overcame the hateful put-downs of his alcoholic father and the collapse of his own marriage to cultivate better relationships in **Becoming the Kind Father** (New Society \$18.95).

978-0-86571-582-0

T is for Theytus

Theytus Books' *Red Rooms* by **Cherie Dimaline** was awarded the Fiction Book of the Year Award 2007 at the Anskohk Aboriginal Literature Festival and their *Zoe and the Fawn* by **Catherine Jameson**, illustrated by **Julie Flett**, was a Bronze Medal Winner for the Moonbeam Children's Book Award in the category of Multicultural-Picture Book in the USA.

As well, Theytus has released its tenth printing of **Jeannette Armstrong's** fiction classic *Slash!*, the first adult novel by a Canadian Aboriginal woman. Frequently adopted for use in schools, it recalls First Nations' alienation and militancy during the period from 1960 to 1983.



Jeannette Armstrong



S. Thomas Russell

BARRY PETERSON PHOTO

U is for Umedaly

Born in Pretoria in 1930 as an Ismaili, **Lella Umedaly** moved to Uganda in East Africa where she married, had five children and became a Montessori schoolteacher. She came to Canada as a refugee after her family was expelled from Uganda by **Idi Amin** in 1972 as part of the expulsion of over 80,000 people of Indian ancestry.



Lella Umedaly

Co-authored with **Muneera U. Spence**, her cookbook *Mamajee's Kitchen* (Umedaly Publishing / Sandhill \$29.95) arose from questions repeatedly asked by her children and grandchildren about Indian cuisine. It's a combination of recipes gathered from Africa, India and North America.

1-59971-026-9

V is for Vassilopoulos

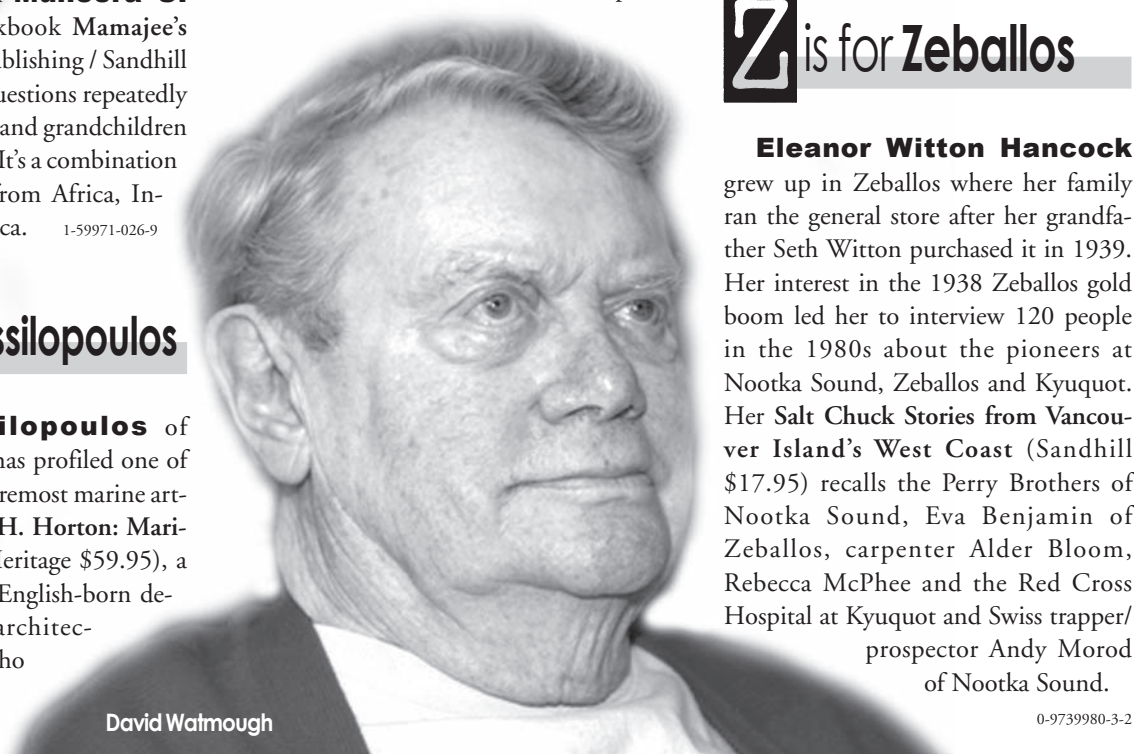
Peter Vassilopoulos of Tsawwassen has profiled one of the world's foremost marine artists for **John H. Horton: Mariner Artist** (Heritage \$59.95), a study of the English-born designer and architectural artist who immigrated to Canada

in 1966. For his series depicting Captain George Vancouver's voyages, Horton sailed Vancouver's routes from the Olympic Peninsula to Alaska to incorporate recognizable shore features. Horton has produced more than one thousand meticulously researched maritime paintings.

978-1-894974-34-9

W is for Watmough

At 81, **David Watmough** is releasing his 18th book and his 13th work of fiction, **Geraldine** (Ekstasis \$22.95), a tribute to women of the twentieth century who were feminists before the word existed. As a Victoria-raised bio-chemist in the field of medical science, the pro-



David Watmough

tagonist, now a grandmother, must cope with the humiliation of being regarded as snobbish and crazy in her declining years, despite her extensive professional success in a man's world.

978-1-894800-99-0

X is for Xmas

If you're looking for an Xmas gift that lasts all year long, for only \$12.72, look no further than right here. For the price of a bottle of wine you can give up-to-date news of B.C. books and authors. There's a *B.C. BookWorld* subscription form on page 40.

Y is for Young

In 1991 **Terence Young** of Victoria convinced renegade high school principal **John Pringle** to let him teach a new Writing 12 class. After Young showed his colleague **Bill Stenson** some of the work the students produced, Stenson became the driving force behind *The Claremont Review*, a periodical specifically created to publish neophytes across Canada and the U.S. Some thirty issues later, Young, Stenson, Susan Stenson and Janice McCachen have edited a celebratory teen literature anthology, **Naming the Baby: The Best of the Claremont Review** (Orca \$19.95).

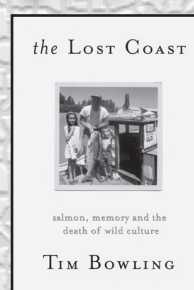
978-1-55143-772-9

Z is for Zeballos

Eleanor Witton Hancock grew up in Zeballos where her family ran the general store after her grandfather Seth Witton purchased it in 1939. Her interest in the 1938 Zeballos gold boom led her to interview 120 people in the 1980s about the pioneers at Nootka Sound, Zeballos and Kyuquot. Her **Salt Chuck Stories from Vancouver Island's West Coast** (Sandhill \$17.95) recalls the Perry Brothers of Nootka Sound, Eva Benjamin of Zeballos, carpenter Alder Bloom, Rebecca McPhee and the Red Cross Hospital at Kyuquot and Swiss trapper/pro prospector Andy Morod of Nootka Sound.

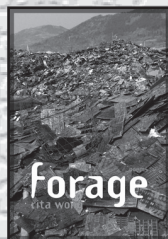
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WHEN THE GOING GETS GOUGH

NAUTICAL HISTORIAN BARRY GOUGH HAS PRODUCED A JIG-SAW PUZZLE OF OUR PAST WITH THE MOST NUMBER OF PIECES.

Barry Gough's *Fortune's a River: The Collision of Empires in the Pacific Northwest* (Harbour \$36.95) could have been titled *The Vast Quarter* or *The Last Quarter*.

He examines the infiltration of Americans and Europeans into the last unmapped area of the North American continent.

It's all fascinating stuff, in bits and pieces—from Russians in Alaska, to migrants from Missouri, to the Spanish in California—but Gough's avoidance of storytelling can be downright odd for anyone familiar with his range of choices.

Whereas most historians nowadays would have succumbed to the pressure of including gobs of First Nations material, and most would have veered sideways to regurgitate juicy details of **Captain Cook's** murder in the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii) or **John Jewitt's** sensational captivity as 'the white slave of the Nootka,' Gough prefers to open his panorama by elevating the stature of the little-known but remarkable world traveler **John Ledyard** (the 'American Marco Polo') who became the first American to set foot in B.C. territory, arriving with Cook in 1778.

A few chapters later, Gough similarly elevates the significance of American mariner **John Kendrick**, a robust character who purchased pieces of property in the late 18th century and became the province's first land speculator. "Kendrick's hunger for land knew no bounds," writes Gough.

After Kendrick was also killed in Hawaii, he was overshadowed by the achievements of his sailing partner, **Robert Gray**, the first American captain to enter the mouth of the Columbia River and to circumnavigate the globe.

An old-school professor with long paragraphs and pro-British leanings, Gough allocates less than a page to the expedition of **Juan Pérez**, the first explorer known to have reached B.C. waters in 1774, and even less coverage of the highly civilized **Malaspina**, who aimed to serve as the equivalent of Captain Cook for Spain.

David Thompson, who literally covered far more ground than anyone, might have received even more emphasis in such a geographically ambitious work, but Gough seems to favour the influence of **Alexander Mackenzie**, about whom he has written a biography.

Simon Fraser, essentially a Mackenzie-wannabe, is appropriately allocated to second fiddle.

As if it's against his nature to entertain, Gough opts *not* to give details of one of the few romantic tales he might have legitimately told.

died from an illness that led to a fatal fall from his horse at Krasnoyarsk in Siberia. Doña Concepción, it is said, did not learn about this for forty years after. So ended the first attempt to bring Russia and Spain into closer cooperation on the Pacific coast of North America."

Gough refrains from turning this episode into *Entertainment Tonight*. His subject is, after all, the collision of empires, not bodies.

Neither does he care to speculate as to how the history of the Pacific Coast might have evolved had Rezanov not fallen from his horse.

Watching Barry Gough play hopscotch with history is highly agreeable if you already know the broad outlines of the game; that way one can take pleasure in the details.

We learn, for instance, that when Alexander Mackenzie met David Thompson, he told the mapmaker that he (Thompson) had "performed more in ten months than he expected could have been done in two years."

And hands up anyone who knew that **José Narváez** was the first Spaniard to encounter Russians in person on the West Coast?

Cumulatively, *Fortune's a River* is a grand performance by a maestro who can only be criticized by the likes of a Salieri who once dissed Mozart for having too many notes.

In the process, readers gain a much-needed appreciation of the formative role played by **Thomas Jefferson**—an admirer of John Ledyard, and the mastermind behind the Lewis & Clark expedition—in determining the fate of the Pacific Coast.

There's also the odd pleasure of encountering a crusty professor, like the kind portrayed by the late John Housemann in movies, who can assert, with complete confidence:

"We can now see that it was the British, surprisingly, not the Russians, who had prevented the

northern consolidation and expansion of the Spanish empire in this quarter...

"By excluding the Spanish from Nootka Sound and Neah Bay, the British inadvertently handed the United States a remarkable gift."

At 400-plus pages, *Fortune's a River* is not for beginners. It needs to be digested slowly, so only time will tell if it becomes the primary overview for pre-Confederation history for the Pacific Northwest.

Having written the first book to be published by UBC Press in the early 1970s, Gough has returned from three decades of teaching in eastern Canada to publish *Fortune's a River* with a B.C. company. It's a homecoming, of sorts, one that might go under-appreciated because he errs on the side of content in an age of piffle.

Barry Gough was founding director of Canadian Studies at Wilfrid Laurier University. He now lives in Victoria where he is not a blogger, and he doesn't have a website.



WOULD-BE FILM PRODUCERS TAKE NOTE: If ever there's a movie or mini-series to be made from **Barry Gough's** book, they might want to know about this fanciful depiction of forty-year-old **Baron Nikolai Rezanov** and his love-struck meeting with fifteen-year-old **Doña Concepción Argüello**, daughter of the Spanish commander of San Francisco, in 1806. Due to religious complications, the beautiful Doña Concepción Argüello never married her handsome aristocrat from Alaska who died on his way back to Moscow. She only learned the details of her lover's death from **Sir George Simpson** of the Hudson's Bay Company during his visit to San Francisco in 1842. She entered the Sisterhood of St. Dominic at Monterey in 1851, at age sixty. Three years later she moved with the Sisters across the bay to Benicia where she died on December 23, 1857. This mural by **Victor Arnautoff** can be seen at the Post Interfaith Chapel in San Francisco.

When the widowed **Baron Rezanov** sailed to San Francisco Bay in 1806, desperate to obtain some badly-needed food supplies for his fellow Russians who were nearly starving in Alaska, he fell in love with the Spanish commandant's beautiful daughter **Doña Concepción**.

Trading between Spain and Russia was illegal at the time, but the sudden betrothal between Rezanov and the

teenage Spaniard enabled the Spanish governor to fudge the rules, ostensibly allowing trade between relatives. Unfortunately a papal dispensation was required to enable the Greek Orthodox baron to marry a Roman Catholic, so the lovers were forced to postpone their nuptials after a six-week courtship.

It's a true story worthy of an opera, but Gough limits it to a few sentences. We learn, "shortly thereafter Rezanov

BY SHANE MCCUNE

*Oil spills, the
deforestation of the
Amazon, overfishing.
Extinction of
species, shrinking
wilderness, global
warming.
It's easy to get
numbed by tidings of
eco-doom, but
eco-redemption is
at hand.*

Although *Building an Ark: 101 Solutions to Animal Suffering* (New Society \$27.95) has its share of sad tales of animal abuse and offers dire warnings about the consequences of neglecting nature, the overriding message of **Ethan Smith** and his co-writer **Guy Dauncey** is one of hope harnessed to action.

After an introductory section called "A Path Beyond Suffering," provides a mini-encyclopedia of humanity's crimes against nature—from the general (regarding animals as property) to the specific (internet hunting, cruise ship sewage)—the authors prescribe remedies grouped mainly according to the numbers of people involved or their occupations.



"Ten Solutions for Individuals" include practising humane pest control, switching to a vegan diet and getting media coverage for animal rights campaigns.

"Five Solutions for Fishers" includes alternatives to longlining and an end to fish farming, and so on. There are suggested actions for farmers, businesses, cities and governments.

Another section focuses on specific threatened species. Some "solutions" are less concrete than others, and some are arguably facile. Developing nations are urged to "Practise Sustainable Forestry," "Take a Stand Against International Whaling" and "Listen to the Dalai Lama."

The final "Ten Global Solutions" are more manifesto than a how-to guide, with such headings as "Unite to End Suf-

fering in Factory Farms" and "Practise Reverence for Life." But even these are clearly written with the desire to inspire, not criticize.

Speaking of

was home-schooled on a family farm with no electricity. He now lives in the Gulf Islands.

Founder of the Solutions Project, Victoria-based columnist Guy Dauncey is the author of *Stormy Weather: 101 Solutions to Global Climate Change*, also from New Society.

9780865715660

Shane McCune is a non-activist who lives in Comox.



The Lundberg Family Farms in Richdale, California is a hands-on operation where animal welfare is as important as profit.

clear writing, *Building An Ark* zips right along, with each chapter occupying precisely two pages including illustrations, fact boxes and lists of related materials such as books and websites. It's easy to read and suitable for readers of high school age and up.

It's a pity there are only five solutions for schools, but some of these are among the most thoughtful and practical: Creating a humane biology classroom, adopting an endangered animal through an international agency and incorporating animal references throughout the curriculum, from math to art.

In her introduction, zoologist Dr. **Jane Goodall** says many of these activities will be applied in her foundation's "Roots & Shoots" programs for children. "*Building an Ark* will give our (Roots & Shoots) groups so many new ideas," she writes. "It will help us realize the importance of small actions we can take each day. When billions routinely make these little changes, we shall see big changes."

Ethan Smith was raised in a remote valley in the West Kootenays, where he

ANIMALS

GET READY, THERE'S AN ARK A-COMIN'



Jane Goodall

OUR MAN IN ESTONIA

Many British Columbians are aware that Sir **Bob Geldof** began his career as a part-time music writer for the *Georgia Straight* but few know the current president of the Republic of Estonia, **Toomas Ilves**, was once involved in the management of Vancouver's Literary Storefront.

Under Ilves' presidency, Estonia has become the first country in the world to introduce voting via the internet for national elections. Estonia has also declared access to the internet to be an unalienable human right.

Mona Fertig, the main founder of the Literary



Toomas Ilves

Storefront, recalls Tom Ilves co-managed the Literary Storefront with **Wayne Holder** following her departure in the early 1980s. "In his CV," says Fertig, "he says that he was director of the Vancouver Art Centre, which didn't exist. I guess The Literary Storefront sounded too unofficial for a political candidate."

During the early 1980s, according to Fertig, **Robert Bringham** was also involved in Literary Storefront-related readings that were held at a Duthie's bookstore outlet in the West End, on Robson Street. Rumours circulated at the time that Ilves could be involved with the CIA. Coincidentally, the current president of Latvia, **Vaira Vike-Freiberga**, is also someone who lived in Canada for an extended period.

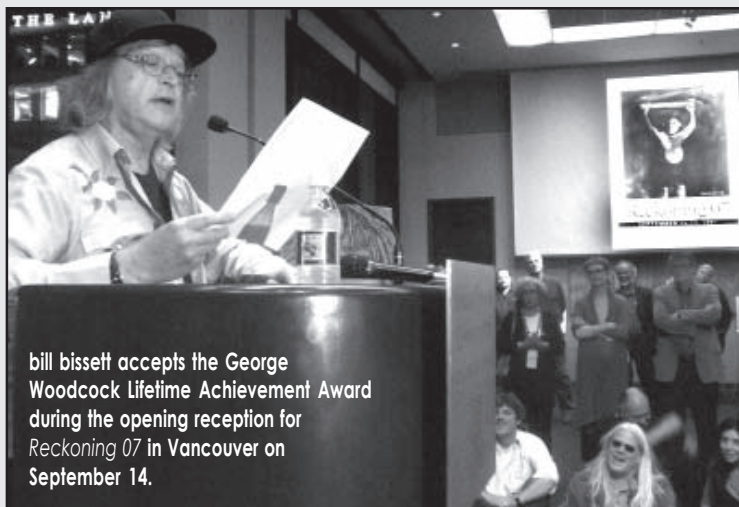


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bill bissett accepts the George Woodcock Lifetime Achievement Award during the opening reception for *Reckoning 07* in Vancouver on September 14.

Celebrating 20 years of publishing *BC BookWorld*

7 rides & 7 reads

I measure my reading by ferry rides, which are a necessary and almost daily part of my life. Your *Reckoning 07* issue took me 7 ferry rides and a total of 3 hours to read, cover to cover. I read, and then re-read almost every article, because each one took me back to my beginnings as a librarian on the west coast.

The *Reckoning* 20th anniversary issue [BCBW Autumn 2007] is heart-warming, mind-bending, nostalgic, brilliantly compiled, and very beautiful in a literary and artistic sense.

I particularly liked Anne Cameron's article—I'm so glad she is still raging against the Machine. Her mention of Thora and Jerry Howell's book store in Nanaimo brought back my own memories of meeting just about every author on this coast at one time or another in that store.

In all my 25 years of librarianship I've never come across another couple who did so much for Canadian authors—local and not-so-local.

BC BookWorld is still the first and foremost publication I read and recommend to all library patrons, readers, and writers. And isn't it looking SO good after 20 years?!

Susan Yates

Vancouver Island Regional Library
Nanaimo



Thora Howell

Reddening's path

Congratulations on *BC BookWorld's* anniversary and thanks for your story of *The Reddening Path*. It's amazing how many people have bought my book at the Hornby Farmer's Market on the strength of it. It seems everyone reads *BC BookWorld* and is guided by it.

Amanda Hale

Hornby Island

Not all bad

I enjoyed the *Reckoning 2007* issue [BCBW Autumn 2007] very much, but must protest the idea of renaming British Columbia.

In the first place, it would be very difficult to pick a better name that would please and represent our present ethnic mix.

Secondly, the present names of the Provinces of Canada and the States of the United States of America contain a symbolic and rich history of the exploration and settlement of the New World.

Thirdly, the British Empire wasn't all bad. James Morris in his *Pax Britannica* trilogy decries the arrogance and brutality but "the good in the adventure, the courage, the idealism, the diligence had contributed their quota of truth towards the universal fulfilment." And this is why people from all over the world want to come to Canada and British Columbia. Finally, both sets of my grandparents were pioneers in British Columbia—good, diligent, courageous people of English origin. I want to preserve and protect their contribution.

Barbara Whistler

Via email

Smoke alarm

The story of how the Trail Smoke Eaters got their name, as described in the *Encyclopedia of B.C.* and mentioned in *BC BookWorld* [BCBW Summer 2007], is a myth.

First of all, it was Carroll Kendall, not Craig Kendall, who smoked a pipe on the ice. Secondly, while a *Vancouver Province* cartoon depicting this event does exist, it actually appeared in 1931, a decade after the team unofficially became known as the Smoke Eaters.

As to the true source of the name, one need look no further than the smokestacks towering over the city. A Trail baseball team was called the Smoke Eaters as early as 1901, while sports teams in Butte, Montana, another smelter town, also used the nickname. Cominco disliked the name, but their efforts to change it proved futile. It was convenient for them, however, to point to an origin that didn't involve the smelter.

Greg Nesteroff
Castlegar

Jesse messy

Heads up: Jesse Owens was a man. Article in *BC BookWorld* [Summer 2007] has him as Jessie. Then claims that he was notorious. I don't remember hearing anything bad about him.

George Harvey Bowering
Vancouver

Gender minder

Are there less women being published in B.C.? On the ferry over to the *Reckoning '07* event in Vancouver I thought I'd see how many women had new books coming out. Of the approx. 150 authors, illustrators, translators and editors whose books are being promoted and published by 16 B.C. publishers in the autumn issue of *BC BookWorld*, only about 50 were women. I wonder

if this figure will rise or are women writers finding it more difficult to find a publisher these days?

Mona Fertig
Salt Spring Island

More on Clutesi

I just want to corroborate Randy Fred's article that characterized George C. Clutesi as one of the greatest Canadian Native artists, as well as a great humanitarian and philanthropist.

As a young man I lived in the Alberni Valley when there were two distinct towns, known as Port and Alberni. If you lived in downtown Port you could hear the rattle and bang of industry all day and night. Indeed sawdust was always in the air. This was one of the reasons I first worked in the logging side of the industry, as opposed to the mills.

In those days Alberni people were friendly, not a bit stand-offish. They accepted you at face value, no matter where you arrived from, or what your racial background happened to be—mine being Métis, Scottish and Prairie Cree. This is where I first met George Clutesi.



Linda Rogers soars above Olu Deniz in Turkey

Looks, not books

I really enjoyed the *Reckoning 07* issue and conference, especially the off-line dating. I have one suggestion should you decide to make it an annual event. I hope you do because there were loads of almost fit men there. Since so many writers are concerned about marketing, what about a dress-for-success seminar? I suggest that we apply to Cultural Service's Walter Quan (has he had work done?) to propose self-improvement grants for writers to make us look better. How about liposuction for poets, plastic surgery for non-fiction writers, and hair extensions for pure fiction? *BC BookWorld* could run Before and After makeover jacket photos, just like those mags at the check-out stands. Brilliant! I killed off the hero of my novel *The Empress Letters* rather than let her age.

Linda Rogers, Victoria

I was raised the seventh child of thirteen. Our mother taught us to respect our racial heritage and indeed the heritage of others without exception. So I had no problem in conversing with George, who at the start was shy and a bit uncomfortable in the presence of this kid who he didn't know from Adam's pet goat.

After I married a young lady from Port Alberni, I soon found work on the boom at the Old Somas Sawmill Division of Bloedel Stewart and Welsh. The Somas Division was reputed to be the largest and most modern sawmill on Vancouver Island. George was also working the boom, feeding logs with a pike pole onto the log slip, on their way to the head rig where they were cut into lumber. He must have been around age 43 around that time.

George and I soon hit it off. He began to confide in me his great need to paint. He often asked me to visit his home and workshop, which I did. This is when George began to tell me of the circumstances surrounding his people's reluctance to encourage him to record the history of his people on canvas. Tribal elders often ostracized him, accusing him of giving away their tribal customs and culture.

Fortunately, George's compulsive need to paint their history and write their sacred stories won the day, but in the end, it must be noted, that in his overpowering need to paint, George was often taken advantage of by a number of people who managed the various in-

dustrial divisions of the empire of the late Macmillan and Bloedel families. These people paid little more for George's art works than the costs of his paints and canvasses. And George always felt badly about that.

The fact that George Clutesi wasn't paid fairly for his work by people who could have afforded to do so remains a great tragedy and travesty.

Hugh M. Hamilton
Victoria

Madame Ethel

Thank you for always sending along *BC BookWorld*. I have a son who now lives in Nelson, BC, and a daughter-in-law working at the library there. They always pass along books from local writers they think I would enjoy. I re-discovered Ethel Wilson after you did a story on her. So thank you for your publication.

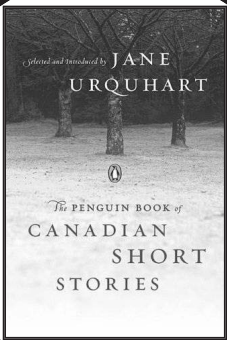
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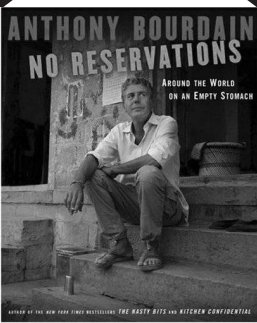
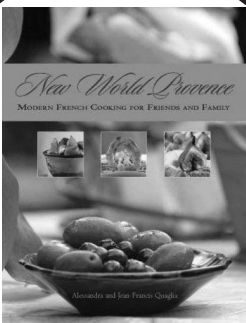
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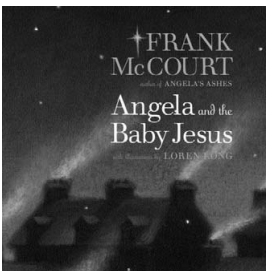
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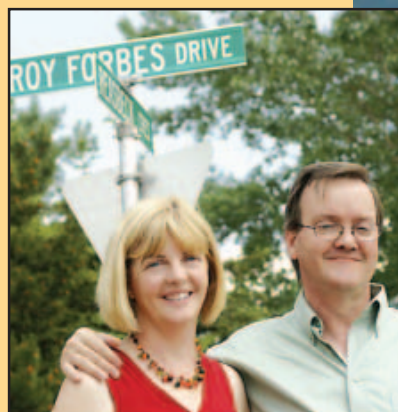
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LOOKOUT

ABOVE & BEYOND

YOU WON'T SEE HER activities covered on *Bravo TV* or mentioned in *Quill & Quire*, but for ten years **Donna Kane** has organized writing retreats, festivals and writer-in-residence programs throughout the Peace River region. Recently she worked with the City of Dawson Creek to name a street after singer/songwriter Roy Forbes. Her new book of poetry is *Erratic* (Hagios Press \$16.95).

978-0-9739727-9-5



Donna Kane and Roy Forbes on Roy Forbes Drive

Geography is not destiny

Contemplating Prosecco & Gord Downie vs. blizzards & road kill

by Donna Kane

Some say the internet is a third culture. Whether you live in the “boonies” or in the city, where you eat breakfast dissolves the instant you log on.

A writer in Rolla, up here in the Peace River country, can be in the same space as a writer on Queen Street—both equally “there”—just like that.

Sometimes I do catch myself thinking about what it might be like to be a writer living in Toronto, perhaps drinking Prosecco with Griffin poetry prize winners in someone’s backyard or reading at the Art Bar where **Gord Downie** might show up and invite me to a party.

But the boonies is where I’ve always lived, a place where, offline, a good cappuccino is at least one gravel road and several hours away, and Saturday’s *Globe and Mail* might not arrive until Monday. With 70% of Canadians living in urban areas, when I look out my window and see more land than houses, I know I’m in the minority. The imagery around me mostly passes for natural, so it can’t help but give my writing a rural flair. Driving where I do, road kill is cer-

tain to pop up as a subject far more often than it would, say, in the work of a city poet. And if a city poet comes for a reading, it’s entirely possible that a fierce blizzard will prevent me from reaching the airport to pick them up, which might then inspire a poem about blizzards and road kill.

Last winter, **Liz Bachinsky** came to read and I didn’t make it to the airport. In less than an hour the temperature dropped 20 degrees causing the wind to pick up so ferociously that the suddenly falling snow drifted my road until it disappeared. That Liz’s plane landed in the midst of that storm seems less miraculous than just plain stupid.

So there’s the northern weather, the northern roads, the northern imagery. At the same time, there’s the reading series I’ve held in the Peace for the past 10 years where many of Canada’s best poets have come to read. And the after-reading events, at places like the Rolla Pub (where **Ken**

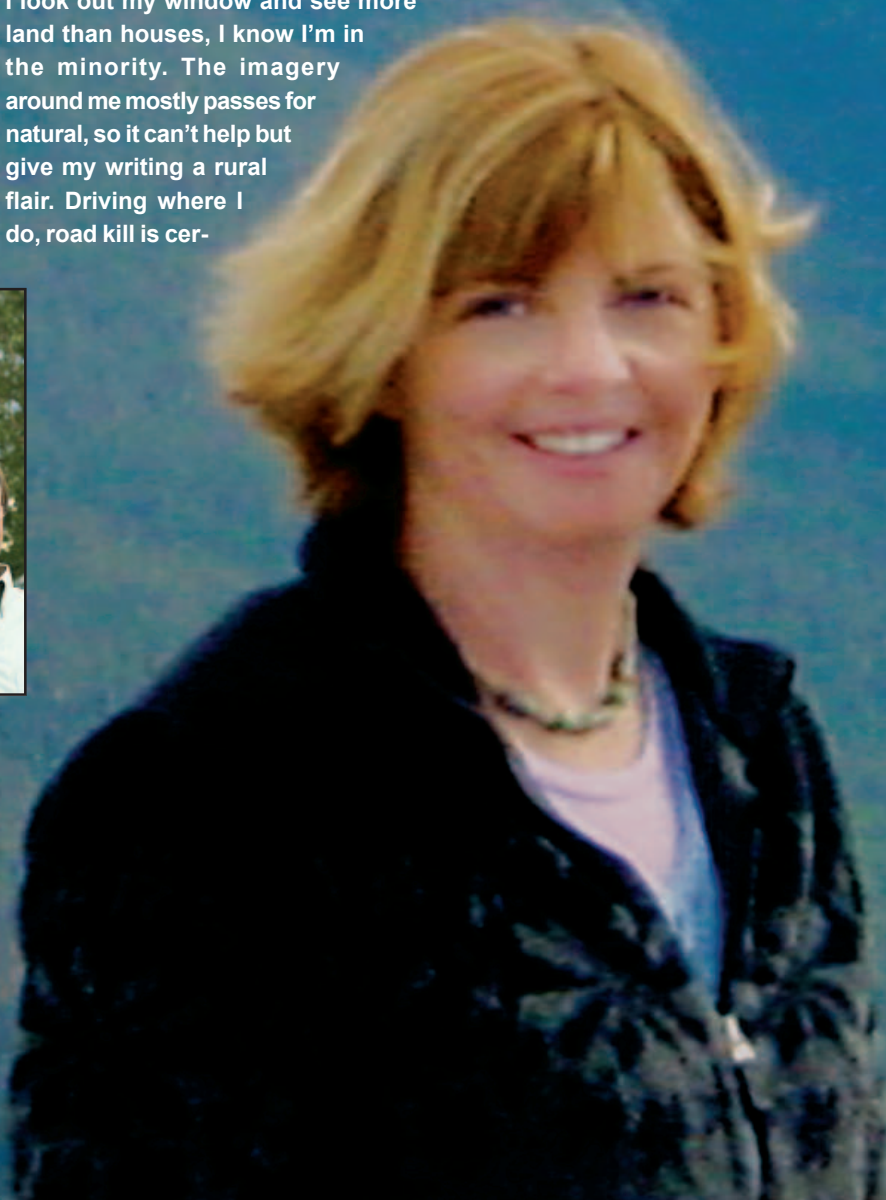
Babstock was shot at with a BB gun and **Lorna Crozier** learned to tie her logging boots) have, in my opinion at least, given our venues the kind of literary fame that would turn Toronto’s Drake green with envy.

My reading series has, in fact, reached such a level of chic that a recent reader, upon arriving in Dawson Creek, undaunted by the number of pickup trucks with moose antlers in the back, asked the first person he saw where the nearest vegetarian restaurant might be. That may have taken things a bit far, but it does suggest that just because you live in the boonies, doesn’t mean you can’t acquire at least the essence of literary hip.

Here artists working in various disciplines band together because there aren’t enough writers or visual artists to make up their own separate clans. Having such a diversity of artists chat and drink wine together has resulted in some groundbreaking events. A prime example is the launch of my new book inside a granary at the Sweetwater Festival in Rolla. My reading from *Erratic* was conducted next to a two-headed calf, an art installation by **Karl Mattson** entitled *Industrial Evolution*.

In the end, I’m grateful for email and bookninja.com, but as a writer, I’m interested in who we are as human beings, how we view the world where we are. I don’t think those concerns would be different if I was in a Toronto backyard or standing next to a two-headed calf.

[Donna Kane lives a few miles northwest of Dawson Creek, in Bessborough. She has just completed a reading tour that included Rolla, Regina, Saskatoon, Booner’s Ferry (Idaho), Antigonish, Halifax and Vancouver. Now she’s back in the boonies—where she belongs. You can visit her world at www.donnakane.com]



“Derek Evans

is a kind of Forrest Gump or even TinTin character,” writes **Yosef Wosk** in his introduction to *Dispatches from the Global Village* (Wood Lake / Copper House \$23.95). “You get the feeling that he has been everywhere, met everyone, and done everything... and that even if he hasn’t, he will.”

Having served two terms as Deputy Secretary General of Amnesty International, Derek Evans “has met prime ministers and presidents, rebels and kings, beggars and saints, terrorists and scholars, generals and chiefs. His travels have propelled him through dozens of countries on almost every continent.”

With his wife **Pat Deacon**, a homeopath, Evans came to the Okanagan in 2000 to serve as Executive Director of the Naramata Centre, an experiential learning institute. In his 14th book he has collected some of his observations as one of the world’s leading human rights activists.

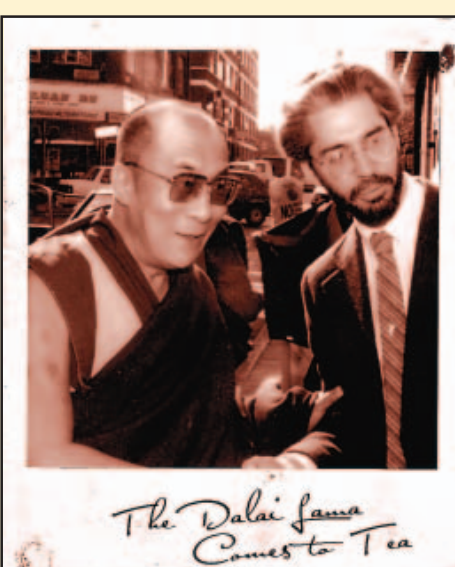
Citing Evans’ *Dispatches* as a Book-of-the-Month, the SFU Bookstore declared, “Whether he’s negotiating with rebel factions in Sudan, or meeting under threat of death and in the dead of night with families of ‘disappeared’ children in Sri Lanka, what shines through in each story is Evans’ unfaltering hope that people can find within themselves the wisdom to choose a different path—that somehow we can learn to live in peace despite our differences.”

Wise and caring, Evans’ essays are encouraging expressions of the continual need to mediate between the powerful and the oppressed to limit abuses of power.

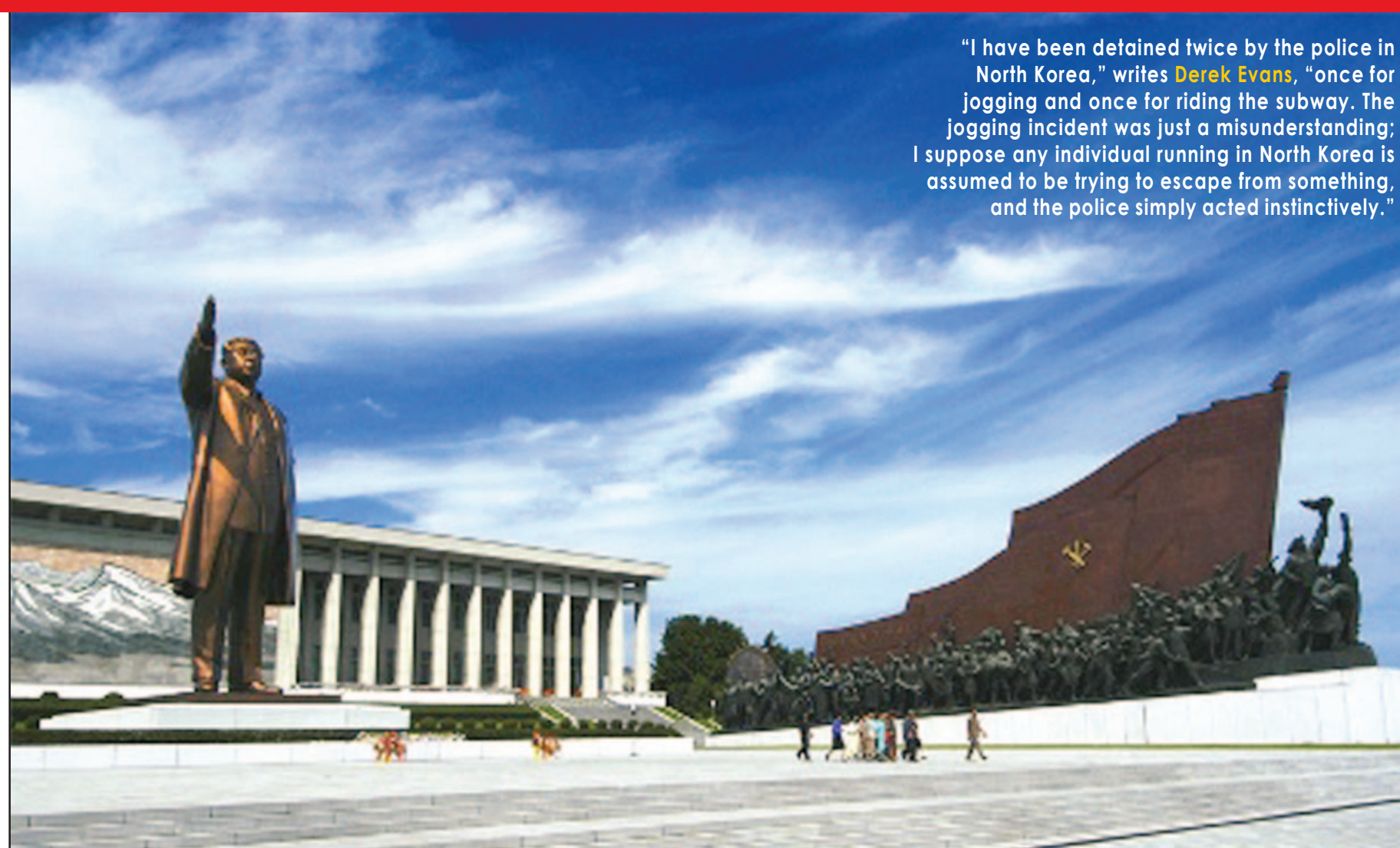
Here he recalls one of his two disturbing visits to North Korea, while noting the insidious encroachments of post 9/11 paranoia and censorship worldwide.



Derek Evans on meeting Yasser Arafat in Gaza: “It seems that political leadership means never admitting one’s own weakness or failure.”



The Dalai Lama to Derek Evans and his co-workers at Amnesty International: “I am a simple monk, and what I really want to say is simply that I believe that the work all of you are doing—caring for the dignity of strangers, protecting their rights—I believe this work is sacred. I believe it is more important than prayer.”



Foreigners who are invited to visit North Korea are often asked to pay homage to the Great Leader President Kim Il Sung at the Kumsan Memorial Palace.

“I have been detained twice by the police in North Korea,” writes **Derek Evans**, “once for jogging and once for riding the subway. The jogging incident was just a misunderstanding; I suppose any individual running in North Korea is assumed to be trying to escape from something, and the police simply acted instinctively.”

CLIMATE OF FEAR

Derek Evans of Amnesty International recalls playing diplomatic ping-pong in Pyongyang, North Korea

One of the less dramatic but most significant consequences of the War on Terror is the creeping encroachment on some of our fundamental and supposedly cherished rights—the rights to freedom of expression and of thought. I say “supposedly cherished,” because with each new restriction that is imposed, it becomes apparent that many people in our society actually place very little value on these rights and are ready to abandon them with little more than an indifferent shrug.

I’m speaking not only about the complex security laws hurriedly adopted in Washington and in Ottawa in the weeks following 9/11—which allow people to be imprisoned indefinitely without charge or evidence—though certainly those laws should worry us all. And I’m speaking not only about the secret, paranoid conspiracies of our public security agencies, which allow government officials to aid, abet, and acquiesce in the abduction and torture of Canadian citizens in Syrian prisons.

I’m thinking also about the many ways that a climate of fear and self-censorship has gathered around us, and has begun to infect many aspects of public life. One of the more recent and insidious examples is provided by Indigo Books. The largest bookseller in Canada, Indigo Books decided to ban an issue of *Harper’s Magazine* because it featured an article discussing the Danish cartoons of Muhammad.

Echoing the feeble justifications of the CBC, *The Globe and Mail*, and numerous other members of the “free” press, an internal corporate memo sent to all Indigo stores—as well as its Coles and Chapters branches—explained that the article may offend some Muslims. It went on to note that the cartoons have “been known to ignite demonstrations around the world,” making it clear that Indigo’s real motivation for pulling the maga-

zine was fear. The feeling of fear is understandable enough, in my view. It’s just too bad it can’t be openly acknowledged and honestly addressed.

It is important to mention that the article in question, “Drawing Blood: Outrageous Cartoons and the Art of Outrage,” was written by the most prominent political cartoon journalist in America, and that it presents a scholarly discussion of the role of editorial cartooning during the past 200 years. As a subscriber to *Harper’s*, I had read the article before the ban was put in place, and had recommended it to a number of people as the most insightful analysis of the cartoon controversy I’d yet seen.

Sadly, such scholarly reflection and critical thought is now deemed to be too offensive—or dangerous—to be permissible. I’m not sure what should be considered the greater scandal: the blatant hypocrisy and cynicism of Indigo Books, or the fact that their suppression of the magazine generated so little public concern. Try to imagine what any bookstore or library would look like if we removed all materials that might be offensive to some individual or group. The shelves would be empty, and a dark silence would soon gather around us. Having shunned the honest effort required for dialogue or for understanding, we would soon become prisoners of our own fears and prejudices, unable even to imagine alterna-

tives, and become prone to acting aggressively to perceived threats.

Perhaps most Canadians have little sense of what is at stake if we abdicate our fundamental freedoms, even just a bit, in the interests of good taste or of a quiet life. The most extreme example, I suppose, is North Korea. North Korea is usually described as “totalitarian,” “paranoid,” and “Stalinist,” and even as part of the “axis of evil.” It regularly threatens its neighbours with missiles and nuclear tests.

I’ve been to North Korea twice, once on an assignment for the World Council of Churches, and once as a special guest of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Whatever words may be used to describe it, North Korea is fundamentally about complete control. I think the most chilling image I have of this comes from a visit I made to a kindergarten in Pyongyang, the capital city. The four-year-olds sat ramrod straight and silent at tables until the teacher gave the command “Be happy!” The children immediately erupted in cheers and laughter and clapping, and just as abruptly returned to their seats, silent and staring, when the teacher declared, “Enough happy!”

You get a sense of how repressed and bizarre the political life of the country is long before you get there. Most visitors enter the country on a connecting flight through China—only you don’t receive a ticket or a boarding card, you just get a letter of invitation from whatever organization is your “host.” The letter tells you to go to the check-

Without a word, all the lost strangers formed a line, and we dutifully followed the man through an unmarked exit and onto a North Korean plane.

The hotel in Pyongyang was modern and well-appointed, but came with some unusual services. There was a television in the room, but like all TVs and radios in North Korea it had only one switch—on/off. For the first five days of my first visit, the evening “news” broadcast consisted mainly of reports of what my colleagues and I had done that day. It was a great relief—probably for everyone in the country—when the President of the Seychelles arrived on a state visit and became the new focus of obsessive media attention. Otherwise, TV consisted of endless lectures denouncing the country’s many enemies, and providing detailed instructions on the correct line of thought—that of the “Great Leader,” or of his son, the “Dear Leader” and current President, pictures of whom peered down on every room in every building.

My hotel room was not only cleaned every day while I was out, it was also thoroughly searched. In fact, only every second room was occupied by a guest; the intervening rooms were reserved for those who monitored us 24 hours a day. One morning, the guests on my floor decided to test the surveillance. At exactly 7 a.m., each of us turned on our showers and then shouted, “Damn, no towels!” We then opened our doors and looked out into the corridor. Within seconds, it was filled with men in suits running from the other rooms carrying stacks of fresh towels, rushing about and bumping into each other.

I have been detained twice by the police in North Korea, once for jogging and once for riding the subway. The jogging incident was just a misunderstanding; I suppose any individual running in North Korea is assumed to be trying to escape from something, and the police simply acted instinctively. The subway was a more serious incident, in that there was a real danger I might have had unsupervised contact with ordinary people—precisely my objective.

With some diversions from my colleagues, I had managed to leave the hotel after dark, and made

my way to the nearest subway station. However, I soon discovered that there are four different types of money in North Korea (for the political elite, for foreign dignitaries, for proletarians or ordinary workers, and for “sub-proletarians”—whoever they are!). The money I had could not be used to buy a subway ticket (a proletarian activity). I decided to try something that had probably never been seen in North Korea, before or since. I stood outside the station as endless lines of workers streamed past, bowed my head, and raised my hands in the universal posture of a beggar. Immediately a crowd surrounded me, and, without a word of discussion, the workers filled my cupped hands with proletarian notes, more than enough to get on the subway. I got about four stations down the line before the alarm was raised and the police boarded the train and took me away.

Throughout my second visit to North Korea, with the Inter-Parliamentary Union, I pressed the authorities for a copy of the Criminal Code. The formal reason I gave for wanting the text was so that I could carry out an assessment of it in relation to international human rights standards. But really, I just wanted to find out if it actually existed, as no one outside the country had seen the North Korean basic law. Every day, I asked for a copy, or suggested adjustments to our itinerary to stop at a bookstore or at a court building. But there was invariably some excuse that made it impossible—the store is closed due to holidays, the building is under renovations, and so on.

Finally, on the last day, after a particularly long meeting, my “host” suggested that we take a break and visit the “Great Study Hall of the People,” the national library. We climbed the stone steps of the enormous stolid building, and took the elevator to the seventh floor. This, he said, was the section on law and politics, as we walked through the gloom past rank upon rank of barren shelves and vacant desks. He ushered me down a particular aisle and stopped in front of a single steel shelf on which were four thin green volumes. He took one down and gave it to me—a copy of the Criminal Code of North Korea. Embossed in gold and in mint condition, the text was in English and inscribed as a gift to me.

I was touched by the near intimacy of the gesture, but also troubled by the thought that this basic legal text may actually have been created or contrived during the past week simply to satisfy my demands and to try to ensure a favourable report to the parliamentarians. Most of all, though, I was disturbed by all of the empty shelves that surrounded us—a whole library without books, the ultimate expression of a regime that could not tolerate the challenge of diversity, the risk of dialogue, or the right to freedom of thought.

It is an extreme image, I know, but one that I wish the executives of Indigo Books, and others who act in fear of the open and respectful exchange of ideas, might hold in their hearts. It will certainly be the image I have in mind the next time I am tempted to shop at Coles or Chapters, or hear about a magazine being banned.

[Derek Evans’ royalties and a portion of publisher proceeds are being donated to Amnesty International and the Naramata Community Fund Society.]

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LONE WOLF

HAVING SAVED THE GREAT BEAR RAINFOREST, IAN MCALLISTER IS GOING IT ALONE, SCOUTING WOLF CUBS



TEN YEARS AGO, Ian McAllister and his wife Karen published one of the most influential Canadian books ever.

The Great Bear Rainforest (Harbour) generated legislation to protect one of the northern hemisphere's richest unprotected wildlife habitats—the main B.C. habitat for grizzlies.

After provincial and federal governments pledged \$60 million to preserve 1.2 million hectares of the largest intact temperate rainforest left on earth, *Time* magazine heralded the young couple as “Environmental Leaders for the 21st Century.”

But as founding members of the Raincoast Conservation Society, Ian and Karen McAllister believed mainstream environmental organizations—such as Greenpeace, the Sierra Club and Forest Ethics—had struck a compromise with industry and government that was unacceptable.

Keeping an arms-length from the negotiations, the McAllisters settled in the tiny west coast outpost of Shearwater on Denny Island where they have raised their first child.

And their conservation crusade continues.

Over a five-year period, Ian McAllister has repeatedly returned to the rainforest to track wolves for his new natural history title, **The Last Wild Wolves: Ghosts Of The Great Bear Rainforest** (Greystone \$45).

In June, freelancer **Andrew Findlay** joined McAllister aboard his trimaran *Habitat* to sail up the serpentine Roscoe Inlet in search of hard-to-find wolves in the lush estuaries near the head of the fjord.

He sends this report.

BY ANDREW FINDLAY

Now somewhat of a loner in the B.C. conservation movement, it's not surprising that **Ian McAllister** is drawn to wolves as subject matter for his new book.

Growing up in Victoria, while other kids flocked to the shopping mall, Ian McAllister boated Vancouver Island's west coast exploring tidal pools, surge channels and inlets with his father.

“Over the years I've spent three, perhaps four months alone, at a time, in these inlets looking for wolves,” says McAllister, as we motor through a narrow passage near the entrance of Roscoe Inlet which the Heiltsuk people call the Gateway. “It's been at times very frustrating but also very rewarding.”

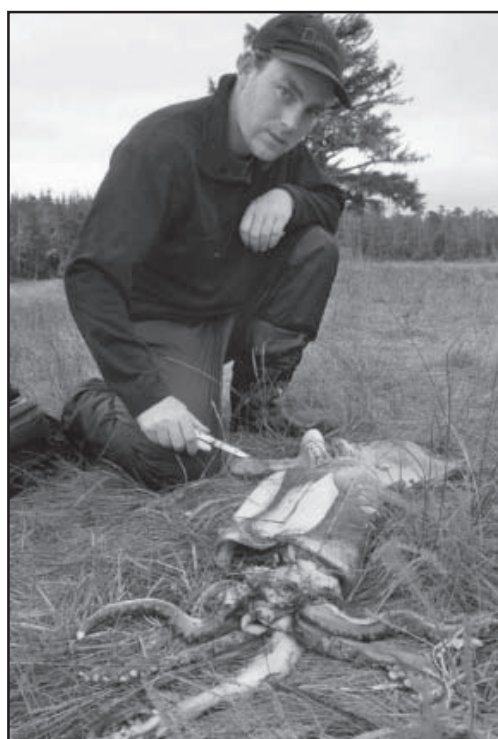
Anyone who has tried to track and photograph wolves soon realizes they would have almost as much success capturing a shooting star or a bolt of lightning. But McAllister has maintained a soft spot for these animals, recording the elusive carnivores on film with a Zen-like commitment. It's the same sort of tenacity that enabled him to fight so effectively for the preservation of the Great Bear Rainforest.

Wolves occupy a curious, and one might say unenviable, position in the animal kingdom, at least as far as humans perceive them. Hunters malign them for killing “their” game. Ranchers ostracize them for preying on livestock. And popular literature often casts them in an unfairly sinister light.

For McAllister, wolves are anything but cold, bloodthirsty creatures. They are intelligent and fascinating animals, highly attuned to their environment and able to use cunning, skill and strength to hunt and kill prey. To gather material

for the book, McAllister spent weeks and months following wolf packs, allowing time for the canines to become accustomed to his scent and presence. He has enough anecdotes from his trips to fill a stack of notebooks.

“There's incredible variability in wolves on the coast. In a span of just 20 nautical miles you can go from wolves that prey on deer and bear to wolves that have a totally marine-based diet,” McAllister says.



TEN YEARS AFTER: During his travels, Ian McAllister discovered that wolf packs feed on giant Humboldt squid.

Sometimes you needn't see wolves to sense their presence. During springtime in the rich tidal estuaries of the central coast, unlike bears that meander in seemingly chaotic patterns in search of chocolate lilies and cow parsnip, wolves leave purposeful straight paths through the lush sedges as they move stealthily between the timber and tide lines. Such ecological subtleties are revealed only to the patient observer.



McAllister describes seeing a black-tailed deer grazing contentedly within 50 yards of a wolf pack that lay concealed in the tall grass. Though the wolves had gone days without a fresh kill, they neither lifted their muzzles nor made any suggestion of a chase. Evidently the predators calculated the cost of giving pursuit and decided that there would be other, more rewarding opportunities.

McAllister has also observed a symbiotic relationship between wolves and ravens. Just as the noisy squawking of ravens alerts wolves to the presence of carrion, ravens often descend to pick over the remains of a carcass left behind by wolves.

After three days in Roscoe Inlet, we had almost given up hope of finding wolves. The estuaries we explored were full of signs—fresh scat, a palm-sized print in the mud, and coarse hair on a salmonberry bush next to a forest game trail. Then as we motored back down the inlet, McAllister spotted a lone black wolf with white paws standing on a shoreline granite bluff, casually watching our passage.

As quickly as it appeared, the wolf vanished like a ghost into the rainforest. And Ian McAllister vanished from the wolf's sight—a brief meeting of the minds.



Editor,
naturalist and
neo-peasant
K. Linda Kivi
lives on a land
co-op in the
Kootenay
River Valley.

PEAKS & CHALETs

Forget Y2K. Conservationists have formed Y2Y to stop Purcell ski resort.

With more than 50 peaks above 3400 metres, the Purcells give rise to the largest protected area in southern B.C. encompassed by Glacier National Park and Bugaboo Provincial Park.

Located between the Rockies and the Selkirk Range to the west, the Purcell Range is a stunning array of lakes, glaciers and forbidding terrain that includes some of the oldest exposed rock in North America.

A proposed Jumbo Glacier Resort, two decades in the planning, has prompted residents and 280 partner organizations to mount a Jumbo Wild awareness campaign in keeping with the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative (Y2Y).

"The highly contested resort," according to **K. Linda Kivi**, "would place a real estate development of 6500 inhabitants in the remote Jumbo Valley on the northern boundary of the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy."

In **The Purcell Suite: Upholding the Wild** (Maa Press, \$25), a collection of essays Kivi has edited to raise money for Jumbo Wild, 25 contributors illuminate the Purcells as a vital corridor in the wilderness that stretches from Yellowstone National Park to the Yukon territory.

One of her contributors, Ktunaxa elder **Leo Williams**, recalls the process by which indigenous peoples were eradicated or dislodged from the area. "My church is there—outside," he says.

"For those who don't know much about Sinixt history," says **Marilyn James**, spokesperson for the sinixt nation, "it is very important to note that the sinixt were declared extinct in Canada by the federal government in 1956, just prior to the signing of the Columbia River Treaty between the USA and Canada.

"Since the sinixt were the only Indian people on the Columbia River system in Canada, it is apparent to me, a sinixt, why we were declared extinct. We were in the way."

Now Kivi and others are the ones in the way of commerce—except this time the media-savvy environmentalists are not likely to be considered extinct in the foreseeable future.

0-9685302-3-0
www.maaress.ca



Co-founder of the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy, Art Twomey broke his sunglasses while climbing Findlay Peak so he made a pair of "Inuit glasses" from a raisin box. He died in a 1997 helicopter crash in the Purcells.

PICK-UP LINES

POST-HIPPIE
& PRE-LATTÉ,
ANNE DEGRACE
CAPTURES THE ZEITGEIST
OF THE SEVENTIES

BY **CHERIE THIESSEN**

A self-described 'story vulture,' **Anne DeGrace** confesses her second novel *Wind Tails* (McArthur & Co. \$29.95) arose from a pub night in Nelson when a friend described a hitchhiker who would only travel in the direction the wind blew.

A second friend added a true story about a driver who asked hitchhikers to send him postcards from wherever they wound up.

For *Wind Tails*, DeGrace turned the wind-following hitchhiker into an American draft evader named Pink—named after the group Pink Floyd—who has allowed a beautiful pair of eyes, along with a determination not to go to Vietnam, to bring him to Canada, and the postcard collector gets turned into Evelyn, an intellectually challenged housewife who strays further and further afield to pick up and drop off hitchhikers.

Most of the action occurs in an Alberta mountain pass, at the Roadside Café, circa 1977, on a day when the wind seems to be blowing in circles. Think of the comedy tv-show *Corner Gas*, transferred to the Purcells.

Cass, the owner of The Roadside Café, still mourns the baby she gave up, and the niece her sister spirited away from her. Archie, a truck driver, keeps coming back, and not just for the coffee.

One day Archie picks up Jo, a dispirited 19-year-old who has dropped out of university, and he brings her like a lost puppy to Cass, the nurturer of lost souls. Jo is on the run, and her distressed parents don't know exactly why—but her mother has an inkling. It was an ill wind that brought her daughter home unexpectedly one fateful day to discover they were both sharing the same lover.

Bob, the local policeman, is too softhearted to be a cop and quite happy to pay the price by being stuck in a backwater. Not only does Bob help deliver babies whilst on duty, he joins Pink in smoking a few joints, subsequent to chasing him through the forest for trespassing in an old cabin.

Add to the mix a rich boy who may have killed his father's partner, an angry young American who threatens Pink because he didn't fight in Vietnam, an old woman who camps out near the café, a water witcher coming to terms with his unwanted abilities, and a dying and doughty old woman who wants to see her sons again, and you've got the makings of a fairly normal Kootenay town.

Along the way a tiny character appropriately called Pixie orchestrates another meeting between Jo and Pink by telling them about a campsite and handing out a map.

With me so far?



Basically, what we have is a series of mini-stories whirling around a central place and a premise: if you are open to interactions with strangers and willing to let the wind take you where it will, you can find your own direction more quickly.

What these characters have in common is the road they travel on, the café where they all wind up, if only for a glass of water, and their effect on Jo, so fragile it feels as if a slight breeze will scatter her. As delicate as a dandelion gone to seed, *Wind Tails* feels as if a slight puff of breath will send all these characters and their stories off with her—a Kootenay-inspired fairy tale for grown-ups.

Born in 1960, DeGrace is a librarian, illustrator, photographer, volunteer and mother who made waves with her first novel, *Treading Water* (2005), based on the fate of Renata, a community submerged under 35 feet of water by the erection of the Hugh Keenleyside Dam.

So we have had water, and we have had wind. Fire might be next.

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TIMOTHY SCHAFER PHOTO

KEEP ON THE GRASS

The grasslands of the Cariboo Chilcotin cover only 1% of our land mass, yet they support almost a third of the threatened and vulnerable plant and animal species of British Columbia.

Chris Harris is something of a publishing loner. His company at 105 Mile in the Cariboo includes a studio constructed of straw bales.

Over 17 years he's produced ten photography books in his 'British Columbia and Beyond' series; with a focus on his regional landscapes, from the Bowron Lakes to Barkerville and the serpentine BCR line.

Harris is also a skilled outdoor adventure guide with a knack for positioning his camera in interesting places most of us will never get to.

Spirit in the Grass: The Cariboo Chilcotin's Forgotten Landscape (Country Light \$39.95) is something else again.

After immersing himself in Cariboo-Chilcotin grasslands for three years, Harris has placed himself near the forefront of a movement to preserve one of B.C.'s most endangered ecosystems.

"I've walked through the grasslands in snow and ice, thunderstorms, rain, wind and fire.

"I've tramped across ancient lichens in heat that turned my skin to leather and have camped on open benchlands to capture the dawn...

"The sound of the meadowlark is now a part of me, and the grasslands now centre my life."



For *Spirit in the Grass*, Chris Harris often spent nights camping on the grasslands, camera at the ready as morning light crept into the viewfinder. The first light came quietly, "as if slowly pushing the darkness away."

In one early morning shot, patches of bunchgrass and sagebrush shimmer like distant galaxies.

Harris also photographed late into the evening where in one shot the setting sun turns Mid-Fraser River Canyon into a molten slash that disappears into black benchlands.

The grasslands were by far the most challenging landscape he has photographed because the land is flatter and the colour palette is muted.

"The grasslands reveal themselves quietly and slowly," he says. "They're soft and rolling, the colours pastel, and it's much more difficult to create images that that evoke a response."



MARK FORSYTHE

The viewpoints range from sweeping, wide angle perspectives high above a jade green Chilcotin River to tight close-ups that mingle light, form and purple mariposa lilies into something hinting at Monet.

Harris also has an eye for adding drama to wildlife photos: a California Big Horn Sheep defies gravity as it crosses a nearly vertical cliff face so it can nibble on a small green bush.

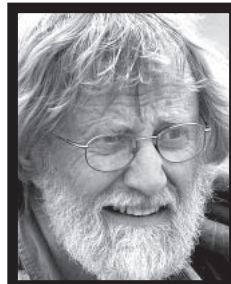


For this project Harris collaborated

with two ecologists from the Grasslands Conservation Council, **Ordell Steen**, a former research ecologist with the B.C. Forests Service, and **Kristi Iverson**, a plant ecologist and past chair of the Council.

From these experts we learn the intermountain grasslands are part of the rich tapestry of ecosystems. In the grasslands, only about 30-55 centimetres of precipitation falls each year, less than any other area in the Cariboo-Chilcotin.

"Air temperatures are the highest in the region," writes Iverson. "Forests cannot thrive in the grasslands; only plants that hold their moisture against the pull of the dry air, or that can avoid the



Chris Harris: tramping photographer

drought by becoming dormant, survive in the grasslands."

This climate results in abundant bunchgrasses, sagebrush, cactus, lichens and diverse wildlife, including the largest breeding population of Barrow's goldeneyes in B.C., as

well as three species of bats that occur only in the grasslands and ancient sandhill cranes.

Threats to this delicate habitat include our habit for dousing fires at every turn. When fire traditionally swept through, once every seven to fifteen years, it renewed life by keeping the forest in check and fertilizing plants with ash.

"After 1860, the frequency of the fires decreased as cattle grazing removed the fuels necessary to carry fire, First Nations people were penalized for starting fires, and fire suppression reduced the size of wildfires. When the fires stopped, trees and shrubs invaded many cool, moist sites in the grasslands."

Many areas are now choked with forest. The grasslands are also being seriously eroded by urban development. We need look no further than the Thompson and Okanagan to see what can happen if human habitation isn't adequately curtailed.

Alien plants introduced by humans, can displace native species and animals; over grazing by cattle can "hammer" the grasslands, and no one knows for certain what global warming will bring.



Poet **Harold Rhenisch** contributes a brief cultural history of the grasslands, tracing the first nomadic people from almost 10,000 years ago, to more permanent Secwepemc and Tsilhqot'in pit house villages beside the rivers.

White settlement and ranching followed with the gold rush of 1858, and legendary ranches like the Gang Ranch, Alkali Lake Ranch and Empire Valley Ranch sprang from the superb bluebunch wheatgrasses.

Wild horses still run free in the Esketemc, and the Esketemc people migrate each year to "bring the horses and their spirit home, and then to return them again, in this culture that has never been broken."

Harold Rhenisch concludes: "Because of the continued honour that the Secwepemc and Tsilhqot'in people and ranchers have maintained for the land, the spirit remains in the grass."

A portion of the profits from the sale of this book will be donated to the Grasslands Conservation Council of British Columbia.

978-0-9685216-8-7

Mark Forsythe is the host of CBC Radio's BC Almanac. His new book is The Trail of 1858 (Harbour, 2007), co-authored with Greg Dickson.



"I was photographing in the grass-level world, when I heard a rock tumble down a cliff across the valley. I looked up and saw a solitary sheep that had left her herd for a tiny morsel of green vegetation in the middle of an almost vertical cliff wall. For some inscrutable reason, out of all the vast miles of available food, this sheep felt drawn to the small bush on this vertical mud cliff." — CHRIS HARRIS

In his old age, Tolstoy dismissed *War & Peace* and *Anna Karenina* as bourgeois entertainment and decided it was better to write fables for children. Some authors, on the other hand, such as **Ann Walsh** of Williams Lake, chose to write for young readers from the outset.

After completing a 10-day summer course with **Robin Skelton** in 1981 in Wells, B.C., she first wrote a time-travelling tale set in Barkerville, *Your Time, My Time*, and returned to the gold rush era for *Moses, Me and Murder*, *The Doctor's Apprentice* and *By the Skin of His Teeth*.

Ann Walsh has recently edited a collection of short stories about young people coping with loss and grief, *Dark Times* (Ronsdale, 2005), and written two kids' novels about social issues, *Flower Power* (Orca, 2005) and *Horse Power* (Orca, 2007).



Why did you start writing books for children?

I had a manual typewriter with sticky keys. Children's books are shorter.

No, the real reason.

I had been a teacher for many years and I wanted to share B.C. history with young readers. I fell in love with Barkerville and I found out that a murder had been committed there in 1866, way back in the gold rush days, and the clue to the murderer's identity was an oddly shaped gold nugget stickpin. You can hardly invent a story with a plot like that, but it's a true story. So that became the basis for *Moses, Me and Murder*.

What did you read growing up?

Growing up in different countries, I read what was available. The 'Just William' series in South Africa; my mother's old nurse-in-love series in Kansas, and anything else I could

KID POWER

Sales of children's books are on the rise in British Columbia, and kidlit veteran **Ann Walsh** is one of the best reasons why.

get my hands on. As a teenager in Vancouver I discovered science fiction and read nothing but SF until I had my first baby. Then I switched to murder mysteries. I'm sure there's no connection.

Several of your books concern racism. Do you ever struggle with how overt the messages in your books should be?

All the time. It's hard to find that fine line between plot and pulpit. As a child, I saw racism in all its ugliness, both in the American South and in South Africa. I remember 'whites only' signs on drinking fountains and in restaurant windows. In my

writing I want to

shout, "Look how ugly this is!" But shouting at readers doesn't encourage them to finish the book. So I try to write the ugliness well, so that the readers see it for themselves.

Do you think most people who write for kids lie awake nights and secretly feel hard done by because they don't get the attention they deserve?

Well, you probably say that about almost any writer! *[laughter]* But, yes, Kidlit writers can and do whine. For most of us the money doesn't pour in, the reviews are scanty and we get little respect from the rest of the literary world. We are 'just' children's writers. Nearly everyone is going to write a children's book someday, when they have a free weekend.

After all, kids' books are short, how hard can they be to write?

Do you talk about this sort of thing with other Kidlit authors?

These days, most of my "talking" is done on-line. The closest children's writer is Kathleen Cook Waldron. She's an hour-and-a-half drive from my house. We have co-authored a book, *Forestry A-Z*, forthcoming in 2008, and we did this by driving 63 km to meet at a restaurant halfway between our homes. We also had a few revision sleep-overs.

Our children's book columnist Louise Donnelly gets weary of all the teenage angst novels and the onslaught of political correctness. Do you have any general perceptions of the teenage novel genre?

The PC problem is hard. I wrestled with the word 'Chinaman' in one of my Barkerville novels. But "Chinese gentleman" didn't fit the language of the day, so I used the words of the era even though they made me uncomfortable. I know exactly how Louise feels. Angst well-done is great, but it's hard to take in large doses. Most teens, however, are one huge blob of angst. I know. I raised two daughters.

Why have you done nearly all your books with B.C. publishers?

My subjects have been deemed too local by many national publishers who still reject me regularly. When I started, YA [Young Adult] novels were just beginning to interest publishers. My first publisher had never done a YA novel until Robin Skelton recommended mine for its "strong sense of place." Small, local publishers are great for keeping an active backlist and for reprinting titles. However their small size can cause financial problems. One publisher still owes me my 2005 royalties—for six titles—and is no longer answering my queries about when I can expect payment.

Should we name that publisher?

We should not.

We mustn't end on that note.

I agree.

In *Flower Power* there's a local crusade to save a neighbourhood tree. Was that based on a real incident? Like that Barkerville murder?

No, that was a case of life imitating art. Shortly after I finished writing it, I heard a news report about a woman who had chained herself to a neighbourhood's tree, just like in the story.

'My favourite compliment thus far, from one of my readers, has been, "Do you know you're world famous in Kamloops?'

But clearly you have a personal agenda in some of your books.

Well, it's a composite of things. My mother was a dedicated environmentalist. She belonged to SPEC which was the first recycling project in the Lower Mainland. However, Mom was too much a Southern lady to sit in a tree for days. I, on the other hand, have many, many times embarrassed my own children. I can never forget how accomplished they were at the eye-roll, the sigh, and the "Do you *have* to, Mum?"

So I guess *Flower Power* came from a blending of mothers—with my father's sense of humour thrown in for good measure. As well, I stole the idea of having all the women in the story named after flowers from a British mystery writer. Except I didn't use any of the same flowers she did.

In the new book, *Horse Power*, your heroine Carrie gets herself re-



"Radish" from *Horse Power*

luctantly involved in her mother's crusade to save a neighbourhood school. Where does that story come from?

All across North America and even in rural Scotland and Ireland, small schools are being closed. A few years ago there was a sit-it at a school at Forest Grove, near 100 Mile House. Many other schools in the Cariboo have been closed. These things don't always percolate into the newspaper in Vancouver or Victoria, but they're important to those of us "out here."

Does it bother you that sometimes people assume "easy-to-read" books are easy to write?

Often. Nathaniel Hawthorne said, "Easy reading is damned hard writing." The fact that a book has an adjusted reading level to interest reluctant readers should not be taken, as it often is, as a negative. Not that I'm sensitive about this. *[laughter]*

ANN WALSH ON SOLITARY REFINEMENT

Writing can be a lonesome occupation—especially in a small town—so camaraderie is precious.

WHEN MY FIRST BOOK WAS ACCEPTED for publication, I bored all my friends in Williams Lake with my incessant talking about its progress.

"Look at what that editor did! Here's the cover, isn't it great? The proofs have arrived!"

It wasn't until the book was in print and thrust into my friends' reluctant hands that I realized that, except for a kind librarian and a supportive bookstore owner, no one in my town knew or cared a hoot about writing and publishing.

We had a well established Art Society, a flourishing pottery club, The Woman's Institute and a dozen churches, but there was no group for writers. So I stopped talking about my writing and went back to work at a 'real' job where the after-work blithering wasn't literary, but the companionship was great.

When my second book came out, I joined the Writers' Union of Canada and registered for the AGM—three days of meetings, workshops, socializing, dancing, listening to other authors and a windup barbecue at **Pierre Berton's** home. I intend my fellow Puddlers no disrespect when I say that once I mentioned that I was going to Pierre Berton's house, I finally became a writer in their eyes.

"Pierre, eh? I've seen him on TV. Say 'hi' for me, will you?"

Then people started asking me questions (after they'd inquired about Pierre's state of health), including one of the toughest questions for a writer to answer: "So, when's your next book going to be ready?" That was when I stopped talking about my current writing project. People didn't really want to know about the rejections, the delays, the

rewrites, the lengthy process from idea to book. They mostly just wanted to know about Pierre Berton.

Just as I didn't understand much about ranching or forestry: my neighbours didn't understand much about my new writing world.

In those days, we had no Internet or e-mail. So at the Writers' Union AGM it was a relief to find people talking about rejections at breakfast, movie rights at lunch, and swapping stories of editors from hell during dinner. I still try to attend the AGM every year. Those yearly meetings and contacts with friends I met there have kept me going through the lonely dark winters of my early career.

I admit I am sometimes jealous of the busy schedule

of the children's writers in Vancouver who have easy access to meetings, socializing and can participate in literary events such as WOTS and the International Writers' Festival, but if I can't get to those meetings and events, at least now I can 'talk' to other writers on-line. Sometimes I even behave like the senior writer I am and offer advice!

Writing from the boonies, I've learned there are other writers near you, but they may still be in the closet, so you have to make an effort to do the things other writers do, even if it means buying a plane ticket or driving 500 km to go to a meeting or a conference.

Or you can form your own writers' group. A good writers' group is a thing of wonder where ideas flourish. My writing group keeps me focused on the fact that I am a writer, that writers write and so, in the words of my first mentor, **Robin Skelton**, I should stop whining and 'get on with it.' —Ann Walsh

[For a complete list of Ann Walsh books, visit www.abcbokworld.com]

from the author of *Some Girls Do*

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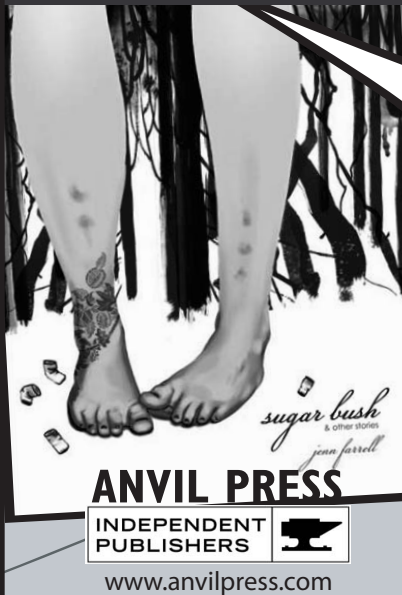
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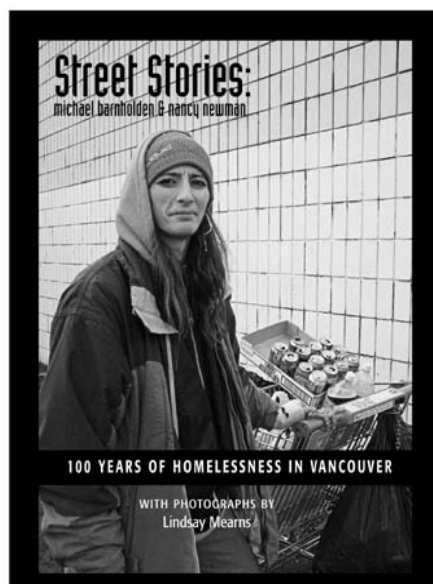
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TALES OF ILLNESS + RECOVERY

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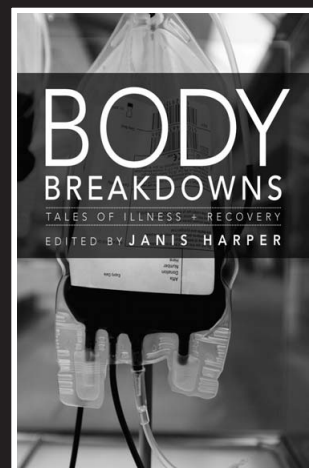
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WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT, ELFIE?

AGES 5 TO 8
Elf the Eagle by Ron Smith & Ruth Campbell (Oolichan, \$19.95)

Former Malaspina College English professor **Ron Smith**—a poet and editor who helped **Randy Fred** establish Theytus Books, Canada’s first Aboriginal press—is most often described as the founder of his own publishing company, Oolichan Books, based in Lantzville.

His Vancouver Island home is situated on the waterfront, surrounded by nesting eagles, but it wasn’t that idyllic setting that inspired *Elf the Eagle*, the first in a planned series of picture books about a runty and fearful baby eagle’s adventures. It was Smith’s own fear of heights.

Elf the Eagle opens with Elf as a fuzzy ball of fluff, his egg tooth throbbing, breaking free of his shell into the terrifying world of a sky-high nest. There is nothing below but water and dagger ferns and “sharp, scary rocks.” What were his parents thinking?

In the days that follow, as dark brown feathers replace the white fluff and his show-off sister Edwina aces her first solo flight, Elf cowers in the nest. Edwina taunts him, his parents bribe him with food held temptingly just out of reach, but it’s a clumsy tumble that sends the eaglet hurtling down towards rocks that “loom as big as a whale.”

At the last moment Elf manages to open his eyes, bravely somersault with an updraft of air and is soon gliding higher and higher, “wheeling and soaring in the blue, blue sky.”

Having taught in Italy and had his poetry translated into a bilingual Italian-English edition, Smith will oversee an Italian version of Elf, also illustrated by **Ruth Campbell**, whose fetching illustrations have captured the majesty of the parent eagles, Edwina’s avian insouciance and Elf’s fearful black marble eyes. As an Emily Carr graduate living on Vancouver Island, Campbell says her portrayal of Elf is a product of her sympathy for all of us who have to leave our comfortable nests.

Having undertaken volunteer work with wildlife rescue, Campbell writes, “Freedom and independence [are] ambitions of the human care givers, not the fledglings themselves, since young birds are quite happy...being fed juicy tidbits...and having all their needs attended to.” 978-0-88982-241-2



Ron Smith

Illustration by Ruth Campbell from *Elf the Eagle*

COCK-A-DOODLE-SCREWS

AGES 5 TO 7
Mechanimals by Chris Tougas (Orca \$18.95)

What if you were a farmer besieged by a tornado that left behind nothing but “a mountain of scrap metal and machine parts” and not a single animal? Well, if you’re the ruddy-nosed, bespectacled farmer in Victoria artist **Chris Tougas’** clever book

Mechanimals you make lemonade when life hands you lemons – or rains sockets, sprockets, funnels, springs and cogs.

The enterprising farmer declares he will make a masterpiece from the disaster, re-building with the materials that are strewn in his yard. “When pigs fly,” his neighbours reply. Soon enough, a mechanical rooster emerges from the welding sparks. This new rooster-bot is so good at his job he wakes the people in China. Powerful Herculean chick-bots follow and then a cow-bot that makes great chocolate milk.

But nothing compares with the flying pig-bot! It’s a refreshingly original and quirky idea for a children’s picture book.

978-1-55143-628-9



WIGGLES & GIGGLES

AGES 3 TO 6
Lilly and Lucy’s Shadow by Christopher Aslan Kennedy & Stephanie Hill (Benjamin Brown Books \$19.95)

Overcoming fear is the theme of *Lilly and Lucy’s Shadow*, **Christopher Aslan Kennedy’s** first book from a fledgling Vancouver-based imprint. Kennedy has partnered “both on and off the page” with newbie publisher **Meghan Spong**, production editor at Raincoast Books.

Lilly and Lucy are two wild-haired girls who head for the park to play on the balance beam. “Wiggling and jiggling...and always giggling,” the pair meet up with Stan who is cowed by his bullying shadow. Afraid to play, Stan escapes the park with a dire warning for the girls to be careful. Lilly and Lucy start to notice their own menacing shadows, but the dauntless girls face their fears by asking their shadows if they want to dance.

Illustrated by Vancouver artist **Stephanie Hill**, this title has already picked up an iParenting Media Award. The second in Spong’s planned series dubbed *The Rainbow Collection* will be called *Wenda the Wacky Wiggler*.

978-0-9782553-0-5

Louise Donnelly of Vernon has written about children’s books for BC BookWorld longer than we can remember.

ALSO NOTED

Sue Ann Alderson, illos by **Millie Ballance**, *The Eco-Diary of Kiran Singer* (Tradewind \$18.95) 978-1-896580-47-0

Heather Kellerhals-Stewart, *Extreme Edge* (Lorimer \$7.95) 1-55028-967-5

Irene N. Watts, *When the Bough Breaks* (Tundra Books \$12.99) 978-0-88776-821-7

Barry McDivitt, *The Youngest Spy* (Thistledown Press) 1-897235-17-8

Kit Pearson, *A Pefect Gentle Knight* (Penguin \$20) 0-670-06682-6

Liam O'Donnell, illos by **Mike Deas**, *Wild Ride* (Orca \$9.95) 978-1-55143-756-9

Joan Stuchner, illos by **Cynthia Nugent**, *Honey Cake* (Tradewind \$16.95) 978-1-896580-37-1

Chris McMahan, *Klutz Hood* (Orca \$8.95) 978-1-55143-710-1

Frieda Wishinsky, *Crazy for Gold* (Maple Tree Press \$6.95) 1-897066-93-7

Christopher Millin, *The King of Arugula* (Thistledown Press \$12.95) 1-897235-21-6

Sarah N. Harvey, *Bull’s Eye* (Orca Soundings \$9.95) 978-1-55143-679-1



Richard Van Camp, *Welcome Song for Baby* (Orca \$9.95) 978-1-55143-661-6

Michelle Mulder, *Maggie and the Chocolate War* (Second Story Press \$14.95) 978-1-897187-27-2

Karen Rivers, *X in Flight* (Raincoast \$11.95) 1-55192-982-1

Marion Gonneville, *The Adventures of Kitty Witty* (self-published)

John Wilson, *The Alchemist’s Dream* (Key Porter Books \$16.95) 1-552639347

Robin Stevenson, *Out of Order* (Orca \$9.95) 978-1-55143-693-7

Lizann Flatt, illos by **Scot Ritchie**, *Let’s Go!* (Maple Tree Press \$19.95) 987-1-897349-02-1

Daniel Wakeman, illos by **Dirk van Stralen**, *Ben’s Bunny Trouble* (Orca \$18.95) 978-1-55143-611-1

Chris Mizzoni, *Clancy with the Puck* (Raincoast Books \$21.95) 978-1-55192-804-3

James Heneghan, *Payback* (Groundwood Books \$19.95) 0-88899-701-9

Linda DeMeulemeester, *The Secret of Grim Hill* (Lobster Press \$10.95) 1-897073-53-4

Paul Yee, illos by **Shaoli Wang**, *Shu-Li and Tamara* (Tradewind \$7.95) 978-1-896580-93-7

HAPPINESS IS A WARM CARROT

The Footstep Café by Paulette Crosse
(Simon & Pierre / Dundurn \$21.99)

You don't need to watch reality TV to see that few families aren't dysfunctional when exposed to close scrutiny. Just as **David Chariandy** has embellished the darker aspects of his characters for *Soucouyant*, **Paulette Crosse** has relished the abnormality of her characters in *The Footstep Café*.

The heroine of *The Footstep Café*, Karen Morton, lives near tragedy-plagued Lynn Canyon in North Vancouver where she operates a café (with an accent). Her husband is a podiatrist with a foot fetish and her daughter thinks she might be a lesbian. Her son is prone to bowel movements in closets and her father is an oddball Anglican priest. And the priest is married to a Tibetan.



Paulette Crosse

Advertising for this novel has included an excerpt describing how the heroine likes to masturbate with a carrot: It should be organic and it is important to microwave the vegetable for 26 seconds, thereby taking off the chill and endowing the versatile vegetable with a stimulating heat.

Described as quirky, absurdist, touching and supremely irreverent, this previously announced novel was delayed after David Godfrey's Beach Holme Publishing failed to honour commitments to its contracted authors. As the press was still evading creditors and authors, Beach Holme editor Michael Carroll moved to Ontario to work for Dundurn, enabling the manuscript to resurface under Dundurn's Simon & Pierre imprint. During that two-year waiting period, the retail price went up two bucks.

Paulette Crosse is a pseudonym for Janine Cross of North Vancouver who has published the fantasy novel, *Touched by Venom*, one of Library Journal's Five Best SF & Fantasy Books of 2005.

978-155002-716-7



David Chariandy has been nominated for a Governor-General's Award and long-listed for the Giller Prize.

GLEN LOWRY PHOTO

MONSTER MACHINATIONS

How a Trinidadian vampire destroys a Canadian family.

BY CHERIE THIESSEN

Soucouyant by David Chariandy
(Arsenal Pulp \$19.95)

In *Soucouyant* we are introduced to a Trinidadian variation of the vampire. The term refers to an old woman who sheds her skin at night, flies through the air, and usually appears as a ball of fire.

During the day she might be an old woman lurking at the edge of the village, but at night—watch out—the soucouyant sucks blood from its victims.

It's a litling word, *soucouyant*, but there's nothing uplifting about the story that first-time novelist **David Chariandy** has wrapped around its presence.

Set in the Toronto-area in the 1970s, *Soucouyant* is mostly the immigrant Adele's story, narrated through her son's eyes, although Chariandy tosses in some of Trinidad's history for good measure.

As a child in the Caribbean, "one morning when the sun was only a stain on the edge of the earth and the moon hadn't yet gone under," Adele encountered the evil presence of the soucouyant while running through the forest in Carenage. It was a premonition of the direst sort. Not long afterwards, Adele's mother became like the soucouyant.



When Adele arrived in Canada to work as a domestic ten years earlier, she was stared at, treated like a whore by the men, and made so uncomfortable that she rarely left her apartment. Then she became

prone to early-onset dementia. Even though she's still a relatively young woman, she is increasingly victimized by cognitive deterioration that includes memory loss.

Or is the soucouyant somehow to blame? Could the trauma of that childhood meeting with the soucouyant have followed her to Canada and brought the disease on prematurely? And could this be an inherited condition?

The narrator himself appears to be one teabag short of a pot. We don't hold out much hope for his future. The father, Roger, was killed at work, leaving his two sons to cope. A monthly widow's pension enabled the diminished family to survive, but then the unnamed oldest son abandoned his mother and his doting young brother.

In the novel, both the narrator and his older brother are nameless. The latter never makes an appearance, although according to Adele's neighbour Meera he returns now and again with a little money for his mother, and once with a box of old books for Meera.



Meera is an attractive and bright young woman, probably about 18, but it's hard to know for sure, as Chariandy has a laid-back approach to time. Meera has mostly kept her distance, not wanting others to identify her as being 'like them,' the embarrassing family that lives up the block in the old house, uneducated and rough, with those two boys.

Because Meera avoided them, the narrator (let's call him X) doesn't recognize her when he discovers her in his mother's home. Initially, he thinks she's a live-in nurse, caring for his mother. X seems a little spaced himself, so it takes a while for him to figure out that a nurse would have an income, and would not have to live rough in the attic or wear clothes stolen from his drawer and closet.

Meera, in fact, has turned her back on her classes and university scholarship and her home. Her distressed mother has no idea where she is until X informs her. Compelled to move in with the abandoned Adele, Meera feels she must atone for being one of those cruel young people who had earlier harassed the immigrant family with anonymous phone calls and worse.

Meera's educated mother was also from the Caribbean, and although Meera's father is Welsh, as far as the neighbourhood is concerned, she's a 'darkie.'

At 17, X decides he doesn't want to be his mother's nursemaid anymore. He tells her he's made provisions for her, but she can't understand. What sort of provisions would leave her in a house alone, where realistically she could not have survived for more than a few days?

The abandonment is callous. It's not clear how long it is before Meera moves in to care for her, but maybe Adele's long time friend, Mrs. Christenson, has filled in the gap.

Certainly her later "bill for services rendered" would indicate that, but details in *Soucouyant* are often sketchy.

The incredible neglect of Adele continues until she is killed by a preventable accident at home. Previously she has trashed the kitchen many times, disappeared outside, and run baths that have overflowed.

Are Meera and X intentionally depicted as monsters sponging off a sick woman, culpable for her death?

When there is a quarrel, Meera simply walks out on the woman who has come to depend on her, without so much as a goodbye.

Then, knowing that his mother has been wandering down to the basement, X goes to bed without securing her safety or locking the door that leads to her death.

The nightmarish outlandishness of this dysfunctional family continues. Mrs. Christenson arrives to take care of the funeral arrangements and presents her bill for home care for \$345,033.48.

After X has sold the family home for \$53,000, he allows her to bully him into handing it all over, even his brother's half.

This story disintegrates into a rant, and the characterization is not always credible, but the evocation of the soucouyant is effective and *Soucouyant* succeeds with its images of the Caribbean.

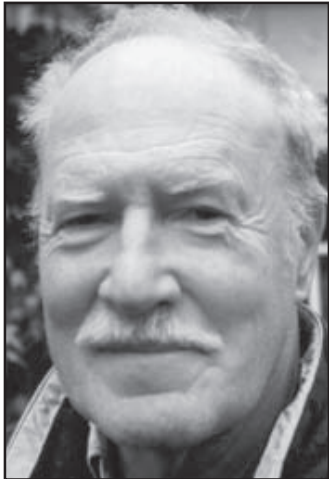
No doubt it was the originality of this uneven first novel that enabled Chariandy, who teaches in the Department of English at Simon Fraser University, to gain nominations for two prestigious fiction prizes.

978-1-55152-226-8

Cherie Thiessen writes from the Pender Islands.

A Few Words Will Do by Lionel Kearns
(Talon Books \$16.95)

"A fresh cougar skin on the fender / of the old Plymouth, and a boy / about three years old, sitting on it..." An old-timer reminiscing or poems from way back brought out of the photo album? Nelson in the 40s, East Hastings in the 60s, Mexico six decades back. Kearns has been there and done that and his poems stand the test of time with ease, "exploring the circled universe of memory." The cover photograph of dead cougars draped over a forties car is one of the many memorable features of this volume of selected poems.



Lionel Kearns

"And for those who store these experiences in words on paper, time becomes a line. But do not fasten onto that line. The fascination is in the living." Kearns is compelled to wonder about time/memory/here/ now. Many of the poems are extended questions about existence that elude answers.

Poem-making itself is often the object of his inquiry including a funny piece in which the poet's product is likened to elephant turd. In "Big Poem," Kearns asks for "a literary liposuction or an editor / who chops text like a plastic surgeon," but these poems are not flabby. Concrete poems from the sixties may look at bit dated now but it's important to recall how new they were once and that they were composed on typewriters.

A Few Words is thin on the current publishing conventions for a slim volume of poems. There's no index or dedication, no chronology of the poems and no acknowledgments. The reader has no way of knowing which poems were previously published, when or where. An author bio would have been welcome. Does it matter? Talon Books is a seasoned publisher and would not have overlooked such details. The format's lack of pretentiousness may be purposeful; a seamless fit with these unpretentious poems. If some of them are new, they fit seamlessly with the old.

In a short poem about wood ducks, Kearns says, "Perfection is being totally adequate / in any given moment." Maybe they're not exhilarating experiments with language but these accessible pieces are more than adequate, a reminder of how good poetry hangs in there. And how pleasurable!

978-0-88922-558-9

THREE WISE MEN

From Mexico, to Winlaw, to Victoria

High Speed Through Shoaling Water by Tom Wayman
(Harbour \$17.95)

"When the switch trips and I convert to nothing..."

What is it with poets when they turn sixty? Tom Wayman of

Winlaw investigates what lasts and what doesn't, body pain, fate, death, burial, eternity, existence and aging all in the book's first section titled "60."

"I will spend a very long time/ in the dark/ without a face/ or word. / Only the light /knows my name."

These poems, many already published in an impressive list of journals, are plain spoken accounts of rural living and especially about the earth. Wayman revisits the same scene: mountain, aspens, creek, house, repeatedly but the repetition is not dulling, rather it is a deepening experience of awe and affection.

His loving attention to the landscape of SE BC, where he lives, through the cycles of seasons, weathers and personal moods, is the strength of the book. Never obscure, he is so plain-spoken however that he risks verging on the prosaic. Is this poetry or chopped-up prose?

Wayman has developed a reputation as a 'work' poet who writes about labour but he hardly touches on his job as a teacher at the University

Tom Wayman has coincidentally published his first fiction collection *Boundary Country* (Eastern Washington University Press \$18.95) and four novellas collectively titled *A Vain Thing* (Turnstone Press \$19.95).



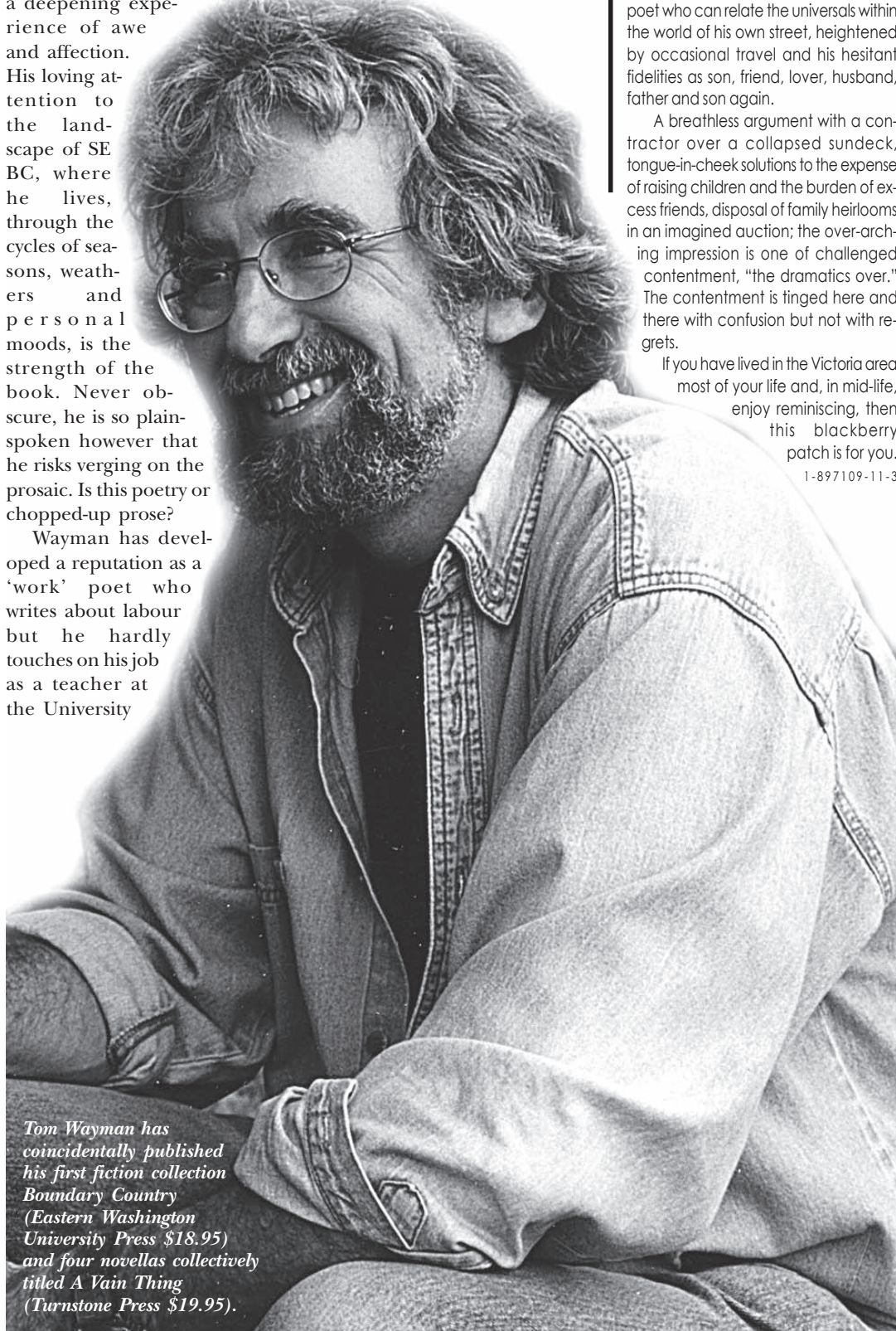
HANNAH MAIN-VAN DER KAMP

of Calgary except in irony or distaste. His real work is the words about snow and wind and silence and recollections of his life as a labourer and, (did I mention it?) aging.

The last section in

Shoaling Water is about poem-making. "The Garden," in which older and young poets garden together but not all in harmony, is required reading for all poets manqué. The section ends with a lullaby, "Sleep poems/ yet unformed.../ You and your burden/ shall not vanish/ nor lose your powers/ You remain forever the beginning/ of the story, / the word drowsing in the stone." 978-1-55017-401-4

Hannah Main-Van Der Kamp writes from Victoria



HYPOGOGIA

Moving Day by Terence Young
(Signature \$14.95)

Memories can often take the drifting shape of hypnagogia, that state between dreaming and awakening where odd clarities and cloudy sensations present themselves without apparent connection. In *Moving Day*, tender-hearted **Terence Young** tells his life as sunny days with cloudy periods.

"A marvel, really, all these bits that come together like a math equation when it looms into sense: I live here, These are the people I love."

Blending literate humour (a lonely kid quotes William of Occam in Latin to a bag lady) with day-to-day domesticity (those garden-darkening plum trees really must come down), Young is alternately wistful, funny and hyperbolic. He doesn't unfold the Big Themes of War and Peace, Gain and Loss. He's a skilled poet who can relate the universals within the world of his own street, heightened by occasional travel and his hesitant fidelities as son, friend, lover, husband, father and son again.

A breathless argument with a contractor over a collapsed sundeck, tongue-in-cheek solutions to the expense of raising children and the burden of excess friends, disposal of family heirlooms in an imagined auction; the over-arching impression is one of challenged contentment, "the dramatics over." The contentment is tinged here and there with confusion but not with regrets.

If you have lived in the Victoria area most of your life and, in mid-life, enjoy reminiscing, then this blackberry patch is for you.

1-897109-11-3

ALSO NOTED



Gillian Wigmore

Gillian Wigmore, soft geography (Caitlin Press \$15.95) 1-0894759-23-6

Allen Bell, Ma Vie Va S'Achever (Flask \$12.95) 978-0-973683-6-7

Margo Button, Heron Cliff (Signature \$14.95) 1-897109-17-2

Marita Dachsel, All Things Said & Done (Caitlin Press, \$15.95) 978-1-894759-22-9

Peter Levitt, Winter Still (Mother Tongue Press)



Andrea MacPherson, Natural Disasters: Poems (Palimpsest Press \$18) 0-9733952-6-5

Pierre Coupey (graphics) rules of the river (DaDaBaBy & Blue Orange Publishing) 978-0-9698897-3-1

Ian Rudkin, Wisdom is Modesty (Brio Books)

Ian Rudkin, What Goes Up Comes Out (Brio Books)

Susan Stenson, My mother agrees with the dead (Wolsak & Wynn \$17) 978-1-894987-18-9

W.H. New, Along a Snake Fence (Oolichan \$16.95) 978-0-88982-236-8

George McWhirter, The Incorection (Oolichan \$17.95) 978-0-88982-234-4

Diane Tucker, Bright Scarves of Hours (Palimpsest \$18) 978-0-9733952-7-3

George Whipple, Kites (Ekstasis \$18.95) 978-1-897430-09-5

Harold Rhenisch, Return To Open Water (Ronsdale \$15.95) 155380-050-8

Kim Goldberg, Ride Backwards on Dragon (Leaf Press \$18.95) 978-0-9783879-1-4

K. Louise Vincent, The Discipline of Undressing (Leaf Press \$17.95) 978-0-9783879-0-7

Bernice Lever, Never a Straight Line (Palm Poets Series \$15) 978-0-88753-438-6



Bernice Lever

SURVIVOR—FOR REAL

Hiding in a converted pig-sty, Rhodea Shandler kept her compassion alive in rural Holland during World War Two.

A Long Labour: A Dutch Mother's Holocaust Memoir by Rhodea Shandler
(Ronsdale/Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre \$21.95)

At age 87, **Rhodea Shandler** finally began writing *A Long Labour: A Dutch Mother's Holocaust Memoir*. It contains the story she felt unable to talk about with her family for most of her life. She died a year later, soon after it was finished. Simply put, *A Long Labour* describes Shandler's life as a fugitive in the Dutch countryside during the five-year German occupation of Holland more than sixty years ago.

Soon after the Nazi occupation of Holland began, Rhodea and her husband left the city and, assisted by the underground resistance movement, traveled to the farming country of rural Holland where anti-Nazi feeling was strongest, and Nazi patrols less frequent. Over the ensuing war years they moved frequently, as one hiding place after another proved untenable.

Found and paid for by the underground, their home was a former pig-sty, whereas a wealthier Jewish couple who could afford to pay more was accommodated in the house with the host family. Their protector's attitude, kind at first, changed overnight to hostility when Rhodea discovered she was pregnant. Rhodea nevertheless feels gratitude to the family. She is fully aware of the risks taken on their behalf—their hosts would have been shot instantly for harbouring Jews—and she understands that those risks were greatly increased by the presence of a baby on the premises. In spite of severe privations, Shandler remained on friendly terms with her hosts and visited them after the war.

Her baby was delivered in the unheated pig-sty on a frigid December day, with unsterilized equipment, and with help from her husband and a fellow fugitive who had some nursing training. Once the child was born, the resistance movement arranged for her to be placed with a Gentile family.

Rhodea and her husband were dispatched to separate hiding places, not far from each other. When convoys of German soldiers searched the area, Rhodea hid in a shallow dug-out, like a grave, in the ground. In a sad footnote, she notes that the first member of the underground who helped them was captured and shot.

After the war, when Shandler returned home to Amersfoort, she discovered that her parents, brother, and many members of her extended family who had been transported to Poland,

supposedly for relocation, had been killed in the concentration camps. She also found that the neighbours to whom she and her husband had entrusted their money and possessions for safe-keeping, were unwilling to return them. Her story ends as the couple and their children start a new life in Canada.



In spite of the gruesome circumstances, Rhodea's tone is surprisingly benign and tolerant, not so much because of the mellowing effect of old age as the result of an enviably optimistic outlook that helped her during her ordeal. She speaks sadly but rarely in anger. Any incipient bitterness is either suppressed quickly or tempered with understanding.

Rhodea manages to sympathize with the young German soldiers she saw in the last years of the war. She saw that they were little more than children, drafted unwillingly into the depleted army. When she visited a German town after the war, she was greatly moved by the plight of German mothers who had lost their sons.

Like many survivors, Rhodea remained tormented by guilt over her own choices—for her abandonment of the mental patients it was her job to care for before she became a fugitive, for leaving her older daughter to the protection of others when she fled, and for failing to convince her parents to go into hiding, rather than making the fatal journey to Poland.



Perhaps because Rhodea's world-view is so generous and forgiving, it was deemed necessary to contextualize her story by prefacing it with a factual account by an expert on the Dutch Holocaust. Dr. **Lillian Kremer**, professor emerita of the University of Kansas, puts a somewhat different perspective on Rhodea's narrative and makes a fierce indictment of Dutch collaboration in the persecution of their Jewish neighbors.

Kremer states that the number of Dutch Jews who perished in the Holocaust was slightly higher than the number in other European countries; that Dutch civil servants cooperated in the disenfranchisement of Jewish citizens; and that the Dutch police actively participated in the deportations. After the war, Jewish survivors found little support from their compatriots, who were interested mainly in re-establishing their own lives. It is alleged they had little sympathy for the greater losses and the atrocities suffered by the Jews.

In the 1960s, the Dutch population that had lived through the war years, like that of other European countries, came in for severe criticism by a younger generation. The myth of a widespread heroic response to Nazism was exposed as a lie; numerous publications indicted the wartime generation for the abandonment and betrayal of Dutch Jewry.

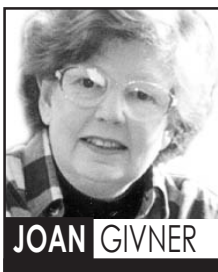
The effect of these two juxtaposed female voices—that of Rhodea Shandler summoning up vivid memories from her own distant past, and that of Dr. Lillian Kremer drawing on a wealth of scholarship to give a broader perspective—is to set up a kind of dialogue. It is a dialogue that deserves, even cries out, to be continued in formal and informal settings, in classrooms and in book clubs, appropriate for all ages.



Only a few quibbles: There is no explanation as to how and when Rhodea Shandler's surname was changed from Bollegraaf and the scholar who wrote the preface repeatedly uses the term "disinterested" when, I think, she means "uninterested." Also, prior to describing her arrival in Canada, Shandler recalls how she crudely assumed B.C. was going to be full of Indians—an off-putting reference that might have benefited from some editorial tinkering.

1-55380-045-1

Joan Givner regularly reviews biographies and autobiographies from Mill Bay.



JOAN GIVNER



Rhodea Shandler

SHOW ME YOUR MUSIC, I'LL SHOW YOU MINE

All was not fear 'n' loathing during coastal encounters of the first kind

Myth & Memory: Stories of Indigenous-European Contact edited by John Sutton Lutz (UBC Press \$32.95)

With truce-like solemnity, prior to international sporting matches it's customary for players to stand at attention as national anthems are played.

As indicated by **John Sutton Lutz'** essay in *Myth & Memory: Stories of Indigenous-European Contact*, the ambassadorial power of music has surely arisen from some deep-seated human impulse that is likely prehistoric, and therefore beyond analysis.

According to Lutz, the crews of Captains **Juan Perez** and **James Cook**—the first two European explorers known to have reached B.C. waters—were both serenaded by music from Aborigines upon their arrivals, in 1774 and 1778 respectively, and both crews cast their own music upon the waters in exchange.

In July of 1774, when the European “discoverer” of British Columbia, Juan Perez, contacted Aborigines in canoes—presumably Haida—off Langara Island, at the northern end of Haida Gwaii, it was subsequently recorded:

“The first thing they did when they approached within about musket shot of the ship was to begin singing in unison to their motet and to cast feathers on the water... They make a particular signal. They open their arms, forming themselves in a cross, and place their arms on their chest in the same fashion, an appropriate sign of their peacefulness.”

The theatrical encounter was placed into a religious context by the Spaniards. As Lutz takes care to note, a motet is a vocal composition in harmony, set usually to words from Scripture, intended for church use. The expedition's priest, Father **Juan Crespi**, further wrote, after an-

other canoe arrived:

“Night had fallen, and we were all reciting the rosary of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception... Seeing that no attention was paid to them, because we were at prayers, the people in the canoe began to cry out, and they continued shouting until such time as the daily recital of the rosary and special prayers to some saints were concluded and the hymn of praise, which caused great admiration on their part, was sung.”



In 1778, at Friendly Cove on the west shore of Vancouver Island, when Captain Cook's two ships arrived, carrying the young British officers **George Vancouver** and **William Bligh**, music was also traded, rather than salvos of weaponry. The collectively written journal of Cook, as collected by his second-in-command **James King** after Cook's death in Hawaii, records the meeting at Nootka Sound:

“After we had anchored the boats came alongside without hesitation but none of the Natives chose to venture on board ... as they had no Arms and apperd very friendly we did not care how long they staid to entertain themselves, & perhaps us; a man repeated a few words in tune, and regulated the meaning by beating against the Canoe sides, after which they all joined in a song that was by no means unpleasant to the Ear ...

“As they were now very attentive & quiet in list'ning to their diversions, we judg'd they might like our musick, & we ordered the Fife and drum to play a tune; ... they Observed the Profoundest silence, & we were very sorry that the Dark hind'ered our seeing the ef-



Pen and ink wash drawing done by José Cardero in 1792 depicting the Spanish ships Sutil and Mexicana meeting the Coast Salish people near Victoria with Mount Baker in the background.

fect of this music on their countenances.

“Not to be outdone in politeness they gave us another song, & we entertained them with a French horn, to which they were equally attentive.”



Lutz, who teaches history at the University of Victoria, is working on a book based on close to two hundred different surviving accounts, recorded be-

tween 1789 and the present, of how indigenous people perceived the arrival of Europeans on the west coast of North America. His contribution to this anthology of essays which he edited—derived from a confab of academics at Dunsmuir Lodge near Victoria in 2002—teasingly offers tidbits from his research.

We learn that George Vancouver's arrival in the harbour that bears his name, like the arrival of **Cortez** in Mexico, occurred at a “spiritually potent time,” vastly increasing his importance. According to Squamish elder **Andrew Paul**, his people believed some disaster was scheduled to befall them at seven-year intervals and Vancouver's appearance happened to coincide with the culmination of that cycle.

Whereas the Nuxalk weren't sure if the European arrivals were from the sky or from the land of the dead, the Squamish, according to **Louis Miranda** and **Philip Joe**, were thought to be from the land of the dead be-

cause their faces were pale and they were wrapped tightly in blankets, like corpses.

The Nuu-chah-nulth in Nootka Sound, however, assumed Cook's men came from the moon, one of the most powerful of all spirits in their cosmology, because they wore yellow and their brass decorations shone like the moon.

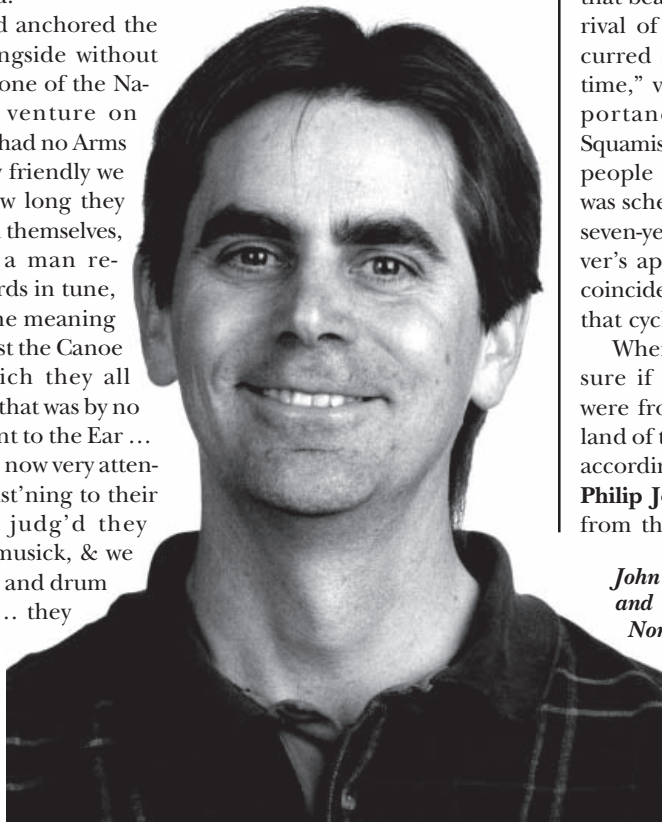
As Lutz concludes, “Rather than immediately destabilizing traditional beliefs, the arrival of Europeans was merely part of the ongoing proof of these beliefs.”



First contacts in our part of the world only date back a few centuries, so *Myth & Memory* is a terrific idea for a book. Unfortunately the contributions include encounters that occurred as far afield as Utah, Virginia and the Kalahari Desert. Five of the chapters concern the coastal areas of British Columbia; two analyze contact stories from Chilliwack and the Okanagan.

The ardent history buff will find plenty of obscure gems. Fort Vancouver, for example, was known by indigenous people as “the place of mud turtles.” But for the so-called general interest reader, *Myth & Memory* is a stylistically obtuse and daunting melange of academics talking to each other, pointing the way to more intriguing work yet-to-come.

978-0-7748-1263-4



John Lutz's “Work, Wages and Welfare in Aboriginal-Non-Aboriginal Relations in B.C., 1849-1970” won the Governor General's Gold Medal and the Eugene Forsey Prize for the best dissertation in labour history.

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BOONIES VERSUS TOONIES:
Sheila Peters and Perry Rath

JACK'S NOSE

In September, at the Reckoning 07 conference, a prominent Toronto publisher shocked more than a few people by making a public apology to Nanaimo-born novelist **Jack Hodgins**.

Having published all of Hodgins' books since 1976, **Doug Gibson** confessed he might have erred in advising Hodgins to remain on Vancouver Island for three decades, rather than move to Ontario.

Even though this statement was clearly intended to provoke constructive debate, noses went out of joint immediately, including Jack's.

A heated discussion ensued about the viability of "writing from the boonies." But these days who can adequately define where the boonies begin? With the onset of the Internet, do the boonies even exist anymore?

No consensus was reached about how best to write, where best to write, or why. Meanwhile, to counter-balance the urbane palaver at *Reckoning 07*, we have featured six authors who function "above and beyond" the 50th parallel: Donna Kane, Ian McAllister, Chris Harris, Anne DeGrace, K. Linda Kivi and our 'cover person' Ann Walsh from Williams Lake.

Call it the Hinder issue.



Samuel Johnson once said "no man but a blockhead ever wrote, except for money."

I believe he was wrong. Writing to make money is one way to write, but it is not the only way—or the best.

—Alan Twigg



Above & beyond the sub-boonies

Since 1998, Creekstone Press in Smithers has resolutely *not* operated as a back-to-the-land press that encourages everyone to make log houses or provide home-birthing techniques for cattle.

Run by **Lynn Sherville** and **Sheila Peters**, Creekstone has endured for nine years as the lone, ongoing, situated-in-northern-B.C. imprint within the Association of Book Publishers of B.C. ever since the untimely death in 2005 of **Cynthia Wilson**, who managed Caitlin Press from Prince George.

Caitlin continues to publish writers from central B.C., but its headquarters have shifted to the Sunshine Coast.

Thus far Creekstone has released nine books of non-fiction, fiction, poetry, photography and painting. Theirs is a modest but realistic man-

date: roughly one book per year.

Their newest title, *the weather from the west* (\$24), is an overtly artsy book of 42 poems by Sheila Peters and 23 paintings by **Perry Rath**—a sophisticated "synergistic" interplay between landscape, heart and mind.

Creekstone books attempt to do nothing less than reflect life in northwestern B.C. from places such as the Bulkley Valley, Smithers, the Hazeltons, Vanderhoof, the Kispiox Valley, Terrace, the Skeena and Bulkley watersheds, the Spatsizi or Tatlatui Wilderness Parks, Haida Gwaii, the Nechako and Fraser watersheds, the Inside Passage and other traditional Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en territory—almost half the province.

Sometimes, maybe those of us below the 50th parallel should think of ourselves as the sub-boonies.

978-0-9783195-0-2

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- Terrace
- Trail
- Tumbler Ridge
- Valemont
- Vanderhoof
- Burnaby
- Kingsway
- McGill
- Cameron
- Metrotown
- Camosun College
- Cariboo-Thompson
- Alexis Creek
- Alkali Lake
- Anahim Lake
- Ashcroft
- Avola
- Barriere
- Big Lake
- Blue River
- Bridge Lake
- Cache Creek
- Chase
- Clearwater
- Clinton
- Douglas Lake
- Eagle Creek
- Forest Grove
- Horsefly
- Kamloops
- Lac La Hache
- Likely
- Logan Lake
- Lytton
- McLeese Lake
- Merritt
- Narcosli
- Nazko
- North Kamloops
- 100 Mile House
- Quesnel
- Riske Creek
- Roe-Sheridan
- Savona
- Spences Bridge
- Strathnaver
- Tatla Lake
- Tillicom
- Wells
- Williams Lake
- Coquitlam
- Lincoln

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- Abbotsford
- Aggasiz
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- Langley
- Maple Ridge
- Mission
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- South Delta
- Terry Fox,
- (Pt. Coquitlam)
- White Rock
- Yale
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- North Delta Secondary
- North Van City
- North Van Dist.
- Lynn Valley
- Capilano
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- Osoyoos
- Oyama
- Peachland
- Penticton
- Princeton
- Revelstoke
- Rutland
- Salmon Arm
- Seymour Arm
- Sicamous
- Silver Creek
- Summerland
- Winfield
- Vernon
- Westbank
- Westbank
- South Bookmobile
- North Bookmobile
- Headquarters
- Richmond
- Brighouse
- Cambie

- Ironwood
- Steveston
- Port Moody
- Surrey
- Cloverdale
- Fleetwood
- Guildford
- Newton
- Ocean Park
- Semiahmoo
- Port Kells
- Strawberry Hill
- Whalley
- UBC Library

Vancouver Public Libraries

- Britannia
- Carnegie
- Champlain Heights
- Collingwood
- Downtown
- Dunbar
- Firehall
- Fraserview
- Hastings
- Joe Fortes
- Kensington
- Kerrisdale
- Kitsilano
- Marpole
- Mount Pleasant
- Oakridge
- Outreach Services
- Renfrew
- Riley Park
- South Hill
- Strathcona
- West Point Grey

Vancouver Island Libraries

- AB Greenwell
- Alex Aitken
- Alexander
- Bella Coola
- Bench
- Brentwood/Saanich
- Campbell River
- Chemainus
- Cobble Hill
- Comox
- Courtenay
- Cowichan
- Cowichan Station
- Cumberland
- Crofton
- Discovery
- Drinkwater
- Federation
- Duncan Elem
- Elsie Miles
- Frances Kelsey
- George Bonner
- Gold River
- Holberg
- Honeymoon Bay
- Hornby Island
- Khowhemun
- Koksilah
- Ladysmith
- Lake Cowichan

- Manson's Landing
- Maple Bay
- Masset
- Mill Bay
- Mt. Brenton
- Mt. Prevost
- Nanaimo
- Palsson
- Parksville
- Port Alberni
- Port Alice
- Port Clements
- Port Hardy
- Port McNeil
- Port Renfrew
- Quadra Island
- Qualicum Beach
- Queen Charlotte
- Sahtlam
- Sandspit
- Sayward
- Sidney
- Sointula
- Somenos
- Sooke
- South Cowichan
- Stanley Gordon
- Tahsis
- Tansor
- Tofino
- Ucluelet
- Union Bay
- Wellington
- Whaletown
- Woss
- Yount
- Zeballos

Victoria Public Libraries

- Central
- Hutchison
- Esquimalt
- Juan de Fuca
- Oak Bay
- Nellie McClung
- Saanich
- View Royal
- West Vancouver Library

ALSO

- A.B.P.B.C.
- Bean Around the World
- Big News
- BC Teachers Federation
- Blenz
- Calhouns
- Capers
- Choices Market
- MacFalafel
- Cranbrook School Dist.
- Daystar Market
- Empire Magazines
- Federation of BC Writers

- Festival of the Written Arts
- Fifth Ave Cinema
- Flag's Pizza
- Green Room
- Great Pacific News
- Grounds for Coffee
- Haig-Brown House
- Havana Cafe
- IGA Plus
- il Cafe
- Isabel Creek Store
- The Jazz Cellar
- Jitters Cafe
- Joe's Cafe
- La Mascotte
- Learning Resources (Duncan)
- Limelight Video
- Maggie
- Mayfair News
- National Library of Canada
- Newshound
- North Vancouver Schools
- Port Hardy School Dist.
- Pitt Meadows School
- Presentation House Gallery
- Ridge Theatre
- Ryga House
- Sandhill Distributing
- School District 5
- School of Journalism at UBC
- Schou Education Centre
- Seaquam Secondary (Delta)
- SFU Library
- SFU Distance Education
- SFU Harbour Centre
- Surrey Writers Conference
- UBC Creative Writing
- UBC Archival Studies
- 'Umista Cultural Centre
- University College of the Cariboo (English Dept.)
- Uprising Breads
- UVic Writing Department
- Vancouver East Cultural Ctr.
- Vancouver Media Club
- Vancouver Writers Festival
- Victoria School of Writing
- Victoria Antiquarian Festival
- Videomatica
- Wazubee Cafe
- Yoka's Coffee

Delta School District

33 outlets

North Van School Libraries

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