FREE SPIRIT

I have always enjoyed picking up a copy of BC BookWorld and reading the latest review—until my most recent issue. Finding my mother in large relief on page 10 was the first shock. She was always a very private person. The further shock was the nasty tone of what should have been a review of Converse’s book but instead was a severely critical review of my grandmother’s character. You should have done your homework. There were only five children in the family. Little House was torn down and a new house built. Janet is Capi’s daughter-in-law, not daughter. Edith Iglauer wrote the article about Capi. Rabblerouser long after Capi died in ’61. She died before her book was even published, in B.C. Edith certainly never interviewed her. It is unfortunate that Cathy didn’t name some of Edith’s understanding gleaned about the mysterious Capi from her then-still-living children. It would have offered a fuller and more humane view of an incredible woman. It is also unfortunate she didn’t seek out some of the grandchildren such as myself who not only have living memories of time spent with Capi but also, in my own case, 47 years of knowing my maternal JoAnn who never once in all that time spoke badly of her mother, and only with love and longing for those many summers up the coast.

Capi was fair, honest and kind. Reclusive, yes. Stern, yes. Ornery, no. She certainly never interviewed her. It is uncanny to think of this as my grandmother, the woman who dared to do what she did. I have many wonderful memories of gathering firewood off the beach for our evening in front of the very large stone fireplace. My grandmother’s book has been in print for 47 years, and, as you mention, into its eleventh printing. It has been a bestseller for years. I have met many people over those years who have read and loved her story, who keep a copy on board their boats and read it again every summer. Why? I ask, after she has been dead for the same 47 years are you, and Cathy, concerned with what kind of wood she burned in her fire- place? I find your article truly offensive. To call her a “piece of work” is an insult to my grandmother’s memory and to our family. I honestly can’t believe I can write this in a magazine that prides itself on supporting literary awareness in B.C.

Capi, through her writing, is an integral part of our BC coastal heritage and in my view her own writing, for those who care to listen, offers its own tribute to who she really was.

Roselyn Blanchet Caiden,
B.A.; granddaughter to
Muriel Wylie “Capi” Blanchet

NEARLY SAVAGE

You have really outdone yourselves this time.

Usually I look through BC BookWorld while riding the ferry and have appreciated how you have positioned B.C. writers against the backdrop of the landscape, as almost frontier-type characters. There are the usual motifs of home schooling, cabins on the coast and travel, in the profiles that you have done of various writers and their work. But the coverage of your winner issue says it all. The image of Julie Angus captures your narrative of the B.C. writer as adventurer, close to nature, nearly savage, sexual, and evidently because of the work, intellectual. Your stories capture the allure, and “lone wolf” nature of creative work admirably. I might add that with some minor adjustments, you could attract young people into literature... I only wish that local architects had an equally compelling reviewer.

William Summers
Cowichan Valley

UNWISE CRACK

We were pleased to see one of our poets Justin Lukyn mentioned in the Who’s Who, but Justin is not a “slightly cracked anthropologist of the everyday.” While there may be some cracked anthropologist tendencies to Justin’s perspective, the press release, where the phrase comes from, actually refers to Henry Pepper, the fictional titular character.

Stefania Alexandru,
New Star Books,
Vancouver

THAT SPIRITUAL FEELING

I read the article in BC Bookworld about Cascadia, Douglas Todd’s book on spirituality without religion in B.C., with interest.

As a Christian, I can confirm that the reviewer is correct to say that most people here are not religious. That has certainly been my experience when talking about my faith in Jesus. It doesn’t mean of course that non-religious people don’t have spiritual feelings. But I personally find it sad that Christianity is so alien to people in B.C.—if people could read the Bible, they would see that it is the story of how God longs to save his people and offer them forgiveness and eternal life through Jesus Christ. By the way, I really like B.C. BookWorld

Robin Arndfield
Osoyoos

LEILAH’S LIKENESS

Having finally got myself out of the orchards after hauling 50 tons of apples over Apple Mountain and surviving, with the help of plenty of horsepower, I came upon your issue with the lovely and powerfully arrestive coverage of the latest winner of the George Ryga Award for Social Awareness. We are absolutely thrilled with it. Thank you for arranging for a special photo session with this year’s winner, Leilah Nadir, and her child. George Ryga would have been absolutely delighted, too. And kudos to your photographer.

Ken Smelyd, coordinator, Ryga Centre, Summerland
W. P. KINSELLA

SINCE 1995, BC BOOKWORLD AND THE VANCOUVER PUBLIC LIBRARY HAVE PROUDLY SPONSORED THE WOODCOCK AWARD AND THE WRITERS WALK AT 350 WEST GEORGIA STREET IN VANCOUVER.

W.P. KINSELLA BIBLIOGRAPHY:

• Dance Me Outside (Oberon, 1977) • Scars (Oberon, 1978) • Shoeless Joe Jackson Comes to Iowa (Oberon, 1980) • Born Indian (Oberon, 1981) • Shoeless Joe (1982)
• The Rainbow Warehouse (Pottersfield, 1989) with Ann Knight • The Miss Hobbema Pageant (Doubeday, 1989) • Two Spirits Soar (Stoddart, 1990)
• The Secret of the Northern Lights (Thistledown, 1998) • Magic Time (Doubeday, 1999) • Japanese Baseball & Other Stories (2000)
• Ichiro Dreams: Ichiro Suzuki and the Seattle Mariners (Kodansha, 2002)

FOR MORE INFO SEE WWW.ABCBOOKWORLD.COM

W.P. Kinsella and Barbara Turner Kinsella of Yale, B.C. celebrated their tenth anniversary in March.
A pair of legends-to-be crossed the border from Wyoming in the fall of 1934. They weren’t exactly Butch Cassidy & the Sundance Kid, but both were charismatic men, born to be wild.

Rich Hobson Jr. had lost his savings during the 1929 stock market crash and befriended Floyd “Panhandle” Phillips, a gregarious storyteller. Hobson, the son of an American naval hero, could write—having attended Stanford University—but it was Phillips, the Illinois farmboy, who could talk.

Both dreamed of being ranchers.

By the time the two greenhorns arrived at Anahim Lake, 200 miles west of Williams Lake, in a Ford panel truck nicknamed ‘The Bloater,’ winter was fast approaching.

According to Pan Phillips’ daughter Diana Phillips in Beyond the Chilcotin: On the Home Ranch with Pan Phillips, as seen by his daughter, the Ilgachuz Mountains and founded the Home Ranch, later made famous by two of Hobson’s classic books on B.C. ranching.

Grass Beyond the Mountains (1951) mythologized a 1937 cattle drive known as the ‘Starvation Drive.’ This story was serialized in Maclean’s.

Nothing Too Good for a Cowboy (1955) recalled their struggles to maintain their four-million-acre spread during World War II when supplies and manpower were scarce.

It didn’t hurt that Hobson included his recurring vision of a beautiful blonde woman to break the solitude.

When the two men parted company in the 1940s, Hobson started ranching in the Vanderhoof area with his wife, Gloria, leading to his final book, The Rancher Takes A Wife.

Hobson died in 1966 but his stories have endured, providing stimuli for a CBC TV series, Nothing Too Good for a Cowboy, filmed in B.C., and an annual Vanderhoof stage production.

More than twenty years ago, and Darlene Brown wrote The Legend of Pan Phillips and now Diana Phillips has emerged with Beyond the Chilcotin.

The new memoir gives short shrift to Pan Phillips’ first two marriages, but picks up steam when her mother, Betty Kushner, is hired to cook for the Home Ranch in 1944. After she meets her new employer Pan Phillips for the first time in Quesnel, they make the six-day, 180-mile journey on horseback, along with Betty’s newborn son, Ken (not Pan’s son).

The pair soon became a couple. Diana Phillips was born in July of 1945, at the Quesnel hospital, and brought to the remote Home Ranch in a Pacific Milk box perched atop a rubber-tired wagon [pictured above] pulled by horses.

“I’m not even sure who came to get us,” she writes, “It could have been one of the hired hands.

“My Dad was not known for his dedication to family life!”

Betty Phillips was the only non-Native pair of legends-to-be crossed the border from Wyoming in the fall of 1934.
tive woman at the ranch and mail was their only contact with the outside world into the early 1950s. Diana’s father called the shots.

“Since Dad did most of the grocery shopping, whatever was on the shopping list that he figured we didn’t need, we didn’t get. If he liked it, he bought it."

A photojournalist named Richard Harrington took superb photos at the cattle ranch in 1956 and 1960, with the result that Diana Phillips had pen-pals around the world.

The high quality of Harrington’s images makes Beyond the Chilcotin extraordinary—as much as the character of Pan Phillips, who is revealed as a droll country sage and a bit of a ham. He often said, “A cowboy is a shepherd with his brain knocked out.”

Although she writes mainly of her own experiences, Diana Phillips allows her father—half mountain man and half cowboy—to steal the show.

She ends by recalling Mike Poole’s 1969 documentary about her father’s last cattle drive for CBC’s This Land of Ours.

“Dad was in seventh heaven with the filming and always wanted to hold centre stage,” she recalls.

Phillips supplemented his income with guiding and the purchase of a portable sawmill in 1959. The Home Ranch was sold in 1970. Diana Phillips doesn’t mention that her father later moved to nearby Tsetzi Lake to run a fishing camp with his son. Born on March 13, 1910 in Pike City, Illinois, Pan Phillips died at Tsetzi Lake on May 18, 1983.

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“Mary Cassam had a small, skinny Hereford heifer one spring that was obviously in calf and she wanted to sell it to Dad. He was reluctant to buy it. She was persistent. Finally a bargain was struck. Dad would pay her the money they agreed on but only after the heifer calved. If she died, it was Mary’s loss. The heifer was delivered a month or so before calving. She went into labour but was unable to give birth. Dad decided to perform a Caesarean on the heifer. He got her standing up and she stood through the whole operation. She kicked the first cut he made, and then he started pouring turpentine and continued slowly cutting. Turpentine will numb and disinfect. After the calf was removed, his stitching job left a lot to be desired. I had to leave as soon as he started cutting as I cannot stomach too much of that sort of thing. So I did not witness the stitching job he did inside, but the outside one was there for all to see. There were six to seven stitches on an eighteen-inch gash. For the next few weeks it was touch and go if she would die of infection or live. The turpentine treatment continued. It was probably due to the turpentine that she survived at all; it killed the flies and disinfected inside and out. By rodeo time in July the heifer went to range and Mary got paid. The heifer was shipped that fall to the cattle sale in Quesnel. She had a very thin scar that was hardly noticeable.”

--- excerpt from Beyond the Chilcotin

Pan Phillips loved company and he liked to argue with a smile on his face.

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At age 15, in 1960, Diana Phillips takes a break from ranch chores.
If Woody Guthrie had visited B.C. mining camps, he might have written a song about Irene Howard's parents, Alfred and Ingeborg Nelson. The stalwart couple in Howard's Gold Dust On His Shirt (Between the Lines $26.95) represent the heroism of pioneer labour serving profit for others.

Knowing only Swedish, Nils Alfred Nilsson emigrated from northern Sweden in 1905 and worked his way west for the Grand Trunk Railway, reaching Prince Rupert, population 300, in 1908. After Nilsson changed his name to Nelson, he married a beautiful young widow, Ingeborg Aarvik, newly arrived in 1908. In Norway, at age 19, Ingeborg had married a village tailor, Kristian Vigen, who had tuberculosis. After her husband died of TB in 1909, Ingeborg succumbed to so-called “American fever,” the desire to start anew on another continent.

In order to join her brother in Port Essington, Ingeborg left behind her infant daughter, Inga—with hopes of bringing her later. “Did Inga wave goodbye?” writes Howard, imagining her mother's situation. “I will never know, and Inga would remain a shadowy figure belonging to the Old Country of my childhood, except for this: when I was a young mother, I had to wave goodbye to my two-year-old son when I stepped out of our house, not to enter that door again for a year. Like Kristian, I had tuberculosis.”

In 1917, Alfred took his family to Mullan, Idaho, to take a railway construction job but severe labour strife eventually forced them to return to Canada. “You can't beat the System,” Alfred Nelson used to say. “They'll beat you every time.” (Swedish-born folk singer Joseph Hillstrom, more famously known as Joe Hill, had been murdered by Utah state authorities in 1915 for his songs in support of the migrant workers.)

Irene Howard was born in Prince Rupert in 1922. She was raised with her brothers in mining camps, mainly around Smithers and the Bridge River area.

At the Duthie Mine, her father was shift boss for a crew of miners and doubled as the family shoemaker and barber. Her mother carried water from a creek for washday “with a yoke across her shoulders and two pails of water sloshing water at her side with every step” until her brothers Arthur and Verner were able to erect a flume.

The unremitting labour of raising a family of seven—“so impossibly taxing, both physically and mentally, that it can scarcely be even imagined”—was ultimately less demanding than the rigours of another kind of labour, childbirth.

Irene Howard recalls her mother and father in the living room, facing one another, in a rented two-storey house in Kamloops in 1930, not long after the Duthie Mine had closed. “She is telling him that she is pregnant. She doesn’t know that I understand what she’s saying. I’m looking at my father’s face. I think he looks angry. My mother reaches out and holds me to her. But he wasn’t angry. I know that now. What he was feeling was utter dismay and helplessness at the turn of events: the mine closing and everything they’d built up at the Duthie lost, the family uprooted again, a job that didn’t even pay wages, and now this, another child.”

Howard’s narrative detours into social history, explaining that the dissemination of information about birth control was made illegal in Canada under the Criminal Code of 1892. (In B.C., the door of secrecy wasn’t unhinged until the radical journalist A.M. Stephen started the Birth Control League of Canada in Vancouver in 1923.)

Ingeborg Nelson was born out in 1931, in no condition to have another child. Her family had moved five times, from one mine to another, between 1920 and 1930. “Who can know the turmoil in her mind,” writes Howard, “(during) those last weeks of her nine months when she no longer felt the child moving, kicking in her womb? And knew that her child had died.”

Three weeks after the still-born birth at the Royal Inland Hospital in Kamloops, Ingeborg Nelson died of a blood clot on February 8, 1931. Nils Alfred Nelson died of tuberculosis brought on by silicosis in May of 1948. “Unaccountably,” writes Howard, “I feel as though I share the blame for what the System did to my father’s lungs. I grieve because I didn’t know what to say when I sat beside his bed, as he struggled for breath in an oxygen tent.”

Irene Howard has now found all the words she needed to say. Gold Dust On His Shirt is a stunningly vivid and in-depth family history that doubles as progressive labour history. This is a fitting follow-up to Howard’s biography of labour organizer and social reformer Helena Gutteridge, the first woman to be elected to Vancouver City Council, who fought for low-income housing and women’s rights until she died at age 88.

"I didn't occur to me that our rough prospector's cabin qualified as a pioneer habitation every bit as much as a tent in the Rockies or a sod hut on the prairies."—IRENE HOWARD

WORKING CLASS HEROES

Ingeborg & Alfred—unsung lives of parenting and perseverance

Irene Howard (pictured below) is held by her mother in this photo taken near the Duthie Mine, north of Smithers, in 1923.
Winner of the National Dutch Debut Prize

He still hasn’t found what he’s looking for.

UNDERGROUND

the debut novel by JUNE HUTTON

Please visit www.cormorantbooks.com/underground

“Beautifully written by this masterful storyteller, Oonagh ... is the story of race and class, joy and sorrow, fear and newfound freedom writ large.”

Karolyn Smardz Frost Governor-General’s Award-winning author of I’ve Got a Home in Glory Land

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SCRUTINY ON THE BOUNTIFUL

Daphne Bramham of The Vancouver Sun was the lone British Columbian among three runners-up for the British Columbia National Award for Canadian Non-Fiction in Canada that went to Russell Wangersky for his firefighting memoir, Burning Down the House: Fighting Fires and Losing Myself (Thomas Allen). Here Bramham reflects on the process of writing The Secret Lives of Saints: Child Brides and Lost Boys in Canada’s Polygamous Mormon Sect (Random House), her investigation of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints community in Bountiful, B.C.

As a child, I dreamed of writing books—novels. I chose journalism as a career because I figured that working in newspapers was a great way to learn the skill of putting nouns and verbs together—although you don’t get much chance to use adjectives or even adverbs.

And the discipline of daily deadlines helped me evolve from a reporter to a writer. I also rather quickly learned that my imagination is not enough for real life. My ability to construct a make-believe world could never begin to compare to the stories in the real world.

In my wildest of dreams, I could never have conjured up Bountiful and the world of fundamentalist Mormonism.

In fact, in May of 2004, when I received an email from Jancis Andrews about polygamy and young girls being trafficked across the Canada-U.S. border to be concubines to older men—all in the guise of religion, I really didn't believe her.

But she convinced me that it was true. And with that, I began a journey into a dark story that had all of the things that are not topics that can be dealt with politely so for the most part we shy away from talking to me, but invited me into their homes. Sometimes for days on end, I sat at kitchen tables sorting through boxes and boxes of religious tracts, personal letters, unpublished family histories and photo albums.

I drank gallons of coffee and poured out nearly equal amounts in tears. I met women so badly traumatized it they’d slipped into lives of prostitution, drug abuse and alcoholism. I met boys who were confused and adrift, convinced that they are damned for all eternity and have nothing left to lose.

The voices of the tyrannical god-men wormed their way into my head. But for every sleepless night I had, I knew from the pain-etched faces of the people I’d met that my bad nights were nothing compared to what they had suffered....

It has been my privilege to shine a light on a dark corner of Canada, to press for the rights of the women and children of Bountiful to be respected and protected and to finally see that justice may be done in that community. But that’s the chapter that has yet to be written.

As an insider’s view of abuse in Bountiful, see also Debbie Palmer’s courageous memoir Keep Sweet: Children of Polygamy (Dave’s Press, 2005), winner of the Vancity Women’s Book Prize.
Don Cherry as a Vancouver Canuck? The Maple Leafs in Victoria? And get this—a face-off circle located directly in front of the goal net. Pure hockey fantasy? Hardly.

Welcome to the Western Hockey League.

Between 1948 and 1974 the Pacific Coast/Western Hockey League operated in a total of 22 cities in four provinces and seven states, in one of the two best professional hockey leagues outside of the National Hockey League. While some of these players went on to have careers in the NHL including future hall-of-famers such as Glenn Hall, Alan Stanley and Gump Worsley, most were career grinders (like Don Cherry who played one season for the Canucks in 1968-69) who are now at long last remembered for their contribution (Heritage $19.95) by Jon C. Stott.

From 1915 to 1926, teams from the Pacific Coast Hockey Association and the Western Canada Hockey League competed against NHL clubs for the Stanley Cup, with Vancouver, Seattle and Victoria each winning professional sports’ most prestigious cup. After that, competition for the cup remained largely an eastern based affair until the 1970s. The advent of the Pacific Coast Hockey League in 1948 was seen as a western counterpart to the eastern-based NHL.

The Pacific Coast Hockey League (it became known as the Western Hockey League in 1952) had great aspirations. Duke McLeod reported in the Toronto Sun that “league directors believe that... not too long from now, the loop... will become a distinct threat to the NHL and AHL as a ‘big-time’ professional hockey organization.” Actually it would die trying.

The inaugural season of the PCHL in 1948 would operate two five-team divisions: the San Diego Skylhawks, Los Angeles Monarchs, Fresno Falcons, Oakland Oaks and San Francisco Shamrocks would play in the Southern Division.

The Portland Eagles, Tacoma Rockets, Seattle Ironman, New Westminster Royals and Vancouver Canucks would make up the Northern Division.

The 1948-49 season saw Vancouver lead the league in attendance with New Westminster close behind. The southern teams did not fare nearly as well, although the San Diego Skyhawks would be the league’s first champions defeating the New Westminster Royals.

The following year saw the Victoria Cougars enter the league led by hockey legend Lester Patrick as its owner. In their first year the Cougars were a lousy team—setting records of futility that drew great crowds.

The 1951-52 season saw a prairie shift for the league with the addition of franchises in Calgary, Edmonton and Saskatchewan. To reflect its extended geographical range, the PCHL renamed itself the Western Hockey League (WHL). The prairie franchises would do well for several years until the introduction of a spoiler known as Hockey Night in Canada that drew live audiences away from the rink and onto the couch.

The 1951-52 season also saw the introduction of a new faceoff rule on the ice level. Instead of two faceoff circles in each defensive zone, there would be only one, directly in front of the goal. League officials made the change to increase the punishment for non-penalty infractions by the defending team. Should the attacking club win a faceoff, officials reasoned, it had a better opportunity of making a screened shot on the goal. This experiment would be tried for three years before being abandoned in favour of the traditional two faceoff circles on either side of the net.

The 1955-56 season saw the addition of Winnipeg with its state-of-the-art 10,000-seat arena. The league was constantly shifting franchises and allegiances with NHL teams in efforts to become more viable. Its experiments in various markets would eventually point the way for the NHL in its location of franchises. Although an official ‘white paper’ was signed between the NHL and WHL, promising compensation for the location of NHL franchises in WHL territory, this all came to naught.

The peripatetic nature of the league would see it shift its prairie expansion of the 50s into another southern expansion in the early 60s. The WHL would become part of a pattern of expansion, contraction and alas, failure. The 1959-60 season also saw another league innovation, a best of nine championship series. This was played between the Vancouver Canucks and Victoria Cougars and won by the Canucks.

In 1963, the WHL introduced a pension plan, the first in minor league professional sports.
By 1964, the Cougars were purchased by Toronto Maple Leafs owner 
Stafford Smythe and renamed—the Victoria Maple Leafs. They'd last three more seasons in the provincial capital before being sold to Phoenix.

Stafford Smythe also had his eye on Vancouver. Smythe was prepared to build a downtown coliseum, if the city would give him the land for free. Vancouver voters turned him down. In 1965-66, when the NHL awarded six new conditional franchises, Vancouver was not on the list and speculation was 
that Stafford Smythe, still miffed by Vancouver voters' refusal to give him free land on which to build an arena, had influenced his fellow owners' votes against the Vancouver delegation. (Vancouver fans voiced their displeasure by boycotting products of Molson Breweries, owners of the Montreal Canadiens and a major sponsor of Hockey Night in Canada).

A total of 26 WHL players from the 1966-67 season became NHL regulars in the first year of expansion. This led to many older players in the WHL, including Vancouver's Phil Maloney (39), hanging in a few more years. As Stott writes, 'From major-league aspirant to strong and independent professional league, the WHL was now moving toward becoming a place where NHL teams could send their aging farmhands and their not-so-brightly shining prospects.'

In Vancouver, the Canucks moved into their new arena, the Pacific Coliseum, on January 7, 1968 losing 4-2 to Providence of the AHL. The Vancouver Canucks played their last WHL game on May 2, 1970. The team entered the NHL along with the Buffalo Sabres for the 1970-71 season. Ex-Ranger center Orland Kurtenbach was named the Canucks' first-ever captain, and the team played its inaugural game against the Los Angeles Kings on October 9, 1970, in which Barry Wilkins scored the first goal in franchise history. Two days later, the squad netted its first franchise win, with a score of 5-3 over the Toronto Maple Leafs.

As for the WHL, it would struggle on until 1974, the ongoing expansion of the NHL and the creation of the World Hockey Association would all contribute to the demise of a wonderful experiment that served western hockey well and in its way gave birth to our beloved Canucks.

Grant Shilling is a regular contributor from Cambridgeland.

AND WHEN THE CRAZY CANUKS WERE CHAMPS

North Vancouverite Janet Love Morrison interviewed more than 70 people in preparation for CBC's 1997 skiing documentary Life and Times: Those Crazy Canucks. Consequently CBC's Peter Mansbridge has supplied the foreword for Morrison's coffee table book, The Crazy Canucks: Canada's Legendary Ski Team (Harbour $34.95) about the rise of Canadian downhill racers such as Ken Read, "Jungle" Jim Hunter, Dave Murray, Dave Irwin and Steve Podborski during the 1970s, known collectively as the Kamikaze Canadians, as well as Neus Wunderteam (new wonder team).

"The Europeans think it's inconceivable that a Canadian could beat them," said Dave Murray. When the team arrived to compete in Argentina in the summer of 1975, Jim Hunter observed, "When we got off the plane we all looked like commandos. We were all in t-shirts and jeans. Irwin walked over and picked up a ski bag holding eight pairs of skis. He threw it on his shoulder like it was box of toothpicks. There was a sense of BOOM!—we had arrived."

After Ken Read became the first non-European to win a World Cup downhill event—at Val d'Isère in 1975—the world took notice of the handsome, yellow-suitied Canucks who had arrived to compete in a rusty old Volkswagen van. Dave Irwin ("the original Crazy Canucks") won Canada's second downhill victory at Schladming, Austria, the same year. Irwin and Read had joined the national team in 1971. Podborski became the first North American to win the World Cup title in 1982, the year Irwin retired. Read retired in 1983; Podborski made his final run at Whistler in 1984.

Rob Boyd of Whistler became the first Canadian male to win a World Cup downhill event in Canada in 1989.

Ken Read and Dave Murray, Schladming, Austria, 1978

Grant Shilling is a regular contributor from Cambridgeland.
The Rise of Sisterhood
From Grace MacInnis to Grace McCarthy, gender unites politicians

Anne Edwards was Minister of Mines, Energy and Petroleum Resources in Glen Clark’s NDP government. Some of the more than 80 politicians included in her book are:

- Rita Johnston
- Rosemary Brown
- Grace McCarthy
- Darlene Marzari
- Kim Campbell
- Iona Campagnolo
- Jenny Kwan
- Carole James
- Pat Carney
- Val Meredith

entertainment, not results.”

According to Edwards, left to themselves, women would run governments on a consensus model. The women in Edwards’ book also take direct aim at the near-complete cynicism of the media, which often falsely dismisses all politicians as soundbites and time-wasters.

“I worked really hard to be out there,” says one-term NDP MLA Margaret Lord, “to keep dialogue going, meeting with groups, bringing people into the office on any particular issue. [I worked at] figuring out where people stood on issues by being totally open to them.”

“A lot of people think televising parliament was the death knell,” says Kim Campbell. “John Turner described question period as bullshit theatre, and it is, but it’s an important part of the democratic process.”

“Still, as a kind of game, it undermines the seriousness of most of the people I know who were elected to various levels of government.”

Edwards works hard to demonstrate that better government for all requires re-making our legislative bodies to better reflect the innate tendencies of the other half of the human race, from Venus.

As long as members must toe the party line under a party whip, with a caucus system which forces voting strictly on party lines, Sanders believes, “you may as well go home—we won’t have better government.”

Collectively Edwards’ sources strongly suggest that communities—communities of interest and common concern—must become the basis for decisions, particularly as the world’s business continues to become more and more global, and the impacts more and more local.

Rod Drown served for six years on the board of the Columbia Shuswap Regional District during the 1990s.

Jenny Kwan, MLA, Vancouver-Mount Pleasant
Rocksalt: An Anthology of Contemporary BC Poetry, edited by Mona Fertig and Harold Rhenisch
(Anvil Press, 2008, $20)

In 1973, Robin Shelton of Victoria reviewed the new Oxford Book of Twentieth Century Poetry, edited by Philip Larkin. Some of his comments were "eccentric, uninformative, superficial, unformed, trivial, absurd." Out of 207 submissions, Larkin had accepted six poems each from twenty-two poets. Shelton was not one of them.

In 2008, Hannah Main-von der Kemp’s submission to Rocksalt was rejected. She writes far less peevishly than Skelton.

Rocksalt star
Hannah Main-von der Kemp’s submission to Rocksalt was rejected. She writes far less peevishly than Shelton.

Putting together the first extensive anthology of B.C. poets in three decades is an admirable but necessarily precarious project. It’s impossible to please all readers, let alone all writers, all the time. Some worthy names will always be left out.

GG-winner Roy Miki but not two-time GG-winner Don McKay? Bowering, Marilyn but not Bowering, George? Were some writers not interested in contributing?

If you’ve been reading B.C. poetry for a long time, you may recognize about half of the poets in Rocksalt by name, but not their poems, because co-editors Mona Fertig and Harold Rhenisch limited inclusions to one “fresh” poem each.


The standard Canadian poetry anthology, edited by Gary Geddes, first came out in 1970. Now into its umpteenth edition, it must still leave a few noses out of joint. He chooses to include less than twenty poets with an average of ten poems per poet, as well as a few pages of bio/poetics.

The 108 poets in Rocksalt represent about one-third of the total number who submitted. B.C. residency was a requirement. The introduction indicates “a new generation” would be welcomed, with an emphasis on “fresh” unpublished work.

True to their resolve, Mona Fertig and Harold Rhenisch have erred on the side of generosity, according space to some less-known writers, but this sampling approach could leave some readers disgruntled. Imagine you are in a coffee shop that offers a huge variety of brews with elegant written descriptions but you may only taste a teaspoon of each.

Speaking of coffee shops, why is there a cover painting of a jaded Viennese hafif bause? It’s hard to relate the image of a bored, paunchy priest as being relevant to the Pacific Northwest.

The contributors live in all areas of the province and include First Nations writers. There appears to be a preponderance of poets from the islands, especially Salt Spring, home to the publisher. A significant proportion have MFAs and/or teach creative writing. A few wag against that.

Some readers might have preferred to have more poetry, less theorizing. The latter rarely illustrates the former.

The personal statements of poets mostly avoid posturing and range from the predictable and pedantic to the original and humble.

One wonders if these statements held equal weight with the poems as they occupy about the same amount of print space.

Catherine Greenwood says that it’s only once in a great while that she is blessed with a moment of “hitting the right note” and confesses, feintingly, that writing poetry is “quite hard work.”

John Pass volunteered this insight: “I know less and less of what I’m up to, or what poetry might make of me.”

Overall, it’s hard to know what to make of this collection, mixed as it is, like this review. No anthology of poetry can be representational of all poetry.

Many British Columbians write and never consider publishing. The “Spoken Word” resurgence cannot be conveyed in print. Fine poets take long breaks from writing. Some write in languages other than English and there are no translations in this volume.

But, to its credit, this collection reflects the rich ethnicity of the population with a span of at least six decades between the youngest and oldest. It’s generous, it’s eclectic, it’s welcome; but not all the poems display accomplishment.

An opening Dedication recognizes about two dozen wonderful poets who have passed away: Everyone will recognize their own favourites and loved mentors.

Editing an anthology is like teachers trying to identify their best students: it shouldn’t be done but they can’t help doing it. Somebody has to teach. Somebody has to edit.

Hannah Main-von der Kemp

Hannah Main-von der Kemp is a poet, teacher, columnist and reviewer who lives in Lund and Victoria.
SOWING WILD OATEN

Accelerated Paces is attractive for its inventive writing and perceptions, rather than artful storytelling.

Jim Oaten is the opposite of a Pollyanna. As the inaugural winner of subTerrain magazine’s creative non-fiction award, he has collected his far-from-sanguine memoirs for Accelerated Paces: Travels Across Borders and Other Imaginary Boundaries, a potpourri of exploratory confessions. Along the way Oaten provides some brilliant personal views of despair. “Bottom is a lot deeper than you think it is. And there is, on the descent, a kind of panicked fascination as you keep plummeting past what you thought was ground zero.”

Some of his observations are even helpful. Depression doesn’t just refer to a feeling of unhappiness. The key to the disorder is in the word itself. Despair. To push down. Most depressive have learned, almost instinctively from childhood, to hold down their emotional selves.

Oaten has taken the lid off in his writing. Life is one big struggle for honesty. The reader shares in the narrator’s amused detachment when he visits Metrotown, “a mall that seemingly comprises about half of Burnaby, British Columbia,” or Las Vegas, “fifty years of unfiltered cigarettes, spoiled cocktails and the sweaty residue of dashed hopes.”

Would-be screenwriters will also enjoy Oaten’s account of attending writing instructor Robert McKee’s legendary thirty-six-hour sermon on the well-told story in New York. Oaten remains transfixed for three days by the hyper-confident McKee. He notes, “Most writers generally make poor public speakers. Their calling is tailor-made for social isolates whose best lines flow from the considered touch of fingertip and the printed page.”

Accelerated Paces is not exactly fiction; but Hunter S. Thompson didn’t exactly stick to the facts either. Some writing is just too good to be true—not easily classifiable as fact or fiction.

An East Vancouverite who says he lives in fear of real estate prices, Oaten offers sentences that bristle with unintentional humour.

“Travel truly is a type of time-stamped insanity,” he writes. “In fact, for someone who has never experienced it, the closest analogy I can think of to a bout of profound clinical depression is international air travel.”

Economy Class. 978-1-895636-93-4

NOW WE THREE ARE SIX

The triumvirate calling themselves SPIN have all hit paydirt recently. Jen Sookfong Lee’s debut novel The End of East (Knopf 2007) is now available in paperback, as is Mary Novik’s debut novel, Conclave (Doublfdeay 2007), winner of the Ethel Wilson Fiction Prize. Jane Hutton, the third member of this six-year-old writers’ group, makes her first fiction splash this spring with a war novel, Underground (Coromandel $21), published on the anniversary of the fall of Madrid. Underground follows Vancouverite Abel Fraser from the Somme in WW I, through the Depression and into the Spanish Civil War. The hero is inspired to defend freedom in Spain by Picasso’s painting Guernica. SPIN has a collective website at www.spinwrites.com.

MURDER AT ELEVEN

The Sweetness of the Bottom of the Pie by Alan Bradley (Doublfdeay $20)

A street kid at age thirteen, C. A. June Wolf has twice hitch-hiked across Canada, lived in and often visited Haiti where she worked with street kids, worked in a Vancouver rape crisis centre and held a variety of jobs before settling in Vancouver. Her first medley of speculative fiction stories, Finding Creatures & Other Stories, includes tales of aliens inadvertently trapped in sculptures by Henry Moore, a skidrow waitress with a passion for patontology and a northern Native man who searches for somewhere to bury a dead spacerman. 978-0-385-62007-7

ALIEN TALES

Finding Creatures & Other Stories by C. A. June Wolf (Anansi & Doubleday $15.95)

Mary Novik, Jen Sookfong Lee and Jane Hutton have supported one another as novice novelists.

SCOT GONE WILD

Wild Talent: A novel of the Supernatural by Eileen Kernaghan (Tilbury $20)

Set in London and Paris, circa 1898, Eileen Kernaghan’s young adult novel Wild Talent: A novel of the Supernatural follows the flight of a 16-year-old Scottish farmworker, Jeannie Guthrie, who heads to London to escape the advances of her not-so-well cousin. Introduced to Madame Helena Blavatsky’s famous salon for occultists, she discovers she has an unwanted “wild talent” for supernatural communication. With her free-spirited friend Alexandra David, she meets more spiritualists, anarchists and theorists in Paris, while venturing further in the tightening world of the Beyond.

Mary Novik, Jen Sookfong Lee and Jane Hutton have supported one another as novice novelists.

Fiction
Andrew Weaver’s global warming study dispels obsfuscation and charts media mood swings.

**Worst CO₂ Emitting Countries by Volume**

- United States of America 1650020
- China 1366554
- Russian Federation 419581
- India 363601
- Japan 343117
- Germany 220566
- Canada 174401
- United Kingdom 1601179
- Republic of Korea 127807
- Italy 122726
- Mexico 119473
- South Africa 119283
- Iran 118259
- Indonesia 103170
- France 101927
- Brazil 90499
- Spain 90145
- Ukraine 90020
- Australia 89125
- Saudi Arabia 84116

- **Total ranked by annual emissions in millions of metric tonnes in 2004.**

- While much of the recent literature on climate change has now moved beyond the science, evaluating potential policy solutions to the problem, there is likely no better introduction to the subject than Weaver’s Keeping Our Cool. In records that Canada has a poor performance on emissions. In 2004, we produced 2.2% of all global emissions of carbon dioxide, despite having less than 0.5% of the global population.

- **Worst CO₂ Emitting Countries Per Capita**

- Qatar 21.63
- Kuwait 10.13
- United Arab Emirates 9.32
- Aruba 8.25
- Luxembourg 6.81
- Trinidad and Tobago 6.80
- Brunei (Darussalam) 6.56
- Bahrain 6.53
- United States of America 5.61
- Canada 5.46
- Norway 5.22
- Netherlands Antilles 5.12
- Australia 4.41
- Falkland Islands 4.13
- Faeroe Islands 3.86
- Estonia 3.82
- Oman 3.72
- Saudi Arabia 3.71
- Gibraltar 3.65
- Kazakhstan 3.64

- **Ranked by per capita annual emissions of carbon in metric tonnes in 2004.**

- **M**

- **H**erb Hammond of Winlaw is a registered professional forester and forest ecologist with more than 30 years experience in forest management. He extensively criti-

- **S**hort as a narrative mystery, *Alex Rose’s Who Killed the Grand Banks?* (Wiley $36.95) investigates the collapse of Canada’s fishery 16 years after the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans announced a moratorium on northern cod. Rose provides answers and identifies culpable parties.

- **A**. H. Kellum, a former editor of Outside magazine, *James Glave recalls building a designed-for-sustainability writing studio (which doubles as a suite for in-laws) on Bowen Island. The process escalates marital tension and debt in his humorous memoir, *Almost Green* (Greystone $22). Glave suggests we should care about the environment, not about eco-hippiness. “This movement isn’t a crusade,” he says. “It’s a series of quiet conclusions reinforced by individual actions. We have to ac-

- **J**ohn Eibner, in *In a Life of His Own: Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook’s Search for Jewish Identity and National Renewal,* shows how Kook’s ideas and actions were shaped by his response to the modern world’s challenges, and how those ideas continue to inform contemporary discussions of Jewish identity and commitment.

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With minimal pandering and maximal knowledge, Cole Harris has built his case for the uniqueness of Canada. By Raymon Torchinsky

The Reluctant Land, Society, Space and Environment in Canada by Cole Harris (UBC Press, $32.95)

Robert Ray, for UBC for four years to integrate 40 years of study and geography of honing his wood-working skills, but mainly the professor emeritus the character and experience of Canada before Confederation.

This is a welcome antidote to the simplistic renderings of early Canadian history we are exposed to in high school social studies courses, political speeches and CBC mini-series. There is no March of Progress, no Heroic Moments or Triumphant Forging of a Nation. Instead, Harris has crafted a deeply insightful account of the history of what would become Canada, "not to promote, preach or create a national vi-sion but to understand and thereby bring into clearer focus what this country is and what it is not."

The Reluctant Land will be used in historical geography courses for many years to come—but it's more than that, because Harris set himself the task of writing a scholarly book accessible to the general reader. For the most part he has succeeded.

Encountering The Reluctant Land is like listening to a series of articulate public lectures, or- ganized on a regional basis, allowing for an exploration of each part of the country, in turn. The writing style is spare, straightforward, free of jargon. There are no footnotes. Instead, each chapter is followed by a succinct bibliographic essay to encourage further reading.

Eric Leinberger, the cartog- rapher, has done an excellent job in preparing the many maps that illustrate the text. And most importantly, Harris provides the reader with a clear account of his thinking process as he assem-bles evidence from a vast range of research and emphasizes the distinctive features of the Cana-dian experience.

In stressing the unique na-ture of Canada's pre-confedera-tion development, Harris shows the extent to which theories ap- plicable to the development of the American colonies, and the broad forces underlying nation building in Europe, have little explanatory power for Canada.

Harris, an Order of Canada recipient, provides an under-standing of the country based on inter-relationships between Na-tive peoples, the physical envi- ronment, as well as the three major forms of European expan-sion: the imperial system, com- mercial capital and agricultural settlement.

This is not the Berton-esque magazine approach to history. Harris has not used illus-trative stories of individuals to entertain. Rather he explores the experiences of fur-traders, pioneer settlers, Native hunters, lumber camp workers and merchants by vividly describing the environmen-tal, social and economic contexts in which they lived.

Harris' somewhat detached style can be compelling. A good example is the discussion of the disastrous social and ecological consequences of the Pacific maritime fur trade—the first rush for quick profit on the West Coast. Even if the unintended consequences had been fore-seen, it is unlikely they would have posed any moral concern for the fur traders.

After Captain Cook's crew accidently discovered the value of sea otter pelts in China in the 1780s, European trans-portation technology and Asian demand almost wiped out the West Coast sea otter population by the 1820s. Over 650 sailings, mainly by ships from England and New England, were made to the West Coast to obtain pelts.

The combination of greed and disdain for 'savages' led to an often violent struggle to co-erce the Native population to supply the fiercely desired pelts. Even before Europeans built settlements and took away land control, the impact on indig-enous societies was immense:

• Their populations were decimated by new diseases brought from Europe (for which they had no defense).
• They were forced into a glo-bal trading network to supply the demand for furs.
• Their way of life was forever changed by the introduction of European trade goods (blan-kets, iron goods, firearms, liquor).

Environmental ef-fects were also devas-tating. Sea otters feed on sea urchins, which in turn feed on kelp. Destruction of the sea ot-ters resulted in unchecked growth of the sea urchin popu-lation, which in turn vastly re-duced the kelp beds that sheltered in-shore fish stocks.

Harris contends that the sub-sequent changes in the Pacific coast ecology, with regards to Native livelihoods, have yet to be fully understood.

Even though events of the past 140 years are not men-tioned in the final chapter of summation—about how the grounds for Confederation were prepared, both advertently and inadvertently—Harris makes an eloquent explanatory argument as relevant to current political and social concerns as anything in today's editorial pages.

"At its best," he concludes, "Canada is a society that respects and appreciates the differences of which it is composed, and, ironically, in so doing establishes its own identity more clearly."

The wattle-and-daub house will likely have to wait. Cole Harris now plans to complete an even broader overview: an ex-amination of the expansion of European society into Africa and the Americas.

Raymon Torchinsky is an urban geographer and saxophonist in Vancouver.
Grateful to leave her mother and the alter-nating “stony silences and yelling matches” that have erupted since the death of her father, Angelo goes to Italy ex-pecting an uneventful summer with her uncle in Tuscany. As described in Ann Chandle-r’s fictional debut Siena Sum-me,r Angela arrives in Siena in time to witness the time-honored Palio, a highly competitive and often bloody, bareback horse race, staged twice each summer, during which ten rid-ers recklessly circle the Piazza del Campo.

Angela’s life becomes com- plicated when she discovers a dappled horse named Tempesta, awaiting a final jour-ney to the slaughterhouse, and Tempesta, a trustworthy boyfriend, befriends both Con and Little Cat and then unknowingly unites them for the chilling climax of Food: the second children’s book by Cooke who, not surprisingly, is a cat-lover.

Louise Donnelly writes her col umn from Vernon.

**ELLEN’S SECOND MOTHER**

The latest installment of Joan Givner’s series about a feisty, feisty, brainy heroine named Ellen (Ellen Fremedon, Ellen Fremedon Jour-nalist, Ellen Fremedon Volun- teer) presents the adolescent’s summer in Vancouver Island with her most heart- wrenching challenge.

At first, Ellen’s summer is full of promise. Pressured into com-peting in a provincial debating tournament and dressed down by the judge for wearing jeans and a juice-stained t-shirt, she goes home triumphant with the silver cup for best speech. So she’s off to Toronto for a glori- ous month of big-city shopping, museums, concerts and art gal-leries.

Best of all, Ellen is leav-ing behind her little brothers and their glorious delight in spi-ritual experiments. Ellen’s mom, who’s been bedridden with MS, has been rushed to the hospital. That’s the set-up for Ellen’s Book of Life.

After her mother’s death Ellen spends a lot of time down and with her doting uncle. Angela’s life becomes com- plicated when she discovers a dappled horse named Tempesta, awaiting a final jour-ney to the slaughterhouse, and Tempesta, a trustworthy boyfriend, befriends both Con and Little Cat and then unknowingly unites them for the chilling climax of Food: the second children’s book by Cooke who, not surprisingly, is a cat-lover.

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**FERAL CATS & FERAL TEENS**

First by Bev Cooke (Dawny, $19.95)

In Bev Cooke’s compelling Feral, hunger forces Little Cat to leave the safety of dark subway tunnels for the bright but largely empty subway platform. “It’s the safe-time, the time when the earth-shaker ear-breakers run seldom and the two-legs are few.” Little Cat meets the street kid Candlewax, “as agile and care-ful as any cat,” who tosses Little Cat a chunk of Egg McMuffin. Candlewax steals candles from the church where he hides out and hawks them on the platform. Candlewax is young, tough, scared. Feral. Just like Little Cat. Theirs is a violent coming-of-age. Little Cat endures the kicks and blows of the two-legs and faces down rats, evil-fanged dogs and other, bigger, viciously territorial cats. Candlewax, or Con as he calls him- self, has escaped a “worms-in-the-head bad” gang leader only to be tar-geted by rival gang. The old gang Nightside will kill him if he goes too deep into the tunnels. Out on the street the Crew is hunting him. Stay too close to the station, the cops will grab him and it’s Juvie; and if Nightside doesn’t get him there, then it’ll be Crew. Either way, Con’s “dead-meat.”

Katherine, herself involved in the gangs through a shifty, un-trustworthy boyfriend, befriends both Con and Little Cat and then unknowingly unites them for the chilling climax of Food: the second children’s book by Cooke who, not surprisingly, is a cat-lover.

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**TEEN Lit!**

In Annabel Lyon’s first work of ju-venile fiction, All-Season Edie (Orica $8.95), eleven-year-old Edie responds to the illness of her beloved grandfa-ther by acting out—try ing to practice witchcraft, runn ing her older sister’s party, trying to learn flamenco dancing and meeting Zeus at the mall while Christmas shopping.

Prior to ending a ten-year tenure as books columnist for the Georgia Straight and joining Vancouver magazine as an executive editor, John Burns published a novel about a teenager named Peter who, in the wake of his father’s death, runs away after he accidentally learns he was adopted. In Burns’ Runderland (Raincoast $11.95), Peter in-creasingly takes $8.95 to a psy-chedelic sub- conscious world he calls Run-derland.

In Jacqueline Pearce’s: Mango Touch (Dawny $8.95), a teenage outsider named Dana hopes her knowledge of manga art will make her popular during her school’s trip to Japan. But after the only manga fan she meets in Japan refuses to talk to her, Dana must make an effort to get the “in-crowd” from her school, known as the Melly Mob. She must cut out of her shell to con-tain and overcome its oppressive leader, Melissa, alias Little Cat.

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**GOING FOR A PIZZA**

Siena Summer by Ann Chandler (Douglas & McInnes, $21.95)

As described in Ann Chandle-r’s fictional debut Siena Sum-me,r Angela arrives in Siena in time to witness the time-honored Palio, a highly competitive and often bloody, bareback horse race, staged twice each summer, during which ten rid-ers recklessly circle the Piazza del Campo.

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**SPOONERISMS**

Titanic sugar spoons and making love spoons

BY PORTIA PRIEGERT

Her grandmother’s silver sugar spoon started Karina Autio on the path to two children’s novels about the history of Finnish settlement in Canada.

The spoon had belonged to her grandmother’s friend, who claimed it had been saved from the Titanic. The spoon led Autio to another story about the woman’s relatives, who died when the Empress of Ireland sank in the St. Lawrence River in 1914.

“When I found out it was Canada’s worst nautical disaster in peacetime,” says Autio, “I couldn’t believe I’d never heard of it.” She began researching the Empress of Ireland and discovered the ship had brought more than 100,000 European immigrants to Canada. “I realized, wow, there’s a lot of material here. Maybe it could be a novel.”

Seven years later, she released Second Watch (Sono Nis 2005), in which 12-year-old Saara Maki is en route to Finland aboard the doomed Empress of Ireland—and she survives the catastrophic voyage.

In its sequel, Saara’s Passage, her return to northwestern Ontario is complicated by the necessity of having her beloved Aunt Marja move to the sanatorium in Toronto for treatment of tuberculosis, leaving Baby Sanni in need of a caregiver.

The story was inspired by the experiences of Autio’s grandmother, who had to leave her baby—Karen Autio’s mother—with her husband at their family farm in Thunder Bay while she was treated in a Toronto sanatorium. Her grandmother never talked about the tragedy, but Autio pieced together the story from other family members.

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Her grandmother, who had emigrated from Finland only five years before, was miserable in the sanatorium and eventually discharged herself against her doctor’s orders. She returned home, living alone in a barn so no one else would be infected.

“She had to spend the next couple of years apart from my mother, watching other women care for her child,” says Autio. She eventually recovered. When she died at age 86, she left letters she had written to the baby she expected to die from tuberculosis.

“It was just soul-bearing,” says Autio, her voice choking with emotion. “My mom translated them for me into English so I could read these letters. At that point, I had to know more about what had happened.”

Saara’s Passage provides an authentic portrayal of a bygone era in Ontario, including the socialist history of Finnish immigrants. Although the characters came from her imagination, she gleaned details about daily life from interviews with seniors as well as research at the archives of Lakehead University and the museum at Thunder Bay, where she grew up. “I am a stickler for the details and being accurate to the time period,” says Autio.

Autio studied math and computer science at the University of Waterloo, which led to jobs in software development for major corporations, including Shell Canada and MacDonald, Dettwiler, an information-services company. She moved to Kelowna in 1996, after living in Calgary and the Lower Mainland with her husband, Will, also a software developer. Her first child, Amalia, is now 11. Autio started writing ten years when her son Stefan started school.

Portia Priegert is a writer based in Kelowna.
When not translating the Romanian poetry of Nobel Prize winner Nichita Stanescu or French literature, Oana Avasilichioaei—the most vowel-rich name in Canadian literature—has used Vancouver's Hastings Park (PNE grounds) as her focus for *feria: a poempark* (Wolsak & Wynn $17), an oblique examination of the legacy of George Black, a little-known settler who had plans for a slaughterhouse in 1869.

**B is for Billington**

Registered nurse Keith Billington and his wife Muriel, an English trained midwife, obtained Canadian nursing registration in Edmonton, then worked at the Fort McPherson Nursing Station in the Mackenzie Delta. As revealed in his memoir, Housecalls by Dogled: Six Years in an Arctic Medical Outpost (Lost Moose $19.95) they had two children in the north, and a third was born later in B.C. The Billingtons now live in Prince George.

**D is for Decker**


**E is for Emerald**

Operational for three periods between 1905 and 1973, the Emerald Mine near Salmo was the first mine in Canada to use heavy diesel-powered equipment underground and also boasted a heated, Olympic-sized swimming pool built with volunteer labour. Having worked as a miner for 13 years, including one summer at the Emerald mine, Larry Jacobsen of Port Coquitlam has produced Jewel of the Kootenays: The Emerald Mine (Gordon Soules $25).

**E is for Inglis**

Partly written during her 2007 Writer in Residence at the Vancouver Public Library, *Hiromi Goto*’s Half World (Puffin $20) for young adults is described as an epic gender-bending fantasy about a lonely, overweight only child of a loving but neglectful mother who is lured back to ‘Half World’ by a vindictive Mr. Glueskin. The heroine Melanie Tamaki must save her parents and protect the future of the universe in the bargain.

**F is for Faragher**

Thistledown Press in Manitoba has become—believe it or not—one of the leading publishers of fiction by B.C. authors. Launching on Bowen Island, *Nick Faragher*’s first collection of fiction, *The Well and Other Stories* (Thistledown $16.95), “combines sharp-witted voyeurism, psychological twists, and an assembly of maladjusted characters whose dark desires govern their fates.”

**H is for Hiromi Goto**

Internationally respected as an expert on the Spanish presence in the North Pacific, former Vancouver Maritime Museum and North Vancouver Archives curator Robin Inglis has compiled an invaluable reference work, *Historical Dictionary of the Discovery and Exploration of the Northwest Coast of America* (Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press $110), to be reviewed in our next issue. Yup, that’s not a typo on the price.
Having co-managed the BC Book Prizes since 2001, Liesl Jauk has taken a new position as manager of Richmond’s Community Cultural Development. Her husband Bryan Pike will continue to manage Rebus Creative, the organization that manages Vancouver’s Word on the Street. Rebus has hired Fernanda Viveiros, former director of the Federation of B.C. Writers.

Alberta-born Pat Kramer has worked for and with Northwest Coast First Nations in educational capacities for more than 20 years. In Totem Poles (Heritage House $19.95) she teaches how totem poles are made, their origin and history, the symbols and ceremonies linked to them, where to see them and how to identify recurring symbols.

Mark Leiren-Young: Never Shoot a Stampede Queen (Heritage House $19.95) is a collection of true-life tall tales about a rookie reporter’s adventures in Canada’s still-very-wild West. “The night Mark Leiren-Young drove into Williams Lake in 1985 to work as a reporter for the venerable Williams Lake Tribune, he arrived on the scene of an armed robbery. And that was before things got weird.”

It all started when James Marc found a Canadian Pacific Steamship cup while diving under an abandoned dock site about twenty years back—and now his Pacific Coast Ship China (RBC Museum $75) identifies more than 280 china patterns used along the Pacific coast of North America. Marc also includes descriptions of more than 59 Pacific coast shipping companies from the late 1800s onward.

A documentary directed by Robert McTavish, What To Make of it All: The Life and Poetry of John Newlove, features contributions by fellow poets such as Bill Bissett and George Bowering. It was shown at the Western Front Lodge in 2008 to coincide with the launch of a post-humous volume edited by McTavish, A Long Continual Argument: The Selected Poems of John Newlove (Chaudiere Books $22), with a foreword by Jeff Derksen.

We regret to report the deaths of B.C. authors Mary Macaree, Dick Hammond, Michael Bullock, Lewis Robinson and Billy Little. Please visit www.abcbookworld.com for further details.

As a project to mark B.C.’s 150th anniversary, Don Reksen and Leona Taylor have augmented information published in a 1908 edition of the Victoria Times Colonist that listed Victoria residents who had been living in British Columbia since 1858. The 54-page booklet entitled Roster of the Fifty-Eighters (Victoria: Old Cemeteries Society $7) includes pertinent obituaries and newspaper stories related to the Victoria pioneers who are listed, as well as a map marking pertinent gravesites in the Ross Bay Cemetery.
S

is for Shewchuk

Murphy Shewchuk’s Cariboo Trips & Trails (Fitzhunry & Whiteside $22.95) is a 406-page guidebook covering backroads trips and recreational trails in the Gold Rush region from Hope north to Barkerville and from Yellowstone Highway 5 west to Bella Coola. There are tables at the end of the chapters that include GPS waypoint data and kilometre references. The text is supplemented with 26 maps and 220 black & white photos. 978-1-55455-031-9

T

is for Tranpeople

A different kind of public transit: As Clinical Director of the Adler Centre of the Adlerian Psychology Association of British Columbia, Christopher A. Shelley has examined why transgendered people face hostility and prejudice and why society needs to more fully recognize “trans-related” issues in Tranpeople: Repudiation, Trauma, Healing (UTP $29.95). Shelley’s study is based on interviews with ten male-to-females and ten female-to-males. 978-1-55455-031-9

U

is for Ullmann

With her well-illustrated The Life and Art of David Marshall (Mother Tongue $34.95), arts journalist Monika Ullmann has launched publisher Mona Fertig’s ambitious literary series dedicated to under-recognized visual artists of B.C. A master carver who also worked extensively in bronze, Marshall pursued a modernist tradition in league with his friend Henry Moore. A founding member of the Sculptors’ Society of B.C., David Marshall died in 2006. 978-1-55455-031-9

V

is for Vander Zalm

Bill Vander Zalm, never a man to be at a loss for words, the 28th premier of British Columbia has self-published a 615-page autobiography called Bill Vander Zalm “For The People” ($39.95 plus tax and shipping) available via his internet site. 978-1-55455-031-9

W

is for Watmough

Following the recent death of his partner for more than fifty years, the much-admired UBC professor and opera critic Floyd St. Clair, David Watmough has reaffirmed his adherence to a notably English style of writing by releasing Coming Down the Pike (Ekstasis $14.95), a volume of sonnets with “inborn Cornish Rhythms.” Drawn from nature, literature, human foibles and gay culture, Watmough’s sonnets, are “loosely related to those of Milton” but also offer modern humour and irony. 978-1-55455-031-9

X

is for X-treme

Years after losing his lower right leg in a motorcycle crash in the Dominican Republic in 1985, Robert Kull traveled to a remote island in Patagonia’s coastal wilderness to live alone for a year. Living near a different Vancouver Island—one located in southern Chile—with only a cat as a companion, Kull wrestled with inner demons to write a diary based on his tumultuous quest for inner peace Solitude: Seeking Wisdom in Extremes (New World Library $23.95). 978-1-55455-031-9

Y

is for Yousef

As co-artistic producer of newworldtheatre, Marcus Yousef published Adrift (Talonbooks $16.95) inspired by the novel Adrift on the Nile by Egyptian Nobel laureate Naguib Mahfouz. Set amongst hip partygoers on a Cairo houseboat during the U.S. invasion of Iraq, the play begins as a comedy as a petty bureaucrat falls in love with a hijab-clad journalist, but tragedy arises from the friction between Western imperialism and its counterpart in the Arab world: religious fundamentalism. 978-1-55455-031-9

Z

is for Ziegfeld

If people remember the actress Billie Burke at all, it’s for her role as Glinda the Good Witch of the North in MGM’s 1939 film, The Wizard of Oz, but before that movie she was a famous stage personality, in London and New York, and as well as the wife of Florenz Ziegfeld, Jr. As the first biography of its subject, Grant Hayter-Menzies’ Mrs. Ziegfeld: The Public and Private Lives of Billie Burke (McFarland & Company $55) has been released to mark the 70th anniversary of The Wizard of Oz. “It is something of an ‘authorized’ biography,” says Hayter-Menzies, “as Burke’s daughter and grandchildren cooperated with me in researching Burke’s private life.” He also interviewed actors who performed with her on stage and screen. 978-1-55455-031-9

David Watmough at the funeral of his partner Floyd St. Clair