Bullying goes to the opera

Shane Koyczan
The Olympic sensation turns the pages of his life into song.
See page 11
ES, WE KNOW VINCENT VAN GOGH CUT OFF A PIECE OF HIS EAR.
Not the whole ear, but enough to convince an up-‘n’-coming
painter named Paul Gauguin
to end their friendship in
1888. But how many know he was an accomplished writer?
By the time Vincent van Gogh died at
twenty-seven in 1889, he had written about
one thousand letters. The way, the Dutch
painter had a sad and depressing life. He was
admitted to hospital in Arles in January of
1888. When he was released, local citizens
claimed he was unstable and a public risk, so
he was apprehended by the local constabulary
and re-admitted. Despite recurring epileptic
attacks, he continued to paint.
By the time van Gogh suffered a self-in-
flicted gunshot wound to his stomach in
July of 1889, leading to his death two days later,
he had sold precisely one painting in his lifetime—
to his long-suffering brother
he was at his bedside when he died.
We know that. But what we didn’t know
was van Gogh, the eldest of six surviving
children, was also a prolific and sophisticated
letter writer.
As described in Patrick Grant’s The
Letters of Vincent van Gogh: A Critical
Study (Athabasca University Press $27.95),
most of his letters (658) were written to Theo—
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Elizabeth May first ran as a candidate in the 1980 federal election campaign, hashing environmental issues into the political discourse. Their Cape Breton roots went back to a time when their family's fortunes plummeted after they emigrated from Canada to the United States. Her family's fortunes were restored when she became a lawyer and helped support her family by her crusader's zeal.

For the sole purpose of injecting environmental issues into the 1980 federal election campaign, Elizabeth May first ran as a candidate against Pierre Trudeaun's Liberal Party deputy prime minister, Alan MacEachen. Although defeated as a twenty-five-year-old lawyer, she gained respect for her family's crusade for environmental protection.

May feels that women have waited too long to have suffered from an identity crisis, having been on the sidelines as Canada's environmental progress was reversed. Her account of the decline of the environment reinvests the revenue in the country's future, or lives off the profits. Her account of the declining respect for Canada worldwide after Harper's withdrawal from the Kyoto Accord adds to her picture of a bleak future.

While May writes with conviction and clarity on the environment, she can be ambivalent on many feminist issues. While she appreciates the women's movement for making it possible for her to go to law school without an undergraduate degree, she is critical of feminism's shortcomings. She acknowledges that equal pay for equal work is a valid demand; at the same time she deplors the fact that a generation of women have equated self-worth with salary, and thus commodified their value.

Elizabeth May herself appears to have never to have suffered from an identity crisis, having been on the sidelines for most of her life. She feels the catastrophic decline in the country's future, or lives off the profits. Her account of the decline of the environment reinvests the revenue in the country's future, or lives off the profits. Her account of the declining respect for Canada worldwide after Harper's withdrawal from the Kyoto Accord adds to her picture of a bleak future.

Federa Green Party leader Elizabeth May follows Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton by writing an autobiography while in office.

Towards the end of her stint with the Sierra Club, May was planning to become an Anglican priest, but with Stephen Harper's electoral victory she found herself facing a choice between political involvement or watching from the sidelines as Canada's environmental progress was reversed. God could wait; planet earth could not. By the spring of 2006 she was on course to become leader of the Green Party she had co-founded, but without a seat in the house.

She made history on May 2, 2011 when she defeated incumbent Conservative cabinet minister Gary Lunn in the Saanich-Gulf Island riding to become the first elected Green Party member of parliament in Canada.

While most of the most headlining parts of her memoir are those in which the personal and the political events are closely woven together, the final polemical chapters, with the headings, How Canada Became A Petro-State and Engaging the Profit Motive to Fight Climate Change, are also compelling. May quotes Thomas Homer-Dixon’s statement that “Canada is beginning to exhibit the economic and political characteristics of a petro-state.” The key difference, she explains, between an oil-exporting democracy and a petro-state is whether the government invests the revenue in the country’s future, or lives off the profits. Her account of the declining respect for Canada worldwide after Harper’s withdrawal from the Kyoto Accord adds to her picture of a bleak future.
Nellie Yip Quong was born as Nellie Towers in Saint John, New Brunswick in 1882. Educated in the U.S., she was an English teacher in New York City when she fell in love with a successful jeweler from a little town called Vancouver. This was Charles Yip Quong, nephew of wealthy Yip Sang. [B.C. history buffs know about Yip Sang. An orphan with no prospects, he managed to save enough money to make an 80-day journey from China to San Francisco in 1864, at age nineteen. He found work in a restaurant and gradually taught himself English. At age 36, he put his belongings in a cart and trudged north through Oregon and Washington, eventually reaching Vancouver where he sold sacks of coal door-to-door. As outlined in Frances Hern’s Yip Sang and the First Chinese Canadians (Heritage 2011), Yip Sang, at age 37, was hired as a bookkeeper and paymaster for Lee Plu, who overshadowed the hiring of Chinese labourers for the Canadian Pacific Railway. Yip Sang was soon elevated to the position of superintendent, organizing as many as 7,000 Chinese workers who comprised as much as 75 percent of the CPR’s workforce. Later successful with an import/export business, he built the two-storey Wing Sang building in 1889.

Designated a heritage building in 1999, the oldest remaining building in Vancouver’s Chinatown, at 51-69 East Pender Street, is now owned and renovated by ‘condo king’ Bob Ronnie, who operates a private art gallery on the site.]

When Nellie Towers married Charles Yip, her parents disowned her and she was spurned by the Catholic Church. After the pair lived in China for a few years, they returned to Vancouver in 1904 and were afforded refuge by Yip Sang in his Wing Sang Building.

The young couple shared lodgings with Yip Sang’s three wives and their 23 children. Yip Sang had allocated one floor per wife—or one wife per floor—and one for a classroom. Yip Sang’s lack of formal schooling was counter-balanced by his Confucian values, such as self-improvement. He sponsored the Oy Kuo School for adult education and served as its principal for ten years. He wanted his own children to attend Canadian public schools for integration purposes but he simultaneously hired private tutors from China and Hong Kong to teach them Chinese.

It was from this environment that Nellie was able to master five Chinese dialects. She soon became a vital and outspoken link between two vastly divergent cultures. “Nellie fought on behalf of the Chinese,” Lazarus writes. “She challenged the justice system and shamed the Vancouver General Hospital into moving non-white patients out of the basement. When the White Lunch restaurant put up a sign saying ‘No Indians, Chinese or dogs allowed,’ Nellie made them take it down. She arranged care for the elderly, brokered adoptions, acted as an interpreter, and became the first public health nurse hired by the Chinese Benevolent Association.”

The Wing Sang Building also served as an opium production facility. Nellie and Charles Yip Quong moved six blocks away from the Wing Sang Building to 783 East Pender Street in 1917, where her husband did most of the cooking and gardening. Nellie proceeded to deliver an estimated 500 Chinese Canadian babies.

The bi-racial couple adopted numerous children, including Eleanor (Yip) Lum who has visited the present owner of the house, Wayne Avery. She described for him one of her favourite memories of Nellie—as a large imposing woman, wearing a wide hat, with a feather in the side and reading a Chinese newspaper on the bus.

According to Lazarus, during renovations, Wayne Avery discovered his house has also served as a bootlegging joint and a brothel. “He found old Finnish newspapers beneath the floor, cartons of cigarettes stacked in the ceiling boxes in a secret hideout in the garden, and locks on the inside of the bedroom doors,” she writes.

As well, Sensational Vancouver reveals that tenants of the house prior to Nellie and Charles Yip Quong included Nora and Ross Hendrix, the grandparents of Jimi Hendrix.

Eve Lazarus previously examined the social histories of heritage houses in Greater Vancouver for At Home with History: The Untold Secrets of Heritage Homes (Anvil 2007). She “blogs obsessively” about houses and their genealogies at www.evelazarus.com
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Harry and Jessie Webb met at the Vancouver School of Art in 1948 and were friends of Al Neil, Marya Fiamengo, David Bromige, Harry Redl, Robert R. Reid, Jack and Joy Long. They were also founding members of the Cellar Jazz Club.

As the daughter of Harry and Jessie Webb, Adrienne Brown has published an account of these bohemians and their contributions to the culture of B.C., *The Life and Art of Harry and Jessie Webb* (Mother Tongue $34.95), for book number seven in the ongoing *Unheralded Artists of B.C.* series.

Best known for their prints made with linoleum blocks during the 1950s, the Webbs were associated with the ferment of both the Vancouver School of Art and the The Cellar Jazz Club at 2514 Watson Street, near Main and Broadway, where pianist Al Neil led the house band.

For many years the Webbs lived at Dundarave Beach in West Vancouver. Also a landscape architect, Harry Webb designed the Park and Tilford Gardens that opened in North Vancouver in January of 1969. That initiative sparked the Munros to open their own bookstore that was relocated to Victoria.

Harry Webb arrived in Vancouver in 1946 as a newly minted teenage veteran who had served in the Canadian Merchant Marine. Buoyantly sociable, the couple attended many costume balls and parties while earnestly pursuing their artistic careers. Harry Webb was involved in the founding of the British Columbia Society of Landscape Architects. He formed a successful design company called Justice & Webb. Jessie studied Paul Cezanne, Georges Braque and Henri Matisse during her years at the Vancouver School of Art.

Bob Reid, who in 1949 established the first private press in Canada, knew the Webbs and describes their approach to the art world:

“They were well-known to Bert Binning, Jack Shadbolt, and Lionel Thomas as dedicated and talented artists, but they were never accepted by the ‘middle-class’ mentality that prevailed in the mainstream of Vancouver art. They were our first hippies, I’d say, mainly because they didn’t have any money and were more interested in making art than money.”

Adrienne Brown is a landscape architect and writer who lives in North Vancouver.

An art exhibition in conjunction with *The Life and Art of Harry and Jessie Webb* will open at the West Vancouver Museum on September 16 and continue to November 8, 2014. It’s called *Art in the Age of Jazz: Harry Webb and Jessie Webb.*
We love books that contain a great author’s life’s work, so we are extremely pleased to be publishing Phyllis Webb’s long-awaited collected poems, *Peacock Blue*. Webb is a national literary treasure who has been long considered one of Canada’s greatest poets. In addition to her career in writing, Webb made important cultural contributions as a broadcast journalist for the CBC. *Peacock Blue* contains all her published poetry as well as thirty previously unpublished poems. Long-time Webb scholar and personal friend, John F. Hulcoop, provides an analytical introduction. Please join us in October, when Webb will be making a rare appearance at Vancouver International Writers Festival.

One of the hottest authors in France right now is novelist Maylis de Kerangal. Her 2010 title *Birth of a Bridge* received a bevy of awards, including the Prix Médicis and the Prix Franz Hessel. The book was also shortlisted for the Prix Goncourt. Talon is pleased to present the first English translation of *de Kerangal*. Talon author Martine Desjardins describes the *Birth of a Bridge* as “a grandiose, gravity-defying feat of narrative structure, acting as a bridge between reality and myth, development and nature, megalomania and intimacy, and attracting the most varied set of characters ever assembled – nomads of the modern world sharing this surreal space suspended between two shores, living outside the boundaries of ordinary life.” And yet for a book accomplishing all this its narrative drive so captivates readers that it compels them to finish it in one sitting.

Michel Tremblay continues his Desrosiers Diaspora series with *Crossing the City*. These wonderful historical novels feature the early lives of characters made famous in *The Fat Woman Lives Next Door* and other novels. Michel Tremblay appears as a character himself this season in George Rideout’s beguiling play Michel and Ti-Jean, in which Tremblay and Jack Kerouac have an epic (imagined) meeting at a bar in St. Petersburg, Florida.
Bullying goes to the opera

Vancouver spoken word virtuoso Shane Koyczan is the undisputed local hero of the Vancouver poetry scene, easily eclipsing the old guard in international exposure and popularity.

Now he’s got a new book—and a new opera.

SHANE KOYCZAN’S NOVEL IN VERSE, Stickboy (House of Parlanse 2008) is the basis for a new opera to be performed at The Vancouver Playhouse from October 23 to November 7.

Stickboy portrays the lonely struggles of a bullied child full of rage, and the ultimate healing power of love.

The Vancouver Writers Festival will present an evening with Koyczan, who wrote the libretto, on Tuesday, October 7 at 7:30 pm.

The evening, called Stickboy: From Page to Stage, will also feature conductor Leslie Dala and director Rachel Peake, as well as two members of the ensemble performing a selection from the opera.

Neil Witemesel composed the music.

“TheSE aren’t pages in a book,” says Koyczan, “these are pages of my life.”

KOYCZAN BECAME KNOWN AROUND THE WORLD IN 2010, when he performed segments of his poem “If he/stands/like a tree/and/or a conciliator, they will grasp the profound and lasting effect of bullying.”

Whether the reader is a victim of bullying, a perpetrator, an observer, or a conciliator, they will grasp the profound and lasting effect of bullying.

To This Day also includes resources for kids aged eleven or older affected by bullying.

To This Day Project, Koyczan has performed with such notables as Pauline Johnson, Maya Angelou, George Johnson, Utah Phillips, and has been a part of the Winnipeg Folk Festival, the Vancouver International Writers Festival, and the Verge International Writers Festival.

He has performed at the Edinburgh Book Festival, the Vancouver International Writers Festival, and the Winnipeg Folk Festival, as well as venues in New York, Los Angeles and Sydney. Koyczan has also won the Canadian Spoken Wordlyrics.

His first poetry collection was Visiting Hours (Mother Press Media, 2005). It was included by both The Guardian and The Globe & Mail in their Book of the Year lists, the only poetry title to appear in both.

By 2014 it was into its third edition. It includes We Are More. Koyczan has presented at TED Talks, where the audience leapt to their feet in applause. It led to Koyczan’s collaboration with TED Education to create a classroom tool that provides teachers with a way to discuss anti-bullying with students.

Koyczan’s “talk rock” band Short Story Long is a quartet that plays folk, funk and ambient music. They received a “Best New Artist” award at the BC International Music Awards in 2009.

Born in Yellowknife, Koyczan attended the creative writing program at Okanagan University College and became the first poet from outside of the U.S. to win the US-based National Poetry Slam competition in 2000.

KOYCZAN HAS COME A LONG WAY FROM YELLOWKNIFE. Shane Koyczan has come a long way from Yellowknife.

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Arthur Porter on Business, Politics, and Intrigue
Arthur Porter and T.R. Reid
A revealing memoir of a fascinating and controversial medical doctor and former spy watchdog of CSIS.
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David Robertson
Fabulous food, tips, and tricks from Vancouver’s world-famous cooking school.
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Miss Vickie’s Kitchen
Family Recipes from Vickie Kerr
Vickie Kerr, creator of Miss Vickie’s Potato Chips
A cookbook of delectable and easy-to-prepare recipes from the creator of the legendary potato chips.
$29.95 October

www.figure1pub.com
Distributed in Canada by Raincoast Books and internationally by Publishers Group West.
Gabrielle Prendergast takes the verse-novel into unimagined territory. Her two young adult novels about a female outsider named Ella, Audacious (Orca 2013) and Capricious (Orca Books $19.95), present high school life in which boys are more civilized than girls. “I think that a lot of the worst bullying is not coming from the girls,” say Prendergast. “It’s within the gender.” Estranged from coventional girls, her heroine maintains two boyfriends with her merrier spirit and quirky humour.

Gabrielle Prendergast: I would say it amounts to a character study of a very unusual and socially rebellious girl who, in her grade eleven year, does a piece of artwork for a school art show that is basically a picture of her traits.

BCBW: So Ella can be an anti-social teenager, but there’s also a part of her that thrives on being rejected or an outsider.

Gabrielle Prendergast: To what extent does Ella create her own alienation?

GP: Being a teenager is largely about finding your place in the world and figuring out how you fit in. I think that when you are a teenager, if you don’t automatically slot into a particular role then it becomes your role to be outside of the acceptable crowd.

I certainly did it when I was a teenager.

BCBW: At the same time, Ella in Audacious and Capricious yearns for some of the respectability of being part of the accepted girl group. Is that how you were when you were growing up?

GP: By the time I got to be Ella’s age, I had kind of gotten over that. I had accepted that role of the outsider, largely the way that Ella does. But the story is only autobiographical to a certain extent. Much of it is made up.

BCBW: You’ve not only given Ella a realistic sexual life, but she has two boyfriends.

GP: I look back on my young years and realize that I wasted a lot of fidelity on boys and men who weren’t worth it. I’m married now, and my husband is worth it, but you know, I’m older. Many times young people commit their lives to one person, or another, for a year, or two years, or six months, and are turning down lots of opportunities for friendship and fun with other people. And then it turns out the first person is not worth it and they turn out to be a jerk.

BCBW: The second book, Capricious, explores this in a much more explicit way. In what other ways are the two novels different?

GP: Oddly enough, if I’d had more time I probably would have written Capricious more by the seat-of-my-pants, like the first one. But Orca wanted to publish it in the Spring, so they hacked six months off the writing time. So I had to plot it a lot more for that reason.

BCBW: When are you writing do you ever stop and ask yourself, is this too adult?

GP: As far as content goes, I have a fair understanding of what is acceptable in young adult literature, and what I would want my daughter to read when she’s a young adult. And what she would be interested in reading. As for swearing, well, it’s too late for me, it’s too late for my daughter and most kids. They’ve heard it all. And as far as the sexual content, well, by the time you’re 16-years-old you’re already reading 50 Shades of Grey. Mainly I don’t want them to be embarrassed while they’re reading the book. That kind of thing still grosses you out when you’re 13, 14 or 15-years-old.

BCBW: Both novels are written as so-called verse novels. Why?

GP: I heard about young adult verse novels for the first time in about 2005 and I thought it might be like Paradise Lost or something like that—an epic poem. So I bought one of them—Sonya Sones’ book, the one called One of Those Hiduous Books Where the Mother Dies—and I loved it. It wasn’t an epic poem at all, it was a collection of poems the way Audacious and Capricious are. I was captivated, so I read a lot of her books, and verse novels by Ellen Hopkins and Lisa Schroeder. Then I just set myself a challenge to write in verse.

BCBW: Arguably the term verse novel is inappropriate, especially with your writing. It’s not poetry and it’s not verse.

GP: Yeah. I’m not a poet. I’ve never really been one of those people who likes to write poetry, but it just seemed to work for me. I felt really creative and comfortable when I was writing. I do think the term verse novel is inadequate. It just doesn’t quite capture what we’re doing. These are not like Dante’s Inferno, as I said. It’s a new way of approaching narrative, and we’re kind of making it up as we go along.

BCBW: Where did the title Audacious and Capricious come from?

GP: Audacious came from the scene where Ella makes a joke about the art of Jackson Pollock. Then she says, “I’m just kidding, I really like him.”

“I think girls and boys are mean to each other in different ways. But the bullying, the psychological bullying, is particularly nasty sometimes with the girls.”

In what other ways are the two novels different?

GP: He’s so audacious.” That’s when her friend Samir says, “Audacious should be your middle name.” It set Ella’s heart on fire to have someone say that to her. It was an incredibly romantic thing to say. I did not know before I wrote that scene that the book was going to be called Audacious. Once that word was attached to Ella, the whole concept of what was going to happen in the book just came to life. And it was very easy to finish that book after that. It took me two years to write it to that point, and about three months to finish the book after that point.

BCBW: Were you audacious in high school?

GP: I don’t remember really ever using that word. It probably was used on me. I did do some fairly crazy things in high school. I was a bit more easy-going than Ella is and not quite so judgemental, but I certainly did some bookers things.

BCBW: Were you capricious as a teenager in terms of who you were involved with?

GP: I didn’t really have boyfriends in high school. Between high school and university, I don’t know what happened to me or to the boys that I knew, but when I went to university literally two months later, I didn’t have enough time to go out on all the dates that I was asked out on. I literally had three dates in one day. I wasn’t a great beauty, just like Ella’s not a great beauty, but I think men were attracted to me for the same reason, because I was kind of kooky. And I liked them and I respected them and I didn’t put any kind of performance for them. I was just myself. But yes, I definitely was capricious with men when I was a little bit older than Ella.

BCBW: Why did you choose Orca Books over another publisher?

GP: I’ve always liked them since I started reading their books. I like that they produce things that are appealing to so-called reluctant readers and to struggling readers. And I like how unpretentious they are. Their goal is to get those books into the hands of readers, and get them into libraries and get them onto bookshelves in school libraries. That’s a more serious job than trying to have some stupid bestseller. I mean, as much as I would like to have a bestseller, and maybe I will one day with Orca, it’s more important to me that my job is to engage young readers. That’s what I want to do.

BCBW: Female bullying is an integral part of Ella’s story. It motivates her to become a different duck.

GP: Yeah. When I write, I’m trying to subvert tropes. One of the tropes in young adult books about girls is the way they’re mistreated by boys. That was not my experience in high school. I certainly had the typical experiences that young girls have, being groped. But, sadly, I found that girls and women can be quite hostile to each other. At Ella’s age, and into the twenties, there’s a lot of competition for mates which might sound cave-manish, but that is actually what’s going on. And that becomes pretty hostile. I think that a lot of the bullying between girls—even at my daughter’s age, and she’s ten—comes from that kind of jealousy.
I n 2010, ADVENTURE FILMMAKER Dianne Whelan went to Base Camp on Mount Everest where she interviewed climbers, doctors and Sherpas, who had all lived there for weeks, sometimes months, awaiting a window in the weather to summit the world’s highest mountain.

Some knew there was a good chance they wouldn’t survive the journey and that the mountain is infamously littered with hundreds of bodies of those who failed to complete the grueling and dangerous climb. Whelan also witnessed the human impact on Everest and the unsettling effects of climate change. The melting glacier, which loses more than four inches a day, reveals evidence of man’s hubris with each new body uncovered by the receding ice.

Her documentary film about the Base Camp trip had its world premiere at the Vancouver International Film Festival. Now Whelan’s personal exposé of her time there has its world premiere at the Vancouver International Film Festival.

Dianne Whelan (inset) and her photo of two climbers on the Khumbu glacier.

“Whelan foresaw the tragedy on Everest that took the lives of 16 Sherpas last week. But it was not a surprise. Everest is melting and avalanche hazards are a daily occurrence. The mountain is a tomb of many frozen dreams. During the climbing season hundreds of Sherpas go up and down the mountain every day to prepare the route and camps en route to the summit. Every time they climb up, it is a bit like Russian roulette, and even preparing for one climber takes several trips up and down the mountain. One of the most treacherous parts, the Khumbu glacier, is where this most recent tragedy unfolded. It was the worst disaster in the history of climbing at Everest. Yet there are over 250 dead bodies on that mountain, so the dangers are not new; seven porters from Darjeeling, India, died when Mallory tried to summit in 1922.

“What is new is the dangerous impact of climate change on a rotting glacier, and the high number of inexperienced climbers who come to the world’s highest mountain thinking they can buy a safe trip to the top. It’s a lethal combination.”

“For those who don’t already know, the literal translation of Sherpa is not “porter,” but “man from the east.” Sherpas are Tibetan Buddhists who left Tibet 500 years ago and settled on the other side of the mountain in Nepal. Today they comprise less than 1 per cent of Nepal’s population.

“As I write this, Sherpas are boycotting this year’s climbing season on Everest because it is too dangerous to climb. They reject the high number of inexperienced climbers, doctors and Sherpas, who come to the world’s highest mountain thinking they can buy a safe trip to the top. It’s a lethal combination.”

“I expect the Sherpas will unionize, and believe the Sherpas, who are taking the highest risks, deserve better wages, benefits and the costs of these expeditions will go up. Do not think it is the end of climbing Everest—as long as people want to pay, somebody will provide the services. But I believe the Sherpas, who are taking the highest risks, deserve better wages, benefits and compensation, and support for their boycott of Everest this year.”

Dianne Whelan lives in Vancouver.
Although it wasn’t on par with the deaths of sixteen Sherpas earlier this year on Everest, it was headline news worldwide in 2003 when seven skiers were killed by an avalanche in the Selkirk Mountains.

As Ken Wylie vividly recalls in Buried (Rocky Mountain Books $25), the doomed adventurers had arrived by helicopter from nearby Revelstoke for extreme skiing under the direction of Ruedi Beglinger. the owner and chief guide of the Selkirk Mountain Experience. He had been running ski tours from his Durrand Glacier Chalet every winter for the past eighteen years. “Each year I ski over a million vertical feet,” Beglinger told new arrivals at their indoctrination session.

Described as temperamental, Beglinger, with “a sharp Swiss accent,” also informed his guests they would have to pay for helicopter costs if they had to be evacuated due to injury. Lessons in avalanche preparedness were given. Skiers learned that if a person is buried in snow for 30 minutes, statistically they have only a fifty percent chance of survival if retrieved.

Ken Wylie would be buried for 35 minutes. Newly employed at the ski resort as the assistant guide, Wylie, with twenty years experience on the slopes, was a skilled mountaineer who was repulsed by Beglinger’s dictatorial personality. Despite being newly married with a mortgage, Wylie was planning to quit.

In his memoir, Wylie recalled the two days of skiing that preceded the avalanche. “When I make a call it’s a hundred percent,” Beglinger had told him. Beglinger’s guiding philosophy included: “Don’t baby them.” Beglinger was the complete boss.

Wylie wanted to intervene but he didn’t have the backbone to undermine the hierarchy in place. No doubt hundreds of lieutenants in warfare have felt the same way.

Buried is disturbing, like a thriller movie. “Ruedi is controlling the decision-making,” Wylie writes, “but the consequences are mine to live with.”

Unfortunately this brave book fails to provide a synopsis of the legal aftermath. What sort of inquiry was held? How did Ruedi successfully defend himself? Were all the bodies found? Wylie suggests on page 17 that possibly Beglinger (whose last name appears only once in the text) was out to particularly impress one of the seven deceased.

Ruedi’s opera about the courtesan Violetta Valéry, La Traviata, ends in her inevitable demise after her life of willful risk-taking in the name of free love. We know something terrible is going to happen as the skiers are divided into groups each day, one led by Beglinger and the other led by Wylie.

Then Wylie describes the deadly avalanche on a severe slope of Tumbledown Mountain called La Traviata. Verdi’s opera about the courtesan Violetta Valéry, La Traviata, ends in her inevitable demise after her life of willful risk-taking in the name of free love. Extreme skiing is a form of deliberate risk-taking.

After Wylie provides a chilling description of what it’s like to be buried alive and survive, he is interviewed by an RCMP constable. A transcript of that interview shows he did not share his private misgivings about Beglinger’s leadership with the police.

Stricken with remorse, Wylie literally crawled through a rear window of a building to avoid further questioning from media. He confesses to the reader: “I am relieved that not everyone in my group died; that fact matters to me. It matters to me that three were from my group and four from Ruedi’s. I witness my competitiveness about these facts with disgust, but it also brings me comfort, as my lower numbers are a measure of competency.”

Unfortunately this brave book fails to provide a synopsis of the legal aftermath. What sort of inquiry was held? How did Ruedi successfully defend himself? Were all the bodies found? Wylie suggests on page 17 that possibly Beglinger (whose last name appears only once in the text) was out to particularly impress one of the seven deceased.

Craig Kelly, a potentially influential client. Is this the first time Ken Wylie has mentioned this detail in public?

We want to know more.}

Return to Tumbledown Mountain

Buried

Ken Wylie

Ken Wylie
Innocence on Trial
The Frontline of War
Juan McLean

Juan McLean was a Vancouver neurologist adjusting to civilian life when he suddenly found himself on trial for ten counts of sexual assault. A gripping novel set on the fringes of Canada’s wrongly convicted.
Heritage House Publishing $3.95 pb $12.95 bk

From Classroom to Battlefield
Victoria High School and the First World War
Barry Gough

Acclaimed Canadian historian Barry Gough brings the First World War closest to home in this portrait of a Vancouver Island high school that goes to war and is forever changed by the experience.
Heritage House Publishing $10.95 pb $21.95 bk

CHEK Republic
A Revolution in Local Television
Diana Dalhaimer

Victoria’s CHEK TV has long been a trailblazer in the television industry. Diana Dalhaimer follows the story from the station’s 1965 launch in its near-fatal infancy and on to its proud years as a proudly independent media outlet.
Heritage House Publishing $10.95 pb $20.95 bk

And in the Morning
Fields of Battle—The Somme, 1916
John Williams

Longing for glorious adventure, fifteen-year-old Jim has discovered only tragedy and a grim struggle for survival in the trenches of France. Recommended for readers aged 14 to 24.
Heritage House Publishing $3.95 pb

Whatever Lola Wants
George Szanto

A story about secrets—those we tell and those that make us who we are. Inspired by human drama, Ted, an immortal, shares the stories of three mortal families with a god named Lola.
Break a Glass Publishing $6.95 pb $18.95 bk

The Pull of the Moon
Julie Paul

Twelve unsettling but poignant short stories that explore human nature, relationships, and the power of secrets, through characters and circumstances that are simultaneously familiar and foreign.
Break a Glass Publishing $8.95 pb $16.95 bk

The Fourth Betrayal
Brun Burrows

After his best friend turns up dead, Ollo Swanson stumbles onto a dangerous government conspiracy. A web of silence and intrigue, this mystery explores what happens when bureaucratic greed and deception threaten the livelihoods of small coastal communities.
Touch Wood Editions $9.95 pb $19.95 bk

Lonesome
Memories of a Wilderness Dog
Chris Czajkowski

The memoirs of a charming and invaluable mutt with attitude, penned by the loyal canine companion of a wilderness junkie. By turns funny, sad, and grim, but always entertaining.
Touch Wood Editions $9.95 pb $19.95 bk

The Afterthought
West Coast Cookbook
Belinda Brown

The Afterthought brings back into focus Vancouver’s psychic foodie culture. Using colour-coded posters designed by Bob Mosher and Frank Lewis as a framework, Brown’s recollections are a celebration of Vancouver’s unique culinary arts like the Grateful Dead, Joan Jett, Steve Miller, Tom Northcote, The Country Joe & the Fish and many more.
Touch Wood Editions $14.95 pb $24.95 bk

Buried
Ken Wayne

On January 20, 2009, a massive avalanche released from Tumbling Mountain in the Selkirk Range of British Columbia. Ten tons of snow buried 19 members of the guided backcountry skiing group Down a day called La Trinita. After a bitter five-year search, it became clear: seven people were dead. Buried is the止损ant family’s story of reflection, rumors and healing.
Touch Wood Editions $14.95 pb $24.95 bk

The Columbia River Treaty
Deborah Harford, Robert Sandford

Part of the same Mountain series of books, The Columbia River Treaty: A Primer is a timely, provocative and accessible work that explains the nature of this complex water agreement between Canada and the U.S. and its important implications for communities and industry throughout much of British Columbia.
Touch Wood Editions $16.95 pb $34.95 bk

Salmon
Jude Isabell

Salmon: A Scientific Memoir investigates a narrative that is important to the Pacific Northwest—the salmon as an iconic species. Traditionally it’s a story about conflict. But that story is not true. By following ecologists, anthropologists and biologists, the reader will reframe this complicated story.
Touch Wood Editions $16.95 pb $34.95 bk
A Rock Fell On the Moon is a poignant family story that reveals a little-known vein of Yukon silver mining history beyond the well-worn yarns of Klondike gold. It’s a ripping good read, according to reviewer Caroline Woodward.

Daddy, what did you do in the mines?

Alicia Priest was an adventurous little girl who loved to hear her father's stories of mining. But when she was ten, she learned the truth about her father's connection to a daring 1963 heist.

Gerald Priest was a chief assayer for United Keno Hill Mine, the third richest producer of silver in the world. He never publicly admitted to his role in the theft of 671 bags of ore that were 80% silver. Estimates vary radically as to its value, but it's likely more than $2 million in today's currency.

Did it come from piles of ore left temporarily, for tax reasons, in an unused mine tunnel? Or did the unusually rich silver come from a giant boulder found on the claims Gerald Priest staked on barren ground known as the moon, hence the wonderfully apt title of the book?

When he lived, Gerald Priest didn't disclose anything to his daughter except increasingly far-fetched stories. She has subsequently applied her journalistic research and interviewing skills to hundreds of letters, newspaper stories, RCMP files and investigators, court documents, the Yukon Archives, lawyers, geologists and former mine employees.

Alicia Priest began her investigation in 2011, after both parents had died, not an uncommon practice for authors who must outflank difficult home truths. She has substituted her journalistic research and interviewing skills for authoring the book, a package deal. Helen's mother had to come along, too.

Each chapter of the book is prefaced by a quote from Robert Service. Amongst the Yukon Bard’s doggerel verse are zinger nuggets of philosophy and psychology.

“Perhaps I am stark crazy, but there’s none of you too sane; it’s just a little matter of degree.”

It’s easy to imagine the bespectacled boy who would mastermind the great Yukon silver heist reading all Jack London’s adventure novels and memorizing Bard’s doggerel verse.

This lively, fashionable young woman from the relatively bright lights of Vancouver, circa 1951, only made the move to Elsa, Yukon, population approximately 600 souls, after Gerald agreed to a package deal. Helen’s mother had to come along, too.

continued on page 18
ing lines of Service’s poetry. But chance rolled snake eyes on a Friday morning in June, 1963. Problems arose only after the driver of the flatbed truck that was loaded with bags of purloined ore took a wrong turn and had to ask for directions. He parked outside the Elsa Cookhouse (barber shop, beer parlour and library) and bought cigarettes and coffee, asking how to reach the main road south.

Unfortunately the mine manager happened to look out his window and see the truck. Fridays weren’t ore-moving days... and, hey, it was a Friday!

What followed were the most expensive trials ever held in the Yukon. The legal elements include a mysterious Third Man who was never charged, or ratted out by the two men who were; the no-longer legal burden of reverse onus (meaning the men charged were guilty until they could prove otherwise); and the intervention of lawyer Angelo Branca who bowed out from representing Gerald Priest after being appointed a Supreme Court judge, an untimely honour which likely sealed Priest’s fate.

This is a consummately well-written book, achieving the near-impossible feat of maintaining a journalist’s objective distance while literally tracking her father’s fifty-year-old footsteps and disclosing painful family secrets with restraint and dignity.

Order from your favourite bookstore. Books can also be ordered directly by viewing the online catalogue at www.granvilleislandpublishing.com

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Caroline Woodward is the author of Penny Loves Wade, Wade Loves Penny (Oolichan 2010), a novel set in the Peace River.

continued from page 17
Wants who comb through the haystack and find the needle. We will be the information assistant, not surfing and clicking. SCP is practicing the new journalism: helping someone do something, finding a pragmatic solution, usually saving time but always saving money in the process.

Thus, if journalism is about identifying jobs to be done, SCP is about doing those jobs you identify. We publish mainly financial and legal titles, but this autumn you’ll find us expanding into the environment, immigration and information policy. The possibilities for this self-helping, solution-seeking field can also, like the technological advances, render us breathless.

SCF has been alive for almost half a century. Like all publishers, it appeals to the large segment of society that likes to read. Unlike some, though, it is not about escapism, fantasy and fiction; it is about taking control of a challenge, about flexing a cerebral muscle group and knocking down to get the task completed, and about finding a new success inside yourself in the process.

A quarterly forum for and about writers; as well as a series about the origins of B.C. publishing houses.

From reader to would-be leader

Kirk LaPointe is the NPA candidate for mayor in the upcoming civic election in Vancouver. He’s also editor-in-chief of Self-Counsel Press, a venerable book publishing imprint since 1971. Here are some of his thoughts on publishing, politics, technology and the future.

A passion to learn and do isn’t always a passion to research and evaluate, so we submit to experts with credentials. That is what SCP authors do. They have spent time to save you time. They stand behind what they have found as professionals. They confer credibility and they build a covenant with the reader, just as a good newspaper or broadcaster would.

Our value proposition, then, is the creation of new forms of literacy and facility in economics, justice, conservation and citizenry that flow from our titles on everything from filing for divorce to filing a freedom-of-information request. The public sphere is awfully big, now that we have the Internet, but we have plenty of room for quality as we gallop ahead with quantity. We want to fill that space.

I am the candidate for the Non-Partisan Association. It’s an interesting name for a political entity, but it suits me. I’ve never been a member of a political organization, and I’ve parked my biases to the best of my ability in my three-plus decades of journalism.

The organization I now run (temporarily, if I lose) in politics is strikingly like the organization I help run (temporarily, if I win) in publishing: serving the community, trying to solve problems, staying practical and grounded. I love that space.

For anyone looking for how I can apply my career to my ambition, here are some clues:

• I have fought for transparency in government, so I want to deliver on that.
• I have found the greatest success in collaboration and consultation, so I want to ensure that.
• I know the value of the arts in our identity and economy, so I want to reinforce that.
• I know the life-changing importance of sending schoolchildren home for the summer with a bag of books, so I want to commit to that.

Those books for the summer as a child for me usually came from the library, and without them I would not have acquired the language of writing, nor the confidence of storytelling, nor the path to management and now public life. Way back then, cities cared much more about their libraries, and without them I would not have gained grand respect for those who bring the skill of storytelling, nor the path to management and now public life. Way back then, cities cared much more about their libraries, and I hope I can do something in an age of Kindle to rekindle our connection to the old-style library (the new-style library being Starbucks/WiFi).

I have spent a little time around the field of literacy and gained grand respect for those who bring the skill of reading to life in a life. A reader as a child might become an SCP reader, and doer, as an adult. I have spent my career asking questions. Now I can find answers. I have pointed to problems. Now I can find solutions. Public service, whether in journalism or publishing or public life, is about that.
BY BEVERLY CRAMP

The late Ivy Mickelson's spirit has spilled in Oak Bay since 1964 at Ivy's Bookshop—a bastion for independent book-selling.

THERE WAS NO SALES TAX on books when Ivy Mickelson opened Ivy's Bookshop. The store did not have a cash register; sales were recorded on a stenographer's pad. As the last copy of a particular title was sold, it was noted on a scrap of paper to remind Mickelson to re-order. No inventory lists were made.

The little store soon became a bastion of the Victoria literary world in the sixties and seventies, attracting the likes of Robin Skelton, P.K. Page, Jim Munro, Nita Forrest, and Pat Martin Bates.

Touring authors included Farley Mowat, Robertson Davies, Margaret Atwood and John Mortimer.

But it was Ivy herself who was the main attraction for many customers. Born in Manitoba, she had moved with her family to Victoria at the age of six. She first worked in 1947 at the old Dignon-Hibben firm in Victoria before it was bought out by Wilson Stationery, which dropped its book department. Mickelson then had stints working in bookstores in England (Foyles Bookstore) and New York (Gotham Book Mart) before returning to Canada and getting hired by Bill Duthie at his Robson Street locale.

Ivy and several other ex-employees from Duthie's went on to open their own bookstores such as Laughing Oyster (Courtenay), Butte Bookdealers (Butte, Montana), Granville Book Company, Women in Print and Sophia Books (all in Vancouver).

"She was brilliant, a genius," says Diana Leeming, who left Ivy's to start her own second-hand bookstore (but has now returned to work at Ivy's under the current ownership).

Pat Sloan recalls being hired by Ivy in the late 1960s: "I often think of her permanently tanned face and her electric blue eyes that seemed to see through my defenses to the real you." Sloan later became managing editor of Sono Nis Press.

Ivy's home. She was warned more than once by her sister, 'Ada how much is this? And Ivy responded, 'Ivy's that I lived in the old Mickelson family home. It was a huge waterfront older house inhabited by artists, creative people and actors. That place was an island of hippie culture. It seemed so natural to me then and yet, looking back, it wasn't ordinary at all.

Sloan says the activities at Ivy's made books an integral part of the larger cultural fabric. "Ivy's Bookshop was more of a social life than a place to look for around books. But computers changed the book world. When they came in, bookstore employees didn't need to know what was on the shelves. At Ivy's, we knew exactly what we had and where it was. We had to in order to keep track of the inventory. At least Ivy had an adding machine that we could use to total our book sales at the end of the day. I had worked at Munro's bookstore and they didn't even have that in the early days—we had to do additions by hand."

While ordering books, and surrounded by a mound of slips of paper as reminders of what was needed, Ivy would also use her knowledge about the tastes of her varied customers as a way to order titles says Diana Leeming. "She ordered books with specific customers in mind. They didn't have to ask her. When the books came in, she would phone them. Customers were so pleased by this. They almost always bought the books."

Meanwhile Mickelson maintained a simple domestic life. "She lived in a series of primitive cottages and she loved nature," says Sloan. "But her love of books shone through. We were even allowed to take books home to read."

"One of the first things Yvonne Sharp did when she bought the store was buy a proper cash register," says Shirley St. Pierre—who has known all five owners. This did not go down well with Ivy.

Yvonne Sharp had the good fortune of going for dinner with John Mortimer, the creator of the Horace Rumpole character that was the basis for a British TV and employ Corley of the Bailey. "Mortimer was a real 'good-time Charlie' especially after he drank a lot of bozo," says St. Pierre. "He gave a memorable reading at Ivy's. People were packed into the store and he talked to everyone, regaling them with anecdotes and funny stories."

Ivy's Bookshop remains an intimate place where people like to drop in and hang out. There will always be a place for bookstores, especially ones that specialize in excellent customer service, knowledgeable staff and community involvement.

Beverly Cramp is a Vancouver freelance writer
In Seven (the series), seven grandsons journeyed around the world to complete tasks laid out in their grandfather’s will. In The Seven Sequels, the discovery of a secret cache of passports and foreign money raises new questions about their grandfather’s past and true identity. Packed with intrigue and suspense, The Seven Sequels launch the grandsons on a new set of adventures that will captivate young readers.

“Every reader will doubtless have his or her own favourite. . . but all will find an intriguing package of books to savour.”
—Canadian Children’s Book News
GURDIT’S LEGACY

One hundred years of Komagata Marumations

Hugh Johnston

The Voyage of the Komagata Maru: The Sikh Challenge to Canada’s Colour Bar, first issued in 1979, reprinted in 1989, and now reissued in an expanded version.

“This is not just a re-release,” said Johnston, “but virtually a new book... One might question going back to a subject after so long, but I’ve been asked to do research for a number of projects over the past six or seven years—a projected movie that did not happen, for a museum at a Sikh temple, for a SFU library website, for papers at conferences etc.

“This has had me digging into the material I collected before 1979 and into what I have acquired since then. And my perspective has changed over the decades. So has the Sikh community. So this is much more than a light re-write with an introduction.”

With Tara Singh Bains, Hugh Johnston has also published The Four Quarters of the Night: The Life-Journey of an Emigrant Sikh (1995) and Jewels of the Qila: The Remarkable Story of an Indo-Canadian Family (2012).

A hundred years ago, a Sikh entrepreneur named Gurdit Singh Arjahl chartered a Japanese steamship, the Komagata Maru, for $66,000, to set sail for Canada with 376 British subjects (including 340 Sikhs) aboard. They were travelling from Punjab, India, via Japan, in order to test Canada’s racist immigration laws.

Nearly all the passengers were not allowed to come ashore. The Komagata Maru sat moored in Vancouver’s harbour for two months while courts deliberated on the case and some of the city’s white citizens lined the pier taunting those onboard. Passengers were without sufficient food and drinking water.

In 1908, Canada had passed a law that allowed government officials to prevent immigrants who had not travelled by “continuous journey” from their country of origin. It was known that the distance from India to Canada necessitated stopovers along the way.

One of the Canadian navy’s first ships, the HMCS Rainbow, eventually sailed into Vancouver Harbour and forced the Komagata Maru back to Calcutta, with deadly consequences for many aboard.

Nearly all the passengers were without sufficient food and drinking water. Passengers were addressing an unknown passenger whom he called Ranjeet. Dulai imagined him as the son of a poor farmer, later a soldier for the British Armed Forces, and that Ranjeet’s family had sold land to prevent British subjects from landing on British soil.”

As well, Dulai has unearthed an obscure letter from an enlightened British subject.

“All the regiments have been formed from India. All our merchant ships steaming in all ports of the world have been built by the Indian people. All the big buildings in London are built out of Indian money. If we were not for India, England would be unknown today. The modern towns of Ed-inburgh, Cheltenham and Bath have all been built with Indian money...but the Indian people are not aware of their strength.”

Hugh Johnston is a Vancouver freelance writer.

By BEVERLY CRAMP

dream/arteries by Phinder Dulai

The Voyage of the Komagata Maru: The Sikh Challenge to Canada’s Colour Bar by Hugh Johnston (UBC Press $29.95)
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Welcome to Pauline Johnson Island

Wayde Compton invents a new geography for Vancouver in his first story collection.

The Outer Harbour by Wayde Compton
(Arsenal Pulp Press $16.95)

Wayde Compton, who grew up idolizing Jimi Hendrix, is a self-described “Halfrican” (half African) writer/performer who knows how to shrug multiple identities on and off in his readings and performances. Currently the director of the SFU Writers Studio, Vancouver-born Compton has long been committed to black history in B.C.

In 2002, he instigated the Hogan’s Alley Memorial Project, with a goal to preserving the public memory of Vancouver’s original black neighbourhood, an alley running through the south-western corner of Strathcona in the city’s East End.

His latest offering of ten stories, The Outer Harbour, is peopled by shape shifter and chimeras in settings that exert special pressures.

Take, for example, his dystopian vision of Pauline Johnson Island. It’s an imaginary construct which he situates in the outer harbour of Vancouver, giving rise to his book’s title,

The entertainer/poetess Pauline Johnson immortalized the

Cherie Thiessen

continued on page 26
review

FICTION

continued from page 25

legend of a lost island in a short story about a century ago. Herself a shape-shifter, Johnson billed herself as a Mohawk Princess although she was only one-quarter Mohawk. She learned about the legend of an island “lost” in the North Arm, only rarely glimpsed, from Chief Joe Capilano.

In Compton’s stories this island could just as well be Ireland’s Surtsey Island or Graham Island in the Mediterranean, a volcanic island that appears and disappears. This mythical symbol of the struggle for survival in the face of colonialism and bureaucracy looms in the foreground of several stories.

“Pauline Johnson Island,” says Compton, when contacted by BC BookWorld, “is actually the primary ‘figure’ of the book. When I was writing these stories, I wanted to consider space itself as character-like, influencing relationships and themes in many of the ways that conventional characters do.”

So imagine a ten-storey luxury apartment atop Pauline Johnson Island in Burrard Inlet. Then picture it slightly altered to become a detention centre for migrants who wink themselves in and out, disappearing and materializing, individually or as a group. Imagine Pauline Johnson’s ‘lost island’ as a scene of a sovereignty protest that turns ugly, a young man shot and killed by the RCMP’s Counter Terrorism Unit during a subversive occupation.

In Compton’s world, boundaries are irrelevant and genres merge. Characters, places and themes weave in and out of the ten stories: themes of race, immigration, consumerism, loss of freedoms, and bureaucratic bungling.

The stories take place between 2001 and 2025, so are some of them sci-fi? Compton concedes there are some elements of fantasy and speculative fiction, especially in matters of identity and political power. “I try to take this on. I guess I would say that I use a few tools common to fantasy and speculative writing to point at current conditions.”

In The Front we’re reminded that things change, forms evolve. It’s pointless to wish for permanence.

In The Outer Harbour, while Vancouver is burning, a dead six-year old migrant and a young man killed years earlier by a Counter Terrorism Unit unite to save a migrant ghost and help return him to the safety of Pauline Johnson Island.

In The Outer Harbour, glyphs, sketches, an excerpt from a paper and maps are part of the mix. The maps of Vancouver, as seen by the migrant ghost, were drawn by Compton’s five-year-old daughter.

In The Boom, everything is also laid out in posters, floor plans, ads, glyphs and sketches. Although several of these stories have been printed in publications like The Fiddlehead and Event, each story feels essential to this collection. “I wrote the first story in the collection before I understood a book was coming,” says Compton, “and the rest emerged after it, although most of them aren’t necessarily derived from it.”

The Outer Harbour could be described as a literary equivalent of that old television show The Outer Limits, where life veers into creepy paranoia.

If shifting realities and a free-falling style disorient you, The Outer Harbour may not be your read. But it’s a challenging collection that marks a bold step forward for Compton.

WAYDE COMPTON HAS ALSO HELPED to create the Contact Zone Crew, with Vancouver musician, deejay and teacher, JASON DE COUTO, a ten-year collaborative sound poetry project that travelled Canada performing live audio mixes of original poetry, instrumental vinyl and spoken word recordings.

As well as producing six books, Wayde Compton founded Commodore Books, a publishing imprint named after the ship that brought the first significant batch of black immigrants to Victoria.

At the invitation of Governor James Douglas, himself partly black, some 600 blacks were invited to move en masse from San Francisco in 1858. Eager to leave behind racial persecution, these blacks, Douglas knew, would become loyal citizens in his fight to prevent the colony from possible annexation to the United States. When the black population of B.C. rose to an estimated 1,000 people, they briefly comprised almost one-tenth of the non-Native population.

✫

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**Death in Smithers**

**Shafted: A Mystery by Sheila Peters**
(Creekstone Press $18)

Sheila Peters’ fifth book is a murder mystery set in her hometown of Smithers. *Shafted: A Mystery* follows an auxiliary cop named Margo Jamieson as she investigates a strange death with the help of a local historian. The town’s picturesque facade is sullied by the conflicting agendas of an old prospector, a rich eco-activist, and a mess of misplaced desires in this mountainous region of northern British Columbia.

The time period is the early 1990s when there are no cell phones or the Internet and the death must be solved with the use of old-fashioned paper files, face-to-face meetings and land line-based telephones. Jamieson, the protagonist, must untangle a web of festering grudges, phony mineral claims, blackmail and murder.

Prior to publication, Peters did a week-by-week serial release on her website and read a chapter per week on the Smithers Community Radio station. Sheila Peters has worked as a reporter, interviewer, human-rights activist and English instructor at Northwest Community College where she teaches creative writing. Her non-fiction book, *Canyon Creek: A Script* (1998), was also published by her Smithers-based Creekstone Press.

**Grave disturbances**

**Will Starling** by Ian Weir
(Soosem Lane $29.95)

Will Starling is Ian Weir’s follow-up to his debut novel *Daniel O’Thunder* that was shortlisted for the Ethel Wilson Fiction Prize and Commonwealth Writers First Book Prize.

Having spent five years assisting a military surgeon during the Napoleonic Wars, nineteen-year-old Will Starling returns to London to help his mentor start a medical practice in the rough Cripplegate area. It’s an era when surgeons and anatomists rely on body snatchers to obtain human cadavers. When a grave robbery goes awry, brash Will is led to suspect London’s foremost surgeon, Dionysus Atherton, could be conducting scientific experiments on the living.

The origins of Will Starling can be traced to a summer evening at the Weir’s family cottage at Shuswap Lake in the late sixties when Ian Weir was about twelve. When a neighbour’s son rode his mini-bike at considerable speed into a barbed wire fence, he was carried like a battlefield casualty to the Weir’s front porch where Weir’s father, a surgeon, was reading. Dr. Weir proceeded to calmly unfold himself from his lounge-chair, retrieve his battered black medical bag, and stitch up the young patient who was shrieking on the picnic table.

“I’m pretty sure the idea for *Will Starling* began to germinate right then and there,” says Weir, a screenwriter who has won two Gemini’s and four Leo’s. “As my brothers and I looked on agog and my mother—the novelist and historian Joan Weir—tried gamely to channel Florence Nightingale. It took me a good while to figure this out, of course. But 40-plus years later, midway through writing a literary gothic thriller set amongst the surgeons and grave-robers in 1816—it finally dawned. The novel is at heart a wistful tribute to my Dad, who passed away seven years ago.”

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**Unhanged gets lift**

**Last of the Independents** by Sam Wiebe
(Translated $17.95)

Sam Wiebe’s novel *Last of the Independents* won the 2012 Unhanged Arthur Award for Best Unpublished First Novel, and was subsequently published in 2014.

The novel introduces readers to a 29-year-old private investigator, Michael Drayton, who runs an agency in Vancouver that specializes in missing persons. Characters range from a local junk merchant, a crooked private eye, and a drug-addicted car thief to a necrophile and a disreputable psychic trying to bilk the mother of a missing girl. Sam Wiebe’s stories have appeared in *Thuglit* and *Spinetingler* and were published in *Mal“, Criminal Element’s Dime Mystery Occasional e-collection. He lives in Vancouver.
Sunday, September 28th

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“More bizarre, a blackened skeleton is discovered in the ashes of the McCartney brothers’ drug store.”

BY BEVERLY CRAMP

VANCOUVER IS STILL A FRONTIER TOWN AT DAWN on June 13, 1886. Its main street is dirt. Residents don’t have to walk far to head into ancient-growth forest. Boardwalks wind around stumps and brush. Mountains of slash have accumulated on the outskirts, often piled as high as three storeys. The smells of fresh-cut lumber mingle with nostril-tingling smoke. A few thousand people are used to it.

Shortly, much of this town will disappear in less than half a day when a small brush clearing fire will turn into a blazing inferno. Most citizens will lose everything except for the clothes on their backs.

Vancouver, originally named Granville, was little more than a work camp serving the logging industry. Smith writes: “For over twenty years, the steady rasp of the crosscut saw has cut a wide swath into the thick stands of ancient-growth forest flanking the inlet. An ingenious system has been developed for speeding up the pace of work. The tallest trees are sawed strategically to knock down partially-axed surrounding trees as they fall, like a giant line of dominoes.”

“In elite residences on the east side of the city, servants are hard at work throughout the morning preparing the meal while their employers attend church. From the cavernous interiors of wood-burning stoves, a mouth-watering array of courses emerges—new spring potatoes nestled alongside a roast beef dripping with gravy, freshly caught salmon, duck with currant jelly and croquettes of rice—all to be placed upon oak dining tables spread with fine Irish linen, silverware polished to a glossy sheen and the most extravagant of English bone china.”

“Other households tuck into simpler fare—slices of homemade bread with spring lettuce or homemade strawberry conserve, slices of cheese—all washed down with a cup of hot tea or coffee from the kettle permanently set… felling, slashing and burning continue relentlessly from dawn to dusk.”

Logging continued at such speed that it outpaced the burning of the slash and stumps left over. The slash piles amounted to a calamity waiting to happen. “Vancouver is sweltering. Late spring has been abnormally hot for the past three weeks. Puddles, normally knee-deep along busy Carrall Street, have long since dried up. The few remaining mud holes are blistered and cracked like paint on an ancient canvas.”

“It was a Sunday when the clearing fire near the end of Davie Street at False Creek (close to the present-day Roundhouse Community Centre in Yaletown) flared out of control, whipped by a rogue wind from the waterfront. Many were at church ahead of sitting down to the best meal of the week.

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One of the men fighting back the flames, George Cary, is sent downtown for help. Rushing into one of the many Water Street saloons, he confronts the chief of police with the news. The chief of police, perhaps in an early state of inebriation, waves his hand dismissively. George Cary runs from the Cambie and Cordova clearing site towards Burrard Inlet, more concerned with staying alive than joining efforts to save the Regina Hotel.

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“My name is Lisa Anne Smith. I have scoured the city’s archives for eyewitness accounts and photos from the era to produce Vancouver is Ashes: The Great Fire of 1886, the first detailed account of that disaster. It’s a ‘you-are-there’ narrative that documents the before and after of a largely under-recognized tragedy in Canadian history.

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Johnny Boateng: rivalry and loyalty

Johnny Boateng grew up in Trail, where he led his basketball team to a provincial championship. He then played on a U.S. team to become a provincial champion. In college, he was captain of the varsity women's basketball team at UBC, leading her squad to two national championships. She then played professionally in Sweden for two years. Boateng lives in Vancouver, where she coaches high school and provincial basketball teams. Her first book, Pick and Roll (Lorimer $9.95) is also for ages 10 to 13. Both are part of Lorimer's high-interest low-vocabulary sports series.

Other contributors include Manola Khounviseth, who endured a harrowing escape from Laos to share tales of her homeland and family recipes. Andrea Thomas honours the ways of her First Nations ancestors by preparing traditional food and sharing stories of hunting and gathering. Brazilian Barcelos, from Brazil, describes following his sweet heart to the Cariboo, while offering up a favourite family recipe.

Guadalupe Zvez is one of more than 45 contributors to Margaret-Anne Enders, Marilyn Livingston, Tom Salley and Bettina Schoen's Spicing Up the Cariboo: Characters, Cultures & Cuisines of the Cariboo Chilcotin (Caitlin $26.95), a collection that affords glimpses into the ethnic diversity of the Cariboo Chilcotin and the connection between community and kitchen.

Guadalupe Zvez, from Honduras, left behind her parents and nine siblings to come to B.C. with her husband, but she never learned to cook traditional Honduran food until she immigrated. Her recipe is for a chicken in coconut sauce dish.

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Kelsey Blair was captain of the varsity women’s basketball team at UBC, leading her squad to two national championships. She then played professionally in Sweden for two years. Blair lives in Vancouver, where she coaches high school and Aboriginal basketball teams. Her first book, Pick and Roll (Lorimer $9.95) is also for ages 10 to 13. Both are part of Lorimer’s high-interest low-vocabulary sports series.

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IMPRESSIONS FALL BOOKS

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的影响
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– ROY BURDEN, author of The Legacy

– ROY BURDEN, author of The Legacy

Cathy Ford is the author of 15 books of poetry. She served as President of the League of Canadian Poets and lives in Sidney B.C. 96 pages, French $15.95

JULIA LEGGETT

A collection of eight witty and brilliant short stories that focus on women's relationships with their bodies, their lovers, their female friends, and their health.

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– STEPHEN FOX, author of The Laughing Girl of the Cuckolds

Julia Leggett lives in Victoria B.C. She has an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of British Columbia. This is her first book.

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THE TRAGIC MARRIAGES OF DOCTOR GENRES AND SONG

Cloe and Alexandra are two contemporary Greek-People, with passionate voices that work with both their lyric and pleasure to express the loves, lopsidedness, and irrationality of the lyric and pleasure.

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The novel turns again in the Corrido, poetry, and the corredor, where the voices are never silenced, nor the poetry's own life. The novel turns again in the Corrido, poetry, and the corredor, where the voices are never silenced, nor the poetry's own life. The novel turns again in the Corrido, poetry, and the corredor, where the voices are never silenced, nor the poetry's own life. The novel turns again in the Corrido, poetry, and the corredor, where the voices are never silenced, nor the poetry's own life.
In her latest book, Landscapes of War and Memory: The Two World Wars in Canadian Literature and the Arts, 1977-2007 (University of Alberta Press $49.95), Sherrill Grace uses her knowledge to adopt the role of observer. This comprehensive study of the literature, theatre and art related to memories of both world wars constructs a bridge through history and connects readers with wartime trials and traumas that many Canadians have never experienced. Sherrill Grace has taught Canadian literature and culture for more than 35 years at UBC.

After his first novel, partially set in the aftermath of the Great Fire of Vancouver in 1886, Lee Henderson’s second novel, The Road Narrows As You Go (Hamish Hamilton $32.95), again makes a retrospective leap, this time to the 1980s in San Francisco where a young, would-be cartoon strip artist from Victoria, Wendy Ashbubble, makes good on her youthful desire to emulate her hero Charles Schultz, who created Peanuts. While living in a dilapidated artists’ commune, she encounters “all the brash optimism and ruthless amorality of the decade” while harbouring the belief that her unidentified father could be none other than the 40th president of the United States, Ronald Reagan. Lee Henderson won the Ethel Wilson Fiction Prize and the City of Vancouver Book Award in 2009 for his first novel, The Man Game (Penguin).
BRUCE GRIERSON’S BIOGRAPHY OF OLGA KOTELKO (1919 - 2014), the nonagenarian track and field athlete who holds over 30 world records and 750 medals, including in the 90-99 age category, is What Makes Olga Run? (Random House $29.95). Grierson explores what drove this 94-year-old to compete. He studied Kotelko’s diet and sleep patterns, and her spare time activities. What Makes Olga Run? examines how our health and longevity is determined by DNA, and how much we reflect upon the shared journey of Albert “Ginger” Goodwin, one of the earliest Vancouver-born actors, and Chad Hobbes, who must discover why his Haida cartoons are positioned somewhere between two continents. Set off the northwest coast of B.C., Red: A Haida Manga is the story of an orphan named Red and his sister, Iaada, who are captured and taken away when their village is raided. 978-1-55017-619-3

“DEE LIPPINGWELL’S PHOTO OF ZZ TOP” is for ZZ Top. Dee Lippingwell’s photo of ZZ Top. 9780889226852

“The Texts in Colin Browne’s The Properties (Talon $19.95) range from a twenty-first-century visitation by Herman Melville to a dinner in New York City to an unknown history of the Lions Gate Bridge that begins in the Coast Salish village of Xwemelch’stn and ends with an assassination in Egypt. Igor Stravinsky, Sigmund Freud, Duke Ellington, Jeanne d’Arc, Walter Guinness, George Bowering, André Breton and more appear. 978-0-88977-348-6

MICHAEL NICOLL YAHGULANAAS originated a new genre of cartoons he calls Haida Manga, or Manhua, with his graphic novel, Red: A Haida Manga (D&M, 2009, 2014). A paperback version has been released for the first time, but the hardcover version was nominated for a Bill Duthie Booksellers Choice Award, A Doug Wright Award, and a Joe Schuster Award. Manga is the Japanese word for comics; Manhua is the Korean word for comics. Yahgulanaas uses the term to establish that his Haida cartoons are positioned somewhere between two continents. Set somewhere off the northwest coast of B.C., Red: A Haida Manga is the story of an orphan named Red and his sister, Iaada, who are captured and taken away when their village is raided. 978-1-77161-022-2

THE CRIME WRITERS OF CANADA 2014 Arthur Ellis Awards for Best Crime Novel. Taking place in 1869, the novel follows the adventures of a newly-arrested policeman from England, Chad Hobbes, who must discover why the mutilated body of Dr. McCoy was found in the woods. Hobbes, who has opened up about his private life in Jason Priestley: A Memoir (Harperzone $33.50). “I’m only 44, and my life and career are certainly not over,” he writes. “It’s like Indiana Jones says, ‘It’s not the years. It’s the mileage.’” I think I’ve got 400,000 miles on me...In 2012, it had been 10 years since my near-fatal car accident. I’d done a lot of damage on myself, including three skull fractures, but I’d rebuilt my body and mind. I’d married my girlfriend (Naomi Lowde), who had two children and got back the career I’d had before the crash.” Yes, and there is stuff in the autobiography about his former roommate, Brad Pitt. 978-0-88922-7152

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Federation of British Columbia Writers Up-coming Events

• September 20, 2014: Humour Writing Workshop with Neil McKinnon in Tofino, BC
• October 25, 2014: Vancouver Island Self-Publishing Fair in Nanaimo, BC
• October 31 – November 2, 2014: Fall Writing Retreat at Bethlehem Centre, Nanaimo, BC
• Look for our Writing classes to commence September, 2014 in New Westminster, BC

See bcwriters.ca for details on all these great events!

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for Historical Writing of non-fiction books published in 2014 by authors of B.C. History. (reprints not eligible)

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British Columbia Historical Federation
All entrants must contact Maurice Guibord before submitting books, at writing@bchistory.ca or 604-253-9311

Winner of 2013 Lieutenant-Governor’s Medal for Historical Writing: Ralph Drew for Forest & Fjord: The History of Belcarra

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

31st Annual BC Book Prizes

April 2015

Seven prize categories for fiction, poetry, children, illustrated, non-fiction, regional, and booksellers’ choice. Submission deadline is December 1, 2014.

Nominations open for lifetime achievement award, The Lieutenant Governor’s Award for Literary Excellence. Submission deadline is January 31, 2015.

For submission details visit www.bcbookprizes.ca
Hilary Stewart (1924-2014)
Hilary Stewart was born in St. Lucia, West Indies, on November 3, 1924. She became an important authority on Northwest First Nations art and culture, starting with her book on the Northwest Coast (1973) and Indian Fishing: Early Methods on the Northwest Coast (1977). Her Cedar: Tree of Life of the Northwest Coast Indians (1984), an examination of the various ways aboriginal cultures utilized cedar, received one of the first four B.C. Book Prizes that were ever presented, in 1985. Stewart’s re-issue of the journal kept by an English sailor at Nootka Sound in 1803, John R. Jeffries, Capt. of Maguanna (1987) also received a B.C. Book Prize. Her other titles include Robert Davidson: Haïda Printmaker (1979) and the perennial bestseller Looking at Totem Poles (1993).

For more, see ABCBookWorld.com

Blanche Howard (1924-2014)
North Vancouver novelist Blanche Howard was born in Daysland, Alberta, in 1924, and grew up in Lethbridge and Calgary. After stints in Toronto and Ottawa, she moved to Penticton in 1948 where she raised three children and became a charter member of the Penticton Women’s Institute. In 1973, Howard moved to North Vancouver and won the Canadian Booksellers Association award for her first novel, The Manipulator, written after her husband became a member of Parliament in 1968.

In later years she was best-known for her literary collaborations with her friend Carol Shields. They co-wrote a husband-and-wife correspondence novel, A Celtabate Season (Viking, 1996). Following the death of Shields, Blanche Howard and Allison Howard edited A Memoir of Friendship: The Letters Between Carol Shields and Blanche Howard (Viking, 2006), with forewords by Shields’ daughter Anne Giardini. Blanche Howard died at the age of 91 on June 12, 2014.

For more, see ABCBookWorld.com

George Whipple (1924-2014)
George Whipple was born in St. John, New Brunswick on May 24, 1924. The extended Vancouver Teachers College in 1952 and lived mainly in Toronto after that. His first of thirteen poetry books gained lavish praise from Northrop Frye, Louis Dudek and Gwendolyn MacEwan. His papers are archived in the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto. He died in Burnaby on May 29, 2014, aged 87.

For more, see ABCBookWorld.com

Paul St. Pierre (1924-2013)
A well-remembered contemporary Canadian humorist, Mark Twain, Paul St. Pierre was born in Chicago in 1923. He grew up in Nova Scotia, served in the RCAF and began his journalism career in B.C. with stints at The Columbian in New Westminster and The News Herald in the late 1940s. He wrote for The Vancouver Sun from 1947 to 1968, and again from 1972 to 1979. He served as the Liberal MP for the riding of Coast Coquitlam from 1968 to 1972 and he chaired the B.C. Liberal caucus for two years. He was a police commissioner in B.C. from 1979 to 1983.

His play How to Run the Country was produced by the Vancouver Playhouse in 1967. Other early books by St. Pierre include Boss of the Namoo Drive (1965); Chilcotin Holidays (1970), a collection of newspaper columns; and Smith and Other Events (1983), one story from which made him the first Canadian winner of the West- ern Writers of America Spur Award for Fiction.

In 2000, Paul St. Pierre received the sixth Terasen Lifetime Achievement Award for an Outstanding Literary Career in British Co- lumbia.

Although he jokingly referred to writing as indoor work with no heavy lifting, St. Pierre was especially adept at depicting First Nations and ranchers in the Cariboo- Chilcotin. In the 1960s, he wrote more than 20 scripts as the basis for a popular and award-winning CBC TV series, “Cariboo Country,” that included the acting career of Chief Dan George as ‘Ol’ Antoine. Cariboo Country was the first significant portrayal of non-urban B.C. culture on television and percolated beyond British Columbia.

Paul St. Pierre’s best-known book, Breaking Smith’s Quarter Horse (1966), began as a television episode called “How to Break a Quarter Horse. Both became the basis for a 1969 Disney feature film entitled Smith! starring Glenn Ford with Keenan Wynn, Dean Jagger and Warren Oates. Known only by his surname Smith, the taciturn rancher enlists the help of an abor- iginal, ‘Ol’ Antoine, to help him break a horse that he believes is an ideal cutting horse, but the story is more about Smith’s character than the horse. Breaking Smith’s Quarter Horse has never been out of print.

St. Pierre for many years maintained a mobile trailer home in the Chilcotin, a home in Fort Langley and a third home in Sinaloa, Mexico. A visitor to his home in Fort Langley once affectionately described St. Pierre as “a half-naked old wildman drinking cheap red wine, checking e-mails and watching old black and white movies with a 110-pound retriever Coco at his feet.”

He died on July 27, 2013, age 90 at his home in Fort Langley. For his tombstone, he requested the inscription “This was not my idea.”

For more, see ABCBookWorld.com
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A letter from the Publisher

This year, 2014, marks the 40th year that books bearing the Harbour Publishing imprint have been flowing out into the world from our headquarters in Pender Harbour, BC. My wife, Mary, and I actually bought our first printing press in 1969, started our newspaper in 1970 and published the first issue of Raincoast Chronicles in 1972. It wasn’t until 1974 that the first actual book with the first actual Harbour Publishing imprint appeared, so that’s what we are using as Harbour Publishing’s official start date.

Our very first book (A Dictionary of Chinook Jargon, 1971) and the first issues of Raincoast Chronicles didn’t have any imprint on the spine because we didn’t know they needed one. When a concerned reader pointed out the omission, we decided to call ourselves Harbour Publishing because every business in Pender Harbour was Harbour this or Harbour that—Harbour Motors, Harbour Bookstore, Harbour Barber. There was also a Harbour Pub and for years the freight truck delivered our books to homes, which we might not have minded if they delivered the pub beer to us, but somehow that never happened.

My approach to starting a publishing operation was conditioned by my background in isolated BC coast logging camps where if something wanted making you made it yourself. My first move had been to get a bulldozer and clear a piece of land. Then I tore down an old building supply building in Vancouver and used the lumber to build a print shop on the cleared land. Then I bought a press and learned how to print with it (sort of). Only then did I start looking around for a library book to publish. And only after the book was printed and bound did I begin to wonder if anybody might want to buy it. (Now, I can hear the wiseacres muttering that my approach hasn’t changed much.) I don’t suppose many onlookers, watching Mary and I pulling armfuls of spoiled paper from our unique press late into the nights of those first years, would have given our enterprise much chance of surviving, but four decades and some 600 books later, here we are.

Our profound thanks go to all the readers, writers and booksellers who have supported us along the way. It has been a great privilege.

—Howard White

New Books in Fall 2014

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Viners of a City

Photographer David Nunnuk has created a book of visual epiphanies, reaffirming Vancouver’s reputation as one of the most stunning places on earth.

PHOTOGRAPHY/RREGIONAL INTEREST
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Cardboard Ocean

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Bestselling author and TV personality Mike McCardel has created an affectionate evocation of a childhood in the rough setting of Queens, New York, but with thrill, chills and love that will be familiar to anyone who was ever young.

MEMOIR - AVAILABLE IN SEPTEMBER; $29.95 / HARDCOVER; 6" x 9" / 298 PAGES / ISBN 978-1-55051-694-9

ARock Fell on the Moon

Dad and the Great Yukon Silver Ore Heist

In this captivating memoir, Alaric Pears draws on her own experiences, as well as letters, interviews, news stories and archived RCMP files, to piece together the story of her father’s infamous silver heist in the 1960s.

A LOST MOOSE BOOK
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MEMOIR/REGIONAL INTEREST - AVAILABLE IN OCTOBER; $39.95 / HARDCOVER; 6" x 9" / 200 PAGES / ISBN 978-1-55051-686-6

Shore to Shore

The Work of Luke Tuts’ALumt Marston

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Albrecht Dürer and me

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From the West Coast to the Western Front

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To mark the 100th anniversary of the beginning of WW1, Mark Forsyth, head of art at BC Alcanum, has teamed up with journalist Greg Decimone to compile artifacts, photos and stories about the war, sent in by BC Alcanum listeners.

HISTORY - AVAILABLE IN SEPTEMBER; $24.95 / PAPERBACK; 8" x 10" / 304 PAGES / ISBN 978-1-55051-684-2

Echoes of British Columbia

Voices from the Frontier

Robert “Lucky” Budo is the steward of one of the largest oral history collections in the world, containing recorded stories from BC’s pioneering days. He has rendered various accounts from this collection into entrancing prose.

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Margaret Horsfield and Ian Kennedy chronicle the history of Tofino and Clayoquot Sound, an area known around the world for its extraordinary raw beauty. This is one of the first books to reveal this region’s rich heritage and fascinating past.

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Oni More Times

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