The first known account of a Chinese railroad worker from the 1880s.
Review page 5

THE LABOURS OF
DUKESANG WONG

JUNE HUTTON
A couple copes with Young-Onset Alzheimer’s. 18

SARAH LOUISE BUTLER
A 9-ft.-tall primate haunts a B.C. family in the woods for decades. 27

SAM WIEBE
Art theft, morality and sibling relationships collide. 25
Saving the Serengeti of the North

Since she was a seven-year-old in war-torn Congo, Liliane Leila Juma has struggled to fulfill her dream of being an author. After writing award-winning plays when she was a refugee in Tanzania and Zambia, Juma came to Canada, learned French and spent years sending her manuscripts to publishers world-wide. Eventually, she switched to canvassing Canadian publishers. More rejections.

Years later, Juma found the publisher of her dreams right here in B.C. at Tradewind Books. She produced an exceptional, charming and poignant memoir, Maison Rouge: Memories of a Childhood in War (Tradewind $12.95) and it was featured on the cover of BC Book-World’s summer issue. Also, distribution of that issue was severely curtailed due to the outbreak of Covid-19.

If the pandemic has impacted Juma’s books sales somewhat in Canada, it has been more limiting internationally. “I have been contacted by people in Africa and Asia, and a friend in Tanzania who wanted to buy my book and introduce it to their school program,” says Juma. “Covid-19 has put this on hold. There is not much to do but wait.”

In the meantime, Juma is writing poems and working on another novel about her great grandmother, grandmother and Juma herself. “It’s a story of three lives but one soul.”

787-1234567890

Wayne Sawchuk with his horse Bonus in Heaven’s Pass, the heart of the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area.

Canada’s Northern Rockies (Creekstone $21.95).

“When I was a child, my father used to tell me a story about a fabulous Shangri-la,” he recalls. “Years later I rode into the mountains to the southern headwaters of the Pine River searching for adventure. What I found was the Braziön River making a giant circle through the mountains and at the top of the circle a high mountain lake. It was the valley of my father’s story, a fabled land.”

When news that logging was to start in this area, sometimes called the Serengeti of the North in honour of the Tanzanian national park that hosts the second largest terrestrial mammal migration in the world, Sawchuk and others formed the Chetwynd Environmental Society. They successfully lobbied the provincial government to protect this wilderness.

“It is an incredible experiment,” says Sawchuk. “We can maintain a sustainable economy and keep the wild heart of Canada’s Northern Rockies beating strong forever.”

978-1-928195-06-0
When he was ten, David R. Gray and his brother used to find ‘stuff’ in an old midden at Tod Inlet, including the skulls of pigs. The boys didn’t realize they had stumbled upon the remnants of an immigrant Chinese community that had worked at the long-gone cement plant that was constructed in 1905.

Tod Inlet is located adjacent to the current Butchart Gardens in Victoria, a former limestone quarry that supplied the cement plant. The Vancouver Portland Cement Company was the first to manufacture cement on the West Coast and it’s the reason for the existence of that mostly-forgotten community that arose in 1904.

The company employed ethnically diverse workers such as Chinese Canadians, South Asian Canadians and Indigenous people who were segregated from white engineers, managers and plant workers and their families.

“Our family boat was kept there,” Gray says, “and it was where we spent summers fishing, swimming, exploring and playing.”

Pig skulls were the first trophies found by the brothers. “As we dug into the loose soil to find more of the curving tusks in earth-stained jawbones—the real prize, we thought then—we discovered old bottles, broken pottery and chopsticks, and then beautifully glazed jugs, pots and rice bowls.”

There were still old-timers around and Gray approached them for answers. They had vague memories of a long-deserted Chinese village connected to the abandoned cement plant, which closed in 1921. Some of those Chinese Canadian workers had gone on to be employed at Butchart Gardens. Two men even continued to live in one of the last standing buildings at Tod Inlet, the old laundry house, until the mid-1960s: Yat Tong and Yem Choi, a gardener who joined the Butcharts in 1941. Gray tried to track down the two men to no avail and the laundry house was burned in a training exercise by the local fire department in the late 1960s.

The site of the plant and the long-gone community is today part of Gowlland-Tod Provincial Park in the municipalities of Saanich and Central Saanich, and it’s registered as a Canadian Historic Place.

Remnants of the plant and its associated worker housing are eroding and overgrown with vegetation. The former footpaths once used by Chinese and other workers have been transformed into a trail system.

While Gray now lives in Ontario, he has never lost his fascination for his old stomping grounds, leading him to research and publish *Deep and Sheltered Waters: The History of Tod Inlet* (RBCM $29.95).

**Remnants of the Tod Inlet Chinese community, 1968**

**Glazed ginger pots found at Tod Inlet.**

**Read it before you see it!**

Eden Robinson’s Giller-nominated, bestselling novel *SON OF A TRICKSTER* is now the major television series *TRICKSTER* on CBC.

Eden Robinson

Author of the bestselling *Monkey Beach*

“*This is Robinson at her best.*
—National Post

NOW THE MAJOR TELEVISION SERIES *TRICKSTER* ON CBC
The Diary of Dukesang Wong: A Voice from Gold Mountain, edited by David McIlwraith and translated by Wanda Joy Hoe (Talon $18.95)

BY BEVERLY CRAMP

The reality for the tens of thousands of Chinese seeking work in North America would prove to be treacherous, ill-paid labour and racism from white settlers. Having gotten over here, it often took years, if ever, for Chinese immigrants to save enough money to get back to their homeland once they realized what was in store for them.

“"My soul cries out,"" Wong wrote after he made his way to B.C. and joined the Chinese railroad crews. ""Many of our people have been so very ill for such a long time, and there has been no medicine nor good food to give them. There has been word among the employing company that we are not good workers and do not work enough for the schedules and plans of the railway owners. Does anyone work when so ill?"

Wong eventually saved enough to buy into a relatively prosperous tailoring business in New Westminster and later bring a wife, Lin, to Canada with whom he raised a family.

Wong’s last diary entry in the book is a happy one as he finally gets the daughter he yearned for after the birth of eight sons. ""It is still the feast of the full moon,"" he notes. ""My fate now has come in my old age, a joyous sign, and take care of her, loving her. She has come in my old age, a joyous sign, and she will be able to bring me pride."

Her brothers will know this goodness and she will be able to bring me pride, a great joy for all this house! She will look after Lin when I leave these lands for the final journey homeward."

Dukesang Wong died in 1931. His diary entries were translated by his granddaughter, Wanda Joy Hoe (who used selections of Wong’s diary for an undergraduate class at SFU in the mid-1960s). Commentary is provided by David McIlwraith for historical context.

Wanda Joy Hoe’s mother, Elsie, was the much longed-for, and only daughter of Dukesang Wong.
Support Your Local Bookseller this Holiday Season
Kim Foikis

As a self-appointed Town Fool, Kim Foikis succeeded in his stated goals “to spread joy and confusion” and to “mock the four pillars of society: money, status, respectability, and conformity.”

THE FOOL’S JOURNEY

Kim Foikis bought a pair of donkeys (Peter and Pan) and totalled his jalopy in a Burnaby car accident. But the same old act started toously by the press—he made great fines, Foikis sold them for $120—by which time he was broke. “Next year,” he said, “maybe I’ll get an elephant.”

Initially his wife Wendy had supported her husband in favour of a town coolie and the more for accumulating value. Sorkin succeeded in his stated goals “to spread joy and confusion” and to “mock the four pillars of society: money, status, respectability, and conformity.”

As a self-appointed Town Fool, Kim Foikis succeeded in his stated goals “to spread joy and confusion” and to “mock the four pillars of society: money, status, respectability, and conformity.”

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**TRAVEL REVIEW**

**Girls gone**

How two young women biked, hitchhiked and drove scooters to travel the world in the 1950s.

Our Trip Around the World

by Renate Belczyk

(Stoddart, $22)

**BY BEVERLY CRAMP**

A young girls growing up in Germany during WW II, Renate and Sigrid Hirte dreamed of far off lands. They became fixated on travel and adventure, if only in their imaginations at first.

After the war, while still in their mid teens they began cycling around Europe. They started out relatively close to home with a cycling trip to Italy in 1948, spending their summer holiday on "ancient, prewar, one-gear bicycles" says Belczyk that they rode all the way from Frankfurt to Naples and back. “Very few cars were on the road then and we had a wonderful time.”

They met few fellow travellers. “Very little travelling was done by anyone in those difficult years,” admits Belczyk. “Yet we were obsessed with seeing the world.”

In 1950, they listened to a speech by the German writer Heinrich Böll who urged his audience to travel to new countries and make friends. To do so, he argued, would help prevent another war. Belczyk and Hirte made a pact that day to do as much travelling as they could and worked to get visas and passports.

That summer they went to Switzerland, Italy and Austria cycling everywhere, pitching their tent in famous fields and talking to people who frequently invited them home for meals. “Often we had flat tires on our bikes and other problems, but somehow everything got solved.”

Eventually a bigger trip loomed, one that would take them over continents and last three years from 1955—1958.

Now at the age of 88, Castlegar-based Belczyk recalls those travels in the days before globalization had begun homogenizing diverse cultures in her memoir, Our Trip Around the World.

Perhaps Belczyk and Hirte’s trip would have started earlier, as in 1951 the two women went to England, hiring themselves out as nannies. Improving their English was as much on their minds as seeing England, Scotland and Ireland. They knew that learning new languages would be integral to their ambitions to travel the world. French and Spanish were next on their list.

This led them to France in the spring of 1953, this time with three-gear bicycles, “the latest in bike technology,” says Belczyk. “For eight months we bicycled all over the country and enjoyed the land and the people. Whenever we ran out of money, we worked: four weeks as chambermaids in a Paris hotel, another four weeks in Southern France during the wine harvest.” Their pay for picking grapes included a bottle of wine a day.

Working while travelling was to become a way of life. From France, the two spent the rest of the year cycling through Spain and Portugal. Africa was next on their ambitious adventure itinerary but they had to kibosh this part of the plan when Hirte’s mother fell ill and beckoned her home.

Back in Germany they kept reading adventure and travel books, and made plans to visit a new continent—North America—starting off in Mexico in 1955. This was to be the start of their three-year-long adventure taking the two young women to Canada, Japan, India, Nepal and other countries.

They went to Mexico as Hirte had relatives in Mexico City. It was a good...
base and both got jobs quickly. They visited beach towns and small villages where handmade crafts were still very much in production. They also joined a mountaineering club and climbed several mountains, which at times proved to be dangerous expeditions.

But they loved Mexico and contemplated staying permanently. Belczyk had even received a marriage proposal, which she declined. “We had to make up our minds whether to settle in Mexico (very tempting) or move on and see more of the world,” Belczyk says. “We decided on the latter and applied for visas to the United States and Canada.”

News that four of their mountaineering colleagues had died while climbing Mount Victoria in the Rocky Mountains inspired them to head to Canada in order to place a memorial for their Mexican friends on the mount where they perished. Another deciding factor was that Hirte wasn’t able to get an American visa. Mishaps as well as fortunate circumstances were to influence where they travelled in the following two years.

The first Canadian stop was in Windsor, Ontario from where they departed for Montreal and cycled along the St. Lawrence River. When they didn’t ride their bikes, they hitchhiked, a common travelling method throughout the 50s, 60s and 70s. “The people who gave us rides were all very friendly and almost all of them invited us for either a piece of pie or a hamburger,” says Belczyk. “I remember wondering, ‘Is there anything else to eat in this country?’”

They soon become celebrities in the local media and were eventually offered motor scooters to aid them on their way. Belczyk and Hirte used the scooters to drive across India, visiting remote Nepal and Bhutan en route. Camping wild and living simply, they took what looks today like big risks. They were fortunate also not to meet any major misadventures. Perhaps the times were less dangerous too, for as Belczyk recalls, they were for the most part, welcomed and helped by locals.

They wandered on foot through the Valley of the Kings in Egypt and drove their scooters through Turkey, across Macedonia and through the Balkans and finally, back to Germany in 1958. Belczyk would return to B.C. to marry and raise a family. Hirte stayed in Germany but the two have remained lifelong friends.

Renata Belczyk is still skiing at the age of 88.
“Isabelle Groc has done a great service for young people and our natural world by writing this book. She describes the threat to our planet’s wildlife in a way that stresses the urgency of the situation we face today, providing scientific information but also describing, in a way that reaches the heart, the beauty that is vanishing.

Every single individual makes an impact on the planet—every single day. And we humans can choose what sort of impact we make. Isabelle’s most important and lasting message is also the most resonant: if human behavior is the cause of the wildlife crisis, it can also be the solution. Remember that you are not alone and that together we can save precious species. To which I would add: we can and we MUST. Before it is too late.”

—Jane Goodall, PhD
DBE Founder, Jane Goodall Institute and United Nations Messenger of Peace

“The fur trade of the 18th and 19th centuries brought sea otters to near extinction. Today they are coming back, thanks to the protections that have been put in place. Scientists have learned that when sea otters return, they have a tremendous impact on the ecosystem, as a keystone species. In this beautiful book, Isabelle tells us an important story, one that gives us hope. The story of the sea otter demonstrates that conservation efforts can make a difference and bring a species back from the brink. Young people will be encouraged to see that positive changes can happen and that we can all do something to help preserve our planet. Hope is much needed today!”

—Dame Judi Dench
Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire and fan of sea otters

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COMING SPRING 2021
Cataline: The Life of BC’s Legendary Packer by Susan Smith-Josephy
with Irene Bjerky (Caitlin Press $22.95)

Irene Bjerky, C’eyxkn, has been chas ing down morsels of information about her family’s con nections to the fa mous British Colum bia packer, Jean Caux, aka “Cataline” since the early 1970s. Bjerky worked around the province as a boiler maker and commercial fisher, sometimes in the same places Cataline had led his mule pack trains 150 years earlier. He crisscrossed the province, fathering two children with Bjerky’s great-great grandmother, Amelia York, C’eyxkn, a noted basket weaver living at Spuz zum. Another child from a different relationship was later born at the opposite end of the province near Telegraph Creek.

Bjerky con nected with Qusante writer and genealogist Susan Smith-Josephy who did research in museums, arch es, ships’ manifests, min ers’ licenses, newspapers and used oral history interviews conducted by CBC’s Imbert Orchard. Seven years later, a more complete portrait of the man comes together in Cataline: The Life of BC’s Legendary Packer.

Smith-Josephy’s prose is clear and crisp—and she knows an entertain ing anecdote when she finds one. Cataline’s friend, Constable Sperry Cline recounted when Cataline first met Judge Matthew Bailey Begbie near Yale: “Judge Begbie was coming up the river dispensing justice in the various camps...The newly arrived packers were asked which side they would support. Cataline coolly drew a long Mexican knife from his boot and answered, ‘I standa by judge!’”

Judge Begbie later returned the favour by declaring Cataline a natural ized Canadian citizen.

Born in the French region of Bearn in the Pyrenees Mountains near the Spanish border, Jean Caux arrived in British Columbia in 1858 during the frenzy of the Fraser River gold rush. He spoke a jumble of languages: Bearnese, Mexican, Scots, Chinook, Irish, French, Chinese and English. One story has him swearing “with great dexterity” in seven languages.

He had learned how to be a packer from Mexicans when he landed in California as a 19-year-old. On the Fraser River, he soon realized it was more prof itable to be a packer than to compete with thousands of gold-panners. He began working for packing outfits and by 1862, had started his own.

Jean Caux cut an impressive figure—broad-shouldered and strong, with a peculiar habit of rubbing rum or whiskey into his shoulder-length, curly hair. He kept people in line with a horseshoe at the ready and began the day with a naked roll in the snow or dip in a frigid creek. His day ended after playing fiddle by the fire and then sleeping outside on a tarp and branches.

Cataline was admired for his re liability, fairness (to animals and crews—mostly Indigenous, mixed-blood and Chinese) and an uncanny memory. Although he was illiterate, he remembered every article that his mules delivered—and the correspond ing cost to transport it. He kept track of employers’ wages and expenses in his head and at the end of each season would settle up to the dollar.

Cataline built one of the biggest and most dependable packing outfits in the province; his 54 years of bone-crunching journeys parallel the development of modern British Columbia at its mining camps, telegraph lines, Hudson’s Bay Com pany posts, CPR and Grand Trunk railroad construction camps and set tlers who were fanning out across the wilderness.

Pack mule trains carrying supplies north were charged tolls (for each mule) in order to finance the continued construction of roads and trails.

Over 54 bone-crunching years, starting in 1858, Cataline built one of the biggest and most dependable packing outfits in the province.
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From Chuck to Eve

The Greater Vancouver Book

By Eve Lazarus

This is not another predictable re-hash of stories and anecdotes gleaned from Davis, the city’s master gatherer who gave us The Vancouver Book (1976) and The Greater Vancouver Book (1997). Instead Lazarus has done her own sleuthing, aided and abetted by internet informants and generous peers such as John Atkin, Michael Kluckner and John Carter.

The result is a potpourri of forgotten art works, eccentric museums, oddball houses, diamond-throwing architectural gems, and a belly-flop contest, as Lazarus explores Vancouver’s neighbourhoods with equal measures of humour and pathos.

Highlights include: Vancouver’s first horse race was held on a downtown street in 1887; Vancouverites drove on the left-hand side of the road until January 1, 1922—one of the last areas in Canada to change over; the rundown Regent Hotel in the Downtown Eastside was a ritzy place when it opened a century ago; Vancouver’s first hospital was located on West Pender Street between Cambie and Beatty; Canada’s first gas station opened at the corner of Cambie and Smithie in 1907 (when there were only 2,131 cars registered in the entire country); the VanTan Nudist Club, founded in 1939, is still operational; and stonemason Jimmy Cunningham who devoted 32 years of his life building the seawall, didn’t live to see it finished when he died in 1963.

Yes, there is, arguably, some filler material, and well-known figures like Trinidad-born Joe Fortes, Vancouver’s first official lifeguard. But even long-time Vancouver history buffs cannot fail to be impressed by Lazarus’ blend of the bizarre, the hidden, the destroyed and the over-looked. Vancouver Exposed is exemplary popular history, so much so that it succeeds in being disturbing. It’s more proof that Vancouver, as captured by photographer Fred Herzog and celebrated by Chuck Davis, has always been an interesting place.

Vancouver Exposed: Searching for the City’s Hidden History

By Eve Lazarus

Arsenal Pulp $32.95
Wade Davis praises the complexity of the Rio Magdalena region of South America and ponders the dismal fate of the U.S.

By Isabella Almasi

DISTRIBUTION OF COLUMBIA, NO THANKS

Wade Davis explored the Magdalena River in Colombia to celebrate its ties to Colombian culture, history and ecology. He was made a Member of the Order of Canada in 2016 and an Honorary Citizen of Colombia in 2018.

At the request of Colombia’s Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Davis spent two years on an expedition along the Magdalena River, which is Colombia’s longest. The river is not just a natural wonder, but also a cultural and historical marker. Davis’ book, “Magdalena: River of Dreams,” published by Knopf, explores the river’s rich history and cultural significance.

Davis’ work is a testament to the power of connecting with nature and understanding its role in shaping human history and culture. His expedition along the Magdalena River was not just a physical journey, but also a spiritual one, as he sought to understand the river’s impact on the people who call it home.

The river’s story is one of resilience and adaptability. Despite the challenges it has faced, the Magdalena remains a vital part of Colombia’s identity, serving as a source of life and inspiration for generations of Colombians.

Davis’ book is a call to action, a reminder of the importance of protecting our natural resources and the need to preserve the cultural heritage that is woven into the fabric of our lives. It is a reminder that we must learn to coexist with nature, rather than exploit it, if we are to ensure a sustainable future for ourselves and future generations.

In an era where the world is facing unprecedented challenges, Davis’ work serves as a beacon of hope and inspiration. It is a reminder that, with perseverance and resilience, we can overcome even the most daunting obstacles.

Davis’ book is a powerful reminder that nature is not just a resource to be exploited, but a source of wonder, inspiration, and renewal. It is a call to action for all of us to come together to protect the natural world and the cultures that are intertwined with it.
**THE MIGHTY RIVER**
Ginalina
Illus by Arley Wills
Winner of the 2020 Western Canada Music Awards, Ginalina is a two-time Juno nominated singer-songwriter, international family musician and now author of this just released title. She sums her song, “Save the Mighty River,” into a partnering keepsake book. It weaves together look-and-find excitement and early nature observations. Above all, it fosters care for the River in the hearts of the young.
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**CROSSING the DIVIDE**
Discovering a Wilderness Ethic in Canada’s Northern Rockies
Wayne Sawchuk
Logger, trapper, conservationist, Sawchuk’s journey to protecting the Muskwa-Kechika wilderness area is packed with edge-of-your-seat stories involving a wounded bear; a blinding snowstorm; a partially submerged snowmobile and jumping onto a mountain from an airborne helicopter. This is a book that will appeal to anyone who appreciates wilderness adventure or dreams of exploring the pristine wilds of the northern backcountry.
ISBN 9780994817518 pb $36.95 hc Image West

**HERE & GONE**
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Michael Kluckner
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Thanks & acknowledgment too to the BC Arts Council, the Canada Council for the Arts, and our federal and provincial governments for their timely and vital response.
To Impersonate the Supernatural: Music, Ceremony and Culture of the Bella Bella by Anton Frederik Kolstee

By Alexander Varty

The musical culture of the Bella Bella is one part of a sophisticated multimedia artform in which music, dance, theatre, sculpture, regalia and story are intrinsically intertwined.

During Kolstee’s ground-breaking study of the “music, ceremony and culture of the Bella Bella,” his University of Illinois thesis was successfully defended in 1988—and it offers a comprehensive analysis of what is arguably the most influential branch of Northwest Coast culture and beliefs. Complicating matters to anyone without advanced training in musicology. Complicating matters is the absence of recorded examples, whether offered on an included CD or via an online link.

Of course, to say that To Impersonate the Supernatural is dry, careful and scientific in its approach is also to say that it’s intensively researched, reasoned and blessedly unromantic. Such dualities abound here. If Kolstee doesn’t give recorded examples of the music of the Heiltsuk, it’s because that nation protects its cultural treasures from easy digital dissemination and believes that specific families or individuals own the rights to specific songs. If he for the most part refrains from translating Heiltsuk lyrics, it’s probably because he knows he’s not linguistically equipped to do justice to Heiltsuk cosmology. If he describes form but doesn’t interpret content, that’s a sign of respect. Despite having done first-hand research in Bella Bella and its environs, he knows he’s an outsider looking in, and confines himself primarily to structural rather than social analysis.

Where To Impersonate the Supernatural will be most valuable to the everyday reader comes when it deviates from scientific methodology and delves into cultural history. In his book’s first half, Kolstee situates his research within the wider context of 20th- and late-19th-century anthropology. A fascinating if compressed account of how early ethnologists such as Franz Boas, Edward Curtis and Marius Barbeau represented and misrepresented Northwest Coast culture leads into a discussion of how music fits into Indigenous ceremony today. Kolstee makes the valuable point that—in its ceremonial role, at least—song is but one part of a sophisticated multimedia artform in which music, dance, theatre, sculpture, regalia and story are intrinsically intertwined. And while he again resists definitive interpretation, he stresses that the ‘Clépu and Auldłux ritual cycles of the Heiltsuk are patterned after seasonal cycles of death, transfiguration and rebirth, and hints that if these operate on a specifically local level—such as the end of the fall berry harvest or the springtime coming of the herring—they also reflect a larger, perhaps even cosmic, sense of scale.

There’s much more work to be done in these areas, of course, and it’s important to point out that Kolstee began his research in 1978, when he spent a year as a music teacher in the Bella Bella school system. That was a very different era in terms of Indigenous empowerment, scholarship and cultural regeneration, and what it tells us is that while To Impersonate the Supernatural is an important publication, it’s now time for Northwest Coast ceremonial practices to be accessed from within, by scholars of Indigenous descent. That’s almost certainly being done as of this writing, so let’s hope that their findings don’t take 30-plus years to come to light.

Alexander Varty is an immigrant musician and writer living on unceded Stauneymuxu territory.
At the centre of this story is one of the smartest people I know, a journalist named Tony Wanless.

Many of us claim to be better in one area of learning than another, at reading and writing, for instance, than at math and science, or vice versa. You can see my own bias in the way I ordered that sentence.

Tony, however, was one of those rare individuals who was accomplished in both areas. He excelled in Latin and algebra, in science and the arts; he skipped a grade in high school. He had the sort of mind that easily grasped foreign languages, a skill due in part to the fact that he was born in the Netherlands where his family spoke Dutch. Tony was a toddler when they moved to Canada, and while he studied French at school, it was English that became the language used at home. His facility with language would become his greatest strength, leading him away from studies in engineering to a career in journalism.

Despite his talent and accomplishments, he has suffered from depression all his life. Perhaps, given his difficult family history, this isn’t so surprising. Tony says his father had a temper and, within a couple of years of their arrival, unhappy to be working in Dutch farming communities in Ontario, he hatched a plan to rob a credit union. Tony’s mother worked nights as a cleaner for the credit union, and he wanted her to let him in. She refused and threatened to expose him. He beat her unconscious in front of the children, and he was subsequently deported, not for the beating, but for the planned robbery. She raised three children on her own, which couldn’t have been easy. When she remarried, to a Chatham resident of British background named Lyle Wanless, Tony traded his long Dutch birth name, Antonius Josefus Franciscus Stephanus Maria Versteeg, for an English one: Tony Wanless.

During the first years of our married life, I would call out questions to Tony, such as, How do you spell this? Or, Who ran the country during the Forties? Or, When were antibiotics discovered? This was lazy of me, I admit. My reasoning, however, was simple: Why should I look things up when I knew he would have the answers right there in his head? Tony read voraciously; he soaked up words and information.

When did all that change? Certainly, there is no denying that it did.

On that spring day in 2018, we arrive, and just in time, at the Djavad Mowafaghian Centre for Brain Health at the University of British Columbia hospital in Vancouver.

We approach the building with its magnificent windows of etched glass, patterns of brain cells that look astonishingly like the tentacles of an octopus, and Tony asks me again, What are we here for?

I repeat what I had said at home as well as on the way over, that we are here to see the neurologist, and to get the test results.

Have I met him before?

I assure him we both have, and Tony nods.

We have a good idea what this neurologist will tell us. Even so, we need to hear it from him.

Four Umbrellas: A Couple’s Journey Into Young-Onset Alzheimer’s.

Four Umbrellas: A Couple’s Journey Into Young-Onset Alzheimer’s.

Tony Wanless and June Hutton met as Pacific Press journalists in Vancouver—he shares her byline in their story of coping with Young-Onset Alzheimer’s.
June Hutton began to suspect something was amiss when Tony put out his cigars in a potted plant with peat moss that started a small “bogfire.” Another time he closed a barbecue cover without turning off the elements, melting the cover until it sealed the unit inside. She would find lettuce in the freezer or dental floss in the fridge. Once, the toaster was wedged into the microwave oven.

Despite mounting evidence, that he had dementia, though he was acutely aware that something was wrong. In the following note, as with the other written contributions from him, the spelling errors, gaps, and repetitions, along with parenthetical comments, are tangible evidence of the disease’s impact, and are left as is for that reason.

It’s been slightly more than a year since I was diagnosed with MCI. I was becoming increasingly forgetful. More important and frightening to me, however, was that it was becoming increasingly more difficult to focus. I would get bored and drift away while doing something, whether talking with someone, or involved with something that I found tedious, then suddenly “wake up” and remember where I was and “get back to work.” It was as if my mind became unanchored and just bobbed along in the water drifting with the current for a bit – a nice, stress-free feeling, by the way. This also meant it became increasingly difficult to work, which meant I was constantly looking for distraction, i.e., computer, talking with Husein, who shared the office with me and eventually stopped coming in. Of course, this also led to depression (which probably increased the problem) because business and many other things were failing. My research tells me this is common with MCI (although it has to be gleaned from all the chaff about Alzheimer’s, which rarely seems relevant, I guess because more complete brain breakdown is “sexier” for most researchers and writers. Later, Tony would add: MCI is a lessening of some mental abilities like memory, impulse control and cognition (i.e. word recall, mathematics, handwriting, etc). It’s a condition that’s on the Alzheimer’s scale, although it doesn’t necessarily develop into Alzheimer’s (about a 30% chance, I was told. Regarding the other 70%, the condition remains the same or reverses).

Tony Wanless and June Hutton on their wedding day, 30 years ago.

FROM AS EARLY AS 2011, TONY HAD BEEN growing increasingly forgetful and confused. The bright mind that had skipped a grade and excelled at Latin and algebra was failing him. He had a fall, and I suspected a stroke. There were computed tomography (CT) scans and other scans, all showing nothing. There were doctors’ appointments and memory tests, such as the Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MoCA), often with long stretches of time between them, which had led to the observation that he had mild cognitive impairment, or MCI.

In one of his earliest emails to me in 2017, Tony still refused to believe, despite mounting evidence, that he had dementia, though he was acutely aware that something was wrong. In the following note, as with the other written contributions from him, the spelling errors, gaps, and repetitions, along with parenthetical comments, are tangible evidence of the disease’s impact, and are left as is for that reason.

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Tony Wanless worked at The Province for 22 years. He was finally diagnosed with Young-Onset Alzheimer’s or dementia after the age of 65. Young-Onset Alzheimer’s or dementia can be diagnosed retroactively. The majority of patients diagnosed with Young-Onset Alzheimer’s have a family history of the disease and a genetic component. More than 560,000 Canadians are living with some form of dementia according to the Alzheimer’s Association of Canada. About 5,000 of the 70,000 patients in B.C. are under the age of 65. —Ed.

Tony Wanless and June Hutton on their wedding day, 30 years ago.
Seriously inconvenient

TRUTHS

JEAN BARMAN REVISITS WHITE PREJUDICES

Using oral histories, family trees, poetry and fiction, Jean Barman brings to life “the land grab known as settler colonialism.”

On the Cusp of Contact: Gender, Space and Race in the Colonization of British Columbia by Jean Barman, edited by Margery Fee (Harbour Publishing $34.95)

BY IAN CHUNN

In the late 1800s, Native people living on reserves near the growing cities of Victoria and Vancouver suffered under white settler rule. “Seriously inconvenient,” said an 1862 Royal Navy officer in Victoria. “A source of nuisance and an impediment to progress,” stated Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier in 1911.

Historian Jean Barman has dug up these perspectives from under-examined resources—oral histories, family trees, local history and statistical records as well as poetry, drama and fiction—and published them in essays over the years.

Sixteen of her essays from 1995–2013 have been gathered together in On the Cusp of Contact. Barman pieces together stories of individuals and groups disadvantaged in white settler society because of their gender, race and/or social class. Each chapter concludes with an historical lesson.

There was a time when Indigenous people lived in reserve lands at Kits Point and Stanley Park until settlers coveted these choice areas. In Erasing Indigenous Indigeneity in Vancouver Barman documents how white newcomers settled these reserve lands. What the city wanted, and what the province helped it get was both the land and, hypocritically, a reputation for being Indigenous-friendly.

But white settler ignorance of local Indigenous groups is there for all to see. The totem poles in Stanley Park—not Squamish, like the people who lived there, but Kwakwaka’wakw, from the northern end of Vancouver Island—stand as an example of what Barman dubs “sanitized indigeneity.”

“The passion to rehabilitate the imaginary Indian who existed prior to the arrival of outsiders was very different from coexisting with real people,” she says.

Drivers using the Burrard Bridge experience a solid reminder of that very coexistence. In 2002, the Squamish won a court case that saw the return of ten acres expropriated for the CPR, and as Barman writes, “Roadways free of billboards except when passing through an Indian reserve have become a staple of British Columbian life.” The billboard now so visible from the bridge is a present-day reminder that “the hasty erasure of indigenous indigeneity earlier is coming full circle.”

In a section titled Indigenous Women, Barman provides several vignettes from contemporary accounts that show Indigenous women acting as independent agents. From the time of Captain Cook, whose crews were searching for the Northwest Passage, furs and “women to bed,” we learn that “except for women taken in war or otherwise exploited, Nootka women on the cusp of contact, controlled access to their bodies.” Barman remarks, “These accounts
challenge the easy stereotype held at the time, and into the present day, of Indigenous sexuality as a commodity.” Barman also addresses diversity within frontier communities in Invis-ible Women: Indigenous Mothers and Mixed-Race Daughters in Rural Pioneer British Columbia. “Acknowledgment of these pioneer women as part of our common history challenges one of the last bastions of the frontier myth” she says disagreeing with the notion that settlers were only white and not diverse.

Barman demonstrates that “the best history grows out of a combination of perspectives” in Island Sanctuaries, in which a successful mixed-race settle-
ment on the Gulf Islands is examined, focusing on settlers who came from the Shetland Islands, Ireland, England and Portugal. Another section deals with Hawai-
ian settlers. Canada granted Hawai-
i an full civil rights—perhaps because of their work in the fur trade—and they often married into Indigenous families. The Hawaiians remain enthusiastic about their heritage and in 1992 (in line with Canada turning 125), “The Hawaiian Connection” brought togeth-
er 200 people, who learned that they had stories and sometimes ancestors in common.

In Navigating Schooling Barman traces how the ideology of common schooling, in linguistically and ethni-
cally diverse B.C. (where, in 1867, Indigenous people were in the vast majority) was overwhelmed by racism with its assumption that non-whites would perform less well in any setting.

Schools thus “almost certainly played a role in the process whereby attitudes of inferiority were internalized” by In-
digenous people. moved from assimilation to prepar-
ing “the Indian for civilized life in his own environment.” One white girl de-
scribes the party around the Indian Christmas-tree: “We were not allowed to go to it, only to peep in through the open door for a little while... The Indian children... singing carols... looked very nice.”

“The past cannot be undone, but it can be better understood,” says Barman and she highlights some of the difficulties still to be resolved: a lack of In-
digenous teachers, not enough support for teaching Indigenous languages and lack of appropriate Indigenous content in textbooks and the classroom. On the Cusp of Con-
tact is robust and well produced, with excellent illustrations. It is ideal for courses across a range of disciplines (history, sociology, education), but in fact, because it so successfully en-
riches our common understanding, it deserves a place on everyone’s bookshelf.

White prejudice and lack of federal funding meant fewer opportunities for Indigenous people to lead lives that would help overcome that prejudice.
In Separate and Unequal Barman writes about All Hallows School in Yale where an initial period of mix-
ing is changed to separation—in the classroom and the playground—as the federal policy for Indigenous peoples came to differ from their European roots and how colonialism managed to dispossess.

Overall, Cole Harris considers the whole territory that became Canada through colonial domina-
tion. He also offers fresh insights on the rising influence of Indigenous peoples and argues, rather hope-
fully, that the country’s “bounded-ness” is ultimately drawing it closer to its First Nations roots.
**CONGRATULATIONS!**

A fine crop of Victoria writers

**Winner of the City of Victoria Butler Book Prize**

**Hats off to the other nominees...**

**MARK LEIREN-YOUNG**
Orcas Everywhere: The Mystery and History of Killer Whales
Orca Book Publishers

**CARLA FUNK**
Every Little Scrap and Wonder
Greystone Books

**CHRISTIN GEALL**
The Elements of Floral Style
Princeton Architectural Press

**CAREY NEWMAN & KIRSTIE HUDSON**
Picking Up the Pieces: Residential School Memories and the Making of the Witness Blanket
Orca Book Publishers

**SYLVIA OLSEN & ODELIA SMITH**
Neekah's Knitting Needles
Sono Nis Press

**LORNA CROZIER**
The House the Spirit Builds
Douglas & McIntyre

**STEVEN PRICE**
Lampedusa
McClelland & Stewart


**Winner of the City of Victoria Children’s Book Prize**

**Hats off to the other nominees...**

**MARK LEIREN-YOUNG**
Orcas Everywhere: The Mystery and History of Killer Whales
Orca Book Publishers

**SARA CASSIDY**
Nevers
Orca Book Publishers

**SYLVIA OLSEN & ODELIA SMITH**
Neekah’s Knitting Needles
Sono Nis Press

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These two juried prizes of $5,000 each are awarded annually. The Victoria Book Prize Society administers the prizes. Guidelines and details:

www.victoriabookprizes.ca

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Young activists will find hope and motivation in this “solutions-focused” book by a climate change scholar.

Know someone who recently adopted a dog? This collection of stories from rescue dog owners will warm their heart.

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**Make the Best Gifts**

Young activists will find hope and motivation in this “solutions-focused” book by a climate change scholar.

Know someone who recently adopted a dog? This collection of stories from rescue dog owners will warm their heart.
Ivan Coyote has won the inaugural 2020 Jim Deva Prize for Writing That Provokes, at the BC & Yukon Book Prizes.

Coyote won it for their twelfth book, Rebent Sinner (Arsenal Pulp $19.95) with its stories of what it means to be trans and non-binary.

The new prize, valued at $5,000, commemorates the Vancouver bookseller (who was a co-owner of Little Sister’s bookstore) and LGBTQ2S+ activist, the late Jim Deva, widely known for his legal battle against censorship.

For almost two decades, Jim Deva and Bruce Smyth, his life and business partner, along with store manager Janine Fuller, battled in the courts with the federal government for the freedom to sell the titles of their choice. He was quoted in the Globe and Mail as saying, “We’ve been fighting for respect for our images and our sexuality.”

The trio undertook the expensive legal action after years of having books they ordered confiscated before arriving at the store. The conflict became known as Little Sister’s versus Big Brother.

Jim Deva is also credited with lobbying the Vancouver police for a respectful and helpful relationship with the gay and lesbian community, rather than an antagonistic approach.

A donation from Bruce Smyth will fund the new prize for the next ten years. “The goal of this prize is to educate, liberate and celebrate,” says Smyth. “My hope for the prize is that it will encourage and acknowledge folks for challenging social norms.”

Non-binary Ivan Coyote says that they are honoured to receive the award. “Truly, Jim Deva was my friend, and I loved and respected him very much,” they said. “I would go into Little Sister’s for a visit and always end up chatting for an hour. He was filthy and irreverent and hilarious. He was dedicated to queer and trans books, the community, his beloved partner, his friends and his dog, I miss him. I’m honoured to have his name connected to mine in this way.”

All but one of Coyote’s books has been published by Arsenal Pulp. “I need to thank Arsenal Pulp especially Brian Lam, Shirarose Wiensky and Cynara Geissler,” adds Coyote. “The team there have been my book family since 1998. We have published eleven books together, and I have loved the process every time.”

Here is the complete list of BC and Yukon Book Prize winners:

**Steven Price**—Ethel Wilson Fiction Prize for Lampedusa (M&S).

**Alejandro Frid**—Hubert Evans Non-Fiction Prize for Changing Tides: An Ecologist’s Journey to Make Peace with the Anthropocene (New Society).

**Chantal Gibson**—Dorothy Livesay Poetry Prize for How She Read (Caitlin).

**Michael Nicholl Yahgulanaas**—Roderick Haig-Brown Regional Prize for Carpe Fin: A Haida Manga (DoM).


**Kyo Maclear** (author) and **Julie Montstad** (illustrator)—Christie Harris Illustrated Children’s Literature Prize for It Began With a Page: How Oyo Fujikawa Drew the Way (Tundra).

**Aaron Chapman**—Bill Duthie Booksellers’ Choice Award for Vancouver After Dark: The Wild History of a City’s Nightlife (Arsenal Pulp).

**Ivan Coyote**—Jim Deva Prize for Writing that Provokes for Rebent Sinner (Arsenal Pulp).

**Julie Flett** and **Joy Kogawa**—co-winners: Lieutenant Governor’s Award for Literary Excellence.

**Jim Deva**

**INSPIRES BC & YUKON BOOK PRIZE**

**JIM DEVA**

The new prize, valued at $5,000, was also the winner of the 2020 Pat Lowther Memorial Prize; longlisted for the Gerald Lampert Memorial Award and the Raymond Souster Award; and a finalist for the Griffin Poetry Prize; the Dorothy Livesay Poetry Prize for How She Read; the Dorothy Livesay Poetry Prize for How She Read; the Dorothy Livesay Poetry Prize for How She Read; the Dorothy Livesay Poetry Prize for How She Read.
George Bowering is no more. He is still capable of conducting a long interview. Bowering’s ap-
proximately 150- plus titles at the Rob-
son Square law courts in 1994, in ken-
drarth with civic festivals to mark the
city’s proclamation of George Woodcock Day. It was akin to visiting Hay-On-Wye (often called “the town of books”) in Wales and seeing all those books.

It was unquestionably the biggest array possible of books by a British Columbia author. Way back in the 1960s, when he was a student at UBC— as well as bud-
dy of a young lecturer at UBC named Margaret Atwood. George Bowering used to borrow George Woodcock’s tape recorder. Fast forward six decades and now Bowering is unchallenged as the second-most prolific literary author of B.C. with approximately 100 titles. Now “George the Second” has re-
cieved the George Woodcock Lifetime Achievement Award for an outstanding literary career in B.C.

BOWERING’S LATEST COLLECTION OF rambles and essays, Writing and Reading, reveals a newer, nuder and possibly humbled Bowering, according to his publisher Rolf Maurer. After a near-death experience when he suffered a cardiac arrest outside the West Point Grey Library in 2015, Bowering no longer plays baseball. In 2018, he was taken aback by a come-uppance from young staffers who refused to provide publicity and marketing for his memoir-like novel No One (ECW Press) as they claimed the story “objectifies women.” The book was never reviewed and it sank like a stone.

Bowering defends that previous novel in this current collection, in a piece called The City of My Affec-
tion. Instead of crying foul, Bowering has pulled his punches and chooses to exhibit how smarter he is in his essay about no one reading No One. So, in a way, Maurer is right. The bellicose Bowering is no more. He is still capable of holding a long interview with himself on the page, but one notes strains of wastefulness in pieces about other writers he has known. These include Robert Kroetsch (“the funni-
est and smartest writer in the land”), Robin Matthews (“the best runter on Vancouver Island”), Sheila Watson, Ethel Wilson and Alice Munro. He claims he once walked with Munro in the West End with his right arm around her waist. He recalls: “I was the happy-
est man in Canadian literature.”

Writing and Reading is a likable mix of off-the-cuff pieces and breezy rambling. Most peculiar is a piece that begins, unabashedly, “I have been a professional gambler.”

How many people have ever done that? Maurer suggested to Bower-
ing that they should arbitrarily pick a year, any year, to exemplify this practice. They chose 1967, Canada’s centenary, when Bowering was 31. In a piece called simply 1967 books Bowering shares his comments on the books he read that year, starting with Prometheus Unbound by Percy Bysshe Shelley. The list is littered with Bower-
ing’s never-ending asides. “I have now read 40 books by Margaret Atwood and have number 41 lined up.” You can argue it’s self-centred; but you cannot argue it is not original. Writing and Reading, if it’s Bower-
ing’s 1000th book, might be a good place to stop, ending, as it does, with George the Second interviewing him-
self. There is a seeping nostalgia in these pages. Recalling growing up “in a semi-arid Podunk called Oliver, Brit-
ish Columbia,” Bowering is aware “my boyhood came even before television, thank God.”

George Bowering receiving the George Woodcock Lifetime Achievement Award from Christina de Castell, Chief Librarian, at the Vancouver Public Library.

George Bowering is second only to George Woodcock for most books written by a B.C. author.
Never Going Back
by Sam Wiebe (Orca $9.95)

In his fourth novel, Never Going Back (part of Orca Book Publishers’ “Rapid Reads” series for adult readers), crime writer Sam Wiebe introduces us to Ali Kidd, determined to put her criminal ways behind her after spending a year in jail.

Trouble is, Ali is so good at being a thief that there are evil-doers just as determined to get her to continue with her particular skillset. And Ali has vulnerabilities because she comes from a broken family that now includes just her and a brother, Dean.

It’s clear that Dean means more than anything in the world to Ali. A crime boss knows this and kidnaps Dean to extort Ali into doing another heist.

Will Ali do it?

In addition to being a master of suspense, as all good crime writers need to be, Sam Wiebe knows how to pack a world of information into a few short paragraphs.

Take his introduction to Ali in the opening soliloquy: “Don’t believe what you hear about me,” says Ali. “I don’t rob people. Robbery means taking something with force. I hate violence, and I’ve never used a weapon in my life. Besides, I’m too good to need force. If I take something of yours, you won’t know until it’s gone, and you’ll never know it was me.

“I’m a thief. A great thief. Or I was. But right now I was a woman waiting in the rain for my brother.”

Right from the get-go, Ali is established as someone with morals. Thievery is an artform to her more than a way of life. Her brother Dean has other talents—he likes to cook and runs a restaurant. He has offered Ali a job when she finishes her jail time.

“Tonight, for my first meal after getting out of prison, he promised to make me something called cassoulet. I told him a burger and fries would be all right. But like I said, he loves to cook. Me, I’m good at other things.”

Ali learned about the security business as a teen when she helped her guardian aunt’s boyfriend, Paul, who installed alarms for a security company. Homeowners set their own codes but Ali learns that as a backup, installers set their own codes in case of emergencies. Usually they pick unique numbers. “But installers have bad days too,” says Ali. “Some are lazy. Paul liked to get home early, so he would always set the same code. Four zeros. ”

“I was fifteen when I learned this. For a fifteen-year-old, that was a lot of knowledge.”

Ali learns other things too, like mastering a rock-climbing wall at a gym where she worked part-time at the age of 18. “After cleaning the floors and emptying the trash, I’d practice climbing, building strength and confidence.”

Now, in addition to being able to get past alarms and locks, Ali can scale walls and enter a building in a variety of ways.

Her skills get noticed by local crime boss Lisa Wan who leads Ali into the life of a thief. After seven years, Lisa betrays Ali and gets her arrested and landed in jail.

Ali’s only visitor in prison was Dean. He convinces her that she should come work in his restaurant when she is released. That is Ali’s intention until Dean doesn’t show up to collect her when she gets out. After a bit of sleuthing, Ali figures out that Lisa Wan has kidnapped him. To free Dean, Lisa orders Ali to engage in one of the trickiest, most dangerous heists she has ever attempted.

Will it work? Will Ali get caught? And what about the handsome police officer that takes an interest in Ali? All is revealed in Wiebe’s surprising conclusion.

Sam Wiebe’s first novel, Last of the Independents (Dundurn, 2014) won the Kobo Emerging Writer Prize, an Arthur Ellis Award, and was nominated for a Shamus award. He is also a former Vancouver Public Library Writer in Residence.

978-1-4598257-7-2
NEW FROM ANVIL PRESS

FOOL’S GOLD: THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF VANCOUVER’S OFFICIAL TOWN FOOL
by Jesse Donaldson
On April 1, 1968, a tall, bespectacled, thirty-five-year-old former social worker named Joachim Foikis received $3,500 from the Canada Council for the Arts in order to finance a unique, self-imposed mission unseen since Elizabethan England: reinvent the vanished tradition of “Town Fool.”
Foil’s Gold is the story of Vancouver’s first—and only—Town Fool. Self-proclaimed as Vancouver’s Official Town Fool in 1968, Joachim (Keni) Foikis set forth on his mission to “spread joy and confusion” and to “mock the four pillars of society: money, status, respectability, and conformity.”
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CZECH TECHNO & OTHER STORIES OF MUSIC
By Mark Anthony Jarman
From the author of 19 Knives and My White Planet comes a brilliant suite of stories built around music and travel.
We see a band coming apart at the ruins of Pompeii, tour through Napoli’s “volcanic dust and volcanic drugs and jackal-headed bedlam,” and embark on a nostalgic stroll past the homeless in Victoria’s inner harbour where “gentle Tunisian techno” rides the breezes above addicts as weighted as Shakespearean characters.
The five stories that comprise Czech Techno are replete with the sizzle and jump we have come to expect from a Mark Jarman story.
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THE LILY PAD AND THE SPIDER
By Claire Legendre | Translated by David Homel
The Lily Pad and the Spider is an autobiographical essay on fear, exploring the symptoms, sources, and genesis of anxiety, from the most intimate to the most ordinary kind. Using short chapters that are fragments of her life, Claire Legendre breaks down the psychological, physical, and social mechanisms associated with that emotion. Her style is lively, often funny, sometimes dark, and the story traces a unique path between France, Canada, and the Czech Republic, casting a defiant yet vulnerable gaze upon the world.
978-1-77214-152-8 • 96 PAGES • $18 • NOVEL

...AND THIS IS THE CURE
By Annette Lapointe
And This Is the Cure follows Allison Winter, public radio pop-culture journalist and former riot grrrl as she regains custody of her adolescent daughter, Hanna, following the murder of her ex-husband. She is unprepared to deal with either the demands of parenting or the fury of her ex-husband’s religiously conservative, grieving family, so she pulls up roots and moves Hanna from Winnipeg to Toronto.
And This Is the Cure is a novel about the weight of unresolved baggage—its pain and trauma—and the process of healing and moving on.
978-1-77214-151-1 • 352 PAGES • $22 • NOVEL

Available at your local independent bookstore or online at caitlin-press.com

Strong Women • Bold Stories • Local Books

Available to the trade from PGC/Raincoast
wider Aidan Fitzpatrick first saw ‘Charlie’ in 1920. That’s when he fell under the 9-foot-tall primate’s spell. The sighting of that unidentifiable creature in the woods changed the course of his life.

Fitzpatrick abandoned his goal of becoming a Catholic priest in favour of studying biology and ultimately becoming a veterinarian. He saved his money for years in order to buy property in B.C.’s interior, where that first sighting occurred.

The loner carved a cedar version of Charlie, placing it inside the doorway, anticipating a reunion with its flesh ‘n’ blood counterpart. The carving becomes part of the household and features the man’s only grandchild, Sandy, who was seven years old when he brought her to live with him in 1959.

The main character turns out to be the woodsman’s granddaughter, Sandy, who never knew her own father due to a short-lived marriage.

While being raised in a remote cabin that included the cedar statue of Charlie, Sandy made do with her distracted, scholarly grandfather and befriended a boy named Luke. The outdoors was their playground and their classroom: they swam, they fished, they explored, and they learned from the creatures around them.

Luke was hiding out with his mother, Eva, having escaped from a violent father/husband. Eventually Sandy married this childhood sweetheart but tragedy again intervened. Her young husband went missing from the cabin, presumably drowned, when she was pregnant with their second child.

Other than a short preface by Sandy which introduces the grandfather and the Charlie quest, the story unfolds all within one winter’s day, interspersed with memories from Sandy’s life in British Columbia’s rugged interior mountains.

Everyone is a tiny creature in a wide, wide landscape, much like the planet earth in the galaxy. Sarah Louise Butler, who is a wildlife research enthusiast and holds a degree in Earth Sciences, has done a stellar job of creating a sense of place that looms high, mysterious and vast over the humans.

“There’s always questions more interesting than answers,” says Butler. “And for a novel where both science and religion feature prominently, it felt appropriate that my characters couldn’t possibly have all the answers.”

“I recognize that not all readers will share this view, which is why I tried to make it very clear, from the first pages of the novel, which sort of book this is.”

“The non-human elements receive more attention than is, perhaps, typical, but the small cast of human characters and their interactions with each other, as well as with the natural world, are at the forefront of the narrative.”

The Wild Heavens is not magic realism. It’s closer to science realism. But it explores the mystery of life. It’s one of those stories that’s bigger than the sum of its parts.

“There’s just something so compelling about their life cycle,” Luke says to Sandy, watching Kokanee spawning in the river. “The circularity of it; how they spawn and then immediately die. It’s kind of perfect in a way.”

When the enigmatic tracks of Charlie finally reappear, it is Sandy who sets out on the trail alone, determined to find out the truth about the mystery that has shaped her life.

Sarah Louise Butler’s The Wild Heavens explores our need to follow footprints.

Sarah Louise Butler, author of The Wild Heavens, by Sarah Louise Butler (D&M $22.95)

BY CHERIE THIESSEN

The Wild Heavens is a small cast of people who have been left behind, flawed, hopeful people who are deeply in love with the place they live, even when its complexities and mysteries exceed the range of their understanding.

“Charlie” is a way around constantly having to describe it as an ‘unidentified non-human primate’.

In a word, The Wild Heavens is enigmatic. Life is bewildering. We have a small cast of people who have been left alone: Aidan Fitzpatrick lost his wife, then his daughter. Sandy never really had a father, then she lost her mother and then she lost Luke, who had lost his father. Eventually, Sandy will also have to part ways with her grandfather.

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Channelling his inner George Orwell, an educated dishwasher chronicles his fight for rental fairness.

baazar of East Hastings does not conform to the great Canadian maxim, if you can't say anything nice, don't say anything at all. He is not likely to be invited to give a presentation to the Vancouver City Planning Commission any time soon. "Guant putty-coloured people slipping and clapping around in flip-flops, inundated plush purses, plastic stiletto shoes, scabby bruised thighs, hollow faces from the living crypt. A man in a wheelchair sat at the foot of a curb while a thin man in a black straw fe-dora and flared women’s jeans worked at pushing his chair up a curb cut. Sidewalk dense with black marketeers and the vice-laden who supported this and the last rent control. A formidable man caught between the gears of gentrification and renovation" but it’s also a delightful dance piece of wordsmithing, an uplifting perfor-mance piece. When Dustin Cole first started writ-ing for the Ormsby Review a few years back, it was immediately obvious that the Alberta-born Cole, raised in the wee town of High Level in remote northwestern Alberta, had the potential to be the literary equivalent to Alphonso Davies. [Now described as the 17th most valuable soccer player on the planet, the Alberta-raised Alphonso Davies had a very brief tenure with the Vancouver Whitecaps before he vulted into the top tier with Bayern-Munich to make $5.5 million per season. Meanwhile, Dustin Cole is about to skedaddle back to more affordable Edmonton.]
A legal immigrant from Ukraine is branded an enemy alien and incarcerated in a World War One internment camp, one of more than twenty in Canada, in Glen Huser’s novel, Firebird.

Firebird by Glen Huser (Ronsdale $12.95)

By Sage Birchwater

PROFILING AND PREJUDICE

Glen Huser’s young reader/adult crossover historical novel, Firebird, offers a sobering look at racial prejudice in Canada more than 100 years ago. After Canada entered World War One as an ally to Great Britain in August of 1914, many immigrants who had fled to Canada years before to escape poverty and oppression in Eastern Europe were branded as enemy aliens. Many were arrested and imprisoned in 24 makeshift, forced labour camps across the country.

The on-the-ground tragedy and their resentment toward the young man as he sets out in action while fighting in Europe.

Eventually Alex learns that Marco has been imprisoned in Castle Mountain internment camp in Banff, Alberta. [Huser notes that the site of the Castle Mountain Internment Camp has been set aside as a national shrine, a memorial to remember the shameful treatment of innocent men, mostly of Ukrainian heritage, caught up in the hysteria of the First World War.]

Huser charts a thread of human kindness and generosity that helps change Alex for the better. Difference-makers include the small-town postmaster, a Ukrainian hobo who helps him jump a freight train, a kind-hearted carpenter and his family, a school teacher in Edmonton and the teacher’s benevolent aunt in Calgary, who all reach out to allow Alex to achieve his goal and find his brother.

The author’s background as an educator and his intimate understanding of the psychology of youth and life in small towns on the Canadian prairies combine to give authenticity to the story. Huser portrays the triumph of human decency through the eyes of children unfettered by prejudice. He conveys the narrowness of powerful individuals consumed by the smallness of their own self-importance and how these shortcomings diminish those around them.

Lastly, he paints a delightful portrayal of the heroic: that is, bending the rules and reaching beyond the limitations of personal circumstances, or based-in institutional normacy, which is what it takes sometimes to make a difference. Firebird illuminates the irrationality of war and the shallowness of racial discrimination and profiling.

Few can disagree that this is a lesson that every society has to learn and relearn, generation after generation.

978-1-55380-587-6

Sage Birchwater writes from Williams Lake.

Castile Mountain Internment Camp (1915)

Firebird by Glen Huser

Saturday at the Garage by Nancy Hundal illustrations by Angela Pan

3-7 YEARS OLD

n this picture book about the warm relationship between a father and daughter, a young girl spends all day at her dad’s garage.

“Lights flick up, the radio jolts on and sings a twangy song to remind the night that its turn is done,” she says as they open the garage. “Coffee bub-bub-bubbles in a pot. I don’t like the taste, but the smell means Saturday, and that’s good.”

One of the regular customers brings her candies and teases that there is an elf hanging out in the area and it has been spotted in their shop. The girl is not so sure but she keeps looking just in case.

Another customer says “Isn’t your dad lucky to have a helper like you?”

The girl’s dad doesn’t say much, but she can tell he is happy.

“Helping fix a car, the girl passes her dad tools.

“Sometimes he beckons me over to show me how he’s adjusting this or that. Sometimes I even do the twisting or tightening. Dad is the magic man under the hood, but he’s slowly passin’ the magic to me.”

They eat a lunch of “meaty sandwiches and crisp apples.” Then it’s play time.

A mechanic, his daughter and an elf

Saturday at the Garage by Nancy Hundal

BC Bookworld Winter 2020-2021
For ‘bearsance’ in the Rockies

A former park warden invents a heroine for our times

Harking by George Mercer

Dyed in the Green

not surprising given that Mercer has part of the target market, and that’s readers who don’t realize they are not wilderness preservation issues.

Dyed in the Green

is complicated by the fact that her na-

her inner struggle to overcome the wounds of her fractured family. After her parents divorced and she opted to stay with her Dad, Harking witnessed the death of her hugely knowledgeable father by protecting a mother grizzly and her cubs who are at risk of being removed from their natural habitat or else killed.

The evolving complexity of Harking’s struggle on behalf of those four bears lends credibility to the tale. There is Harking’s social quest to make sure everyone in Jasper does what’s right, even though it looks to be a lot easier to most people to just do what’s simple and wrong, and there is her inner struggle to overcome the wounds of her fractured family.

After her younger brother returns to Jasper, along with her estranged mother, Harking’s brave defense of the unwanted mother grizzly and her cubs is complicated by the fact that her naive brother has got himself tangled up in the Rockies

so that we can better adjust our own needs of wildlife, not only in our parks and protected areas, but everywhere. In the absence of a huge influx of people in places like Jasper National Park during the spring of 2020, wildlife responded by showing up in greater numbers and in areas not normally used in recent years.

Although other factors including weather may have influenced wildlife behaviour this year more so than in the past, species such as grizzly bears may be showing us that their preferred habitats overlap with human use even more than we suspected.

“This phenomenon, if we want to call it that, is occurring throughout the world, highlighting the need to better understand wildlife use as well as our impacts on that use, if we are to coexist with other species. “My greatest hope from writing this story is to help communicate the need to develop a better appreciation for the needs of wildlife, not only in our parks and protected areas, but everywhere, so that we can better adjust our own use to accommodate other species we share the planet with…”

“Changing our expectations and our own behaviours is critical if we are to coexist with wildlife into the future.”

 Crocs can do everything

The series of children’s books with crocodile characters that author Robert Heidbreder and illustrator Rae Maté made popular for ages 3-6, is now available in a boxed set, Crocs in a Box (Tradewind $24.95).

Crocodiles Can Do Everything (2005), Crocodiles Play (2008) and Crocs at Work (2015) offered youngsters verbal and visual fun, taking them along with the colourful crocodiles as they frolic through a day; play sports like baseball and hockey; and tangle on jobs such as cooks, florists, croc ‘docs’ and teachers. Changes in the newly packaged titles include smaller-sized books and different cover art.

Prior to writing, Robert Heidbreder was a primary and kindergarten school teacher for thirty years, and received the Prime Minister’s Award for Teaching Excellence in 2002. For over 20 years, Vancouver-born Rae Maté has been an art teacher to preschoolers and their parents at Vancouver Children’s Arts Umbrella on Granville Island.
Beep Beep Bubbie
by Bonnie Sherr Klein
illustrated by Élisabeth Eudes-Pascal

Kate is upset when her Bubbie (grandma) gets a motorized scooter. Will Bubbie still be Bubbie in that scooter?

Bonnie Sherr Klein, best-selling author of Slow Dance: a story of love and disability, joins acclaimed illustrator Élisabeth Eudes-Pascal “for this lighthearted intergenerational story, sure to open young eyes to issues of disability.” (Quill & Quire)

Crocs in a Box - 3 Little Books
by Robert Heidbreder
illustrated by Rae Maté

The three mischievous crocs are back—in a box! Frolic along with these raucous reptiles as they romp through a crocodile day, sprint off the sports field, and turn the work-a-day world upside down.

“Heidbreder’s bouncy verse and the mayhem and imagination of Maté’s energetic illustrations will leave kids joyous with laughter.” (Toronto Star)

The Mysterious Stones
by Enrique Pérez Díaz
illustrated by Yayo

Kiki lives with his tío and his abuela ever since his papá sailed away in search of a new life.

Written by Enrique Pérez Díaz, Cuba’s leading author for young people, and illustrated by the award-winning Colombian-Canadian artist Yayo. “The Mysterious Stones is a title to share between generations, one that ends on a note of hope, perfect in today’s world. Highly recommended.” (CM Reviews)
A IS FOR ABRAHAM

Book designer Tree Abraham won First Prize in the Reference category for Alcuin Society’s annual competition for book design for Cedar + Salt: Vancouver Island Recipes from Forest, Farm, Field, and Sea (TouchWood $45). Cedar + Salt was also a finalist for the Bill Duthie Booksellers’ Choice Award at the 2020 BC and Yukon Book Prizes.

B IS FOR BARRETT

Due in March, My Best Friend is Extinct (Orca $10.95) by Whistler-based filmmaker Rebecca Wood Barrett is about a young boy who befriends a strange prehistoric-like creature during a snowstorm. Illustrations are by Cornelia Li. For ages 8-10.

C IS FOR CORNWALL

Having almost lost the family cabin during the fire season of 2017, Claudia Cornwall collected stories from people in Sheridan Lake, Ashcroft, Cache Creek, 16 Mile House, Lac La Hache, Queensel, Williams Lake, Hanceville-Riske Creek and Clinton for British Columbia in Flames: Stories from a Blazing Summer (Harbour $26.95), with over 60 photographs.

D IS FOR DECKHA

Legally, animals are defined as property, often leading to their inhumane mistreatment. In Animals as Legal Beings: Contesting Anthropocentric Legal Orders (UTP $34.95), Maneesha Deckha, a UVic law professor, suggests a new legal term, “beingness”—as an alternative to “personhood”—as a way to legally recognize animals and protect them from exploitation.

E IS FOR EL SALVADOR

Having lived through El Salvador’s brutal civil war between 1980-1992, which claimed more than 75,000 lives, Lucia Mann has written The Little Breadwinner: War and Survival in the Salvadoran Heartland (Aperion $17.95) about families tyrannized by the country’s military-led government amid the “dirty” war between the American CIA-backed government and the left-wing rebel group, Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front.

F IS FOR FRIESEN

After publishing more than a dozen books of poetry, Victoria’s Patrick Friesen has released Outlasting the Weather: Selected & New Poems (Anvil $20), which spans a quarter century of his work. In 2016, he was nominated for the Griffin Poetry Prize for his co-translation of the Danish book of poetry, Prayed Opus for Strings & Wind Instruments by Ulrikka Gernes.

G IS FOR GRACE

Having written about Malcom Lowry, Margaret Atwood and painter Tom Thomson, UBC professor emerita Sherrill Grace spent ten years on Tiff: A Life of Timothy Findley (WLP $39.95), described by Atwood as, “A meticulously researched deep dive into a troubled and fascinating life—passionate, engaged, often messy, vastly rewarding.”

H IS FOR HANDMAN

Misha Handman started writing comics for his friends in elementary school, graduating to short stories and collaborative works. His debut novel Shadow Stitcher: An Everland Mystery (Edge $14.95) follows a private detective in the 1950s on a missing persons case involving organized crime, murder and espionage. The novel was shortlisted for a Rakuten Kobo 2020 Emerging Writers Prize for speculative fiction.

WHO’S WHO BRITISH COLUMBIA

Maneesha Deckha’s research includes animal law, feminist analysis of law, health law and bioethics.

Tree Abraham

Patrick Friesen

Sherrill Grace

Lucia Mann

Rebecca Wood Barrett

Maneesha Deckha

Patrick Friesen

Rebecca Wood Barrett

WHO'S WHO BRITISH COLUMBIA

32 BC BOOKWORLD • WINTER 2020-2021
The new Indigenous Literary Map of BC highlights the careers of more than 100 Indigenous literary artists of B.C. with extensive descriptions of their output. Stage two of the literary map next year will add another 100 authors from among the 300 written about by Canada Book Fund and Alan Twigg. The project is supported by Canada Book Fund and Alan Twigg from among the 300 written about by Canada Book Fund and Alan Twigg.

In the tradition of ‘poetry of witness,’ Victoria-based Danielle Janess’ debut poetry collection The Milk of Amnesia (MQUP $17.95) uses various forms and language—theatre, film clips, photographs and dance—to address problems with historical memory and the trauma of inherited memories of war. Elements of Janess’s book grew from a maternal grandfather who was arrested in Warsaw within the first twenty days of the Second World War, and sent to a Soviet gulag where he rested for three years before joining the Free Polish Army in Russia.

Kwalwyn’s kwakw and author David Neel was shortlisted for the 2020 Hilary Weston Writers’ Trust prize for non-fiction for his memoir The Way Home (UBC Press $32.95) about his struggle to reconnect with his traditional culture. The jury said his “spellbinding memoir” was “wise and deeply moving.”

It helps to be an enthusiast for the subject you are working on. Vancouver tea tippler Chelsea O’Byrne, illustrator of the Kill the Book Tea Time Around the World (Greystone $22.95), enjoys a good cuppa’. O’Byrne works mainly in watercolour, graphite and gouache. Her images accompany Denyse Waissbluth’s spare text about the many tea cultures including those of Tibet, Iran, England, Thailand, Russia, Egypt, Pakistan, Hong Kong, India and Japan.

The project is supported by Canada Book Fund and Alan Twigg from among the 300 written about by Canada Book Fund and Alan Twigg.

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In her tenth novel, *Forest Green* (Doubleday $29.95), Victoria-born Kate Pullinger explores how trauma can warp a life through a man who begins life in the Okanagan Valley during the Great Depression, is haunted by his experiences as a World War II soldier, nomadically works in logging camps across B.C., finds one great love but it’s turbulent, and ends up homeless on Vancouver’s streets. Pullinger won the Governor General’s Award for her 2009 novel, *The Mistress of Nothing*. 9780385683043

Jordan Scott, who has struggled with stuttering most of his life, has published a debut kidlit book, *I Talk Like a River* (Penguin $24.99) for children aged 4 – 8, with illustrations by Sydney Smith. It’s about a boy who stutters and is helped by a patient, kind father who takes him for a walk by the river to help him find his voice. 9780823445592

After 21 years as a paramedic, Graeme Taylor retired from the B.C. Ambulance Service and has recorded his experiences in *A Paramedic’s Tales: Hilarious, Horrible and Heartwarming True Stories* (Harbour $24.95). He candidly recalls what it’s like to attend to people dying, and those who are badly injured or disfigured, those in the midst of psychotic episodes, competitiveness with firemen, what paramedics joke about, and how they deal with suicidal patients. 978-1-55017-902-6

Meredith Quartermain uses a train journey from the West Coast to the East Coast in *Lullabies in the Real World* (Newest $18.95) to probe Canada’s legacy as a colonial nation. At times playful, at other times confrontational, Quartermain ends by imagining a time before, or outside of, colonization. Her poems also reflect imaginary conversations with Canadian poets such as Robin Blaser and bpNichol. 978-1-988732-78-7

In her tenth novel, *Chemical World: Science in Our Daily Lives* (Orca $19.95), former biologist Rowena Rae alerts young readers to the role chemicals play in their daily lives. She invites them to consider what they eat and how different foods could affect their health. 978-1-55017-902-6

Jordan Scott explores the linguistic implications of stuttering as it relates to human communication. In 2006, he was nominated for the Dorothy Livesay Poetry Prize for *Silt*. 978-1-45982-157-6

**WHO’S WHO**

**P IS FOR PULLINGER**

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In *Chemical World: Science in Our Daily Lives* (Orca $19.95), former biologist Rowena Rae alerts young readers to the role chemicals play in their daily lives. She invites them to consider what they eat and how different foods could affect their health. 978-1-55017-902-6

**S IS FOR SCOTT**

Jordan Scott, who has struggled with stuttering most of his life, has published a debut kidlit book, *I Talk Like a River* (Penguin $24.99) for children aged 4 – 8, with illustrations by Sydney Smith. It’s about a boy who stutters and is helped by a patient, kind father who takes him for a walk by the river to help him find his voice. 9780823445592

**T IS FOR TAYLOR**

After 21 years as a paramedic, Graeme Taylor retired from the B.C. Ambulance Service and has recorded his experiences in *A Paramedic’s Tales: Hilarious, Horrible and Heartwarming True Stories* (Harbour $24.95). He candidly recalls what it’s like to attend to people dying, and those who are badly injured or disfigured, those in the midst of psychotic episodes, competitiveness with firemen, what paramedics joke about, and how they deal with suicidal patients. 978-1-55017-902-6

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The Sopranos star, Michael Aloni, is Akiva Shtisel in the Israeli TV series Dinei, a global hit about a fictional Haredi (Orthodox) family in Jerusalem. See F entry.

U IS FOR UGANDA

Janice Masur has written a memoir about growing up in a small European Jewish community from 1949 to 1961 in Kampala, Uganda under British Imperial rule in Shalom Uganda: A Jewish Community on the Equator (Island Blue $4.99). With no rabbis or Jewish infrastructure, this community of just twenty-three families formed a cohesive group that celebrated all Jewish festivals together and upheld their Jewish identity.

W IS FOR WEBB

The internet has more pitfalls than a game of Snakes & Ladders. Human rights lawyer and UBC professor, Maureen Webb argues that hackers can be vital disruptors and that many are trying to "build out" democracy into cyberspace in her hugely important study Coding Democracy: How Hackers are Disrupting Power, Surveillance, and Authoritarianism (MIT Press $39.95). Her previous book was Illusions of Security: Global Surveillance and Democracy in the Post-9/11 World (City Lights, 2007). 978-0-305-04355-7

WHO'S WHO

Michael Aloni is Akiva Shitsoel in the Israeli TV series Dinei, a global hit about a fictional Haredi (Orthodox) family in Jerusalem. See F entry.

X IS FOR XLATSEP

Kwantlen storyteller Joseph Daniel James, whose traditional name Xalatsep means ‘written down,’ has teamed up with Kwakwaka'wakw artist Simon Daniel James for the kidlit book The Sasquatch, the Fire and the Cedar Baskets (Nightwood $14.95). It’s the story of a Sasquatch who rescues his family from a forest fire by dousing flames with water stored in baskets woven from cedar bark by his mate.

Z IS FOR ZIMMERMAN

Alex Zimmerman has self-published, Becoming Coastal: 25 Years of Exploration & Discovery of the B.C. Coast by Paddle, Oar & Sail (Seaworthy Publications $26.95). An avid sailor and outdoorsman, he built several boats and kayaks, and designed his latest boat. After several thousand miles under the keels of his various vessels, he says the sea still has things to teach him.

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**LETTERS**

**Bookie president**

My wife and I live in Edmonton. We greatly enjoy BC BookWorld. Thanks for doing it. Saw a mention some years back on a B.C. bookstore man who became president of Estonia or some other Baltic country. I looked through old copies but could not find it. Can you help me out—what was/is his name?

Tom Monte

Edmonton, Alberta

[According to ARCBookWorld: Toomas Hendrik Ilves was involved with the Literary storefront in Vancouver during the 1980s. He reputedly taught Estonian literature and linguistics at SPU for a year and his wife taught in the psychology department at UBC. Born in Sweden, he became president of Estonia in 2006. Under his presidency, Estonia became the first country in the world to introduce voting via the internet in national elections. When he was involved in BC literature, there was a rumour that livs could be involved with the CIA. More information can be found in the History of the Literary storefront by Prasor Cardan: The Literary storefront, The Glory Years, Vancouver’s Literary Centre 1978-1984 (Mother Tongue 2015). —Ed.]

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**Community value**

Thank you for having us on the cover of the autumn edition of BC BookWorld. It looks beautiful. I have had many friends snap photos of it and send the pictures my way from ferry and book stores and locations near and far. I am so deeply grateful for the coverage this brings to our book (BRG: Stories about Life in Plus-Sized Bodies). The support that BC BookWorld gives to our writing community in B.C. is so important and immeasurable in value.

Christina Myers

Surrey

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**Scramble Campbell**

Once again issues of BC BookWorld landed at our local library. Once again, I grabbed one and started pag through it. I was enjoying myself when I came to page 25 and nearly lost my lunch. Gordon Campbell complete with slimy grin staring out at me. Scramble Campbell may not have been the worst premier in B.C.’s history—there’s too much competition for that one—but Campbell is in the running for the title! The so-called Lib erals went their merry way selling off B.C. in bits and pieces to their friends and supporters, including an attempt to sell BC Ferries. The list goes on and on. George Abbott’s Big Promises is welcome if not somewhat late.

Denise Peacock

Clearwater

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**Photo credit**

In the Autumn issue: Bigg’s orca T37B pursues a sea lion in the Strait of Juan de Fuca, August 1, 2014. Photo © Ken Balcomb.

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**CROSSING THE DIVIDE**

**Cover Story:**

**BY HAYNE SAWCHUK**

[Photo by Brian Kent (Vancouver Sun)].

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