



Personal Reflections on a Disastrous Year (2021)

John J. Clague, Emeritus Professor, Department of Earth Sciences

It is now certain that we, collectively, are changing Earth's climate, and that the pace and scale of this change are unprecedented over the past 10,000 years. It is obvious that the direct and indirect effects of a warmer atmosphere will be largely negative, even dangerous.

Atmospheric scientists formerly thought that the effects of human-induced warming would be felt largely later in this century, but warming is happening faster and sooner than they expected. Indeed, effects of a warmer climate are being felt now: unprecedented floods in western Germany and eastern Belgium in July 2021; this year's wildfires in Greece, western North America, and Siberia; and the persistent and continuing reduction in Arctic sea ice. According to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), weather-related disasters (storms, floods, and droughts) have increased five-fold over the past 50 years; roughly 2,000,000 people lost their lives in weather-related disasters since 1970; and the economic losses over that period totalled about USD 3.4 trillion.

Most Canadians have not taken the climate crisis seriously. Many are not persuaded that it is a crisis, or perhaps they feel that it is someone else's problem. The events of 2021, however, have changed some minds. In BC, it was a year like no other in recent history.



Photo: Karsten Winegeart / Unsplash

If the pandemic were not enough, we experienced the deadly record heat at the end of June, the second worst (after 2017) wildfire season on record, and then the catastrophic atmospheric river in mid-November. Taking into account the direct and secondary (supply chain disruptions) effects, the last of these events ranks as Canada's most destructive natural disaster.

But can we blame such extreme events on climate change? Atmospheric scientists in the past have been reluctant to attribute specific events to climate change, but no more. With new modelling tools, ever-faster computers, and robust statistical analyses, scientists have shown that these extreme events are so far beyond normal that they must have been made more severe by a warmer, more energetic atmosphere. In effect, a warmer climate can push a hazardous meteorological event over a threshold that leads to a disaster; i.e. unprecedented drought, unprecedented high temperatures, unprecedented strengthening of hurricanes. I like to think of it, by analogy, as the drug-enhanced, world record

In this issue

- 1 Personal Reflections on a Disastrous Year (2021)
- 2 President's Report
- 5 Ronald Hatch
- 6 Impossible Expectations
- 7 A Good Year
- 8 Poem: Work Order
- 10 On Reflection
- 11 Computers versus People? Equally Stupid!
- 12 Socialist Report
- 13 For a Good Read
- 15 Birds in the Deep Freeze
- 16 Truth Before Reconciliation
- 17 Clementina
- 20 From Belfast to Burnaby: A memory of SFU
- 21 Your 'Energy Thumbprint'
- 21 Favourite SFU Moment
- 22 Writing on the Edge
- 23 It's All About You
- 25 In Memoriam
- 26 Memories of Mort Briemberg
- 27 Cricket, Anyone?
- 28 Editorial

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President's Report

Frances Atkinson

Dear members,

Following our 2021 AGM in November, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the SFURA Board members for all your work in your various roles over the past year. All have agreed to stay on for another year with the exception of Joanie Wolfe who stood down. Thank you Joanie for your contributions including your work on the Early Arts book website and on copyright issues.



The current board members are pleased to announce that several members have agreed to serve in various capacities this year. We welcome Sandra Djwa, Michael Stevenson, and Gladys We to the SFURA Board. To find out who's on the Executive Board for the next year, see <http://www.sfu.ca/retirees/about-us/sfura-executive.html>.

We are also grateful to Sheilagh MacDonald for joining the Benefits committee as CUPE liaison, and to Marcia Toms for continuing to serve as our newsletter editor.

In December members received an email from our new communications officer, Gladys We, announcing that SFURA has changed the membership year so that it will end on September 30. This is to better align with the academic year when many retirees retire. Current members do not need to renew their membership until Summer 2022. We will work out an arrangement to ensure that members have a valid parking pass for Burnaby campus through September 2022. For more information, see <https://www.sfu.ca/retirees/membership-registration.html>.

Gladys is also working on a membership survey asking about the types of activities you would like SFURA to offer. By the time you read this, you may have already received that survey.

The benefits committee continues to investigate improvements to our health care plans. Through discussion with Human Resources, they have obtained estimates from Pacific Blue Cross about some possible improvements and cost implications for the monthly premiums. The membership survey includes a question on benefits to assess retirees' preferences.

The Early Arts at SFU project has now completed a significant amount of work on the website. Masters of Publishing student Casey McCarthy gave us a great boost during her placement with SFURA, searching and digitizing materials in the SFU Archives with the excellent assistance of the Archives staff, and building up the website. We encourage you to take a look at <https://www.sfu.ca/earlyarts.html>. We are also making good progress with the book. If you have any memories or memorabilia from the early arts era (1965-75) that you would be willing to share with us, please get in touch. We can be reached by email at sfura-book@sfu.ca.

SFURA's administrative assistant, Annie Ye, has resigned after 6 years of service. Thank you, Annie, for looking after the office and taking care of many essential tasks. We will miss you.

The Board is currently reassessing our requirements for office assistance. Meanwhile, the SFURA office will be closed until further notice. Any urgent matters should be reported to retirees@sfu.ca.

Happy New Year to all,

Frances

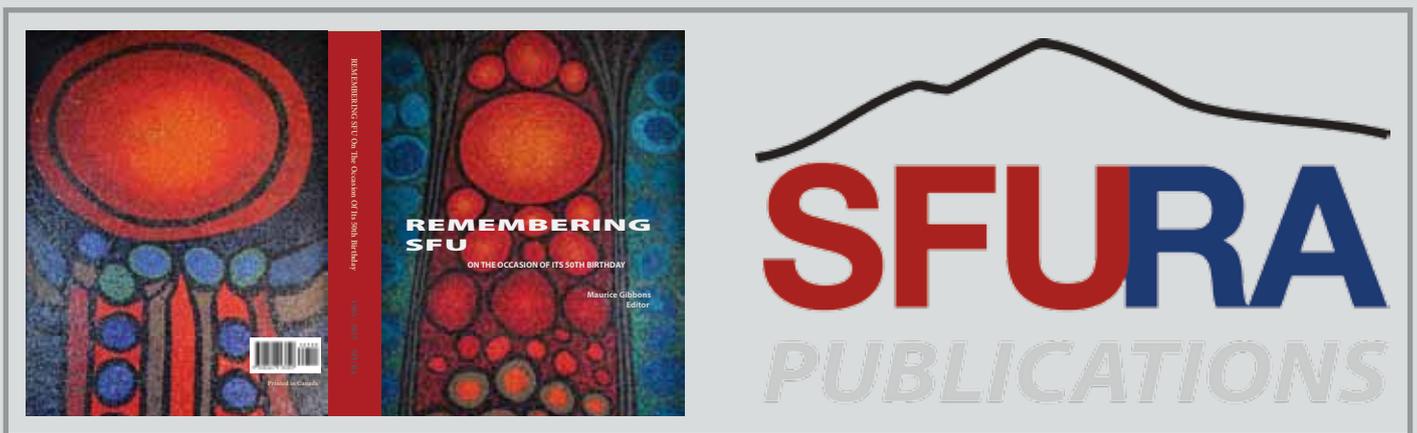


Photo: Ron Long / Fluffed Up Anna Hummingbird

continued from page1

performance of Ben Johnston in the 1988 Seoul Summer Olympics. You remember Ben, right? Ben was a world-class sprinter, but it was stanozolol that made him the fastest human on Earth. In a similar vein, weather disasters happen naturally, but a warmer climate 'amps' up their severity.

Can we expect more extreme events like those of 2021 in BC? The short answer is: Yes. The longer answer runs something like this. Forecasting climate in the future, like weather forecasting, is a probabilistic exercise, thus we cannot predict the climate of 2022, or for that matter any other year; there is inevitable uncertainty in such estimates. However, atmospheric modellers can posit a range of average climate conditions, subject to acknowledged uncertainties, as this century rolls on. The consensus within the scientific community is that we are in the early stage of a ramp-up to a warmer world. Currently, the average temperature of the atmosphere at Earth's surface is a little over 1°C above the pre-Industrial average (it is much higher at high latitudes and high elevations). Average temperatures will likely be two times higher than this value by mid-century. One of the many physical consequences of a warmer atmosphere is that warmer air can hold more water vapour than cooler air. Modellers also suggest that continental-scale atmospheric and ocean circulation is changing. The jet stream appears to be behaving 'sloppily' and unexpectedly, in part due to a reduction in the difference in atmospheric heat between mid- and high-latitudes and a northward shift and broadening of the Northern Hemisphere Hadley cell.

The impacts of a warmer atmosphere on humans worry me. 'Natural' disasters have huge economic and social costs, and the costs will increase as this century progresses. Risks will increase, not because we lack an adequate understanding of science, but rather because we might lack the will to tackle the climate crisis head-on. In my view, humans are, figuratively, pinning themselves into a corner in terms of options for dealing with the crisis. We are increasingly being left with unproven technological 'Hail Mary' measures to solve the problem. Technology will likely help, but it will not solve the climate problem by itself. Rather, we will have to adapt to a warmer future, with the possibility that our adaptations will be overwhelmed by the problem itself.



Photo: Kelly Sikkema / Unsplash

The global risk posed by climate-triggered disasters is being greatly amplified by the 'elephant-in-the-corner:' the unsustainable increase in human numbers in hazardous areas. Consider, for example, the explosive growth of megacities in areas vulnerable to earthquakes, floods, and sea-level rise. Earth's population, which is now 7.9 billion and increasing at a rate of about 200,000 per day, is well beyond a sustainable level. Human numbers have increased more than 150 million in the 22 months since the COVID pandemic began, and in the time it took you to read this commentary, there are 500 newborn on the planet to nurture.

Let me end on a less pessimistic note, with some suggestions about what we can do. These are examples; a comprehensive list would be much longer:

- Insist that governments proactively reduce the risk of natural disasters to people and property. We need to be proactive in creating safer living spaces at all scales, from individual buildings to cities. This is a long and expensive endeavour, but consider the alternative of spending trillions of dollars to clean up after disasters if no action is taken.
- Insist that our politicians take meaningful actions to stabilize climate. Canada is a country with one of

the highest per-capita carbon emissions in the world, and its politicians at all levels are, to use a phrase, ‘rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic’ with their carbon-reduction policies. Most politicians would take umbrage at this statement, but in reality no provincial or federal political party is charting a course that will allow us to meet our COP26 commitments.

- Support agencies that strive to improve the lives of the disadvantaged, both in Canada and in less wealthy countries. Those most affected by climate change are poor and politically disadvantaged and, ironically, are not responsible for it.
- Reduce our own carbon footprints by consuming less. Do we really need a second car, a second vacation home, a motorhome? Can we reduce our consumption of meat? Can we use public transport more than we do? And so on...
- Remove fossil fuel companies from our investment portfolios and insist that the federal government stop subsidizing them.
- Support international cooperation, which is essential to tackle the now chronic problem of huge numbers of people being displaced each year by disasters and catastrophes. The United Nations is flawed, but it's all we have.

To close, the problem may seem so daunting to you that you might conclude there is nothing individuals can do to contribute to a solution. On that point, I side with Margaret Mead – “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” ❖

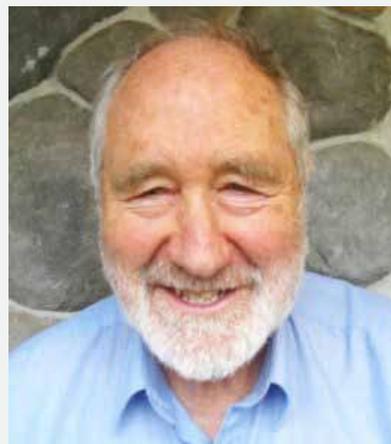
Ronald Hatch

Sandra Djwa

British Columbia friends of Canadian writing have lost a champion with the death of Ronald Hatch on 25th November 2021. A retired UBC English Professor who completed his Ph.D. on 18th Century Social History and the poet George Crabbe at the University of Edinburgh, Ron and his wife Veronica were the founders of Ronsdale Press. Over 160 friends, colleagues, and authors have recently written notes of appreciation to the *BC BookWorld* website, all citing Ron's kindness, good judgement and editorial skill at Ronsdale Press. Each entry described a specific occasion when Ron had been instrumental in bringing a worthy book to the public.

Our paths converged in the mid-seventies as part of a team of five academics who wanted to write a History of English-Canadian Poetry 1626-1950 and worked for two years on a proposal later rejected by the Canada Council. We became co-editors for the 1983 and 1984 “Poetry” columns of the years' work in Canadian poetry for the *University of Toronto Quarterly* by serendipity. When 260 books of poetry arrived on my doorstep, I asked Ron for help. A fine critic, he was a careful and measured reader. When I withdrew to complete another project, he continued for another six years in effect, a crash course in Canadian writing. In 1988 he and Veronica (née Lonsdale) established Ronsdale Press, bringing together their names and their joint efforts. Both were committed social activists who participated in the Clayoquot Sound Protests of 1993.

Today, Ronsdale Press is a British Columbia press dedicated to “publishing books that give Canadians new insights into themselves and their country.” The press lists some 270 books in print including the following: *Is This Who We Are?: 14 Questions about Québec* by Alain Dubuc (2016); *The Resurrection of Joseph Bourne*; by Jack Hodgins (2013); *From a Speaking Place: Writings from the First Fifty Years of Canadian Literature*; edited by W.H. New, (2009); *First Invaders: The Literary Origins of British Columbia*; by Alan Twigg (2004); *The Exile & The Sacred Travellers* by Marie-Claire Blais; (2000); *Hamatsa: The Enigma of Cannibalism on the Pacific Northwest Coast* by Jim McDowell (1997); *Clayoquot & Dissent* edited by Ronald Hatch and Veronica Hatch (1994). ❖



Impossible Expectations

By Rong Long



I doubt that anyone would accept a job with Must Do The Impossible as one of its requirements, but that is exactly how my new job in Bio Sciences turned out.

Back in the 1960s and 70s many university departments had their own photographers who provided the specialized services that their particular department required. UBC had a number of such specialists, but SFU had only one: me.

I have always loved the technical challenges of photography and Biology threw them at me in spades. It quickly became apparent why Biology needed a dedicated photographer. The work required experience that no regular photographer had and I spent a majority of my time in Biology developing, by experimentation, specialized techniques that would achieve the results I was expected to produce.

For example, it was not unusual for a scientist to hand me a small glass phial that was apparently empty. But inside lurked a tiny black speck, and that was my subject. The speck was a live fly that not only required a portrait, but also needed the hairs along the edges of its wings counted. More important than anything, though; I better not lose or kill it because it was the only specimen

said scientist had.

Another next to impossible photo I was expected to produce was of half dozen water striders. A scientist wanted a close-up photo to be used on the cover of a study he had done on these insects.

Water striders are about an inch long and have long legs, which allow them to skate very quickly over a water surface. They are predators and feed on live small insects that they hunt by sight. And that means they have very good eyesight. No way was I going to sneak up on these guys to get my shots.

I set up a shallow tray about 18 inches square, filled it with water and dropped my subjects into it. I placed a blue card above, to reflect like a blue sky on the water surface, lights on either side and my camera on a tripod at one end of the tray.

Naturally, the insects retreated to the far end of the tray. They were only 18 inches away but it might as well have been a mile. I needed to be within two or three inches to get the shots I needed. It was impossible.

So I left them there in the middle of my lab. I fed them occasionally with a dead fly, which they had to make do with, and went about my other work.

As I continuously moved around them they gradually got used to me. They actually learned that I was not a threat to them. After a week of this I was able even to touch them to place them exactly where I wanted for their portraits. The photos were a great success.

But that job was easy compared to what came next.

One scientist was doing research on parasitic wasps. These wasps lay an egg inside of another insect, such as an aphid, by means of a hollow structure, much like a stinger, called an ovipositor. The wasp stabs the ovipositor into the aphid and lays the egg in the same instant. The Prof



wanted a picture showing the attack and the ovipositor actually penetrating the aphid. The largest of these wasps was less than 1/4 inch long and the action happened so fast it could not be seen. And those were only the initial problems.

Worse, he had three wasp species to be photographed.

I was provided with a potted bean plant covered with aphids. The wasp was in a small, separate capsule.

When I released the wasp onto the plant it immediately ran up and down hunting for an aphid to attack. The aphid could sense the danger and let go of the plant when the wasp approached. In seconds the plant was bare of aphids and not a single one had been attacked. I repeated this over and over for days and weeks.

An additional difficulty was that, because my subjects were so small, it was impossible to follow the moving wasp with the camera until it made its attack. I had to choose an aphid, focus the camera on it, and then hope the wasp attacked that aphid: what were the chances?

Even more difficult was the speed of the attack. Just seeing an attack was a problem because successful attacks were rare and for each wasp species I had to observe enough attacks that I could recognize the movement of the wasp immediately before the attack. In other words, I had to trip the shutter before the attack actually happened.

This job was totally impossible. But I did it. It took me three months.

I don't remember even being thanked. The impossible was simply expected. And I did it, always. ❖

A Good Year

Daniel McDonald

Good New Year folks

If you've not made enough resolutions may I suggest:

- Join our SFU Team Kiva
- start off with just one loan of \$25 to explore the platform.
- savor the warmth of having done a little good in the world.
- wait for the loan to be repaid and then re-loan to to another group or individual.



That will set you up for a final resolution.
-flourish each day and sleep well each night.

If you are already on the team, resolve to pat yourself on the back and immediately make a few more loans.

2021 was a good year for our team.

We made loans of \$69,650 giving a hand up to farmers, fishers, small shopkeepers and students.

In our friendly competition with 1940 other universities around the world we rank #14 while our monthly lending has kept us on the closely watched scoreboard of the top 10 for monthly lending for 33 of the last 34 months. In December our good company on that top 10 included MIT, Stanford, U.Wash, and Penn State.



It's a loan, not a donation



You choose where to make an impact



Pushing the boundaries of a loan



Lifting one, to lift many

WORK ORDER

By Jared Curtis

This email has been sent
to notify you
that your work order,
and I quote,

*“Please adjust
refrigerator door for
gravity-assisted closure”*

has led to these actions:

- Sent purchase order for door cam 8-22-21*
- parts have not arrived 9-16-21, 10-2-21*
- waiting for parts 10-30-21*
- not arrived yet 11-6-21*
- no arrival of parts –*

This work order has been completed.

Sadly, it is not completed, only abandoned,
the door left to limp on
in its frigid state without a cam,
without a reason to return to base,
merely left to hang open—
a gaping face, staring at the silent room,
ailing dishwasher, and shiny sink.

An action to certify inaction, yes,
but to what purpose?

Clear the books,
sweep the desk of post-its,
shorten to-do lists?

Yet the task called for
remains undone.

A spade stuck in rich garden soil,
a scythe rusting in a field of grain,

a car on blocks in the back yard,
a parcel crushed in shipment,
label now illegible,
and sent to the dead parcel warehouse,
all exclaim, I AM UNDONE.

Agenbite of Inwit.

In a pile of cards and letters,
all addressed to me,
is one from absent friends,
still unanswered.
Smiling faces on Christmas cards,
left to languish in a basket of such greetings,
are shifted, in stages,
from table center piece to counter
to bench, and then, alas,
the basket's contents regretfully recycled.

Neglect is endemic but needn't be.

Get up and dig the garden,
reap the field,
repair the car,
fix the fridge,
replace the broke appliance,
– write the letter –
you'll feel better.

©Jared Curtis

Author's comment: I began the poem in frustration and complaint, flew off into hyperbole, reigned myself in with remorse (Agenbite of Inwit), and ended in hope and resolve.

Adventures in the great freeze-smog-winter of London 1962

Marilyn Bowman

I was living in London during the terrible winter of 1962-63. I had just returned from a 4-month trip hitchhiking to Istanbul and back, dreaming of a cosy London Christmas in my Paddington bed-sit with its fireplace and my home-cooked food. But the winter was severe, and most plumbing froze.

London still suffered from decades of problems dating from the Depression, WW II and the loan repayments to the US for war help. Even without the terrible weather worsened by thick smog, my friend Cathy and I, one-year past BA pals from the University of Alberta, had been surprised at what we found when looking for a “bed-sit” the previous summer. It was common to find that the toilet was out at the bottom of the backyard garden, or that the bathtub was in a small wooden lean-to shack stuck on the outside of the back of the house: with no heating! We were lucky to find a bed-sit in Paddington in an apartment-hotel where our room did have a sink. The toilet and bathtub were in a room on a landing in the stairs, with no heating and shared by all in the staircase. In those days plumbing pipes were placed on the outside walls of even major buildings, with giant water tanks on top for pressure. This meant the pipes froze when it got cold, and I remember seeing women standing in line in the snowy streets with buckets waiting for their chance for water from the public standpipe.

“ *Our pipes did not freeze although most did in London that year, and two friends often came visiting for the facilities*

Our pipes did not freeze although most did in London that year, and two friends often came visiting for the facilities. Even with running water our bed-sit posed challenges. Having a bath was a hoot because in grand old British tradition, the one room in which you would be both naked and wet had no heating at all. In addition, Cathy and I, good prairie girls, were rather dubious about the women living in the place, so we went to the bath armed with Javex and Ajax to sterilize every surface before our pure clean prairie bodies had to encounter the toilet or bathtub. The tub was a vast old porcelain-on-iron version, and to get the hot water you put a big copper penny into the geyser (the on-demand gas-fired heater) poised high above the freezing cold bath tub where you skulked arranged directly below the water pipe. You adjusted the rate of flow of the water through it so that it hit the back of your neck as hot as possible. It then drizzled down over your shivering

body to pool in the icy bottom of the tub where it quickly became frigid. So you scrubbed like crazy and got back out into the freezing room as fast as possible.

Worse was yet to come. First, the gas-works could not supply gas for fireplaces and heating because the steam-engine trains were frozen in place at the coalmines and could not move to bring coal to the gas-works, so the gas to stoves and fireplaces became feeble. That meant our fireplace with its single, ankle-height fold-down gas ring for cooking gave off a pale blue glow that was completely useless for cooking or heating our room. Then, the electrical workers went on a ‘work-to-rule’ strike, so our one electric bulb faded down to an equally pale blue glow.

It also turned out to be the last winter of the terrible smog events. The smog even seeped through the edges around our draughty windows, and we could smell it in the bedding. The conditions killed more than 700 people that December, a historic winter. For us pampered city-slickers from Edmonton, it was like living in a cave. But we were having fun and met lots of interesting people including some who are still friends.

Cath and I were very unsophisticated despite our academic prowess. Our apartment hotel had a ‘private members bar’ just inside the front door. Often, the barmaid would invite us in as we came home from work, but we would decline as we weren’t “private members”, didn’t understand that the term was probably some way of avoiding legal trouble, and were not really drinkers. But one day we decided to accept the invitation. We propped ourselves up on high bar stools and each ordered a beer. After a short time and without even finishing her drink, Cath decided the place was not for her and went to leave. She firmly pushed back from the bar but her stool stuck in the ancient carpet and did not move. Instead she fell backward with a huge bang and sprawled out on her back on the floor. Total mortification for both of us. I picked her up and we fled, never to return. I think I heard a long hoot of laughter from the dark bar. ❖



Computers versus People? Equally Stupid!

By A. E. Curzon

It's amazing how events in one's life lead to teaching I used to travel to and from SFU by bus. a bus on my way home I slipped on some snow. Fortunately, I was able to walk very soon after duties at SFU with little interruption. Being a learned astronomically quickly that I was not a when streets are covered in snow. Another thing in a computer is, in effect, stored as a public reveal any computer information whatsoever be able to use the information to find the public information stored on the computer.

Several times I have written short items for appeared for articles I realized that there was incredibly boring life. I do tend to drill home facts

But then ... but then ... it snowed. Simultaneously a telephone bill arrived. In the interests of honesty I should tell you that I changed certain financial facts in what follows, hoping that the location of the public display of my computer information will remain undiscovered. So it snowed and a telephone bill arrived. What's that got to do with anything? Well, because of the snow I couldn't go out to my bank and therefore it would seem that I couldn't pay my telephone bill, either.

I'm obsessive about paying bills on time and I had heard that it is possible to pay them by phone. That is what I decided to do. I phoned the bank and got a phone number needed for making payment. When I made contact it was evident that I was a novice, so rather than having to communicate solely with a computer, an assistant helped me at various vital points. I took copious notes so that I would be able to do everything on my own with future bills. When the moment came for the assistant to enter the desired payment I had the relevant bill on the table where I was sitting and was immediately able to tell her the sum owing was \$32. She entered it and the interaction ended joyfully – debt paid – no falling on snow. Then the disaster occurred. The amount clever clogs had quoted was wrong by a factor of 2. My wife and I both have cells phones and this time we each had to pay the minimum sum of \$32. Over a long time I have paid \$64 per month or more and was astounded that I could have made such an error. But conceitedly I smirked. There on the table were the very detailed notes that would save us. I followed them and eventually paid the extra \$32 by phone. This happened on the 16th of December, long before the payment deadline in January.

In early January my monthly bank statement arrived. It showed two separate payments of \$32 to the cell phone company and strangely a payment to me of \$32. I did not understand! I phoned the bank and they said I might have to wait several hours for an attendant or I could leave a number and they would call later. I decided to wait but after about 20 minutes a nurse arrived to care for my wife and I closed the call. Later I phoned a different number at the bank and very soon was answered by a human being at the other end of the line. I was delighted. She explained that when the computer receives two identical payments to one agency it is programmed to ignore one of them on the grounds that the caller has simply made a mistake so what had happened was that only \$32 dollars was paid to the cell phone company even though the balance sheet showed two such payments and \$32 had been returned to me. I disliked this error.

These events show that computers and users can be equally stupid. I was stupid initially because I overlooked the payment due for my wife's phone and hence initially paid \$32 by phone instead of the required \$64. The computer wrongly interpreted two successive identical payments by phone as evidence of a mistaken second payment of \$32 dollars. There are all sorts of ways in which the situation could have been avoided. For example, the computer could have announced to me that second phone payments would not be accepted if they were the same as an earlier phone payment. Even now, not everything is clarified. I phoned the phone company and a human being said he thought that my failure to pay the full December amount would not incur a great cost. What a relief. The experience considerably increases my preference to speak with human beings rather than pressing the buttons required by a computer. ❖



others many years later. When I was On one occasion when I was getting off and one leg ended up in a plaster cast. the accident and I continued my teaching member of the Physics Department I born skier and should avoid going out I learned is that any information stored notice on a wall and one should never to any individual because he or she will notice, thus having access to all the other

'Simon Says' and when the recent request nothing new I could write about in my so I suppose the boring is to be expected.

Tripping on the Coast : Chatterbox and Skookumchuck

Tom O'Shea



During the dog days of August Leora and I needed a break from the monotony of Covid restrictions. At that time we were confined to travelling within BC so I planned a four-day trip to Victoria to visit friends and the Provincial Museum. But...horror, the Public Health Officer suddenly imposed travel restrictions and we weren't supposed to go anywhere outside our health region. For us that was Vancouver Coastal. This meant we couldn't even cross Boundary Road to see our friends in North Burnaby who were in the Fraser Health unit: an apparent glitch that the PHO soon rectified. I complained bitterly to a friend at our weekly lunch in the same health unit and good old Ted said "Why don't you take a trip to Princess Louisa Inlet?" For those of you who don't know, Princess Louisa Inlet is a short, well-guarded inlet near the top of Jervis Inlet about two hours by powerboat north of Egmont which is at the top of the Sechelt Peninsula on the Sunshine Coast. It's all in the Coastal health region. Ted and I had sailed up there in the past, and it's one of the most beautiful spots in BC. .

Great idea. I booked for September 21st and was able to get an add-on tour of the Skookumchuck Rapids the same day, as well as two days' accommodation at the local marina/hotel. Much to my surprise, and causing me to lose a bet, the Young Prince of Canada subsequently called an election for September 20th. We drove to Egmont, arriving on the 20th and I was delighted to see a large TV in the bar. I told the bartender I was looking forward to seeing the election results that evening, and he replied: "We got the TV, but no cable. Sorry about that." So, curled up in our room that night I had to listen on my iPhone as the results of the most important election since the Second World War rolled in. How I missed the excitement of seeing it live.

The next day, ten of us boarded the boat for the trip up Jervis Inlet. Our captain gave a great running commentary for the two hours it took to get to Princess Louisa Inlet. An added bonus was a close view of a helicopter logging operation where the helicopter lifted trees from near the top of the mountain flanking the inlet and dropped them into the booming area near us. I had some regret at seeing this, but at least it wasn't a clear-cut. Then, we shunted through Malibu Rapids, a narrow passage into the much smaller Princess Louisa Inlet. The mountains on either side closed in, clouds hovered near the peaks, and waterfalls surrounded us. At the top of the inlet we tied up in the provincial marina and had our picnic lunch sitting in the light mist of Chatterbox Falls, the outlet of the hidden James Bruce falls, the highest in North America. What a treat.



Skookumchuck narrows provincial park, Egmont, BC / Photo:: Eleanor Carter

For a quick look see www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZPJHZNDR4Tc&ab_channel=wynterseaproductions.

For our next treat we headed back to Egmont and shortly after returning took another boat tour. This one was to the rapids in Skookumchuck Narrows. These occur at a narrowing of the Sechelt Inlet when high, incoming tides pile up to create strong currents, whirlpools, and waves. Most spectacular is a standing wave that runs at up to 12 knots. Kayakers plunge into this and the backwash keeps them stationary for as long as they can control their craft. See www.youtube.com/watch?v=VQqOEZBcLd0&ab_channel=EpicTV.

The final surprise on the ferry home from Langdale was meeting a young friend. He happened to be a crewmember and took us up onto the bridge where we had a fine view of the approach into Horseshoe Bay.

So who needs trips to the waterfalls of Venezuela, the fiords of Norway, or the rapids of the Zambezi? We have everything right here.

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Reviews by Sandra Djwa, David Stouck

The Innocents / Michael Crummey, review by Sandra Diwa

I come from a time and a place where the question “Who’s child are you, me maid?” was a perfectly acceptable way to start a conversation. It provided instant identification because early settlements in Newfoundland were usually Anglican or Catholic and located by family names, a shorthand that carried over into the 20th century. It’s also a valid question in relation to Michael Crummey’s new novel, *The Innocents* (2019), where larger issues of paternity are questioned throughout the book.

Crummey, who began as a poet, has published eight books of poetry as well as five novels. His novels include *River Thieves*, *The Wreckage*, *Galore* and *Sweetland*. For these books he was awarded the Commonwealth Writer’s Prize, twice shortlisted for the Giller Prize, and three times shortlisted for the Governor-General’s Award, the last for *The Innocents*. With this book I consider Crummey to be Canada’s foremost practicing novelist. Why? He creates the early world of NFL settlement with great poetic skill and psychological insight, often expressed through the 18th Century idioms of the colonial world.

This spare, stripped-down novel began with a story Crummey found in the NFL archives about two orphans. He says that he then wrote *The Innocents* in six months. The story begins with the birth and subsequent death of an infant, Martha, followed rapidly by the deaths of her parents. This leaves two older siblings, a boy Evered who is eleven and his younger sister Ada, who is nine, alone in an isolated cove:

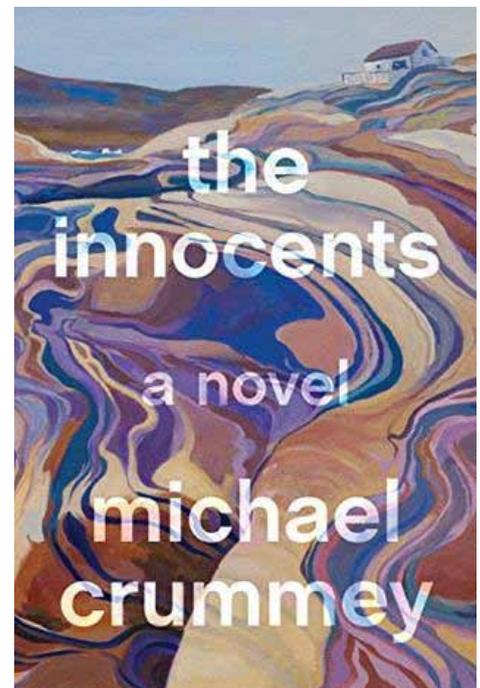
They were still youngsters that winter. They lost their baby sister before the first snowfall. Their mother laid the infant in a shallow trough ...she sang the lullaby she’d sung all her children to sleep with, which was as much as they had to offer of ceremony. The woman was deathly sick herself by then, coughing up clots of blood into her hands.

The mother and child (a recurring motif) probably died of “galloping consumption” or tuberculosis, a disease that ravaged the NFL outposts because of damp, overcrowded conditions. Fishermen like Sennet Best and his family initially set themselves up in small, wooden structures where they ate, worked and slept – “tilts” they were called – plugged with moss to keep out the rain and driving wind.

There was no ceremony for the dead baby, in part because the mother was Roman Catholic and the father Anglican. By marrying, but not baptizing their children, the couple antagonized both communities. Consequently, there is no one to help should troubles come. When the mother dies after freeze up, her husband tips her body into the ocean. The two siblings, watching from the shore, see that a sudden “dwy” (snowfall) has turned the father’s hair white. When the father also dies at the turn of the year, the boy undertakes the terrible task of wrestling the heavy corpse into a skiff and out into the deep water. There Evered tries, but is unable, to strip the body of clothing that he needs for his own survival. When the boy returns to the wharf, his sister Ada sees that her brother’s hair has also turned white – but from shock.

Crummey structures this novel by the poetic devices of repeated motif, and by paralleling in the plot chapters. Early on he sets the scene for the changing world of the cove as the children experience it:

The ice marked the start of a season beyond winter in the cove... They went down to the beach where the ice field stretched as far as they could see, rising and falling on the ocean swell. They could feel the cold razoring off the frigid surface through the little clothes they wore and Ada shivered against it. The white was tinged blue and pink as the early light rose and the quiver running up her spine was almost a pleasure. (30)



The cove is the “heart and center” of their isolated world but the biennial visit of the supply ship, ironically called *The Hope*, is “the fulcrum on which life in the cove turned.” A vital part of the indenture system by which the fishermen existed, this supply ship brings food and necessities in the spring, and returns again for payment in cured cod at the end of the summer. The siblings are alone in the cove but the wider world regularly impinges upon their lives, at first by shipwrecks and then by the twice-yearly visits of the supply ship. Later chapters record encounters with passing vessels like *Noah’s Ark*, *The Medusa* and *The Hydra* – all bringing the many different kinds of information required for their survival.

Crummey’s stories are rich but often bleak. What he accomplishes in *The Innocents* is to immerse us in Newfoundland life as it existed 300 years ago. Both children are starving by March when they manage to catch a baby seal, a “whitecoat,” near the foreshore. The boy cuts out the heart, slices it like a fruit, and offers it to his younger sister:

Ada’s pale face was raw and her eyes red with the crying she’d done in the cold but there was an unmistakable glim of light beneath the skin,...

She reached for another sliver of the heart. ‘Poor little thing,’ she said. ‘It’s a sin to be eating it.’ But she could feel the fierce goodness of it flooding her senses.

She felt it right to her very toes. (42)

This story of the two orphans is told simply with vivid sketches of people and place. Crummey remarks that using the idioms of the period allowed him both to distance himself from the action and express truth obliquely. The story he wants to tell includes the privations suffered by new settlers fleeing starvation in England and Ireland due to the enclosures of the “Commons;” the deep English Anglican/ Irish Catholic cleavage; the oppressions of the indenture system; and the lack of women in the early fishing society that leads to incestuously close marriages.

Above all, the novelist depicts never-ending work required for survival, as well as the astonishing vitality that propels it. Each member of the family is engaged in the cod fishery– the dawn to dusk struggle on the ocean catching the cod (usually by adults but now by Evered), the incessant toil of gutting and salting to prepare the fish: “the two children wielding knives honed to a razor’s edge, up to their slender wrists in the blood and offal, their heads wreathed by galling halos of black flies and mosquitoes...” (67) Once the fish is prepared and salted, it must be dried through constant turning on wooden “Flakes” or stages. Worse, even well-cured dried cod was often classified as ‘only fit for the West Indies’ by a dishonest paymaster.

The book’s title, *The Innocents*, refers primarily to the main characters Evered and Ada but it also alludes to the Biblical “slaughter of the innocents” by King Herod. For Catholics the Biblical innocents were the first martyrs and without sin. But for the everyday Catholicism of the 18th Century the infant Martha was born into sin unless baptized. For Anglicans the child is without sin but cannot enter the church until baptism. In practice, both faiths relegate the unbaptized infant to Hell, a notion hotly contested by the child’s Catholic mother. She asserts that her child Martha “died innocent and sits on God’s right hand and hears our prayers.” For Ada, Martha becomes an intercessor to be called upon whenever danger threatens.

Crummey has created a kind of alternative universe. The siblings, lacking formal instruction, live by their own commandments, eleven in number, beginning “The ocean and the firmament and the sum of God’s stars were created in seven days.” Regularly invoked is the last precept “A body must bear what can’t be helped.” Most important in living their lives is number nine, the belief that Martha “died as an innocent and sits at God’s right hand.” The Anglican paymaster on *The Hope*, (ironically called “the Beadle”) disputes this assertion when Ada repeats it. The Beadle insists “we live in a fallen world,” and demonstrates his ethic by molesting Evered and cheating the children of the full value of their catch.

In the larger sweep of the novel, brother and sister “fall” into experiences of all kinds that shape their lives. Innocence is defined in the novel as not just an absence of knowledge about what constitutes sin, but also as a lack of knowledge about self, about sexuality, and about relations with others in the larger society. Not surprisingly, this early colonial world is highly patriarchal. The greatest joy of Everard’s life to this point is being a man among men, the tipsy male camaraderie of drinking rum with the crew of *The Hope*.

Throughout this novel Crummey carefully differentiates between “men’s business” and “women’s business” – and there is no easy traffic in between. Evered does not share his terrible knowledge about the cannibal ship with his sister, and Ada does tell her brother about the brutal particulars of their mother’s childbirth. At the end Ada is still wondering about how her baby was conceived while Evered is resisting the notion that the baby might be his. Nonetheless both recognize they must move on to a larger community. The place to which Crummey directs the brother and sister is a real NFL settlement – Mockbeggar – but ominously named given their situation. ❖

Birds in the Deep Freeze

By Ron Long

Throughout the pandemic the birds coming to my feeders have provide many hours of entertainment. The Christmas 2021 deep freeze caused me to think hard about how to support them.

My first concern was for the two female Anna's hummingbirds that seem to live in my yard. An on-line search provided the advice that to prevent freezing a hummingbird feeder should be brought inside at night. I immediately knew this was poor advice because the birds, after a long night of fasting, particularly a long cold night, needed to feed very early in the morning. I have seen them at the feeder when it is barely light.

My solution was a clamp-on light socket and reflector (Home Depot \$16) with a heat lamp bulb. This provides enough heat to prevent freezing, can be left on night and day when necessary and is perfectly acceptable to the birds. The bulb does need to be protected because cold rain can cause it to burst. Place the light under an eave even if the feeder itself is exposed.

My other concern was the birdbath. Seeing birds searching the frozen solid birdbath for a drink made me realize that, with everything frozen, finding drinking water is a problem for birds.



I thawed the birdbath with hot water several time each day. Birdbath heaters are available on-line (app \$40-\$80) but there is some concern that a warm birdbath might encourage some birds to actually bathe which could result in frozen feathers.



The solution to this problem is to cover the bath, leaving just enough access for drinking. I accomplished this with a dollar store plastic basin, and a brick to hold it in place, that leaves about a 3 cm width of shallow water around the edge. Enough for drinking but not enough for bathing. ❖

Photos: Ron Long

Truth Before Reconciliation

By Marcia Toms

Throughout 2021 searchers uncovered the remains of hundreds of Indigenous children at former Indian Residential Schools across Canada, and subsequently a groundswell of interest in reconciliation seems to have emerged in non-Indigenous communities. But before there can be reconciliation, hard truths must be told.

Land and language are at the heart of those truths. This might seem obvious, but it is not. Acknowledging whose land settlers live on has in some venues become usual, and with that, a spate of objections. The critics say “it’s meaningless” or “it’s unnecessary” or that treaties and conquest have negated Indigenous claims. And so on. The same goes for efforts to revive or retain fast-disappearing Indigenous languages. Dismissals run from “it’s hopeless” to the old chestnut “speak English, it’s the universal lingo.” And because these languages flourished and then succumbed to conquest, some regard their going as a sort of natural order of things. Each of these objections to and denials of the truths of Indigenous experience is refutable through history, philosophy and anthropology. But perhaps what is most needed is the wisdom derived directly from individual experience. It is to mine I look when trying to make sense of where I fit and what my responsibilities are as a grandchild of settlers.

When I was a child, my family travelled and camped all over British Columbia and the western USA, from the Caribou to California, from the Rockies to Yellowstone Park and the ‘Lewis and Clark’ Caverns. We saw moose, deer, beaver, mountain sheep and goats, and bears. Lots and lots of bears. But despite being born, raised and educated in Vancouver, a new city blessed by the stunning abundance of a world that had been cared for by the Musqueam and their neighbours for millennia, I learned nothing about them or ‘the city before the city’ they had built along the north edge of the big river, a place today called Marpole, or of their culture’s enviable richness. Yet the possibility of knowing looked me right in the face, every time I sat on the grassy bank above the road on West 16th, staring at the forbidden forest across from me.



Photo: Salmon Beach Seine Gwani

My first truly rooted understanding of what land means emerged from my second visit to ‘Namgis territory in 1991. I was kayaking with a group of SFU colleagues along the Johnstone Strait, just south of Alert Bay. We visited Paul Spong’s OrcaLab and then paddled to Village Island, a home of the Mamalilakulla First Nation, and to ‘Mimkuamliis, the site of the 1921 Potlatch held by Kwakwaka’wakw chief Dan Cranmer. The RCMP raided the event and confiscated all the goods, treasures and regalia. A number of people were arrested and went to jail. For dancing. Cranmer held the event in defiance of the 1884 law that forbade the peoples of the Northwest Coast from potlatching, thus interdicting their most important cultural expression: vital to redistributing wealth, to practicing rituals and to conferring honours. With the Nation’s permission we landed and I hopped out of my kayak and onto the beach, its texture pebbled by smooth, worn stones, ocean-rounded small pieces of glass and china, and pale driftwood. Facing west, the

old village looked straight down a channel dotted with low, green islands. Away from the shore, old cedar house posts leaned into young trees. Climbing brambles and overgrown paths led us to more tumbling cedar structures. Everywhere, lush greens testified to fecundity.

On the foundation of that fecundity, the legacy of a temperate rain forest, the people had built over time immemorial, one of the wealthiest material cultures in the world. When the tide went out, as the Haida say, the table was set. Reliable runs of salmon, aquaculture to capture clams, a forager’s dream of plant life, deer, other mammals, and birds to hunt freed nearly everyone from having to work year round to survive. The five months of winter were reserved for celebration, for storytelling and for the refinement of artistic work, sublime, and symbolically fascinating. This was what the land gave. And, not so far from towns, albeit changed by clear cuts, mines and hard-surfaced roads, it remains.

A recent episode of the CBC television series ‘Nature’ featured three generations of a Wet’suwet’en family pulling in salmon, preparing the fish for cold smoking and then tending the smoke. The Elder and grandmother was Professor of the Land, her son, a red seal chef and the young grandson, a chef in training visiting home from school in Vancouver. Every step of the cold smoking was precise, explained in detail by Grandmother, clearly refined by practices as old as the forest.

When the Canadian federal government imposed the Indian Act in 1876 its purpose, after previously expropriating

the land, was clear: destroy the 'Indian in the Indian,' in part through forced assimilation, in part by active destruction of language and culture and in part by replacing the latter with a version of Western learning vastly inferior both to the knowledge of generations of Professors of the Land and to what was offered to non-Indigenous Canadians. It is the great good fortune of the non-Indigenous community that, in the face of terrible havoc, the First Peoples resisted, remembered and reclaimed.

One part of that reclamation is the generous willingness of Indigenous communities to share their knowledge about the land's truth and the languages that tell it. Taking advantage of these offerings is surely the responsibility of all who are interested in going beyond truth to reconciliation.. ❖

Clementina

By *Vernonica Dahl*

If there ever is a Nobel Prize for the Song That Took The Most Time To Compose, I'll get it! Here's why:

I was in my twenties when the only computer in the entire University of Buenos Aires, lodged in the Engineering Faculty, and nicknamed "Clementina", "died." Irreplaceable pieces had broken. I had been going daily to the Faculty of Engineering just to run my programs, so to pass time on the one-hour trip to the Faculty of Exact Sciences where I studied, I wrote a little poem named *Clementina* after the computer. She'd been given this nickname because she could play music, including *My Darling Clementine*.

Years passed. Computers evolved. They went from taking the space of an entire room, to taking our entire attention spans, invading our minds, always close to our bodies in cell-phone form, always requiring us to type and bend and strain our eyes and put their demands before our own priorities.

In 2015 I was staying at an AirBnB apartment in Buenos Aires while attending the international conference on Artificial Intelligence (IJCAI 2015), where I presented a paper. There, Dr. Raul Carnota, my former companion and a current colleague, located me and asked if I could recite my poem that very night at a ceremony at the Faculty of Exact Sciences. He was going to talk about "Clementina". I doubted that I could even recall it, but I promised I would send it if I could. As I was already booked for dinner, I could not attend the ceremony.

I tried. Some words came back, but this time, with their own music. With the benefit of hindsight I completed the words and also completed the story they told. As the remaining words materialized, they also showed up with their own music. About 45 years had elapsed, during which I had not touched that poem. Still, in that apartment, a song inspired by the poem magically completed itself almost in one breath. It played only in my mind or in my humming. There were no instruments.

Once it felt complete (even though it was only half as long as it is now), I recorded it a capella on Garage Band on my laptop. I emailed the resulting .mp3 to Raul, who included the lyrics within his transparencies, showing them while the .mp3 played. Later he reported that the 'aula magna' resounded with applause. They loved it! I was SO sorry I couldn't be there! Many of my companions attended so it would have been a precious moment to share with everyone.

During my next visit to Argentina in 2019, I gave a talk for Las De Sistemas at the Museo de Informática, and someone planted a guitar in my hands after the applause, begging me to play 'Clementina'. That applause was even huger, or at least full of smiles and merriment. *Clementina* was becoming mildly famous ☺, but was still half its present length.

Then the pandemic shut down my gig at the Brazilian restaurant **Boteco**, where my music partner and I had been playing every two Fridays. I became depressed. Also, **West Coast Swing** had shut down, and of course tango, salsa, and every dance venue in the city. I felt paralysed and fearful. And then I started phoning friends, populating my empty home with all the conversations with dear people which, in normal times, neither I nor they could have found as much time for. I reached out to my dear friend and fantastic musician and composer Nancy Ruth, whom I'd met once when we both gigged at **Branas** on False Creek, and who's been living in Malaga for the past many years. I asked her to help me record professionally a song I'd just composed for Altar Mujeres, a celebration of International Women's Day 2020, spanning five Latin American countries. She kindly agreed! The recording process with her and her musicians, even at

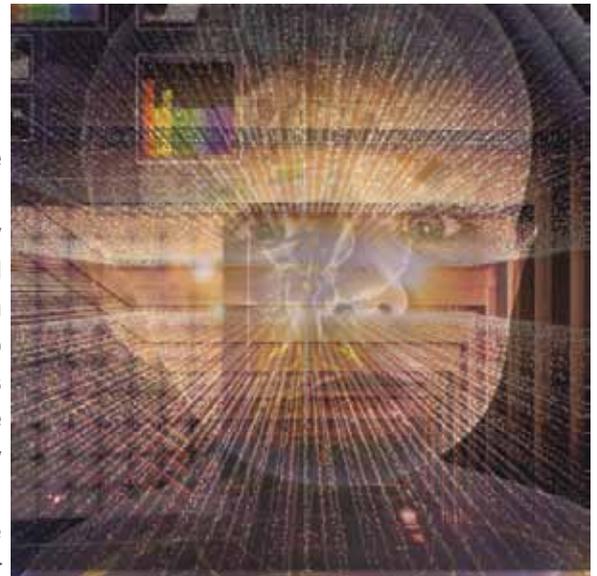


Photo Mashup : W. Piovesan

long distance, was wonderful. The result so satisfied me that I decided it was time to record *Clementina* professionally.

But there was a snag. Nancy thought I should extend it. So I tried, and this time I toiled. The magic of that instant inspiration in Buenos Aires in 2015 could not be replicated at will. Until it hit me that what I needed was not a second part, but to write about the beginning of the story, adding a first part. As soon as I got that, the words rearranged and extended themselves in a rush into the song. It shuffled musically to their welcome, and with Nancy helping out with the arrangements; it was all completed and recorded in a few exchanges. More than 45 years had elapsed since its beginnings as a poem. I dedicated it to my first grandchild, Lena Sample, who was born in May 2021 during its composition.

Shortly after this production of *Clementina*, I gave a talk via zoom in Marseille at a conference honouring my thesis supervisor, the late Alain Colmerauer. I ran all 13 seconds of the chorus which mentions Prolog, the computer language he developed at Marseille, and his widow, the linguist Colette Colmerauer, asked me to send her the entire song and its translation into French. This is how the French version was born.

My dream is to turn it into a children's story, with illustrations and its own sound track. ❖

CLEMENTINA

Coro: Clementina...

Hace tiempo en la Argentina
trabajando a todas horas
la única computadora
se llamaba Clementina.

De aquí pa'alla,
de alla pa'quí,
la programábamos sin fin,
ya fuera en Fortran
o ya en Assembler
y algunas veces, hasta en Lisp.

Se fue rompiendo de a poco,
en un rumor de bytes y bits
Daba resultados locos,
era nuestro hazmereír.

Dijo "Renuncio! (Am D G Em)
Yo me jubilo.
Ya demasiado laburé.
Esto es muy duro,
No me resigno.
Tranquila y libre viviré"

Coro: Clementina...

La buena de Clementina,
con su instinto tan profundo,
quiso recorrer el mundo
y nos dejó esta profecía:

Yo no me iré!
Reduciré!
Toda tu vida infiltraré!
Me hare Chiquita

y hasta bonita,
y en tu cerebro viviré.

Se fue yendo despacito,
en un rumor de bytes y bits
Y supe que estamos fritos
cuando volvió y eran mil...

Son mil millones
en mil rincones!
Yo las programo sin parar.
Me vuelven loca,
y me obsesionan,
pero sin ellas no puedo estar.

Coro: Clementina, Clementina...

Fue lindo prólogo para Prolog
Clementina, Clementina
De Argentina, con amor

Coro: Clementina, Clementina
Yo le dedico esta canción
Clementina, Clementina
A Lena Sample, con amor

Créditos:

Música, Letra, Voz: Verónica Dahl

Arreglos y producción: Nancy Ruth

Guitarras/ coros: José Marín Rodríguez

Bajo/ Batería: Juan Soto

Saxo: Manuel Olmo

Coros: Nancy Ruth

Mezclado por Juan Soto

*Voz grabada en Demitone Studios
(Vancouver)*

A Salerosa Music Production (Malaga)



To listen to song click on the image above

CLEMENTINA (Translation)

Chorus: Clementina...

Long ago in Argentina
Working at all hours
The only computer
Was named Clementina.

From here to there,
From there to here,
We programmed it endlessly,
Be it in Fortran
or in Assembler
and sometimes, even in Lisp.

She started slowly breaking,
In a rumour of bytes and bits
She yielded crazy results,
She was our laughing stock.

She said: "I resign!
I am retiring.
I've already toiled too much.
This is too hard.
I can't resign myself.
I will live in peace, and free"
Coro: Clementina

The good Clementina.
With her deep instinct,
Wanted to travel the world
And left us this prophecy:

I will not leave!
I will reduce!
I'll infiltrate your entire life!
I'll become tiny
And even pretty
And will exist in your brain.

She left little by little,
In a rumour of bytes and bits
And I knew we were cooked
when she came back by the
thousands!

They're a thousand million
in a thousand corners!
I program them non-stop.
They drive me crazy,
And they obsess me,
But I cannot live without them.

Chorus: Clementina, Clementina
SHURU-BURUP-BUP-BURUP_BA
(x2)

Chorus: Clementina, Clementina
It was a good prologue to Prolog
Clementina, Clementina
From Argentina, with love

Chorus: Clementina, Clementina
I dedicate this song
Clementina, Clementina
To Lena Sample, with love

Chorus: Clementina, Clementina
SHURU-BURUP-BUP-BURUP_BA

Credits:

Music, Lyrics, Vocals: Verónica Dahl
Arrangements and Production: Nancy Ruth
Guitars/ chorus: José Marín Rodríguez
Bass/ Percussion: Juan Soto
Sax: Manuel Olmo
Chorus: Nancy Ruth
Mixed by Juan Soto
Voice recorded in Demitone Studios (Vancouver)
A Salerosa Music Production (Malaga)



CLEMENTINE (*French lyrics*)

Chorus: Clementina

'Y'a longtemps, en Argentine,
à la Fac d'Informatique
il n'y avait qu'une seule machine
qu'on appelait la Clémentine

Pendant des heures
et sans répit,
elle compilait le jour, la nuit,
du code en Fortran
ou en Assembleur
et même des fois encore, en Lisp.

Soudain, elle se mit en grève
dans un mélange de bytes et bits
Avec ses circuits rouillés
elle n'sortait que des bêtises

Elle dit: "J'abdique!"
« Moi, je me dégage"
(car elle était désespérée)
"Vous êtes méchants, et
je suis ludique.
Il faut sans moi vous débrouiller."

Clementina ... etc (chorus).

Avant d'partir en vacances
cette visionnaire, Clementine,
consulta de près les astres

et nous confia cette prophétie:

"Je survivrai!
Vous le verrez!
Vos vies entières j'infiltrerai!
Bien attractive,
même addictive,
dans vos cerveaux j'existerai.

Elle se mit a déconner
dans un mélange de bytes et bits;
je l'ai vue se multiplier,
se clônant de mille en mille...

Y a mille millions
de chaque côté,
je les programme sans arrêt
Car elles m'obsèdent,
me rendent folle,
mais je ne peux pas m'en passer.

Chorus : Clementina...

Chorus: Clementina, Clementina
Elle est partie chercher Prolog.
Clementina, Clementina,
de Argentina con amor

Chorus: Clementina, Clementina,
Moi, je dédie ce calembour
Clementina, Clementina
à ma petite-fille, avec amour.

Chorus: Clementina, Clementina
(a capella)

Credits:

Musique, Paroles, Voix: Verónica Dahl
Arrangements et Production: Nancy Ruth
Guitares/ chorus: José Marín Rodríguez
Bass/ Percussion: Juan Soto
Sax: Manuel Olmo
Chorus: Nancy Ruth
Melangé par: Juan Soto
Voix enregistrée par Dave Sikula à
Demitone Studios (Vancouver)
Une production de Salerosa Music
(Malaga)



Pour écouter la chanson cliquez sur l'image
ci-dessus

From Belfast to Burnaby: A memory of SFU

By Frances Atkinson

First, some background. I was a student in Belfast in 1971 when it exploded into civil war. The recently released movie, *'Belfast,'* is a good story about an uncommonly communicative family, but is the tamest possible representation of that time.

An eighteen year old Bachelor of Education student from the country, I was immediately sent out on teaching practicum to a ground zero flashpoint, Protestant on one side of the road, Catholic on the other, later euphemistically known as an "interface area." To quote Nuala O'Faolain, "the war in working class Belfast had come down to plain neighbourly hatred".¹

Or, as Seamus Heaney put it, there were explosions and funerals, soldiers with cocked guns watching, searches and seizures among the guns and the torches, street-lights gone, night-sights of fires and riots, fear, fatigue, tormented between race and resentment, agony and injustice, pity and terror, weary twisted emotions rolled like a ball in the heart.²

Getting home for the weekend, back to the country along roads that "had noiselessly filled with the British army under the hedge in camouflage gear, their rifles cocked" (O'Faolain), was equally hazardous.

I cast around for an alternative. I found a math (or maths) program. That seemed safer. It came with a subject I had never heard of, computing science. It set me on a course that eventually led me to SFU.

Midway through my computing science studies, I fled Northern Ireland and continued them in London. I had a boyfriend (later husband) from across the warring community. We could survive in Northern Ireland only as long as we hid out. He joined me in London a year later after finishing his studies.

In theory and sometimes in practice, we could finally raise our heads. But, not at other times. The IRA was bombing in London at the time. Skinheads were everywhere. On the tube (London Underground) at night in our early twenties, we stayed invisible by keeping our mouths firmly shut, hiding our accents.



Photo: Belfast / Becca Mchaffie

Years passed. Dimly figuring out that keeping silent was no way to live, we applied for emigration and decided on Vancouver where my sister and brother-in-law had already arrived from Northern Ireland. Civilization at last! We could finally open our mouths without worrying about our accents. And since nobody knew anything in Vancouver about the distant conflict, we could stop fudging where we came from: Ireland, Britain, the UK, anywhere except Northern Ireland.

After an eclectic start, in 1982 I got a job in Computing Services at SFU. The next decades were the pioneering years: the introduction of email, the Internet, the first version of the web, the dynamic web, e-learning systems, and so on. Often exciting, often contentious. I met such impressive talent, always a privilege to work with. I found the opportunity to build exhilarating, having come from a place of destruction. For years I was typically the only female in the room. I was used to that. As O'Faolain expressed it, in Ireland you came at being female only obliquely. Despite the challenges, those pioneering years are irreplaceable.

Much of what we built, however, happened under great pressure. At the higher levels there seemed to be endless battles over what to do next about everything. A culture of firing or in HR-speak, terminating entire management groups set in. Of some 25-30 IT directors over the decades (typically 5-7 at a time), only a few have left SFU on their own terms. It's the least secure management job in the university. The reasons are complex and I won't get into them except to note that the ability to move things forward has depended more on other factors, such as having the right specialists and giving them space to do their jobs.

Meanwhile, my "real" life continued in parallel, with an unrelenting flow of bad news coming from family in Northern Ireland about bombing, shooting, stoning, mental illness, and suicide, as well as the usual passing of parents over time.

In the 2010s, two things have happened. I "was retired" from SFU like so many IT managers before me. The adjustment was abrupt but accomplished quickly. My 32-year career there has taken its place as an interlude: glad to have done it, gladder not to be doing it anymore.

More importantly, my homeland has finally started to consolidate its uneasy peace in a way that for me represents a fork in the road that I'm not on. Brexit and its complications have accelerated that. I am grateful for that, too.

1. O'Faolain, Nuala. *Almost There - a Memoir*. Riverhead Books, 2003, p.96

2. Heaney, Seamus. "Belfast 2. Christmas, 1971." *Preoccupations: Selected Prose 1968-1978*, Farrar Straus Giroux, 1981, pp. 30-33

Your 'Energy Thumbprint'

By Meguido Zola

"Sometimes," I'm reading aloud, "Bertie's dog would lick his face . . . So, Bertie would lick him back.

But Bertie's gran would shout: 'No, Bertie! That's **dirty**, Bertie!'"

As part of my 'day job' as a retired schoolteacher and university professor of education, I'm doing a guest workshop with a colleague's class of pre-service teachers on the subject of early literacy in the classroom.

I'm halfway through a dramatic reading aloud of the naughty British children's picture book, *Dirty Bertie* whose shocking habits range from nose-picking, to eating sweets off the ground, to weeing on the flower beds, just like the cat.

"No, Bertie! That's dirty, Bertie!" The class dutifully choruses the refrain, as I read out each of Dirty Bertie's misdemeanours and the predictable responses of his mum, dad, big sister, gran, and everyone else. . .

Until I'm suddenly interrupted, mid-sentence, by a cry:

"I (with the emphasis on 'I') remember you! . . .

The class looks around at the young man who so rudely shouted out thus.

My blood runs cold. The cry seems, well . . . outraged. Accusatory. Menacing, almost.

What on earth is this about? This total stranger to me — we've been in each other's company barely an hour — remembers me, he claims?

A case of mistaken identity?

Worse, has the young man actually encountered me in some context in which I comported myself in less than seemly fashion? A brouhaha in traffic? An altercation with a student?

"I **remember** (with the emphasis on 'remember') you," the young man repeats his cry—but, this time, more quietly, calmly, reflectively.

We are holding our collective breath. "I remember . . . you came to our class, at Strathcona . . . I was in grade three or four . . . you read aloud to us, as a visiting author . . . I laughed so hard I was sick. I think I had to leave the room. It was so crazy, hysterical. I felt so . . . so **light**."



* *

Ten, twenty, thirty years on, I wonder: will my students remember me, my interactions, my teaching? **WHAT** will they remember? **HOW** will they remember?

And what about you and those you have interacted with, served, taught, advised, counselled, all these years?

In his *Little Money Bible*, metaphysician Stuart Wilde writes about how anything, any event, any interaction "has an energy of its own. That is its 'thumbprint', if you like."

The energy thumbprint captures, for the one who experiences it, the essence of that thing, event, interaction, or person.

So . . . what will those we have been with remember about our 'energy thumbprint'?

Understanding and empathy? Affirmation? Release? Flow? Hope and expectancy? Inspiration and courage to move forward? ❖

Favourite SFU Moment

By Mauvereen Walker

During the many lives I had as a temp, prior to finding a full-time position in Graduate Programs in the Faculty of Education, I worked in the Lohn Lab in the West Mall. The project we were working on just happened to be for the Faculty of Education but also we helped students with their tech issues. One eventful day brought me face to face with Hayley Wickenheiser. Hefted on her shoulder was the largest sport bag I had ever seen. She made it into the lab and the bag dropped with a thud to the floor. I asked her if she was carrying her entire home on her shoulder. She smiled and shared that not only did she carry all her hockey equipment but she also carried her softball equipment and various clothing for both sports. Hayley indicated that she was travelling back and forth between Calgary and Burnaby to make both obligations, plus working on her degree. This made her very busy and a bit stressed. What I gleaned from that encounter was always move forward, take opportunities as a gift, never lose your curiosity, and have a life that has a glass half full. Maybe even more. ❖



Photo: IMC SFU

Sheila Delany

Sheila's New Life

Yesterday I mourned; today I celebrated—and both for the same reason: my car. First let me introduce the car—and no, it did not have a name, thank you very much. It was a 1997 Toyota Tercel, navy blue, four-door sedan. My mechanics have told me over the years not to get rid of it, that it has years of service left, that it's far better than what Toyota replaced it with, and that they themselves own the same car. It was a simple, smallish car, suited to my physical build and low-tech propensities, hardly anything on the dashboard other than the bare necessities. It didn't have a seat-warmer, steering-wheel warmer or rear-window wiper, all of which I occasionally regretted. Nonetheless, in it I drove down to Berkeley and back several times; went to Seattle often for opera, theatre, shopping and seeing friends; took summertime trips with one or another friend—to Yarrow, Silver Lake, Clinton; and in the greater Vancouver area was able to have a rich, spontaneous cultural and social life.

Then I had an accident—my fault, a left-turn I shouldn't have made. Damage was limited to the right front fender area. I wasn't injured, though probably had a mild concussion from the sudden jerk forward; this left me tired and a little dizzy for a couple of weeks. Two nice young police-persons materialized immediately; they had been attending at an incident just there. They took care of everything, called BCAA and then Busters; they took witness information nothing from ICBC for over three weeks, various destinations and took the bus once. Having lived in Vancouver had a car, I considered this an the bus that stops a block from Harbour Centre, a frequent participation in three book groups, could have had two weeks' or \$500 (I had the Roadstar package), or the up to \$500. There are a few other post-accident benefits not related to transportation, such as a dozen half-hour massage sessions or 25 full-hour physiotherapy but I didn't use them.



Without knowing ICBC's decision, I was in limbo. Should I think about a new car? Repairing my Tercel? Not having a car at all? If my car is beyond repair, will ICBC rebate the unused seven-month portion of my policy? My ICBC adjustor, at long last returned from her vacation, assured me that ICBC does not issue rebates. I called my neighborhood ICBC agent, with whom I've renewed my policy for years. He gave me interesting information: that although ICBC does not technically issue rebates, they do issue refunds if a policy is canceled! (I think this is what is called a distinction without a difference.) My adjustor informed me that I would not be able to cancel my policy without handing in the license plates. Where is the car? She could not tell me but gave me the number of the person who could tell me. The car was out in New Westminster, in the ICBC junkyard. I phoned, the woman in charge-- pleasant and knowledgeable-- informed me that my car had been deemed unfixable and that I did not need the plates to cancel my insurance. They, the junkyard, could dispose of the plates along with the few items I hadn't removed: a chamois cleaning cloth, a snow brush, a map.

So, with a rising sense of liberation, I took my insurance papers around the corner to my broker and canceled the insurance. Suddenly, a burden fell away: Never again do I need to line up at a gas station or worry about running out. Never again pay ICBC a cent. Never have to switch snow tires for all-weather and vice-versa. Or call BCAA to put on my spare in case of a flat. Never have anything stolen from the trunk in case of a passenger forgetting to lock a door. Yes, these were doors that locked and unlocked manually, or with an actual key. No scratches, dents, half-jimmied locks. Never think about where to park nor feed a meter, pay or contest a ticket. Never have to worry about traffic density, crazy drivers, limited night or rain vision. I felt a sense of freedom. I'll miss my Tercel, reliable companion that it was, but I feel lighter, relieved. I went for lunch to celebrate: onion rings, papaya salad and Singaporean laksa.❖





IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU

Evelyn Palmer



A hearty welcome to all the new members of Club 85. All SFURA members 85 and over, and those who will turn 85 within the next membership year are given complimentary life membership. Our membership year has been extended to *September 30, 2022*. The following 8 members have revealed their ages, making about 55 members of the group. That's impressive! **Richard Boyer, Jay Burr, Paul Delany, Annie Lee, Martin Kitchen, Marjorie Nelles, Anand Paranjpe and Derek Sutton.**

If you will be turning 85 before September 30, please let me know at [<evelyn@sfu.ca>](mailto:evelyn@sfu.ca). If you became a Club 85 member in the past we have your name and will send you your membership card for the 2022-2023 year in September. If you don't remember, write me and I will confirm it or add you to the list.

Jan Blanchet was a founder of the SFURA and served on the board from 1998-2007 as secretary and treasurer. She assisted Bev Carlson and Marg Jones with all the social activities, envelope stuffing, and everywhere help was needed. She still lives in North Vancouver and is a proud member of Club 85. She has a deep history with Alberta and British Columbia; her father was outdoorsman, writer and rancher R. K. Patterson. She gave us a seminar about him, *A Life of Great Adventure*, the title of Patterson's biography by David Finch.

Jan was married to David Blanchet, the youngest son of M. Wylie Blanchet who wrote the book *The Curve of Time* about her family's summers in the 1930's and 1940's when they cruised the coastal waters of BC in a 25-foot boat. KNOW, the Knowledge Network, produced a video of an interview with Jan and her nephew Michael Blanchet, part of the series *150 Stories that Shape British Columbia*. It was broadcast in the fall and the link for the 3 minute video is; <https://www.knowledge.ca/program/150-stories-shape-british-columbia/short/e58/curve-time>.

Our champion author, **Selma Wassermann**, has done it again. She has published her tenth book since 2004. The latest is *Rethinking Teacher Education, A Bold Alternative to pre-Service Programs*, published in 2022.

The book offers strategies for improving teacher education programs. for pre-service course work and evaluation of student teaching.

See; https://www.sfu.ca/retirees/Books_By_Retirees.html?q=Selma+Wassermann

Michael Wortis is participating in Canada HomeShare, a national co-housing program run by the National Initiative for the care of the Elderly (NICE). It matches elderly folks, living alone in a large house and wishing to stay "at home" as long as possible, with post-secondary students looking for relatively inexpensive housing in a market (like Vancouver) where that is a scarce commodity. The model provides rental for the student in the \$400–600/month range and help for the elder with yard-and-household chores plus--most importantly in this time of Covid--some much needed companionship. The pilot project started in Toronto in 2018, where it was initially funded by The City of Toronto. The program has been up and running in Toronto since then. A Vancouver-area pilot with participation by SFU was initiated in 2021.



Canada HomeShare
by NICE

Michael writes:

I got the notice of an online presentation in early August, and Siobhan Ennis (SFU Masters student in virology) moved into my spare room on Nov. 1, 2021. We are the first HomeShare "match" in the Vancouver area.

The local HomeShare program is coordinated by a social worker, Anna Hofmarks, who sets up and facilitates the details of the matching process and the rental agreement and is available to adjudicate any frictions that may occur (we haven't had any). Obviously, the dynamics of each pairing is going to be different; but, I am—frankly—delighted with the how things are working out. I get help with chores like leaf-raking, snow-shovelling, and cleaning but also,

inevitably, with electronic technology skills like iPhone use and home networking, which those of us in our 80s did not pick up in our more-plastic youth. Plus, most importantly, it is great just having the companionship of a bright young person with energy to spare to knock me out of my boring ruts from time to time. Of course, I am getting a good introduction to aspects of virus research I might not otherwise have known anything about. We are sharing a good many meals and seem to have lots to talk about.

I am happy to discuss with the HomeShare program with anyone who might be interested in participating.

An article about this appeared in *SFU news* What's On on December 17, 2021. This is the link to it; <https://www.sfu.ca/dashboard/faculty-staff/news/2021/12/sfu-student-retired-professor-forge-unlikely-friendship-as-roommates.html>

Barry Truax, Professor Emeritus in the School of Communication and a founder of the World Soundscape Project has not retired gently, he seems as active as ever. After a hiatus of about two years, he has been able to accept invitations for in-person events in Europe, so in early December he traveled to Parma, Italy to present a keynote lecture on “Acoustic Space” at an international conference at the Conservatory of Music, a stand-alone recording of which can be viewed at: www.sfu.ca/~truax/videos.html. In addition, he presented one of his multi-channel soundscape pieces called *The Bells of Salzburg* in the newly renovated Carmine Auditorium there.

He also made a presentation of his work and played four multi-channel works at the *Tempo Reale* studio in Firenze, which was attended by students from all over northern Italy.

In response to the pandemic situation – or rather, because of it – he has also taken the SFU slogan of “engaging the world” quite literally in offering free online courses in sound and electroacoustic music to more than 75 students, researchers, teachers, composers and sound artists from a dozen or more countries. The summer and fall offerings were based on an online Tutorial he prepared, based on two labs he taught in the School of Communication’s Sonic Research Studio for about 40 years. This term he is experimenting with an online course on *Soundscape Composition* with a multi-channel component, facilitated

with weekly file transfers. Eight international studios and a dozen other participants are signed up for this experimental format that will highlight SFU’s pioneering work in the field.



Photo: Auditorium del Carmine / fondazionetoscanini.it



Photo: Auditorium del Carmine / fondazionetoscanini.it

Barry’s biography is at; <https://www.sfu.ca/~truax/bios.html> ❖

In Memoriam



We ask any of you who have further information about any deceased SFU retirees to submit obituaries to the SFURA Webmaster on the link provided on our website at: https://www.sfu.ca/retirees/in-memoriam/a_g.html We post names of all deceased SFU retirees whom we are aware of, not only those who were SFURA members. We welcome tributes to your former colleagues. We will place them with their obituaries on the website.

Professor Emeritus **Raymond Bradley** passed away in New Zealand on January 12, 2022 at age 91. He taught Philosophy at SFU from 1969 until his retirement in 1996. He was a prolific writer of textbooks and philosophical articles and he wrote many more after retiring. An account of his fascinating life is in his obituary at: https://www.sfu.ca/philosophy/events/news/2022/obituary--raymond-bradley.html?_ccCt=bvcv-2hvi4i-utic8w-5e8aoa51

Tom Calvert passed away on September 28, 2021 at age 85. Tom was an innovator, leader and mentor whose career pioneered multi-disciplinary research in animation, user interfaces, educational and learning technologies, and tools for artistic composition and creation. Career highlights include being co-Founder and Professor Emeritus of SFU's School of Interactive Arts + Technology (SIAT) and Dean of the Faculty of Interdisciplinary studies. He won numerous awards including the Canadian Human Computer Communication Society Achievement Award and the Xerox Canada/Form Award for excellent in furthering corporate-university cooperation. Tom loved hiking and sailing, and travelled extensively.

His obituary is on our In Memoriam website at:

<https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/retirees/memoriam/2021/TomCalvertOBIT.pdf>.

His online memorial is at: <https://www.mykeeper.com/profile/TomCalvert/>

The video of his Celebration of Life is at: <https://www.sfu.ca/~tom>

There was a tribute to him in the Globe and Mail of October 27, 2021: *Digital media Pioneer Tom Calvert figured out how to make pixels dance.*

https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/retirees/memoriam/2021/Digital_media_pioneer_Tom_Calvert.pdf

Paul Koroscil 1938 - 2021 It is with sadness that I report the passing of colleague Paul Koroscil of the Department of Geography. Paul was appointed in 1965 and served until his retirement in 2003. His interests and writings lay within 'human geography' perspectives, his specific interests being developed through historical approaches. Immigration to Canada and BC, and cultural landscapes were among his principal themes. These were importantly developed in his teaching, for which he was justly popular among students. In retirement, he worked to further the understanding of BC agricultural and heritage landscape formation, and in 2021 received the Award of Merit from the BC Historical Federation.
- Len Evenden

We have added the obituary of Theatre Professor **Marc Diamond** (1944-2005) to our website. Marc came to SFU in 1980 where he taught in the School of Contemporary Arts for 25 years. He was a Teacher, theatre director, playwright, novelist, opera librettist, and encouraging mentor to countless students and colleagues.

His obituary is at: https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/retirees/memoriam/2021/marc_diamond_obit.pdf

SFU's first Olympian and SFU's first Rhodes Scholar, **Wilf Wedman** passed away on November 12, 2021 at age 73. Wilf was a high jumper in the 1968 Olympic Games. He held many positions including he Premier's Sports Awards program with Harry Jerome and Head of Athletics Canada and he worked with the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Committee. At SFU Wilf served as Director of Athletics and Recreation and was responsible for the expansion of our recreation facilities, including the West Gym and current fitness centre.

See our webpages at;

https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/retirees/memoriam/2021/Wedmann_Obit.pdf

There was a tribute by **Steve Frost** in the November 14, 2021 issue of What's On;

https://athletics.sfu.ca/news/2021/11/14/general-athletics-sfus-first-olympian-rhodes-scholar-former-ad-wilf-wedmann-remembered.aspx?_ccCt=bvcv-2gwzvb-o4kq1u-5e8aoa54



Memories of Mort Briemberg

By *Martin Nicolaus*

Last year, former SFU faculty member, Mordecai Briemberg, died. Mort did not retire from SFU, rather, he was fired after the 1969 PSA strike. Many students remember Mort as kind, attentive, helpful, humble and serious. After SFU, he completed a PhD, devoted himself to English as a Second Language Students and various worthy social justice causes. On the occasion of Mort's passing, former colleague Martin Nicolaus remembers both the times and the man. - editor

My first impression of Vancouver was of a beautiful vacation land. From my window the panorama of snowy peaks across the water, almost within arm's reach, took my breath away. I had visions of hikes and picnics and leisurely outings in the park, good living, loving, productive studying and writing, getting a PhD, and humming along in harmony with the universe.

Some of that happened, but as to the rest, I was dreaming. Shortly after my arrival, I became part of a political struggle that official historian Hugh Johnson forty years later described as "the most notorious conflict on a Canadian campus then or since."

Simon Fraser University (SFU), my new academic home, was then all of two years old. The architecture all in grey concrete with long horizontal lines, sharp vertical pillars, and never a curve. On the frequent days when the fog was thick, working there was like being in a submarine. By the time I arrived, the core classroom and office buildings were finished, but construction on the perimeter went on around the clock.

Despite the architecture, the place was lively; it buzzed. SFU had opened the doors of higher education to students for whom there was no room in the UBC campus. Almost forty per cent of the SFU student body identified the principal wage earner in their family as a blue collar worker. Many students had had years of experience working and were more mature than average. Nearly half were women.

To staff the new school, the administration recruited heavily from abroad. There was no choice. Canadian universities produced few PhDs, and other new universities in Canada competed for the available talent. One of the few Canadians on the Political Science, Sociology and Anthropology (PSA) faculty was Mordecai (Mort) Briemberg, a Rhodes scholar who did not yet have his PhD.

The newness of the place and its diverse faculty made for a mixture of expectations. Brits expected to rule their departments with little interference from above or below. American faculty expected to operate in a web of collegiality with the chair acting as negotiator or referee. SFU's new university administration operated on a top-down corporate model. Many students, however, with the support of some faculty, were in no frame of mind to follow that model. Several campus-wide upheavals boiled up, with demonstrations, petitions, occupations, and all the rest. Both the chancellor and the university president lost their posts in the process.

Tempests also brewed inside PSA. Chair Tom Bottomore was a prominent academic Marxist who had made Marxism respectable in the academic world, even at staid UBC. That was an important contribution, and one which attracted Mort Briemberg and other colleagues, including me. But at SFU, the administration was far to the political right of his own Labour Party inclinations, while most of his faculty colleagues and the students were to his political left. Inside of a year, Bottomore wished a plague on both houses and departed in a huff to teach at Sussex in more sensible England.

Some time after Bottomore's departure, after interim substitutes, we faculty in the PSA department elected Mort Briemberg the department chair. Mort was an excellent choice. He was a culturally conservative Canadian in a stable marriage; he didn't do drugs, sleep with his students, or cheat and lie. He could not be painted with the "hippie" or "outside agitator" brush. He had outstanding academic credentials as a former Rhodes scholar at Oxford. He was a calm, thoughtful, soft-spoken person, absolutely honest and up-front, and courteous with everyone. If he had chosen to go that route, he might have made a very popular rabbi, even with his steadfast support of the Palestinian cause. In a brighter academic setting he would have been a consensus pick as department chairman, and probably would have risen to become a university president.

Mort's election was also a time when the department (or most of it) came together and adopted something like a mission statement, or perhaps it was a manifesto. Mort played a key role in its creation. Its main thrust was: A department grounded on the philosophy of participation and control from below and designed to serve the needs of the people of British Columbia, belief in critical social science, in democratic control and in community integration.

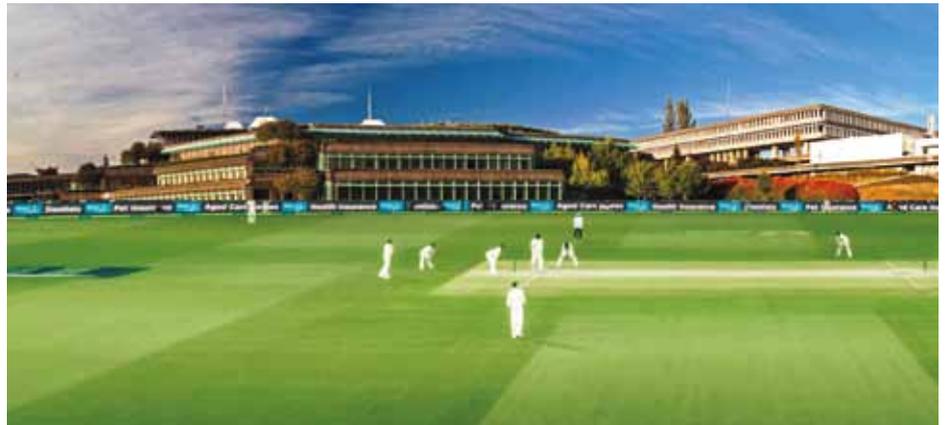
I remember that there were a number of American draft resisters in Vancouver, as well as kids who had been inducted and refused to stay with their units, which earned them the label “deserters.” Mort and Liz Briemberg had co-founded a much-needed aid organization for people in this situation.

After I left Vancouver in late 1968 the movement at SFU continued with full force. As expected, the administration did fire most of the radical PSA professors, including Mort Briemberg, The firing earned the university a formal vote of censure by the Canadian Association of University Teachers, but the university ignored the Association and refused to reinstate the faculty. Several of the fired professors, including Mort, found it impossible to get university jobs, and their academic careers were destroyed. Decades later it turned out that the CIA was tracking Mort and other professors. I had wanted to be an academic since high school; it was my career goal as a first generation immigrant. But what happened to my friend Mort soured me for life on the idea of pursuing an academic career. If a person as brilliant and endowed with such integrity could not find a fit on any faculty in North America, I did not want to be part of that system. ❖

Cricket, Anyone?

By Dave Huntley (With Colin Jones)

Just a few months after SFU opened in 1965, cricket season approached. When I was a graduate student, I had previously played with the Occasionals, the UBC faculty team. Seeing the chance for more cricket in Vancouver, David French of



the Occasionals decided SFU should have a team, entered it in the local league under the name of Vandals, and lent us enough basic equipment to start us off. Enough people emerged from SFU’s concrete to form a team. They included Roy Thomas from the mail room, Colin Jones and Derek Sutton from Chemistry, and John Mills from English.

Our first practice on the field outside the gym was rather primitive. And at one of the first matches played ‘at home,’ I bowled a ball that hit an opposing batsman in the face, breaking his nose and a cheekbone. The teams abandoned the game, and after a cock-up with the ambulance - its driver did not know where SFU was - help did arrive.

The next week, Colin Jones and I wrote a scathing letter to The Peak, castigating the administration for not including a well-tended cricket pitch in their planning. We were summonsed to see the President who expressed his dismay that scientists had written such a critical letter. Apparently, he expected that sort of behaviour from those in the Arts, but not from us. Then, he escorted us to view a large model of the emerging campus, and pointed to the planned playing fields below the gym. There it was: a cricket pitch! Had we achieved victory so easily?

We actually did win a game that first summer, against The Rowing Club as I recall. We acquired new equipment and proper practice nets, thanks to the SFU Athletics Department.

On one memorable occasion we turned up for a league match and found the field strewn with antennae. Someone in the administration had given the radio club permission to do this, not knowing that the SFU cricket club existed, let alone that it had reserved the field that day. Somehow, we managed to share the field. Imagine cricketers on the run successfully negotiating all that electronic equipment!

In spite of the plans and the president’s promise made all those years ago, however, a cricket pitch has yet to appear. ❖



EARLY ARTS AT SFU 1965-1975



Editorial

I am delighted to present this issue, which offers a wide spectrum both of memories and current thinking about a variety of challenging issues. Throughout the pandemic, editing *'Simon Says'* has given me a worthy endeavour, as well as personal solace. While I know I am privileged to live in a house with a dry basement, a roof that doesn't leak and a big garden, reading, ruminating and learning from the work of others has become a most welcome source of optimism for the future.

Here, John Clague provides a serious look at the current state of climate change, accompanied by crucial suggestions to spark needed activism. Sheila Delany's piece about her newfound freedom in being carless in the city is gentle advocacy for what could be a new 'normal.' Tom O'Shea writes about the magnificence and beauty right on our doorstep here in British Columbia. When I was visiting Interlakken in Switzerland, a fellow traveller saw me photographing a mountain, discovered where I was from and exclaimed: "What are you doing here!" It wasn't a question. Been to Istanbul but not Bella Coola? You're missing a bet. Marilyn Bowman reminds us that a cold water flat with dodgy heat, even in London, might not be all that romantic, except of course, in retrospect. Ron Long's eagle eye as

a photographer of all things very tiny comes into clear view in his current article, proving beyond all doubt that patience is a virtue.

This issue sees the introduction of a new section about Memories of SFU that seems to have motivated many of you, and with considerable enthusiasm. We journey from Belfast to Burnaby, drop in on a meeting with a Canadian hockey legend, learn a (very) little about cricket and chuckle as Meguido Zola relates telling Dirty Bertie's story to pre-service teachers, one of whom has a long memory. Sometime soon, someone from SFURA will choose, entirely at random, the recipient of \$50, as promised when we announced this feature in the last issue.

Finally, February is Black History Month. I first became interested in Black history in British Columbia during a discussion with an acquaintance who stated confidently that BC had no Black history. I took immediate umbrage. I knew that a history existed, mainly because my parents were serious jazz fans and after The War, frequented clubs and café-diners in Downtown Vancouver where local Black residents, travelling jazz artists and patrons from diverse backgrounds enjoyed great music. Together. In marked contrast to what

was permitted in most of the city. My mother worked at the Bank of Toronto at the corner of Robson and Burrard and got to know Lena Horne, a customer when she was in town. My parents also had occasional after-work meals at Vie's on Union Street. From Mum I learned about hotel segregation in Vancouver and that Lena – through sheer force of will and by being Lena – 'opened up' The Georgia, where she stayed.

In fact, BC has a long, vibrant and important Black history, hidden from most for too long. From the first settlers on Saltspring Island and in Saanich, to the first police force – Victoria's African rifles - to John Deas, builder of canneries, to the inspired women entrepreneurs of Strathcona, to Eleanor Collins, Canada's First Lady of Jazz, and hundreds more. These stories should be shouted from the rooftops about a people who, in the face of entrenched racism, made contributions to the province out of all proportion to their numbers. I know that I have a great deal more reading to do, starting with a new look at Crawford Kilian's "Go Do Some Great Thing" recently reissued with an introduction by Dr. Adam Rudder. I intend to enjoy myself while learning more about what we all ought to know.

