Rainforests of the ocean

Detailed maps of kelp beds developed by the British Navy in the 19th century are helping modern scientists chart habitat change in coastal BC

BY ANNE MacLaurin

Kelp forests are a rich ecosystem critical to many species such as herring and salmon, but researchers know that kelp is decreasing in some areas of the Pacific Northwest.

Now, using an innovative method involving British admiral charts from 1856 to 1956, UVic geographer Maycira Costa and her research team in partnership with Fisheries and Oceans Canada (FPO) and the Canadian Hydrographic Service (CHS) have created the first historical digital map of BC’s coastal kelp forests to further investigate the loss of kelp.

It was Costa’s awareness of kelp beds locations that led to an accidental discovery of British admiral charts from over 100 years ago. During a meeting with a colleague, Costa noticed a framed picture of a chart that had many small markings in the same area of current kelp forests.

“I started to look at the details and then I looked at the area that I know of kelp distribution because we are working there with the modern satellites,” she recalled in a Canadian Press interview. “And I looked at that and said, ‘this is kelp distribution.’

“Kelp was considered a navigational hazard so the British carefully annotated all kelp forests on their charts,” explains Costa. “And the historical charts increase our understanding of kelp distribution over time.”

The new reference map will help address questions related to the habitats of salmon, herring and many other species that rely on kelp for protection and food.

SEE COSTA P.2

How do we support student academic success?

The second in a series of articles that explores how staff and faculty across campus are implementing the university’s Strategic Framework.

Q and A: Dr. Shailoo Bedi

Tell us about your work at the university.

I’ve been at the university for 14 years, most of that with UVic libraries. For the last year and a half I’ve had a split dual role, as Director of Academic Commons & Strategic Assessment at UVic Libraries (3.5), and Director of Student Academic Success with the centre for Learning and Teaching Support and Innovation (LTEI) (5).

I feel like I’m the luckiest person to be able to work in a hybrid position. At the library, I manage a complement of uvic and pta staff, focus on assessment, and also do space planning and facilities work to improve the student experience. At the LTEI, I’m involved in initiatives to support student academic success, and support the Centre for Academic Communication, the Jamie Cassels Undergraduate Research Awards (JCURA) program and the Arbutus Review journal as managing editor.

I engage a lot with the Strategic Framework in part because I see a diversity of the UVic community and have quite a broad reach through my dual role. I am also quite familiar with the framework as I was part of the advisory group during 2017-18 that helped to develop it. I’m also excited to be co-chairing Connect U, the university’s all-staff conference, which will take place in May this year.

How do you see the Strategic Framework helping or contributing to your work, and the work of your unit?

I feel really closely connected to the framework, especially the strategies within the Intensify Dynamic Learning section (3.1-3.5) that I feel guide my work, I see the framework like the frame of a picture — it gives support and structure to our creativity.

The LTEI is a really joyful place to be, supporting instructors in becoming excellent teachers who can infuse their teaching in diverse ways and use research enriched teaching to promote student success. We’re committed to providing the supports for dynamic learning so that students can be academically successful here at UVic and also beyond here — whether they go on to a professional career, or graduate work or research.

This year with the LTEI I’m working with a team to coordinate the 10th anniversary of JCURA. Over a decade, more than 1,000 students have become involved in empirical research through JCURA. It’s a truly interdisciplinary initiative that en...
President’s Extraordinary Service Awards

The President’s Extraordinary Service Awards celebrate the outstanding contributions of UVic employees. Fourteen nominations from across campus—representing 67 people (six teams, eight individuals, five employee groups)—were submitted for the 2019 awards.

Congratulations to all of the nominees (see the full list at uvic.ca/president).

Show your support for your colleagues by attending the Cause for Applause award celebration ceremony, April 30 from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. in the McKinnon Building lobby. Register at uvic.ca/communes/events/home/case-for-applause

“I offer my sincere congratulations to each of the nominees for their extraordinary service to our university,” says President Jamie Cassels. “Each year it’s a genuine pleasure for me to celebrate the talent and commitment of our staff and faculty, who provide the foundation for our extraordinary environment. Each of these nominees is deserving of our thanks and recognition.”

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK
CONTINUED FROM P.1

gaggs students in dynamic learning and hands-on research outside the classroom, which helps to set them up for academic, professional and personal success.

It’s amazing where integrated experiential learning is happening at the university—not just in the obvious areas like co-op terms and practicum placements. The library is transforming along with the academy to facilitate new types of learning and integrate experiential learning through space-based learning, part of our extraordinary academic environment.

This is an exciting experiential opportunity and a chance for all of us to learn together. I am grateful to Dr. Charlotte Lippie and Maria Shallard with the Indigenous Mentorship Network for connecting with us. Through the Arbatus Review collaboration, we’ll be able to provide an experience for Indigenous students in scholarly publishing and will also be learning ways to respectfully incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing and practices to continue our work and efforts to decolonize the academy. I think that’s the best part about working in higher education—the reciprocity of learning and collaboration. This project reflects on many areas of the framework, particularly the areas of dynamic learning and fostering respect and reconciliation.

The Connect U conference (May 22–23) is another project that is weaving the themes of the framework into its programming. Our staff are so instrumental in creating our extraordinary academic environment and I hope everyone comes out to take part in this fantastic community learning opportunity. It’s a chance to meet other colleagues and broaden our perspectives beyond our own units. It’s an opportunity not to be missed!

COSTA, continued from p.1

Costa, with support from the Pacific Salmon Foundation, is comparing the historical maps to satellite images of coastal areas to understand how these habitats have changed and why.

“Kelp are the rainforests of the ocean,” Costa says. “And they uptake a lot of carbon from the atmosphere of the ocean.”

This research is part of initiatives led by two to establish programs and priorities for canoey-forming kelp species—now identified as Ecologically Significant Species. The federal regional response plan for oil spills in emergencies is one program requiring a deep understanding of kelp distribution, since kelp is highly vulnerable to oil spills, as well as coastal pollution and shoreline development.

“Kelp forests play an important ecological role in the health of our oceans so when we lose kelp beds, it impacts the habitat of many marine species,” says Costa.

Funding for this mapping project was provided by two, under the Oceans Protection Plan, with in-kind support from the cco.
The heavy snow wasn’t light work. UVic employees worked around the clock to assess the conditions in pre-dawn hours, operate backhoes during the night and post-early-morning and late-night status updates on the UVic website and social media.

Mid-February’s heavy snowfall was exceptional in more ways than one on campus.

Even while most people enjoyed a “snow day” when the campus was closed late on Monday, Feb. 11 and the following day, there were those who walked, carefully drove or carpooled to work so that students and staff could safely plow, pathways were cleared and—with the campus closure happening when it did—that payroll got processed so 5,200 employees could get paid on time on Feb. 15.

When Colleen Korte got the call early Tuesday afternoon for any janitorial staff who could safely come to campus to help shovel snow, she didn’t hesitate—despite living on a hill in Esquimalt on a road that hadn’t been plowed. Born and raised in Victoria, Korte had never driven in deep snow. “I guess I’m one of those people who will always at least try.”

The usual 20-minute drive to UVic took nearly two hours in her Jeep Liberty as she picked up two colleagues near Walmart in Saanich and then another near Hillside Mall. Just under half of the usual number of janitorial staff made it to work to clear building entrances, stairways and pathways while Facilities Management staff continued their work clearing and salting roads, as well as shovelling.

“It was hard work, the snow was wet and heavy, and it was cold but everyone pulled together to get the campus ready for the next day,” said Korte.

Facilities Management staff

Dynamic hands-on learning is a pillar of the UVic experience—through our co-op program alone, students work for more than 1,360 co-op employers each year, putting their studies into practice across diverse sectors. Each year, we recognize employers who have provided extraordinary hands-on learning opportunities to UVic co-op students. The 2018 Employers of the Year are:

- Babcock Canada (50+ employees)
- ImmunoPrecise Antibodies (<50 employees)
- LlamaZOO (new company, hiring co-op students for five years and under)

Babcock Canada

2018 Employer of the Year – More than 50 employees

At Babcock, co-op work terms are much more than a job placement—they’re a key recruitment tool. One of the engineering solution company’s mandates is to ensure that tomorrow’s talent is ready to make a difference, and they are committed to fostering students’ education. This approach is lauded by students, who often describe their experiences at Babcock as transformative and life-changing.

Since 2015, Babcock has hired 58 engineering and commerce co-op students from UVic, 13 of whom returned for a second term and four for a third—a testament to the extraordinary experience Babcock provides. Co-op students are typically supervised by a former co-op student to enhance the mentorship experience, and are encouraged to network across departments and meet with senior staff to better understand and the business. The company is currently developing a program that will allow co-op students to complete a series of work terms, each in a different department, as a way to help students transition into a full-time role.

Babcock is a strong supporter of UVic Co-op and Career beyond co-op placements; the company participates in UVic’s mock interview clinics, exhibits at the Hi-Tech Fair and was a platinum sponsor of UVic’s Human Powered Submarine Team in 2018, helping the team showcase their project at the 2018 Mari-Tri-Fest Conference.

ImmunoPrecise Antibodies

2018 Employer of the Year – Fewer than 50 employees

ImmunoPrecise Antibodies (IPA) has made it a habit to hire the best and brightest, a feat made possible by its long-standing status as a co-op employer. The custom antibody business has hired UVic’s biochemistry, microbiology and business students to complete 66 co-op work terms, and in the past three years alone has hired eight co-op alumni—five of whom are current employees.

Most full-time IPA scientists and staff are UVic graduates; as a result, lab experiences build off the skills that students develop in their biochemistry and microbiology courses, and students are typically provided with a co-op project that relates directly to their area of academic interest. Co-op students receive extensive training and certification and are included in company meetings. They also give progress reports at weekly lab meetings that are attended by all IPA scientists, an experience that helps students strengthen their analytical and critical thinking skills.

Overwhelmingly, co-op students report their time at IPA provides them with a practical application of theoretical knowledge and a rewarding mentorship experience.

IPA is a dedicated UVic partner; staff and scientists regularly share their experiences through UVic’s “What can you do with your degree” series, take part in mock interview clinics and networking events, and collaborate on UVic research projects, including a recent Engage Grant.

LlamaZOO

2018 Employer of the Year – New company (hiring co-op students for five years and under)

Since launching in 2014, local 3D visualization company LlamaZOO has made co-op a priority. After hiring their first co-op student in 2015, LlamaZOO has hired computer science, software engineering and business students, and each student has reported an equally positive experience.

SEE CO-OP EMPLOYERS P.5
Help shape the Campus Greenway
Share your feedback on draft landscape designs for the Campus Greenway, on March 21 in the McPherson Library foyer from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The Campus Greenway will strengthen the existing east-west pathway between Sinclair Road and Gordon Head Road, connecting buildings and public spaces while creating a vibrant and social hub. This is a unique opportunity to address the Strategic Framework priority of “increasing the vibrancy of campus life in the greenway.”

There is a link to the YouTube playlist on this event.

More info: uvc.ca/campusgreenway

Research Reels is a wrap!
More than 150 people descended on Centennial on March 5 to apply for virtual PhDs in popcorn. Or rather, to cheer on (and be captured by) the 16 semi-finalist videos in UVic’s Research Reels competition—part of IdeaFest. Colton Hash, ONC artist-in-residence, took home the top prize for the second consecutive year in the feature category for “Acoustic Turbulence.” Ermyne Gilpin’s “Land as Body” took second place. And Brent Godi’s video on 3D bioprinting won the people’s choice award for a feature. Social media awards went to Julian Sketchley (microfluids) and Jin-Si Over (CDES Marine Palentology Lab). Vernica Les and Morgan Gelinas won the people’s choice award for social media with their Community Cabbage video. 54,000 impressions were generated (along with the free popcorn). And if you missed the event, don’t fret. There is a link to the YouTube playlist on uvc.ca/researchreels.

Financial legal and ethical workshops through HR
HR offers free two-hour financial education sessions for employees at all stages of their careers. On March 28, learn about setting goals and improving your overall financial wellness at the financial planning session. On March 29, learn about estate and personal planning, and understand the impact of property changes like divorce or illness at the legal checkup session. Register online by March 15. hrdept@uvic.ca

Campus blood donor clinic on March 25
A community blood donor clinic is being held at the UVic William McMaster Library from 9 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. in the SUB’s Michelle Pujel Room. Call 1-888-236-AVONTE, the Canadian Blood Services website at blood.ca or download the GiveBlood App to book an appointment.

Multi-faceted advocacy to improve the lives of older adults
As a passionate advocate and engaged scholar, health geographer Denise Cloutier’s ultimate goal is to support the quality of life of older adults. As a geography professor and Institute on Aging and Lifelong Health researcher, Cloutier’s work has contributed to improvements in community and facility-based care—that is, shelter and services—so people can live as fully as possible as they age. By engaging with long-term care residents, community-dwelling older adults, families, health authorities and other academic researchers, Cloutier has made a difference in the lives of many older adults. She has raised awareness and suggested improvements to long-term care facilities to support a greater sense of well-being and belonging.

Cloutier works tirelessly with her research teams and collaborators to interview older adults, family caregivers, nurses, licensed practical nurses and health care aides who she is evaluating programs. This includes addressing the care needs of vulnerable persons living in rural communities, socially isolated, living with dementia, stroke-affected and those at the end of life. Her work shines the light on the importance of supporting compassionate, healthy and successful aging in our communities.

Scholars recognized for community engagement
By Anne McLauren and Krista Roehnert
Over the course of both their careers, health geographer Denise Cloutier and business professor Brent Mainprize have been deeply engaged with communities—creating better lives for older adults and Indigenous youth across British Columbia. As the 2019 recipients of the Provost’s Engaged Scholar Award, Cloutier and Mainprize’s commitment to healthy aging and Indigenous peoples were celebrated at a March 5 Ideafest event.

The award honours tenured faculty members who have demonstrated less-than-outstanding scholarship in their field, as well as inspired teaching and community engagement. Mainprize will hold the title of University of Victoria Provost’s Engaged Scholar for five years and receive a one-time award of $15,000 to support their research, teaching and community engagement.

“Both Denise and Brent demonstrate the impact and transformative capacity of community-university engagement,” said Valerie Kuchene, vice-president academic and provost. “These exemplary community-engaged scholars have committed their careers to fostering connections and creating positive change.”

Empowering Indigenous communities to pursue prosperity
For over 20 years, Mainprize has committed to meaningful scholarly engagement with Indigenous communities. He is passionate about building capacity with communities in their territory on their terms with a vast network of reciprocal partnerships that spans the country.

Mainprize is honoured by the invitation to work in community to build capacity and empower community members to pursue sustainable economic prosperity. His work focuses on co-designing strategy, structures and education experiences that assist in shaping Indigenous created economies.

One example of this is the work Mainprize has engaged in with the Nisga’a government, leading a research-based think tank to develop their strategy and increase their economic development for the next decade and beyond. This ongoing process is for the Nisga’a people on helping to answer the question, “How can the Nisga’a government best achieve sustainable economic prosperity while preserving heritage and culture?”

Mainprize was also invited by the Council of the Haida Nation to assist in their applied research and facilitation of a comprehensive strategic plan for Haida protected-areas management. Central to the work was a vision for heritage site management as “an economy with respect for the land and waters for generations.”

Green spaces or green power? Finding a land-use balance
By Jennifer Kwan
Early in his research career, Kevin Palmer-Wilson discovered that renewable energy sources such as wind and solar could play a major role in a future carbon-free electricity system—but each method of producing energy comes with its own costs.

Palmer-Wilson, a PhD student now with the 2060 Project, noted that first-hand public resistance to a wind farm project when he worked at a German electricity provider. Although Germany was seen as a trailblazer in renewable energy at the time, Palmer-Wilson’s project presentation nearly turned into a shootout among rural community members.

“We need to get off fossil fuels and embrace renewables, but there is real conflict between how people feel about their local environment and the global challenges of climate change,” re-calls Palmer-Wilson of the event some five years ago. “Getting that human dimension—the public acceptance to this paradigm—so that our energy system models is vital in understanding the great challenge of climate change.”

Limited land globally to 102 by 2100 requires a drastic reduction of carbon emissions from electricity generation by the mid-century. Wind and solar are predicted to dominate carbon emissions reductions, but requires huge expenditures to produce energy than the more compact fossil fuels.

When factoring land and social accept-ability, how viable are alternative energy sources?

Palmer-Wilson and his peers at 2060—a joint project of ES&V and the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions—sought to factor land area into decarbonization pathways. Research-ers found that globally relevant case study where in 2017 some 87 per cent of electricity was generated by fossil fuel. They assessed the trade-offs between land area impacts, technology alternatives such as hydro, wind and solar, as well as the costs associated with cutting carbon emissions from electricity generation.

Modelling results for 2015–2060, researchers used annual electricity consumption figures from Alberta utility operator and factored different scenarios that provide energy with various combinations of wind, solar, natural gas and coal in order to meet demand. Researchers then assessed different land-use constraints and financial costs. They found using renewables like wind and solar could require as much as 10 times more land than today’s power plant. In cases where no more land can be used, costs for producing electricity jumped 13 per cent.

Alternatives to renewables includ-ef carbon capture and storage, a tech-nology that sucks CO₂ emissions from exhaust and then stores it, typically underground, so emissions don’t enter the atmosphere—though scalability of this emerging technology is uncertain.

Nuclear energy is another option, but opposition varies significantly across regions due to concerns about long-term storage risks of nuclear waste.

Researchers also note that re-ne-wables can’t be spread evenly across Canada because renewables have to be put in areas that are most consistently sunny or windy, or where ocean waves are most plentiful and powerful.

“What path are we going to take? We can do nothing or we can take advantage of that option. We have to either mitigate climate change or we adapt. If we choose to mitigate then society has choices to make about technologies, but each comes with a cost,” says Palmer-Wilson.
Beyond the Oxford comma

Panynch at the Phoenix

Student designer reconstructs a storied legacy for latest Phoenix production

BY JOHN THRELFALL

Every play needs a set, whether the audience realizes it or not. From a bare wood floor to a drab apartment that slides open to reveal a magical fantasy land, the set is the canvas upon which the actors come to life. So what happens when a director asks rather than creating a set from scratch, to simply adapt a design that’s 30 years old?

The 2019 edition also expands and solidifies core principles of respectful use in communications + Marketing (UC+M). The company’s vision statement. They’re a group of employees. The guide helps campus writers avoid inconsistencies in spelling, capitalization and other matters of editorial style, has been updated and reviewed by University Communications + Marketing (UC+M). The 2019 update better reflects the evolution of inclusive language around gender and sexuality, and spells out commitments to respectful use and typographic representation of Indigenous place names, partners and subjects.

The 2019 edition also expands and solidifies core principles of respect when writing about students, staff, faculty and partners.

The guide should be used by academic and administrative units for print and web materials—but not for academic, scholarly or research texts. When preparing marketing and general communications materials, official correspondence and reports and submissions to universities governing bodies, following the guide helps ensure the university maintains its position as a leader in sustainability and ethical business practices, as well as the preservation and enhancement of its reputation as a respected institution.

The guide’s approach to style is based on principles of clarity, brevity and conciseness. It includes guidance on the use of inclusive language, such as avoiding the use of gendered pronouns and terms that may be considered offensive or discriminatory. It also covers the use of plain language and accessible writing, which is especially important when communicating with students and other stakeholders.

The guide is designed to be flexible and adaptable, allowing for local variations and adaptations. It includes guidance on how to use the guide in different contexts, such as academic, administrative and marketing communications.

The guide also includes guidelines for using the university’s brand marks and logos, as well as examples of effective and ineffective use.

Beyond the Oxford comma

The UVic Editorial Style Guide, which helps campus writers avoid inconsistencies in spelling, capitalization and other matters of editorial style, has been updated and reviewed by University Communications + Marketing (UC+M). The 2019 update better reflects the evolution of inclusive language around gender and sexuality, and spells out commitments to respectful use and typographic representation of Indigenous place names, partners and subjects.

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Patrick Lane: 
Rest in poetry

BY JOHN THRELFALL

Award-winning poet and novelist Patrick Lane passed away on March 7 at age 79, the result of a heart attack. His publisher, McClelland & Stewart, made the announcement, calling Lane “one of Canada’s most renowned writers”—a claim few would refute. His passing made headlines in media outlets nationwide.

Lane’s distinguished career spanned 50 years and 23 volumes of poetry, as well as award-winning books of fiction and non-fiction, published in over a dozen countries. The winner of numerous accolades—including the Governor General’s Award for Poetry, the Lieutenant Governor’s Award for Literary Excellence, the Canadian Authors Association Award and three National Magazine Awards—he was named an officer of the Order of Canada in 2014.

An influential member of the Department of Writing from 1992 to 2004, Lane was also famously married to winning poet and novelist vid Leach, current writing chair. “He would mentor and champion his students long after they had graduated from his classroom, and UVic,” said Leach, current writing chair. “He was an also much sought-after teacher, having held positions at the University of Saskatchewan and as writer-in-residence at the universities of Toronto, Alberta, Manitoba and at Concordia. In recognition of his service to Canadian literature, he received a Doctor of Letters (honoris causa) from UVic in November 2013, as well as honorary doctorates from UBC, McGill, UNBC and VIU.

“Pat inspired several generations of new writers with his poetic vision and generous spirit,” says David Leach, current writing chair. “He would mentor and champion his students long after they had graduated from his classroom, and UVic.” He was also honoured to be one of the few poets to see his work gathered and published as a collected works in his lifetime: 2011’s The Collected Poems of Patrick Lane included more than 400 poems, dating back to 1962.

“What makes this career even more remarkable is that Patrick’s formal education stopped with the completion of high school. However, through wide reading and dogged perseverance, he became one of the best educated and unconventionally brilliant people I have ever encountered,” wrote noted Canadian author Guy Vanderhaeghe in support of Lane’s honorary doctorate.

Formal awards and designations aside, Lane was admired and well-loved by colleagues and former students, many of whom have gone on to influential literary careers themselves. “No one can sum up adequately what a major figure like Patrick contributed,” says writing professor Tim Lilburn, a literary colleague and close friend of Lane’s. “I can’t think of anyone who has had a more profound impact on Canadian poetry over the last 50 plus years. He was a great poet and an extremely generous mentor.”

That’s a sentiment with which double Giller Prize-winning author Esi Edugyan clearly agrees; having studied under Lane at UVic, she has described him as “my first great teacher.” “He was a giant of Canadian letters, one of our most essential writers,” wrote UVic Chancellor Shelagh Rogers upon the news of Lane’s passing. “RestinPoetry.”

Born in 1939 in Nelson, BC, Lane earned early praise for his poems based on his ‘working man’ experiences. His first poetry collection, Letters From The Savage Mind, debuted in 1966, and his final novel, Deep River Night, was published in 2018. His frank and honest 2005 memoir, There Is A Season, chronicled his rehabilitation from alcoholism and earned him both the Lieutenant Governor’s Award for Literary Excellence and the BC Award for Canadian Nonfiction.

“We express our condolences to Leema and their family for this deep loss,” says UVic Dean of Fine Arts Susan Lewis. “Patrick is a legend in the field of Canadian poetry. I was deeply moved by his 2013 convocation address when we honoured him as Doctor of Letters.”

During that address, Lane poetically encapsulated 65 years of his life, reflecting on the changes he had seen both in the world and himself during that time. It seems only fitting to offer these final words from the poet himself:

“I stand here looking out over this assembly and ask myself what I can offer you who are taking from my generation’s hands a troubled world. I am an elder now. There are times many of us old ones feel a deep regret, a profound sorrow, but our sorrow does not have to be yours. You are young and it is soon to be your time . . . . But there are men and women only a few years older than you who are trying to remedy a broken world. I know and respect their passion. You too can change things. Just remember there are people who will try to stop you and when they do you will have to fight for your lives and the lives of the children to come.”

Read the full text at bit.ly/lane-uvic.
The archives of Dr. Edith Iglauer—acclaimed journalist, author and activist—are now at UVic, providing a scholarly resource for researchers studying literature, politics, history and the writing process. Recipient of a UVic honorary degree in 2006 for her role as a trailblazer for women in the field of journalism, Iglauer’s writing showed an instinctive grasp of US politics, the environment and Roosevelt’s speeches.

Heather Dean. “This fascination and empathy to visit with her briefly, and always to have her archives and her writing. Looking through her day planners, and folders of correspondence, fan letters, cassette tapes of interviews, original notes for her New Yorker articles, non-fiction book manuscripts, Second World War reporting, and work at the US Office of War Information, along with material covering US First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt’s speeches.”

It was a privilege meeting Edith in 1940s. After convincing an editor that she was a pioneering reporter, “I fell upon it in a used book store and read it straight through—such a wonderful book.”

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It was a privilege meeting Edith in 1940s. After convincing an editor that she was a pioneering reporter, “I fell upon it in a used book store and read it straight through—such a wonderful book.”
Two new studies are part of David Walker’s life. He was born and raised in Smithers, BC, which he drolly notes is “an hour’s drive north west.” His parents—both skiers—had him on skis by the age of two. “They got me up to the mountains from day one,” Walker recalls with a smile. “There are photos of me all bundled up in a backpack. They used to tow me in this little tobogan behind them.”

This continued all through high school. “Skiing just kept on being the common denominator in everything I did. Like, I’d play team sports, then go to ski practice. I’d go running, then go to ski practice.”

While in high school, Walker managed to balance school, sport and work relative ease, consistently placing in the top 10 in his age category and receiving a national ski title by grade 12. Even with sport taking up so much of his time, he always made school his priority, determined to attend post-secondary education. After graduating, he went straight to Okanagan College in Kelowna.

How did it go? Walker laughs before replying. “It was a disaster,” he says. “I’d also just jumped up a matter of months—and he also didn’t give up his plans for school.

Walker decided not to return to school the following year and instead focus entirely on skiing. After a summer spent fire-fighting, he was in great shape for the upcoming ski season. Then he came down with mononucleosis.

“I raced with mono for 45 days,” he says. “I got tenth at US nationals. I was fourth or fifth Canadian, with a full-blow mono. There were a few races that I started and got 200 metres in and would think, ‘Wow, I feel awful.’ It’s like you’re drowning. I finally went to a doctor. I had mono and a chronic sinus infection.”

Struggling with having to drop out of the ski season, Walker put his regular routine on pause. He visited friends on Vancouver Island. He fought fires during the summer season. He also finally made the decision to go back to school. By the time the ski season resumed, he’d settled into the rhythm of schoolwork and training. “I was going fast, and I felt good. School went well, skiing went really well.” But even with this success, Walker decided this would be his last year skiing. His new plan was to transfer to UVic and pursue a degree in mechanical engineering. He wanted to move to the island, he wanted to row, and he wanted a bit of a break from skiing.

Then he received the email from Cross Country Canada telling him he was disqualified for the World University Games.

Walker laughs when he tells this story. “I used to hate the way I wasnt certain I would make it back to competing on the international stage, all in a matter of months—and he also didn’t give up his plans for school.

Starting at UVic last September 2018, university has given Walker another supportive community. When asked about support he’s received while training for the World University Games, his rowing teammates are the first people he mentions. “The rowing team has been exceptional,” he says. “There are several other engineers on the rowing team, who understood the stress of trying to juggle academics and athletics firsthand. When asked how he balances the heavy academic workload of an engineering degree with being a student athlete, he quotes his rowing teammate. ‘It’s not balance. It’s sacrifice.’

When asked to elaborate, he explains that sacrifice is maybe the wrong word. “It’s priorities. Because I don’t feel like I’ve lost anything. A lot of athletes who train as much as we do are very process-oriented. The thought process is, ‘I wake up, I’m going to do this, these are the things I can control. We’re obsessive about the things we can control and what we can do to influence our outcomes. That mindset fits really well with school.’

Although Walker is a highly-motivated person with a try, fail, try again, do better mentality, he’s also very level-headed about the struggles of competing as a full-time student. “Be patient for your success, and you’ll find it is very rewarding. You’ll regret not trying more than you’ll regret taking an extra semester. If you need to drop a course, drop a course; if you need to miss a session, miss a session. You can’t hold yourself to robotic standards. Being a student athlete is hard—and it’s wonderful. So don’t be scared. And,” he adds with a laugh, “take it easy on yourself.”

David Walker is currently competing in Krasnoyarsk, Russia for the 2019 winter World University Games.

UVic writing student Kim Dias also recently interviewed writing professor Bill Gaston for the UVic/Life student blog. After teaching at UVic for 20 years, the award-winning author Gaston retires this year, quipping, “I’ll finally get to write my writing career” bit.ly/19-gaston

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**Better policies could reduce harms of alcohol**

Two new studies are sobering reminders of the shortcomings in Canada’s alcohol policies—federally and provincially.

By Amanda Farrell-Low

Canada’s federal, provincial and territorial governments could be doing a much better job at implementing policies that reduce alcohol-related harms, according to new reports from the UVic’s Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research (CISUR).

The Canadian Alcohol Policy Evaluation project, led by researchers at CISUR and Toston Centre for Addictions and Mental Health (CAMH), issued two reports in late February—one each on provincial and federal policies. The team looked at 11 different categories of alcohol policy including availability, pricing and taxation, and health and safety messaging. They then developed gold-standard best practices based on extensive international research, then compared these best practices against what Canada’s provincial, territorial and federal governments had in place as of 2017.

Researchers found that none of Canada’s provinces and territories collectively achieved less than half (44 per cent) of the potential to reduce alcohol-related harms.

When scored against the best current practices observed in Canada in 2017, the two jurisdictions with the highest scores were Ontario (64 per cent) and BC (58 per cent). However, the assessments were done before Ontario introduced new regulations to change alcohol policy, including the infamous “buck-a-beer” program.

Alcohol has surpassed tobacco in terms of being the most costly drug in Canada when it comes to harms, “says Stockwell. “This shows that these policies could reduce harms of alcohol consumption.”

But the reports aren’t all bad news. There are many areas where jurisdictions are doing well. Manitoba set alcohol prices according to alcohol content; Saskatchewan and Quebec placed upper limits on the density of alcohol outlets; and BC implemented an impaired-driving roadside suspension program.

If we were to assemble an alcohol policy based on all the best practices currently in place in the country, it would score 87 per cent, or an A Grade,” says Stockwell. “This shows that these recommendations are achievable in Canada today, and that these offers-practical and feasible steps for government and other agencies to get there.”

For more details on the project, visit alcoholpolicy.ca.

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**Masterminds returns for 2019**

Since 2006, Wednesday evening in April belong to the Masterminds lecture series. Every year, there’s a new roster of entertaining speakers who delve into their personal passions to bring you engaging and visual presentations on an eclectic range of subjects. All talks take place from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Masterminds is sponsored by the UVic Retirees Association and UVic’s Institute on Aging and Life Long Health, with support from the university

Here are this year’s lectures:

* April 10 Alexander Pohran-Dawkins
  Music from the inside: The ‘flow’ of live performance—Staging musical performances in the era of personal playlists
  HSD Building, Room A20

* April 17 Claire Carlin
  Humanities in the digital age: A quiet revolution—How the digital humanities are changing the research landscape
  Harry Hickman Building

* April 24 Trevor Hancock
  Creating a “One Planet” region: Healthy cities in the 21st century—Creating a healthier and more sustainable Victoria
  Harry Hickman Building

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**Info and registration:**

ascii.ca/masterminds