



University  
of Victoria

## Welcome to new members

**Thomas Birch**  
Affiliate

**Bob Carson**  
UVic Online

**Penny Codding**  
Chemistry

**Joe Harvey**  
Affiliate

# GREY MATTERS

## University of Victoria Retirees' Association

Volume 01/12

UVRA Newsletter

January 2012

### The Editor's Dilemma

Funny thing about newsletters, there's never enough space for all the news.

Among us are seniors with interesting pursuits and volunteer jobs who want to have their news items printed, to the letter!



And why not, that's what the newsletter is for.

So you try making them all fit on the available pages: first the hard news, like registration deadlines for conferences etc., then the good news, like new members joining and upcoming events and lectures, next the soft news, like general announcements, recipes, Dear Abby – oops, we don't have that yet – but we do have the secrets to living healthy (President David Docherty's specialty). Finally, the bad news about a friend or colleague passing on.

And yet, there's always the odd duck intent on making the editor's job harder, like: wouldn't it be newsy to read about a fellow retiree's outrageous vacation in Saskatoon, or in Istanbul, Turkey? And who among our readers would turn up his nose at learning about somebody's consuming hobby? Does anybody here have an unappreciated invention or a

green idea? And what about our pets? (I serve notice right now that my terrier "Moose" is way smarter than your dog.) So dear reader, please send in your story complete with pictures and a portrait photograph of yourself, mug-shot if you will, to the UVRA office, or to me.

Peter Zingeler peter.zingeler(at)shaw.ca

### Bits from the Board

I trust you all had a wonderful Christmas, and on behalf of the Board, I wish you and your family and friends a healthy and fulfilling 2012.

From the UVRA perspective, it promises to be an exciting and challenging year, with several projects beginning to come to fruition.

But first I would like to extend a huge thanks to Elizabeth Coey, who has been the editor of Grey Matters for the last few years. She has decided to step down from this position. The UVRA is certainly indebted to her for the time and effort she has committed over the years in producing such a great publication with ever improving appearance and quality.

However, I am happy to inform you that Peter Zingeler has kindly volunteered to step in as the new editor. On behalf of the Board, I

### UVRA Executive Board 2011-12

**President:** David Docherty  
**Vice-President:** Melvin Klassen  
**Recording Secretary:** (vacant)  
**Treasurer:** Kathy Harris  
**Past President:** Isobel Dawson  
**Benefits:** Peter Liddell  
**Communications:** Judy Cryderman  
**Membership:** George Smith  
**Newsletter Editor:** Peter Zingeler  
**Special Events:** Winona Pugh

**University Club:** David Leeming  
**CURAC/ARUCC coordinator:** John Schofield  
**50th Anniversary:** Peter Liddell & Trevor Matthews  
**Members at large:**  
Sharon Crumly (volunteer coordinator)  
Elaine Gallagher  
Jim Pearce  
Joanne Thomas  
Beverly Timmons (Masterminds)  
Dave Turkington (Masterminds)

would like to extend a warm welcome to him as he takes on this very important role. In an effort to serve the needs and expectations of our members he will put his own stamp on the newsletter, and bring fresh and interesting ideas to the job. He will introduce himself in this edition as well as share his view of the future.

As indicated in the last newsletter, the various members of the Board and Committees have been extremely busy with several projects. We have been approached by the University to contribute to the 50th Anniversary celebrations by providing stories from our members about events they know had a significant impact on themselves, and on the way the university evolved. The stories will be collected in the form of interviews with a covering article being preserved in the UVic Archives. You may have been approached about your story, or you may have already volunteered to tell your story. Peter Liddell and Trevor Matthews have been instrumental in leading this project and keeping it on track.

John Schofield and his committee have been very busy in organizing the hosting of the 2012 CURAC Conference scheduled for April 18-20. They have produced an exciting program that we hope you will find interesting, and that you plan to support. We have a friendly competition with UBC and SFU in the number of attendees from our respective associations! Check the section in this edition for more details on the conference, and please plan to attend.

Once again, the UVRA in conjunction with the Centre on Aging, is organizing the Masterminds Series of Lectures in April. Thanks to the efforts of Bev Timmons with Dave Turkington gradually taking over the chair of this event. They have an interesting group of speakers lined up, so please check the details in this edition of the newsletter.

Your Events Committee has also been busy in organizing a variety of trips and events that you are encouraged to attend and support.

The Christmas luncheon was well attended, and we were once again regaled with stories by Trevor Matthews and then his subsequent induction into the "The Order of P" (you don't want to know the details!).

The Benefits Committee, under the leadership of Peter Liddell, has also been looking into alternative EHB and dental plans and will be making some recommendations in the near future. Lois Jones has been tremendously helpful in deciphering and comparing various policies, and we thank her for all her time, effort and expertise in this matter.

I am sure you will enjoy reading the Newsletter and finding out more of what has been going on with the UVRA and upcoming events, as well as articles of interest. If you have any ideas or suggestions on how the newsletter or the UVRA can better serve your needs as a member of the association, please let me or any Board member know. It is my hope that we develop a stronger profile and partnership with the University, so that it

sees us as a valuable resource and a connection to all UVic retirees.

David Docherty, UVRA President.

## UVRA Events—January to May

❖ **January 24, (Tuesday), 10 am.**

**Institute of Ocean Sciences**  
(9860 West Saanich Road, North Saanich).

This tour will give us an inside look at the Pacific Geoscience Center and the Canadian Hydro-graphic Services. Participants will be able to purchase lunch in the Ocean Sciences Cafeteria after the tour.

**Register by: January 17. Cost: \$5/ person**

❖ **February 9, (Thursday), noon**

**Chinese New Year Buffet Lunch and Presentation**  
(Crystal Jade Restaurant)

**Presentation - Secret Stories of Victoria's Chinatown with John Adams**

Our Chinese buffet is one of our largest events, as we join together to celebrate Chinese New Year, and learn more about the remarkable Chinese culture.

**Register by: February 2. Cost: \$15/person**

❖ **March 14 (Wednesday), 10:15 am**

**The Royal B.C. Museum Archive Tower.**  
**Behind the Scenes of Restorations**

As seen from the perspective of the Provincial Archivist, this tour will introduce us to the skilled professionals responsible for the preservation and restoration of the museum collections. Participants may continue on to nearby restaurants for lunch on their own.

**Register by: March 7. Cost \$5/person**

❖ **April 17 (Tuesday). 10 am**

**Birds and Plants of Mystic Vale and Finnerty Gardens**

This walk is a pre-conference event for both UVRA members and CURAC conference participants, to give us a greater knowledge of our own backyard. We will start at the University Chapel with our guide Agnes Lynn. After touring Finnerty Gardens, you may choose to continue on an optional tour of Mystic Vale.

**Register by: April 10. Cost \$5**

❖ **April 18-20 (Wednesday – Friday)**

**CURAC Conference.**

The annual conference for the Federation of College and University Retirees Associations will be hosted in Victoria in 2012. For more information, to register, or to volunteer, see the UVRA website.

❖ **May 17 (Thursday) 7 am from UVic**  
**All day bus tour to Gabriola Island.**

This gem of the Gulf Island is home to artists, craftspeople, weavers, wineries, potters, as well as a few UVic retirees. A no host lunch stop will be made at Sylva Bay, where you may enjoy a pub lunch or your own picnic. For more information, check the UVRA website.

**Register by April 30. Cost \$40 per person**

The Events Committee thanks all the members who suggested the above events.

*Please note our cancellation policy:* refunds for amounts over \$5 will be provided, when requested prior to the registration deadline, or at the discretion of the Executive.

Events Committee: Winona Pugh (Chair), Bob Allen, Jim Currie, Donna Mollin, David Docherty.

Feedback / Suggestions: UVRA Office

## Volunteers

Please consider volunteering in the UVRA office — talk with other high-minded and like-minded people on the telephone or in person.

An office volunteer is needed for 2 hours once a month to do a little filing, giving directions, answering general inquiries during the hours of 1:30 to 3:30 on a weekday afternoon. Parking is free and easy.

If you have some time to volunteer in the UVRA office, please contact Sharon Crumly at [scrumly\(at\)shaw.ca](mailto:scrumly(at)shaw.ca)

## Masterminds 2012

### A Lecture Series by UVic Retirees

The Masterminds lectures highlight the continuing contributions of the University of Victoria's retirees to the University and to the community. With the generous support of the University of Victoria, the UVic Retirees Association and the Centre on Aging will present a series of four free lectures by UVic Retirees from April 4th through April 25th.

The lectures will be held every Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. in the Hickman Building, room 105. **Please register for the lectures by calling 250-721-6369**, and plan to arrive early, because seating will be limited. If you do not have a parking permit, there is a **charge of \$2.25** to park on campus at night. Parking permits are available in all parking lots. The parking lot at Centennial Stadium (Lot 4) is probably the most convenient to the Hickman Building.

### Wednesday, April 4: Dr. Stanton E. Tuller, *The Climate of Victoria: Characteristics, Variations, and Controls*

Dr. Stanton Tuller is Professor Emeritus in the Department of Geography, where he taught climatology from 1969 until his recent retirement. His major area of study is applied microclimatology including ground surface energy budgets, human thermal exchange and wind climate. Much of his writing focuses on Greater Victoria and the Pacific Coast of B.C. He is an Accredited Consulting Meteorologist (ACM) and is called upon to consult in areas such as applied climatology, climate impact assessment, and wind analysis. Dr. Tuller will discuss the climate of Greater Victoria, focusing on selected characteristics, regional variations within the local area, controls, and comparisons with other regions in Canada.

### Wednesday, April 11: Prof. Martin Segger, *The Emergence of Architectural Modernism in Greater Victoria*

Prof. Martin Segger has held many positions at UVic, including Director and Curator of the Maltwood Art Museum and Gallery, Senior Research Associate, Centre for Global Studies, and adjunct professor in the Department of History in Art. He has also served as the President of the International Council of Museums, and is a Fellow of the Canadian Museums Association and of the Royal Society of Arts. As a result of Martin's contributions to UVic over a period of 37 years, especially in the areas of cultural resource management and heritage initiatives, he was awarded the President's Distinguished Service Award in 2010. Drawing on plans, drawings, photographs and architectural models from the 1950's and 1960's, his presentation explores a number of planning initiatives, design projects and building programs that defined this important phase in the development of the Capital Region.

### Wednesday, April 18: Dr. Elaine Gallagher, *How Age-Friendly is B.C.?*

During her professional career at the University of Victoria, Professor Emeritus Dr. Gallagher was a professor in the School of Nursing, and served a three - year term as the Director of the Centre on Aging. In 2002, the Canadian Association of Nurse Researchers named her "Researcher of the Year" for her work on falls and injury prevention among older people. As a result of her professional accomplishments, Simon Fraser University named her an Outstanding Alumna in 2007. Dr. Gallagher is best known for her work on a project entitled "STEPS" (Studies of Environments which Promote Safety)—the first published study on the epidemiology of seniors' slips, trips and falls in public places. For the past three years, she has served as the lead Canadian researcher for an international project on

age-friendly communities. Her presentation will focus on the strategies necessary to create an age-friendly British Columbia, and the progress thus far.

**Wednesday, April 25: Dr. Larry D. Yore, Challenging Science Illiteracy: Celebrating Canadian Successes and Building for the Future**

Distinguished Professor Emeritus, Dr. Yore is former Co-Director of the Pacific Centre for Science and Technology Literacy (2005-2011), former member of the Board of Directors of the National Association for Research in Science Teaching, consultant to the B.C. Ministry of Education, and former Chair of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction in the Faculty of Education. He has played an important role in the governance of UVic through his administrative and committee work throughout the university. He has been involved in research into teaching and learning science with a focus on literacy and language for over 40 years, and has presented over 300 conference papers, invited talks and guest lectures. This presentation will identify the science literacy successes of school programs, and challenges facing society in general and education in particular, with emphases on improving school science and public engagement with pressing science, technology, society, and environment issues.

Dave Turkington and Beverly Timmons

## **CURAC Conference – UVic 2012**

This year, the 10th annual CURAC/ARUCC conference is being held in Victoria, BC April 18 to 20, 2012, hosted by the UVRA in collaboration with the UBC Association of Professors Emeriti and the SFU Retirees Association.

CURAC/ARUCC is the federation of college and university retiree associations of Canada. The federation has 40 member associations at colleges and universities across the country with a combined total of 15,000 individual members.

Program topics appeal to a broad audience of post-secondary retirees. For the UVic conference, sessions look at best practices as these relate to benefits and activities for post-secondary retirees, and ways that associations can support their parent institutions.

Conference discussions also address matters of seniors' health and lifestyle led by professionals in these fields, including Neena Chappell FRSC, Canada Research Chair in Social Gerontology, Department of Sociology and Centre on Aging, UVic; and UVRA President David Docherty.

### **SAVE THE DATES—EVERYONE IS WELCOME**

Meetings run 9:00am to 4:30pm each day in the University Centre Conference Room (the "Senate and Board Room") and near-by in classroom C109 in the Clearihue Building.

Full registration @ \$150/head includes a welcome reception and conference banquet at the Harbour Towers Hotel at 345 Quebec Street as well as morning and afternoon refreshments and lunch each day, and transportation between the hotel and the UVic campus.

Day registration is \$45/head/day, and includes morning and afternoon refreshments and lunch.

Program topics include:

- Best Practices from selected associations across North America (2 sessions)
- Options for seniors' living arrangements
- Issues in Pension Plan governance
- How active do you have to be to be healthy?
- Challenges and opportunities of communicating with the membership (Are we ready for Facebook?)
- Regional CURAC/ARUCC groups: exploring their potential
- The upcoming revision to the Canada Health Accord: a seniors' wish-list

Registration procedures and full program details on the 2012 CURAC/ARUCC conference link on the UVRA web-site, or from the UVRA office, Technology Enterprise Facility (TEF), Room 223, University of Victoria, PO Box 1700, STN CSC, Victoria, V8W 2Y2; 250-472-4749 (1:30-3:30pm Mon-Fri).

Parking at UVic is \$7/day; Lot 2 and Lot 3 are closest to University Centre.

Pre-registration, rather than registration at the door, is encouraged.

## **UVic United Way Campaign 2011**

The United Way campaign goal for 2011 was set at \$290,000. As of December, it had reached 90% of that goal.

Congratulations to three UVRA members, each of whom won a weekly draw. The campaign will continue in all departments on campus this spring and summer. To keep informed, or to volunteer for next year, please check the website at <http://unitedway.uvic.ca>

Thanks very much to all of you who participated this year. We are deeply grateful for your contribution to helping the United Way assist those in need.

If you have any questions about the campaign, please contact me.

J. Isobel Dawson [isawson\(at\)uvic.ca](mailto:isawson(at)uvic.ca)



## Treasurer's Report

UVic has entered into the last quarter of the fiscal year which ends March 31, 2012; accordingly, UVRA will make changes to our financial management.



This year, the major change will be to our members who hold "annual memberships". Members holding a "life membership" will not be affected.

The current annual membership cycle (June to May) will shift to follow the revised bylaws, and will run from April 1 to March 31.

The Bylaws and Constitution can be viewed through the UVRA website.

In June, as we work into the new cycle, we will be requesting only \$12.00 for the next 10 months, to extend your membership to the end of March, 2013. Then, in April of 2013, from those in good standing, we will be requesting the regular membership fee of \$16.00 for the 2013-2014 fiscal year.

Of course, if a fee increase is necessary, the above amounts would change.

If you are one of those few members who has not submitted the membership fee for the current year, we would appreciate receiving your cheque, made payable to UVic Retirees Association, as soon as possible.

The current financial status of the UVRA reflects a positive balance, with saving accounts and term investments at Coast Capital, as well as our account with UVic Financial Services.

The financial records are available for review by current members upon request in the UVRA office. Attendance at the annual UVRA AGM in June will give you a full run-down of the financial activities throughout the year.

Kathy Harris

## News about Retirees

In November 2011, our George Smith received the 2011 Legacy Award for Sports in a ceremony at the Victoria Conference Centre. UVic is one of six corporate sponsors.

"*Glorious Victorians: 150 years—150 Houses*" is a new book by Nicholas Russell, a UVRA member. It celebrates Victoria's residential architecture from its beginning.

## University Club Report

I am the UVRA rep on the University Club Board. It is my pleasure to keep the UVRA members informed about University Club news and events. The UVRA and the University Club have a long-standing agreement that allows our members to join the Club at a special rate of 75% of the current Associate Member rate – which works out to \$15 per month.

As a member of the University Club, you are able to enjoy lunch at the Club Monday to Friday, and dinner Monday to Saturday. Some upcoming events of note are the *Family Night Celebration of Pasta* on Tues. Jan. 17, and the *Celebration of Wine and Food* on Thurs. Jan. 26.

This year marks the 30th Anniversary of the University Club. Executive Chef Mark David has created some delicious winter specials for cozy dining in the Camas room, each one served with soup or salad. For all of the details of these and more upcoming events, check the website: <http://club.uvic.ca>

Several UVRA members took up my offer of a tour of the University Club. Please contact me for a tour.

David Leeming [leemingd\(at\)uvic.ca](mailto:leemingd(at)uvic.ca)

## Physical Activity and Wellness Corner #7



In the last newsletter, I indicated that I would address the role of exercise in back health. From demographic data, we know that almost half of us suffer from some sort of back pain. Although back pain can occur in any area of the spine, it most commonly occurs in the lower back or lumbar area of the spine and is generally referred to as low back pain (LBP). This can result in localized pain, or create the classic pain down the back of the thigh and leg as a result of pressure on the sciatic nerve that passes through the vertebrae and muscles of the lower back. The actual cause of the pain is often hard to identify and, therefore, difficult to fix.

### *Structure of the back*

The back or spine is a complex structure consisting of individual vertebrae stacked upon one another and separated by intervertebral discs. The discs have a hard cartilage exterior but a soft middle that allows for the mobility of the spine. The discs will compress and change shape as we move or stay in one position for prolonged periods of time, such as sitting. The discs will also compress or narrow as we get older. The problem

is that nerves pass between vertebrae in a narrow space that is close to the discs. During various movements, pressure can be placed on the nerves due to movement or sliding of the vertebrae or compression of the discs. There are small joints between the vertebrae that can also be strained with subsequent inflammation, that puts pressure on the nerves in the area, resulting in acute or chronic pain.

#### *The importance of exercise*

The stacked vertebrae are held in place as a result of the bone structure and many large and small ligaments. However, the small and large muscles that attach to the vertebrae are considered to be the major way in which the spine is stabilized. Consequently, making sure we are able to exercise these muscles is very important. Exercising will keep them well-conditioned and will avoid low back pain. Exercising is an essential part of any rehabilitation program, and it will prevent recurrence of the problem. LBP is also associated with inflexible muscles, in particular, the hip flexors that cross in front of the pelvis and the hamstrings at the back of the thigh. Most preventative or rehabilitation programs will therefore include exercises to strengthen the muscles that support the spine as well as promote flexibility.

#### *The type of exercises*

Some exercises can actually exacerbate the problem of LBP. Finding the right exercises is key: They challenge the muscles that support the spine, and do not cause compression on the vertebral discs in the lower back. Most exercises that involve flexing the trunk on the legs (most sit-ups) actually cause a lot of compression on the lower back and are, therefore, not recommended. You should also avoid exercises that activate the hip flexors when the feet are braced and/or the legs are straightened. Consequently, in recent years, a number of exercises have been developed that are generally referred to as bridging exercises. They target the correct muscles without causing compression of the discs in the lower back. Another important finding from research is that people who suffer from LBP generally do not activate the muscles that stabilize the spine before they move or try to lift something. Simple activities, such as making the bed or reaching for an object, can often trigger LBP, if you don't stabilize the spine before moving. Many exercise programs teach us to activate the muscles so that it becomes an automatic response. There is a number of ways to activate the stabilizer muscles, but the simplest is to tense the stomach muscles as if someone was going to punch you. The challenge is to continue to breathe and move while keeping these muscles under tension! In many of the exercises used to enhance spine stability, the first action is to contract these muscles, and then perform the exercise or hold the position, while keeping these muscles under tension (and breathe!).

#### *Specific program*

Space does not permit me to go into any detailed exercise program, but I am providing a reference to an article<sup>(1)</sup> that I have found very helpful for people wishing to initiate a program. I encourage you to have a look at it, and see if it can be of help to you. As always, I would extend the usual caution: proceed slowly, and if it hurts, don't do it. As I said, depending on the cause of LBP, some exercises will exacerbate the condition. Also remember that if you have recovered from LBP, and have found that exercises helped in your rehabilitation, please keep doing them, even though the symptoms have disappeared. Our human tendency is to exercise only if we have to!

David Docherty angdave(at)shaw.ca

- (1) Dr. Stuart McGill, Department of Kinesiology, University of Waterloo, *Enhancing Low Back Health through stabilization exercise*, <http://www.ahs.uwaterloo.ca/~mcgill/fitnessleadersguide.pdf>

## In Memoriam

Shirley Reeve, 1931 to 2010, was the Secretary in Communication and Social Foundations, Faculty of Education, prior to her retirement.



Elias Mandel, M.D., 1928 to 2011, an associate member, studied many subjects at UVic, including classical guitar, Italian, and oceanography.

We offer sincere condolences to their families.