Greetings fellow retirees.

I have been looking forward to Spring even more than usual this year. An entire year has passed under the shadow of COVID-19 and we have had to adapt our lives in so many ways that sometimes it feels like our life is disconnected from normality. With the return of longer periods of daylight and sunshine as well as the arrival of vaccines, I am encouraged as we begin to step into those activities that we miss in a way that we value most, and, reconnect with friends, family and others in a more direct way. It has been a test of our endurance and we are going to make it out of this stronger and more agile than we ever thought was possible. The world has tested us and we have overcome obstacles and created new possibilities.

Your association, UVRA, has also adapted to changing circumstances in many ways and our membership is now just under 730 members. I want to take a moment to thank our
wonderful team of volunteers - both my fellow members of the UVRA Board and others who have helped us bridge this period of adaptation. I wanted to particularly mention Lou Schmidt (you keep this ship on course!) and those involved with the Elder Academy, Masterminds and the Members Forum - moving these into a total virtual world has been an incredible feat and I know that our membership and other attendees appreciate your efforts.

We are very pleased to announce that UVRA’s Vice-President, Rebecca Warburton, has been elected as a UVic Convocation Senator. Congratulations Rebecca!

A number of items to mention since our last newsletter:

- The Masterminds series has gone virtual and this year’s fascinating series in April will be held weekly starting April 7th.
- The UVRA Annual General Meeting will be held Wednesday June 2nd - this year virtually. More information, including the link, will be distributed closer to the meeting date. We look forward to you joining us online.
- UVRA has just recently established a second UVRA Graduate Student Scholarship to be awarded annually.
- Given the level and number of UVRA activities, we have added some part-time office support to provide assistance. Sanjit Roy is a UVic student currently working on his PhD in the Social Dimensions of Health Program and is a IALH Student Associate. He has been doing an amazing job assisting our association with a number of our activities, including the online requirements of Elder Academy and now the Member’s Forum.
- We are pleased to announce that Sanjit was awarded the Ruth A. Gardner Research Award, given by the Eldercare Foundation. More details are provided in this newsletter.
- Our Members Forum has been a great success with an increasing attendance. Our most recent session on ”Memory” had a number of wonderful presenters and we want to thank Herb Weil, one of the Forum’s initiators, for generating this great topic. Thanks also to Jane Birkbeck for facilitating and Sanjit Roy for moderating the operation of our Zoom room.
• Check the update later in the newsletter about a new vaccine coverage that will soon be added to the Johnson’s Extended Health Plan.

• We had a very successful United Way campaign this year with more detail in the United Way page of this newsletter. Thanks to Mary Ellen Purkis, our UVRA United Way coordinator, for doing such a great job and thank you to the UVRA members for your generosity.

As you know, UVRA is a member of the College and University Retiree Associations of Canada (CURAC). CURAC has now established a Later Life Learning (LLL) Project that distributes information about available online sessions from member associations across Canada. This initiative has resulted in an increase in the number of our communiques because of the large selection of sessions now available to you. These sessions contain information/presentations on an endless range of ideas and topics presented by incredible academics, educators and speakers from across Canada. Most sessions are free or at minimal cost. UVRA’s Masterminds and Elder Academy are now included in this distribution network.

I would like to draw your attention to one of the LLL Project upcoming-events - the CURAC Virtual Conference on April 15, 2021 presented by McGill University. There is still time to register for this 2-hour session which will include a talk on *Nature and Nurture: How early life experience changes our DNA narrative* by McGill medical researcher, Dr. Moshe SzHF, renowned in the field of epigenetics (the study of how behaviours and environment can cause changes that affect the way genes work). It is offered free of charge - the name of your retiree association will be requested at registration.

Since we value your suggestions and input, we encourage you to share your thoughts and recommendations of appropriate topics for future UVRA Member’s Forums. It is a great way to share ideas and to become acquainted with other UVRA members. These discussions are held monthly by UVRA on Zoom with free registration via Eventbrite.

A reminder also that this newsletter welcomes new ideas and submissions of an article or a photo.

Until next time, Stay safe and keep well.

*Margaret Klatt*

March 2021
EDITOR’S NOTES

This edition is full of great articles and useful information. It also contains surprises for readers – so expect to find the unexpected in some articles.

Peter’s Benefits page provides information on the new vaccine benefits for Johnson policy holders. It also contains the link to enter your name to win a fabulous trip to Columbia. David’s 38th exercise article makes people like me, who are not fond of exercise, feel less guilty. Melvin’s ‘Passwords’ article is a must read. He clearly explains numerous items we should know about usages of passwords for various tasks, and provides a number of website to consult for more information.

Peter’s Club page, and the Club’s poster, outline the great incentives offered to UVRA members to join the Club. As a picture is worth a thousand words, I will let the pictures speaks for themselves regarding it being true that the Club is Victoria’s best kept secret. If you are a vegetarian, please be sure to check out the Club’s modifiable take-out menu located on this edition’s last page. There is also a children’s take out (and dine-in) menu.

The two Forum articles and the April Forum provide both information and an invitation. For those unable to attend the March Forum, Jane’s article is a comprehensive recap of the meeting’s salient points while Herb’s article lets readers know what is being planned for the April Forum, while always leaving room for other topics.

In Members Column, Yvonne’s second installment of her volunteer work is captivating and, unexpected regarding one of her own pursuit. I will not let the cat out of this bag – you will have to read her article to find out.

What’s new at the university has readers voyaging over the moat to learn about a paleoanthropologist who discovered that which has been hidden in plain sight for thousands of years. Her grandmother had been a code breaker working at Bletchley Park during World War 11, so Genevieve may be a chip off the old block, to put it colloquially.

Sanjit Roy, who is UVRA’s part time worker, won a prestigious award a few months ago. I interviewed him to find out more about the recipient and the research project he is presently undertaking. Here again, I think you will find the unexpected in the expectable.

Did you know that the Club has a take-out children’s menu, or that its kitchen can modify numerous take-out dishes for vegetarians? If not, have a look at this edition’s last page.

Lou, Diana, and Sanjit (the editing team)
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Health insurance: Vaccine Coverage

At the last Board meeting, it was agreed to support the addition of vaccine coverage to the Johnson-UVRA policy. The level of repayment chosen was $100 p.a., per person. Our co-sponsors, the UBC Emeritus College Council, had decided to go along with whichever level UVRA chose, and agreed immediately when I reported our decision. That agreement is necessary for any changes in coverage under this policy.

Depending on your type of coverage (single, couple, family), you may expect to pay an additional $1-2 premium per month. Coverage will begin on September 1st, the normal annual renewal date for this policy.

What’s covered? All vaccines that are not covered by the BC medical services plan, such as Prevnar, Shingrix, and the travel-related vaccines against dengue, yellow fever, polio, etc. Fuller lists are available here:

https://immunizebc.ca/what-vaccines-do-adults-need
https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthlinkbc-files/travel-immunizations-adults

Travel

CURAC, the umbrella organization for Canadian post-secondary retiree associations, has entered a partnership with Tripmerchant, a BC-based company.

Members of affiliated associations, such as UVRA, are eligible for a very attractive prize draw of 5 nights at the Sofitel Legend Santa Clara in Cartagena, Columbia — voted top hotel in South America by Conde Naste last year. Airfare is included.

The contest concludes on June 30th, 2021. Details of the contest are here:
https://curac.tripmerchant.ca/colombia-tourism/
Password for Access: CURACTM18

On May 27th, at 9 a.m. Pacific Daylight Time, the Columbian Tourist Board will stream a presentation on the region. To register for that, go to:
https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUpdGgrT1uEtMXUhKWANGamDHtKcTtj2x8
UVRA Graduate Scholarship was developed with the intention of helping graduate students pursue their goal of conducting research on the many factors related to aging and health outcomes within the rapidly growing 55+ age group.

The first UVRA scholarship, administered through the Institute on Aging and Lifelong Health, was awarded Fall 2019 to Lisa Ohlhauser, a graduate student whose research project investigates the impact of physical exercise for persons with cognitive decline on quality of life, mood, and cognition.

The successful applicant for the 2020/2021 UVic Retirees Association Award is Matilde (Matty) Cervantes. Matty is a second year Masters student in the Social Dimensions of Health program. Her research interests include aging, intergenerational relationships, and well-being. She is particularly interested in the mental and social health of older adults and their caregivers.

For the first endowment of a scholarship, UVRA matched the donors’ donations dollar for dollar. We have now created a second graduate scholarship and the Association will, once again, match contributions from members of the UVRA. You are strongly urged to contribute to this worthy initiative which will have long term positive effects on furthering the research on aging.

To contribute simply click on this link:

https://extrweb.uvic.ca/donate-online/UVRA

REMEMBER
THE ASSOCIATION WILL MATCH YOUR CONTRIBUTION
YIELDING A DOUBLING OF YOUR CONTRIBUTION
Don’t feel like exercising? Don’t feel guilty about it!

Many of us do not feel like or enjoy the thought of exercising, often accompanied by guilt, because most of us know that we should and it is good for us! However, in his new book “Exercised: Why Something We Never Evolved To Do Is Healthy and Rewarding”* Daniel Liberman explains why we are not really programmed to exercise but more geared to conserve energy. I heard him being interviewed on CBC a few weeks and was intrigued by what he said. He is an evolutionary biologist and, in his book, uses anthropological evidence to address many myths and misunderstandings about exercise. He also offers suggestions on how we can deal with something we are not really programmed to want to do.

His contention is that although we evolved to move it was so we could hunt and gather in order to survive and maybe elude the sabre-toothed tiger! The physical activity had purpose so it made no sense to go out and expend precious calories on activity that was not related to survival. He contends that we have deep-rooted instincts to avoid unnecessary physical activity so you are not being lazy if you don’t want to go for a run or to the gym. In fact, he estimates our hunter-gatherer ancestors would spend up to 10 hours a day sitting around and doing nothing. However, he does explain that they probably did not sit staring at a screen for hours and still recommends people get up and move around on a regular basis to boost our metabolism.

So, what can we do to overcome our programmed instincts? He is an avid runner and confesses that he does not always feel like going out on cold, wet, and dark mornings for a run. I also admit that I too do not always feel motivated to exercise. The first thing he says is to recognize this is a natural response but one we need to overcome and not “get mad at yourself” for having such feelings. The second point he makes is that we evolved to be physically active when it was necessary or socially rewarding or fun to do such as dance or playing games. As I have noted in other articles it is easier to be motivated to exercise if you enjoy what you are doing and, if you do it with other people. It is not surprising that group classes involving moving to music are very popular, as is the coffee gathering after the activity.
His third point is not to worry about how much exercise we do and how much time we spend doing it. According to Daniel Liberman we did not evolve to be perpetually active, run marathons, or “lift giant rocks”. Our ancestors engaged in about 2 hours a day of moderate to vigorous physical activity which is clearly more than the current recommended amount of 30 minutes for 5 days per week.

In an interview with the Harvard Gazette Dr. Liberman was also asked if it is normal to exercise less as we age? I found his reply particularly interesting. He noted that there was no such thing as retirement in the Stone Age and people continued to be hunters and gatherers to support their families. He went on to say that we evolved to be active through our entire life span and that life long physical activity helps us live longer and stay healthy as we age. This is attributed to the fact that “physical activity turns on a broad range of repair and maintenance mechanisms that counter the effects of aging”. He goes on to reference a Harvard Alumni Study that found older alums who exercised had a 50% lower mortality than their sedentary peers and the benefits were even higher in the older than younger alumni.

The take home message is don’t feel guilty if you do not feel like exercising or being physically active but still do it because it has many benefits - especially as we age.


But, my topic is passwords that you use on your computer and your devices and on the Internet.

**Passphrase**

Recently, UVic web-sites are using the word "passphrase", instead of the word "password".

An example of a passphrase would be the first letters of each word in a phrase that you will never forget, e.g., E(very) g(ood) b(oy) d(eserves) f(udge) a(lways), followed by a special character, e.g., an octothorpe (#), and then the 2-digit year of your birth.

Looking at the UVic web-sites, I see conflicting information:

- **write down your [UVic Law School] applicant ID ... and password. You'll need them for checking the status of your application ...** https://www.uvic.ca/law/admissions/apply-now/
- **Do not write down any passphrase and store it in a visible location** https://www.uvic.ca/systems/support/informationsecurity/datasecurity/passwords.php

**What passwords do you have, and where do you use them?**

Let me count the ways:

- your online banking, such as Interac e-Transfers https://www.interac.ca/en/consumers/products/interac-e-transfer/ for a grandchild’s birthday, or to pay for a UVRA event
- your Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) account
- entering your PIN for your debit/credit card when making in-store purchases
- loyalty cards, when redeeming your "points" (Aeroplan, AirMiles, PetroCanada
- logging-on to find online discounts (Shoppers Drug Mart, Thrifty Foods’ Smileoffers.ca)
- online purchases (ABEbooks, Air Canada, Amazon, Apple Store, Bolen Books, Disney Plus, eBay, Etsy, Microsoft Store, Travelocity, WestJet)
What passwords do you have, and where do you use them?

Let me count the ways continued:

- recurring auto-payments (BC Hydro, Times Colonist newspaper, annual fee for Microsoft’s Office 365 software, Netflix, Shaw Cablesystems)
- one-time online payments (annually, City of Victoria taxes)
- online non-monetary accounts (UVic NetLink, Global TV’s watch-on-demand app, GasBuddy, Gmail, Hotmail, iCloud, Netflix)
- on "portals", such as Lifelabs or CRA or "My Telus" or "My Shaw" (to manage your TV/phone/Internet/mobile account)
- the passcode to unlock your mobile phone
- the Microsoft Windows logon password
- the ID/password for any ”cloud-storage” sites, such as Apple, Dropbox, and Microsoft
- if you have a web-site to pay the annual fees for the hosting of your web-site
- the password for your Facebook/Twitter/Instagram account, to post updates

Password complexity and recycling

As an example, the older iPhone 5C accepts a four-digit code, while a newer iPhone requires a six-digit code. Some sites enforce complexity (a mix of upper/lower case letters, at least one number, and at least one special character).

It is unsafe, and a very bad idea, to use the same password at multiple sites, because an intrusion at one site can capture the ID/password you use at that site. After a compromise, I’m sure that there will be attempts to abuse your ID/password at other sites.

As an example, a CBC web-site quoted a CRA press-release about the "locking" of 800,000 accounts on the CRA system. The CRA claimed that their IDs/passwords were not compromised, and there was no breach of CRA's online systems. Rather, some IDs/passwords may have been obtained by unauthorized third-parties of sites that are external to the CRA, and those IDs/passwords were determined by the CRA to be identical to IDs/passwords as used within the CRA web-site.
I forgot a password -- now what?

Some web-sites offer a ”help desk” that you can telephone, to launch a password change.

Some web-sites have a ”I forgot my password” hyperlink. Before you click that hyperlink, be sure that you are accessing the official web-site.

Be extremely cautious before accessing any web-site that is listed within an E-mail that you have received. It may be a “phishing” message, promoting a “rogue” web-site, instead of the official web-site.

The official web-page of the site may ask you a few ”secret questions” (that you have previously chosen) and you must give your answer, to verify that it really is you, not an imposter, who is trying to make a change.

One UVic Library I.T. person prefers to use non-relevant answers to those questions. For example, he would answer a question like ”what is the name of your elementary school” by giving his home telephone-number. Such a technique is resistant to unauthorized ”guessing” of the answers.

Some web-sites will send a text-message to your cell-phone, with a ”one-time-use” numeric code. You would enter that code onto the web-site, to launch the password-change process. Of course, this requires that you must have previously given your cell-phone number to the web-site.

Some web-sites will send an E-mail message to a different E-mail ID, with a hyperlink to launch the password-change process. Again, this requires that you must have previously given that ”recovery” E-mail ID to the web-site. More importantly, this requires that you still have access to that ”recovery” E-mail ID. For example, if you switch your Internet service from Shaw to Telus, to spend less per month, and that ”recovery” E-mail ID is a Shaw ID, you will lose access to your ID on Shaw’s systems.

Some web-sites will send a text-message to your cell-phone with a ”verification-code”. Hopefully, you have not changed your cell-phone services to a different provider, which may have changed your telephone-number.

Thoughts about ”spring cleaning”

Be proactive -- I recommend that you logon to every web-site that you access -- some sites demand that you change the password, if you have not logged-on to that site within the last 12 months. Do this when you are not in ”panic-mode”.

After you logon, check your personal information that you previously have submitted to that site. Have you moved? Have you changed telephone-numbers? Have you changed your ”recovery” E-mail ID? Has your credit-card number, or its expiry date, changed? Any change in your ”next-of-kin” person? Can you still access that E-mail ID?
Getting organized

Think about a process of “standardizing” your many passwords. By this, I mean that you should pick a highly-memorable “root” password, such as the city and year when you graduated from Grade 12. Then, customize that password for each different site, and change the password on every web-site.

For example, for the eBay web-site, your password could be the first 3 letters of the name of the site -- "Eba" -- followed a special character -- "%" or "$" -- followed by your “root” password.

This “hybrid” password follows the common recommendations: capitalize the first letter, have digits for your grad-year, and have lower-case characters.

This process will help you in your day-to-day usage of each web-site’s password, but you need to tell some trusted person, such as a partner, or your oldest offspring, about this method, if you use it.

One caution: some web-sites demand occasional password changes, which complicates this method.

Or, one “low-tech” way of recording your IDs & passwords is to use a pen & a notebook, such as you used for your Physics lab-book, and to write each site-name, the ID (such as your AirMiles card-number) and the date on which you reset the password, into the notebook. If you need to change a password, update the page in the notebook. Again, tell some trusted person that you are using the notebook, and where you are storing the notebook. Think about using a small fire-proof safe, for this notebook, and for your passport, and other important documents.

Also, think about using one of those “cloud-services” sites for storing an electronic version of the notebook. You should grant access to the file to a trusted person, without granting access to any other files that you store on the “cloud”.

Finally, I remember one of the Marx Brothers movies, where the brothers tried to enter a “speakeasy”, by giving a password at the door. Groucho & Chico spoke “swordfish”, and were allowed to enter. Harpo, who (argumentatively) never spoke in their movies, reached into his overcoat, to produce and display a sword and a fish, to gain admission.
Harnessing Grey Power II

As promised in the last issue of Grey Matters!, here is the second installment on my post-retirement volunteer work.

When I told friends in September 2018 that I was now volunteering as a teaching assistant in English-language classes for newcomers at the Intercultural Association of Greater Victoria (ICA), some of them must have wondered: “Is Yvonne trying to travel back in time to relive the golden years of her graduate studies?” No, the reason is even crazier. This is how it all began.

In January 2016, I decided to enroll in a beginner’s Arabic class offered by Continuing Education. Why study Arabic? You will remember that previous to 2011, we had few occasions to see the Arabic script. Once the Arab Spring caught the world’s attention, however, we began to notice Arabic captions flashing across the screen during news reports. What did all those dots and squiggles travelling from right to left mean, I kept wondering. Wouldn’t it be fun to be able to decipher them?

Soon after my retirement in 2012, I had learned to read Italian. This passive knowledge came quickly, as Italian has many similarities to French. And so, fresh from this success, I thought I'd tackle Arabic. Sure enough, I enjoyed the Level 1 class so much that I immediately signed up for the next level. That was when I hit the first roadblock. I received notice that the class had been cancelled due to insufficient enrolment. Not one to be easily discouraged, I signed up again the following session. Once again, no class! Moved by my persistence, the instructor offered to give me private lessons. I readily accepted, and our weekly (later bi-weekly) lessons lasted from October 2016 to March 2020, when the pandemic hit. So I can now decipher the dots and squiggles flashing across my TV screen, right? Alas, only in my dreams! This is the major obstacle: in written Arabic, the short vowels are omitted. If you already know the language, you can figure things out, but if you don’t know the words, how is that possible? Imagine the consternation of a beginning learner of English when confronted with a sentence like “Th mst dffclt thng abt readng Arbc is tht shrt vwls ar omttd in wrtng.”
When you’re studying a language, you need to meet some people (other than your teacher) who speak it. Where else would I find more native speakers of Arabic than at a Centre that helps recent immigrants and refugees? I looked up volunteer opportunities on the ICA website (https://www.icavictoria.org/). There were many choices, but assisting the teacher in an English class just seemed a natural fit for me. As ill prepared as I was for my work as housing advocate and environmental activist at the GVAT, I was more than qualified to apply for my “job” at the ICA. I had 30 years of teaching experience; I was myself an immigrant; I learned English as a second language. (This means I know what the present perfect continuous tense is in English.) On top of that, the two largest groups of newcomers who use ICA services come from China and Syria. My first language is Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese), and I’ve been studying Arabic.

So how was my experience at the ICA? Let’s start with some numbers.

Number of levels I’ve taught since September 2018: 3 (Levels 3, 4, 6; there are 8 levels in total)

Number of teachers with whom I’ve worked: 2

Number of students I’ve taught: 70 (the maximum number of enrolments per class is 18, but students can join or leave a class any time during the school year)

**Number of countries they came from: 23!**

Breakdown: China 21, Syria 14, Thailand 4, Iran 4, Korea 3, Vietnam 3, Ukraine 3, Eritrea 2, Japan 2; 1 each from Bosnia, Cambodia, Cameroon, Colombia, the Dominion Republic, France, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Nicaragua, Russia, Somalia, Taiwan, and Venezuela.

Age range: from early twenties to mid-seventies

Level of education: from elementary school to PhD

And how was this teaching different from my experience at UVic, apart from the demographics of the student population? Although my specialization was in French Literature, I did my fair share of teaching lower-level French-language courses. Unlike at the ICA, however, I never taught my students any of the following:

- how to read instructions on a medication bottle
- How to tell the doctor about your health problems
MEMBERS’ CORNER

Yvonne Hsieh (3 of 4)

- how to tell your child’s teacher about your concerns during a teacher-parent interview
- how to return merchandise at a store
- how to open a chequing (sometimes pronounced “chicken”) account at a bank, cash a cheque, or ask for big or small bills from the teller
- when to call 911, 811 or 211 (I hadn’t even heard of 811 or 211)
- how to ask the Residential Tenancy Branch for help if you have a conflict with your landlord or tenant
- what to do if you’re stopped by the police while driving (don’t try to pay the police; keep both hands on the steering wheel, especially if you’re a dark-skinned young man) . . .

Why do I enjoy this work so much?

1. I only have to show up for class: minimal prep work, no corrections, no issuing failing grades to students.
2. For someone with a life-long interest in languages and language acquisition, this is paradise. So many different accents, and such a diverse set of challenges for the learners! I already knew what native Chinese and French speakers find difficult with English, but I learned that Thai speakers have the hardest time pronouncing the “s” sound, which explains why they often leave out the crucial “s” at the end of plural nouns.
3. For someone with a passion for literature and human stories, these classes are a gold mine. At the orientation session for new teaching assistants, we were advised not to probe into the past of the students, as some might have suffered serious trauma. I’ve always borne that in mind; however, when I’m working with them one on one or in small groups – and this has become more frequent with the switch to Zoom teaching and the use of breakout rooms – they sometimes volunteer information about their past. The oldest students – most of whom came to Canada to reunite with family members – naturally have the most interesting life stories. They also attend classes more regularly than the younger ones, whose work or family responsibilities sometimes necessitate their absence. Many refugees did not come directly from their country of origin to Canada. A student from Iraq, a civil engineer by training, left his homeland for Syria in 2003 during the U. S. invasion. In 2011, he fled Syria for Turkey, where he remained as a refugee for several years, before being allowed to join one of his children in Victoria. A woman from China, a retired academic from Beijing University, was sent by the Chinese government to work on a farm in Mongolia during the Cultural Revolution.
Years of hardship ensued but somehow, she ended up completing a PhD in Biology in then West Germany, and became a professor. Another older woman from China, whom I helped to orient on her first day of class, kept apologizing for her “bad English” and “poor memory.” But when I asked when and where she had studied English previously, she made a startling revelation: “I lived for two years in Tanzania in the early 1990s.” “What were you doing there?” I asked. “I went there as a medical volunteer; I’m a retired gynecologist.” I felt like rising to salute her.

Alas, my Arabic has not improved one bit, but I sometimes dazzle my Arabic-speaking students by writing their names in their language.

* * * * *

A memory resurfaces from the distant past. A 13-year-old immigrant, recently arrived in Vancouver, accompanied her mother to her first English-language class for newcomers at Vancouver City College (now Langara). In walked the teacher, an energetic blond woman wearing high heels. Breaking into her sunniest smile, she pointed to herself and said: “Hello, my name is Mrs. Meeker.” She then pointed to each student one by one to ask: “What is your name?” Incredible as this may sound, one student could not understand the question, despite numerous repetitions and Mrs. Meeker’s best efforts at pantomime. My mom aced this initial test and felt pretty smug. Unfortunately, she would never acquire sufficient fluency to have a meaningful conversation in English. I’m hoping my students at the ICA will fare better.
Please use the following link to register for Masterminds:
https://events.eply.com/Masterminds2021
Modern Day Democracy: Current Perspectives

AN ELDER ACADEMY EVENT

Thanks to populism, presentism, extremism and the pandemic, the face of democracy looks much different today than ever before. This series offers four topics which explore the impact of these forces not only on our present context but on the past and the future as well. Our presenters will share their insights and perspective on these timely issues.

WHEN, WHERE, HOW MUCH?

DATES: Saturdays, May 1, 8, 15, 22, 2021
TIME: 10:00am to Noon. Entry to meeting starting at 9:45am for all 4 events
WHERE: Online via Zoom
LINK TO JOIN THE SESSIONS: Emailed to registrants two days before first session.
COST: $20.00 for the four sessions.

May 1: “Truth, Reason and Democracy”
Presenter: Colin Macleod, PhD, UVic Dept. of Philosophy

May 8: “Restoring Democracy in an Age of Populists and Pestilence”
Presenter: Jonathan Manthorpe, Author and Journalist

May 15: “Democracy and Colonialism in Canada: A Long-term Perspective”
Presenter: Peter Cook, PhD, UVic Dept. of History

May 22: “Extremist Politics, the “Culture War”, and the Annihilation of History”
Presenter: Edwin Hodge, PhD, UVic Dept. of Sociology

REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT

Registration, payment and presenters’ bios and abstracts at EventBrite. Please click on: https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/democracy-tickets-134224598387

Students attend free but need to register by emailing UVRAElderAcademyevents@uvic.ca to get Zoom link

Questions? Please email UVRAElderAcademyevents@uvic.ca
Nutrition 2: Are we what we eat?

AN ELDER ACADEMY EVENT

We are pleased to offer a second series on nutrition again ably led by Greg Mulligan from the School of Exercise Science, Physical and Health Education. He takes a hands-on approach to helping us eat well and sensibly based on the most recent research and science. In this series he will explore several concepts related to food and human health. From the basics of understanding metabolism and calories, to looking at some of the complex nutrient relationships that contribute to your health. He will discuss the intricate behaviours that drive people to adopt a variety of popular diets and look at some of the strategies to successfully navigate your food journey.

WHEN, WHERE, HOW MUCH?

DATES: Tuesdays, June 1, 8, 15, 22, 2021
TIME: 2:00pm to 4:00pm. Entry to meeting starting at 01:45pm for all 4 events
WHERE: Online via Zoom
LINK TO JOIN THE SESSIONS: Emailed to registrants, via Eventbrite, two days before first session
COST: $20.00 for the four sessions.

June 1st: “Understanding Human Metabolism: What is a Calorie?”
June 8th: “Fads & Facts: What are effective diets?”
June 15th: “Farm to Table & Food to Human Cells: Eating to Support Healthful Aging”
June 22nd: “Dietary Choices: How Your Food Environment Shapes Your Eating”

REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT

Registration, payment and presenters’ bios and abstracts at EventBrite. Please click on: https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/fake-diets-tickets-150361865387

Students attend free but need to register by emailing UVRAElderAcademyevents@uvic.ca to get Zoom link

Questions? Please email UVRAElderAcademyevents@uvic.ca

More details to follow – topics and title subject to change.
Thank you a thousand times over!

Our 2020 UVRA United Way Campaign has now come to a formal close. As you will recall from my earlier updates, we set a goal for the 2020 Campaign of $42,000 – this amount would help us to contribute 15% of the larger UVIC Campaign goal.

Now that the Campaign has come to a close, I am so pleased to report that our total funds raised for 2020 Campaign is $50,545.70!

Our Campaign total represents a 30% increase over our Campaign total from last year. Over the last 10 years, the Retirees’ United Way Campaign has raised nearly $400,000 in support of our community. This is a remarkable achievement. It is due to retirees who donate once during the Campaign to particular programs and to those who make regular donations throughout the year. Every donation is so greatly appreciated and helps the United Way have impact on the most pressing issues facing our community whether that is new and supportive programs for young children recently arrived in this country, meals and social connection for isolated seniors, or dedicated programs to support people struggling with mental health and addictions.

It has been my great pleasure to serve again as United Way Campaign Chair for the UVRA this year. As a member of the UVIC Campaign team, I have had a preview of a new initiative that will be rolling out in a major way as we approach Campaign 2021. In this new initiative, you will see the important integration and flow of knowledge and benefit between members of UVIC’s research community and the agencies and programs supported by the United Way of Greater Victoria. Watch for that in the autumn of 2021!

In the meantime – I hope all of you who have been waiting so patiently for your vaccine are getting appointments to receive that little ‘ticket to freedom’! Have a great summer with family and friends – and watch this space for Campaign 2021!!

On behalf of a grateful community – thank you to all for your generosity

Mary Ellen Purkis, UVRA United Way Campaign Chair
THE AWARD

“The Ruth A. Gardner, Research Award, held and administered by the Eldercare Foundation with research support from IALH, is one example of how vital connections between research and community organizations can be strengthened…[This] annual award supports a University of Victoria student undertaking a clinical or applied research project designed to enhance and advance care for individuals with chronic conditions who are aging.”

The 2020 recipient of this award is “Sanjit Roy, a PhD student in the Social Dimensions of Health program and an IALH Student Affiliate. As part of his doctoral research, Sanjit is applying his education and proficiency in applied statistics to better understand socialization and community building for individuals with Alzheimer’s disease or another form of dementia….”

UVRA employs Sanjit part-time, as Office Administrator, so we were delighted to learn he had received this award, but I wanted to know more about the person and the applied research project that won him this honor, so I interviewed Sanjit and the result of our conversation is the focus of this article.

ITS RECIPIENT

Growing up in Bangladesh, Sanjit noticed that, older individuals were left out of their communities’ events. As a result, they felt lonely, isolated, and stigmatized. They lacked, what Sanjit came to call, access to social medicine.

It is this observation, strengthened by the knowledge that he would direct his studies and his life to finding ways of enhancing the quality of life of older persons that eventually led him to Canada to undertake a PhD in the Social Dimensions of Health Program.

Sanjit was, and remains, an exceptional student achieving high grades from High School to his MSc in Applied Statistics. Along the way, he was the recipient of well-deserved awards and scholarships, and authored and co-authored several peer-reviewed publications.
Prior to coming to Canada in the summer of 2019, he was working as an Assistant Professor, in the Department of Population Sciences, at the University of Dhaka, in Bangladesh, and, prior to working for UVRA, he was a research assistant for the Voices in Motion (ViM) Choir Project, an “intergenerational choir for adults with memory loss, their caregivers, friends and students.” Sanjit’s involvement with ViM, and his being privy to the life-changing results achieved by all the participants in this project, was instrumental to the direction taken in the proposal he submitted to the Eldercare Foundation.

THE APPLIED RESEARCH PROJECT

While supported by solid scientific evidence, it is not generally known that “social isolation and loneliness are significant health risks comparable to being sedentary, smoking 15 cigarettes a day or being obese – and a significant predictor of mortality.” In addition, the very joie de vivre – the person’s quality of life – is impeded when s/he is excluded from participation in the happenings of his/her community, and, persons suffering from dementia can be the most affected due to the nature of their illness.

The proposal Sanjit presented to the Eldercare Foundation, when he applied for the Ruth A. Gardner award, was to design and offer dyads consisting of the person with dementia (PwD), and his or her care partner (CP) - weekly one hour Zoom visits to the Memory Café: A Welcoming Place for a period of 12 weeks. During those visits, the dyads are invited to participate in “professionally facilitated engaging and creative activities designed to provide opportunities for social connections.”

The overarching goal of Sanjit’s applied research project is to: 1) evaluate the impact of a virtual memory café in PwD, CP and on students: and 2) to test the use of a one-stop platform...as a dementia hub for an array of dementia friendly online activities.”

Regarding (1), the Memory Café made its Victoria debut in February 2021*. Participants were asked to complete questionnaires at the beginning and end of the 12 visits. “Descriptive and inferential statistics...for quantitative data and thematic content analysis... for qualitative data” will be utilized in the production of data.
As for (2), the research that went into the preparation of Sanjit’s proposal highlighted a crucial lacuna: Victoria does not presently have a place which could be accessed by persons with dementia wanting to join socially centered activities. The implementation of such a platform in Victoria would not only benefit users and reduce administrative cost, but also help to advance research by making it easier to gather data pertaining to participation.

IN CONCLUSION

Sanjit’s PhD dissertation will “focus on investigating the benefits of social connection and community engagement to enhance the quality of life of PwD and their CP [with the goal of developing] a dementia-friendly neighborhood in which PwD and their CP have opportunities to participate in meaningful activities and to meet others [experiencing similar situations. The Memory Café project] will provide data for [Sanjit’s] dissertation and advance what we know about creating dementia-friendly communities and how to engage community partners to increase opportunities for PwD to participate more fully in [the social activities of] their neighborhoods.”

NOTES:

1. The IALH Update, February 18, 2021. Reprinted with permission
2. Document titled “Summary of Research and Career Goals”, provided to me by Sanjit Roy.
3. Document titled “Memory Café: A Welcoming Place”, provided to me by Sanjit Roy.

Credit for picture of Sanjit with cheque: Ashleigh Enright
Credit for picture of Memory Café: Google, the Calgary Project
Credit for picture of Sanjit at Finnerty Garden: Sanjit Roy

When he has time, Sanjit enjoys visiting Victoria’s beautiful parks and gardens with his family and friends.
RESEARCH STUDY
Online 12 week Zoom program
Saturdays, 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM
February 27 to May 15, 2021

Intergenerational: Bringing older and younger adults together

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Debra Sheets, Ph.D., MN, RN
School of Nursing, Univ. of Victoria
Ph: (250) 853-3947
Email: dsheets@uvic.ca

MEMORY CAFÉ VICTORIA
A joyful creative space for people with memory loss and their family members

Experience joy, creativity and social connections! Our professionally led arts program includes storytelling, poetry, music, art, gentle movement, and more!

Participate in a UVic research study that will explore the impact of social connection and creative engagement on well-being and quality of life.

ARE YOU ELIGIBLE?
• Mild to moderate memory loss and their care partners
• Able to participate online for 1 hour
• Access to a computer/tablet and internet

BEFORE THE PROGRAM STARTS & AT THE END YOU WILL BE ASKED TO:
• Participate in a Zoom interview (~20 min.)
• Complete an online survey (~30 min.)
Some people perceive the University of Victoria as being surrounded by an imaginary moat which prevents information, regarding the research being undertaken inside the university’s buildings, from reaching the public. In this article, our journey takes us back to the Pleistocene Epoch - from 2.6 million to 1,700 years ago.

It is well known that parietal art is present in many caves, but what is less known is that some of this art may have been the world’s first means of communication, by way of a pictorial language.

I learned about this possibility last February while watching an episode of The Nature of Things titled *The Real Neanderthals*. This is where I virtually met Genevieve von Petzinger, paleoanthropologist, and PhD candidate in the Anthropology Department of the University of Victoria.

Genevieve was first drawn to the geometric symbol (red dots, linear lines, dashes, triangles, squares, etc.), present among the well-known pictures of animals, hands, and faceless figures decorating the walls and ceilings of numerous caves, in one of her undergraduate classes. Then, when she visited the caves of Europe, she discovered that they appeared more often than any other drawings and that led her to conduct an in-depth examination, and subsequent analysis, of these geometric designs.

Of great importance to this paleoanthropologist was the discovery that over a period of 30,000 years and a whole continent, only 32 signs were repeatedly drawn on numerous cave walls and ceilings in Europe.
While there is no way for anyone to know what these symbols meant, or whether they were a language, she views them as being a significant landmark in the evolution of humankind. Why? Genevieve’s answer, as told to Jerry Banks in an interview, is because “[i]t represents the first time that our ancestors could store information outside the body. This is a huge, cognitive leap forward – encoding something that someone else can come along later and understand.”

Genevieve is presently completing her PhD under the supervision of Dr. April Nowell, getting ready to publish papers about her new findings. working on a new project pertaining to Neanderthal cave art, and maybe even writing a children’s book about the lives of Neanderthal children.

1University Affairs (2020).

An Age-Old Mystery: researcher catalogues humanity’s earlier symbols.
Kerry Banks, Writer and Publisher. April 15, 2020.

Work used in the preparation of this article:
https://www.universityaffairs.ca/features/feature-article/an-age-old-mystery-researcher-catalogues-mankinds-earliest-symbols/

Other works consulted:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hJnEQCMA5Sg
https://www.facebook.com/genevievevonpetzinger1/
Credit for Genevieve’s picture:
https://www.uvic.ca/socialsciences/anthropology/people/graduate-students/profiles/von-petzingergenevieve.php
Credit for 32 symbols picture: https://ideas.ted.com/what-the-mysterious-symbols-made-by-early-humans-can-teach-us-about-how-we-evolved/
Following the recent COVID protocols, indoor dining is not allowed at the Club, until at least April 19th, pending any new announcements from Dr. Henry. Patio dining is allowed.

As our age group gets vaccinated, this should encourage more and more of us to enjoy the Club’s facilities. AND, April will see the return of the Tent on the deck, and more and more sunshine to enjoy the front row seats for the annual duckling parades and the newly emerged turtles.

This is the perfect time for you to become a member if you haven’t joined before; and it’s free for one year! See next page for more information regarding joining the Club.

See you there soon, I hope!

Peter Liddell

ATTENTION VEGETARIANS! This edition’s last page has a list of take-out dishes modifiable by the Club’s kitchen for vegetarians. And, the children’s take-out menu.
UNIVERSITY CLUB MEMBERSHIP
BENEFITS FOR THE UVRA

UClub management and staff are always coming up with entertaining Members-only events at reasonable prices. These events include bi-monthly dinner specials, wine pairing dinners, Cocktail Culture Club, Robbie Burns dinner, Mother’s Day brunch, kids’ Halloween Christmas brunches, annual Christmas buffets and much More!

The UClub’s wine, beer, and cocktail menus are below industry standards prices and we feature a variety of local craft beers, wineries, and distilleries.

Our Lounge Supervisor & Head Bartender, Adam Bonneau, is constantly reviving our wine and cocktail list to ensure that there is always a diverse selection.

Our culinary team and Executive Chef, Michael Allin, create delicious weekly dinner specials on top of our flavourful dining menu.

UNIVERSITY CLUB OF VICTORIA MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES FOR UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA RETIREEs

Retiree’s Association Sponsored One Year Free Membership

Members of the University of Victoria Retiree’s Association (UVRA) that have never held a membership at the University Club, are eligible for a one free membership.

Retired Membership

A Regular member who has retired from the University of Victoria and has been a University Club Member for at least five (5) years, is eligible for a 50% reduction off the regular dues.

Retiree’s Association Sponsored Membership

Members of the UVRA are eligible for University Club membership with a 25% discount off of regular dues for the first five (5) years of their Club membership. After five (5) years of Club membership, their dues are reduced to 50% of the regular dues.

In this category, dues are pro rated for current memberships; for instance, if the Retiree has been employed by UVic and has held a membership at the University Club for two (2) years prior to retiring, then they would receive the 25% discount for three (3) years (making their Club membership a full five years), then have their dues reduced to 50% off the regular dues.

UClub Contact information:
Phone: 250-721-7935 | Email: reservat@uvic.ca | Website: club.uvic.ca
The Memories Forum

Memories – mine, yours, ours – how is it we may remember the same events so differently? When we remember those days gone by with our friends, our children, our acquaintances past and present, we may find that memory can be a tricky affair. It may be persistent, dramatic, recurring, forgotten – it may sneak up on us in the night, or be a regret that just won’t let us go. Thanks to Herb Weil for putting this Forum together, it was a hit!

Timothy Vernon, founder and leader of the Pacific Opera of Victoria, took us on a trip of remembrance through music and books. He spoke to memory as a continuum, a movement from beginning to end, from the crescendo in music, through the storyline in books, and indeed in life, where we begin in the darkness of the womb and end in the darkness of the tomb. And in between, he reminded us that our memory is what allows us to be alive in this moment, recalling the past and living in the present.

Rachel Wyatt, playwright, radio dramatist, writer of fiction, reminded us of the importance of our collective memories, from major events like WW 11 to our days with family and friends. She talked about what memories are made of, and asked whether they are ever exactly true? This is why memoirs, however ordinary they might seem, are important. For Rachel, passing on our stories to children like her great grandchildren - who will perhaps live to see this century through - might help them to understand history.

Rachel talked about our divergent memories, when we find our audience remembers similar events differently, and about our desire to retell those past memories, often stopping to ask, “Have I told you this before?” We shared some online chuckles as we thought about those moments, and our deep desire to recall, “over and over again.”

Books that speak to memories flew fast and furious.

From Herb - Michael Ondaatje’s Warlight; Anatomy of Memory, by James McConkey; and passages from Alice Munro.

From Timothy - Shakespeare’s comedies of memory and the current interest in the philosophy of memory.

From Rachel - an author’s grumble that people seem to think she writes fiction based on her own life – not true and quite impossible in just one lifetime!

Two other books were shared by participants: Save Your Mind: Seven rules to avoid dementia, by Dr. Antoine Hakin (2017) and Dr. Sanjay Gupta’s new book, Keep Sharp: Build a better brain at any age.

Until next month, let’s make our memories work for us, and not just outsource them to Google.

Jane Birkbeck

NOTE: Our apologies to anyone who was unable to connect to the Forum, and also apologies to the attendees for our “Verison” moments. We plan to forge ahead and forget this month’s meanderings.
Memories Part 2: Matters we missed or barely touched

April 30, 2021 – 2-4pm on Zoom

This second Memory Forum will first consider aspects of memory briefly mentioned in March and add a discussion on writing and reading personal memoirs and then the memories of characters and their implied authors in fiction. How can these enrich our own? For up to an hour all attending should feel encouraged to talk about relevant matters because we ran out of time for full participation in March.

Among the possible topics, but not limited to them, are (1) how unexpected memories pop up and, in turn, lead to others that we might have thought we had forgotten and (2) fake or partially false memories that we can now recognize as not quite right, perhaps as conflicting with those of other persons about the same experiences. Inevitably, we think and talk about how much we forget. Can these less present memories offer some positive balance?

After this opening discussion, I will try to follow some of what has been said with special attention to these aspects. This applies to those of us who respond to grown children or grandchildren who request we record or, at one extreme, those who aim at a larger audience, and the other extreme, those who choose to think but not to write. 1) Do you want to start with a vivid image of an event rather than a more preachy message? 2) If to an event, does it reach you preconsciously? 3) What feeling do you want your audience to feel toward you? Certainly not that you are pretentious or pompous. Nor that you present as false humility that tries to hide such qualities.

What basic image of yourself do you now have that changed as we age?

How has the meaning of words and of social attitudes from those we remember changed? For example, ”interesting” ”sentimental” even ”human” at one time could lose their overt primary sense and instead connote flaws or faint praise. Not to mention words like ”cute” or ”nice” that parents used to encourage us to feel about others when they had nothing more convincing to express.

The second aspect is how much modern fiction, from page turners to innovative classics, relies upon a narration that keeps filling in blanks in memory to prepare for later discoveries. In the sense of a convention as an unstated agreement between author an audience, how has this changed when, for example, representing thought of others in precise words is impossible to us in everyday life, but present to every child who reads a comic strip?

Finally, when we reread a great book, or see again a splendid movie, how much more do we discover that we remember, perhaps subconsciously, having missed it the first time?

Herb Weil
Organizer of the March and April 2021 Forums
INVIATION
MEMBERS FORUM

Date: April 30, 2021
Time: 2:00pm - 4:00pm
Cost: Free - Please register with Eventbrite (link below) to receive the Zoom link two days prior to the event.

Session Topic*: Memories Part 2: Matters we missed or barely touched
*Session topic is intended to stimulate, not limit, discussion ideas.

Registration Link: https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/april-forum-tickets-149648319151
Facilitator: Jane Birkbeck
Organizer: Herbert Weil

What is the Members Forum?
The UVRA Members Forum is a social connector for retirees where topics of general interest are discussed and members with specific interests may find like-minded individuals to form subgroups, if desired.
VEGETARIAN MENU (TAKE OUT) &
CHILDREN’S MENU (TAKE-OUT AND DINE-IN)

CLUB’S TAKE-OUT MENU
FOR VEGETARIANS

Yam fries
Truffle fries
Lox flatbread (leave lox off)
Spring rolls

Finnerty salad
Apple and feta salad
Caesar salad
Buffalo brie salad
Cobb salad (leave bacon off)

Hot press chicken and brie (leave chicken off)
Vegan Beyond burger

Falafel pita wrap
Reuben (leave pastrami off)

Chicken gyro (leave chicken off)
Spinach and cheese cannelloni

Curried prawn noodle bowl (leave prawn off)
Saanich fare bowl

Mediterranean falafel bowl
Poke bowl (leave tuna off)

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CLUB’S CHILDREN’S MENU
TAKE-OUT & DINE-IN
FOR CHILDREN 12 AND UNDER

All entrées come with a fruit cup and choice of fries or small house green salad.

$9.00

GRILLED CHEESE SANDWICH

CHICKEN FINGERS

FISH AND CHIPS

MACARONI AND CHEESE-WITH GARLIC TOAST