



Season's Greetings!

From the President's Desk

The Board of Branch 1200 wishes everyone in the branch all the very best for the winter holidays and a very Merry Christmas to those who celebrate. We are coming into the season of Peace on Earth and Goodwill to Everyone although it feels like a distant dream right now.

Aging in place and in peace is still a privilege, as we look around the world at the conflicts raging in Europe and the Middle East and see the impacts of climate change on the lifestyles of people living in vulnerable areas. Areas like BC where the wildfires crept close to our biggest Interior communities and threatened the lives and homes of many retirees. Even Vancouver Island had its share of fires and floods in 2023 so we need to stay alert to ways to mitigate these dangers.

Being older, I have observed, is no limitation to success as I listened to a new Beatles record (who thought we would ever say that in 2023) and the new Rolling Stones LP. These ancient rockers are in their 80s and show no sign of slowing down – somewhat inspirational to those of us who are a decade behind them. Other amazingly productive octogenarians are people like writer Margaret Atwood, President Joe Biden, actors Michael Caine, Morgan Freeman and Dame Judi Dench. Ninety two year old actor/director Clint Eastwood, when asked about how he manages to continue in his successful movie career, replied “I don’t let the old man in”! So that is a lesson to all of us that aging is an attitude not just a chronology.

As the year draws to a close I want to thank the whole Board and volunteers of Branch 1200 who have worked tirelessly to provide both interest and activities for members. Special appreciation goes out to George Bowden (our new First VP) who is now also the Provincial First VP, Treasurer Ed Forbes (and the Finance committee) who will be sorting out the new funding system the Provincial Treasurer is putting in place, and Marilyn Spencer (Social / House Director) and her volunteers for arranging the locations and refreshments for our events. As a board we need your support through attendance at meetings and helping out as volunteers to keep the branch running. It is branches which facilitate community and connections with members, and support a network of former colleagues.

Wishing you all the very best for the Holidays as we celebrate the return of the light at the Winter Solstice and a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year in 2024.

Remember – don’t let your age define you - keep that old person out!

Stay Engaged!

Barbara Golder, President

BCGREA Victoria Branch 1200

<https://bcgre.ca/branches/victoria-branch-1200/>

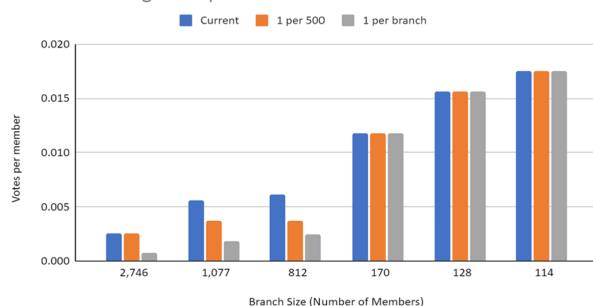
Voting for Branch Delegate Apportionment

Don't forget to exercise your vote for the Branch delegate apportionment poll request by January 26, 2024!

There are 2 options to vote from. (Orange & Grey below)

To the right of Branch 1200 are other branch representations.

General Meeting Votes per Member



Branch 1200 is the 2,746 member column.

The Branch Executive recommends voting for the "one delegate per 500 members" option.

Thank You!

Speaker Presentations Coming in 2024



We will not be meeting in January 2024 but are busy working on presentations for February and March.

Further details on presentations will be announced as our Program Director and Social/House Director finalize the details!

In the meantime, we are working on producing a survey to ask you what kinds of presentations would interest you.

This will be done in the new year!

Thank You!

Members Corner



Long Standing Members

If you have been a member of the **BCGREA for 20 years or more**, please tell us so that we can honour your achievement with a Life Member pin at one of our events!

Please email your name, and **month** (if known) and **year you joined** to:

victoriabranch@bcgre.ca

Subject: Life Member Pin

Also, if you'd like to share your life story with us or know a retired BCGREA member who would, please contact Laura Lam, Communications Director at the above email address.

Thank You!



November 2023 Membership Draw Winners

The lucky winners are as follows:

Eric Burkle—Tim Hortons Gift Card

Vic Marshall—Tim Hortons Gift Card

Margaret Melvin—Poinsettia

Congratulations to you all!

November's Guest Presentations

Two fascinating presentations from our Victoria based writers who kept us spellbound throughout:

Linda Eversole is an author and retired public historian who has spent most of her working life in some aspect of employment related to history.

From archaeological excavations in England to research, curatorial and executive positions with a variety of institutions including the Royal British Columbia Museum and the British Columbia Heritage Branch.

Investigating the past has always been her passion.

And with that said, Linda Eversole provided a thoroughly researched look at the role of women involved in Victoria's prostitution business in the mid 1800's to early 20th century in her books:

Victoria Unbuttoned: A Red-Light history of BC's Capital City and **Stella: Unrepentant Madam.**

Here, Linda delves into the past using archives, government documents, letters, journals, interviews, and old fire insurance maps, giving us a fascinating narrative, as we see historical figures from the poorer, disadvantaged segment of society come to life.

Linda gives us a glimpse into the unconventional lives of Stella Carroll, Dora Son and Lillian Gray to name a few.

Within these pages, the historical aspect of women in business roles comes through first as property developers, then eventually owning and running brothels in Victoria. Very few of the buildings from that time still exist, so the remnants of this part of history are left to our imaginations when we visit their location.

From **Victoria Unbuttoned:**

"Sexual commerce is not usually top of mind when talking about the growth of a city. In fact, as illuminated in the saying "the worlds' oldest profession," sex work is an ever-present economic sector that consistently defies attempts at abolition or regulation. Where people gather and settle, the business will always be present."

Linda Foubister was born in Victoria and worked for the BC government, initially as a biologist, and later, a policy analyst.

Her interest in mythology grew with the broadcasts by Joseph Campbell on the Power of Myth.

She wrote a monthly column, called "Mythic Times" in the Moss Rock Review, Fairfield's Community Magazine for many years, and she has contributed stories on myth to anthologies and online magazines.

We may know Victoria as the Capital city of British Columbia, but there also is a mythic side to Greater Victoria and its surrounding area.

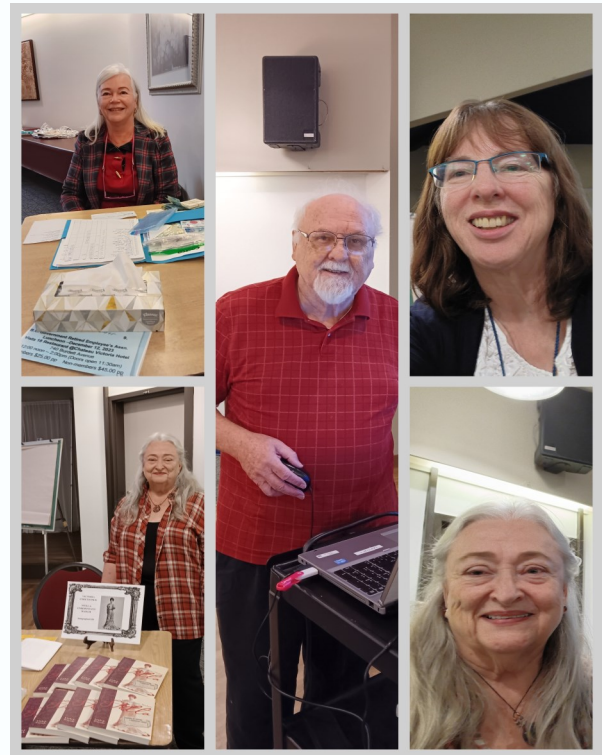
Have you ever stopped to look at the CPR terminal building in downtown Victoria— well, it is built to resemble the temple of the Greek God of the sea, Poseidon.

Who was Juan de Fuca? Was he Spanish? Did he find the straits of Anian which was purported to lead to the land of gold and riches; was this the fabled northwest passage to Asia?

Who named Clover Point after finding a headland of red clover, grasses and ferns?

Linda Foubister also explores other familiar places like Mystic Vale at UVIC. "The very name evokes mythical connections. *Mystic* is defined as inspiring a sense of mystery and wonder. *Vale*, a shortened form of valley, evokes the mortal world, as in the phrase "this vale of tears."

Thanks to Linda for masterfully bringing these mythic tales to life for us in her book "**The Key to Mythic Victoria**".



Thanks to all who came out to support our local writers!

To: Marilyn Spencer (top left), George Bowden (center), and our featured Guest Presenters Linda Foubister (top right) and Linda Eversole (bottom right) a most appreciative thank you.

And a special thanks to Gerry Buydens who arranged our speakers.

Life Member Page

We are truly thrilled to share with you the history of this month's Life Member, Robert (Bob) Curtis, retired BCGEU member in 1983.

With most grateful thanks to Bob, his son Lee, and daughter-in-law Pauline for writing down Bob's story and providing the wonderful photos!

Bob is still active at his 'almost-99' years of age. He has a list of things he likes to get done every day, and that's how he has lived most of his life. As a young boy, he sold newspapers while growing up in Fernwood and later delivered prescriptions for Clark Pharmacy on his bike for a few years.

He enlisted in the Canadian Navy at eighteen and went off to war; he was one of the lucky ones to return. In 1949, Bob met Ellie (Paterson) and they married in 1950. They had two children, a son Lee and daughter Pat, followed by six grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.

Bob started his printing apprenticeship at the Colonist newspaper at seventeen and finished it at The Queen's Printer (QP, now King's Printer) when the war ended. He went on to work there as a journey man, then foreman and finished his career as superintendent of the printing department.

Bob enjoyed his years with the BC Government. It was no coincidence he ended up there, as he was convinced by his father, Henry Curtis, that it was a very good place to work. Henry had also worked and retired there, having started as a Page Boy in the early 1900's. Bob said it was the kind of place "co-workers really worked together to get things done."

There were challenges to be dealt with in his job and deadlines were often looming, especially since the QP was responsible for printing most of the government's documents.

Publications such as the weekly Provincial Gazette, BC Statutes, various Ministries' reports and maps, as well as a host of other documents were routinely produced. Bob said he had a great office to work in looking over Government and Superior Streets, but most of the time he was too busy to look out the window.

Some other good memories from his time at the QP included a tour of the Crofton Pulp Mill and trips to Toronto and San Francisco to look at new printing equipment. He also enjoyed bowling with many co-workers after work at the Strathcona Hotel Lanes and Mayfair Lanes. Bob also enjoyed being invited to lunch in the Legislative Dining Room by Premier Dave Barrett and had a similar invitation from the Provincial Secretary, Wesley Black. He was honoured to attend a long-time service awards dinner at Government House.

Bob retired from the QP in 1983 after 39 years of service. He has now been retired longer than he worked! He enjoyed travelling to many far-and-away places with his wife Ellie (now deceased), and now spends his time helping his children and grandchildren with renovation projects, yard work and maintaining his yard and garden. When Bob isn't fixing something, he can be found pitching horseshoes at Victoria's Horseshoe Club. He is the oldest competitive horseshoe pitcher in Canada, and says he isn't quitting any time soon.



Bob holding the picture of the ship is when Capitol Iron gave it to him when the store closed. Bob served on the LaSalle during WW2. He also remembers when Cap Iron opened- he was 9 years old.



Bob still going strong !

Some events from the year that was 2023:

Summer Luncheon at Trafalgar Pro Patria Legion Hall -

Another glimpse at our fun gathering held on June 20



Barbara, our President

Colleen and Neela enjoying their lunch



Marita, Susanne and Marilyn who helped put together this and other events throughout the year!

Thank you for all your hard work; our members truly appreciate it!



Music in the Park, August 8, Rutledge Park



Let's have fun with the Winter Olympics 2026 Word Search Puzzle

Find these words: **Horizontally, Vertically, Backwards, Diagonally**

A	L	P	I	N	E	S	K	I	I	N	G	P	Y	Q	N	C	Z
G	C	I	V	T	J	S	N	V	C	E	H	C	W	H	S	R	C
L	R	V	S	X	N	Y	L	Q	O	V	N	O	D	J	M	O	A
S	V	K	H	W	R	E	H	V	R	Y	W	J	P	C	Q	S	H
H	G	T	V	C	H	K	Y	S	T	N	X	C	Q	N	O	S	V
O	M	K	R	C	V	C	M	B	I	A	T	H	L	O	N	C	L
R	N	F	V	T	I	O	W	C	N	D	H	J	E	M	Z	O	N
T	O	B	O	K	M	H	C	S	A	S	J	O	W	N	K	U	P
T	R	Q	H	E	V	E	Y	C	D	K	W	K	P	R	C	N	E
R	D	C	A	S	Q	C	W	W	A	H	F	R	I	M	O	T	J
A	I	O	Z	S	K	I	J	U	M	P	I	N	G	P	V	R	B
C	C	T	R	E	D	H	L	C	P	V	G	C	N	Q	L	Y	S
K	C	B	E	C	P	G	U	Y	E	K	U	B	I	B	A	S	H
S	O	K	M	F	O	R	V	D	Z	S	R	N	D	M	E	K	L
P	M	W	D	V	L	Q	N	C	Z	Q	E	O	R	Y	B	I	E
E	B	A	V	I	U	K	S	S	O	C	S	M	A	N	P	I	C
E	I	Z	N	B	G	F	Y	C	C	B	K	Q	O	W	H	N	B
D	N	G	C	G	E	Y	V	G	U	O	A	Z	B	S	G	G	Q
S	E	V	F	T	H	B	R	V	D	R	T	F	W	A	I	G	Z
K	D	C	C	R	F	W	V	P	C	S	I	E	O	L	E	K	Y
A	V	B	S	K	E	L	E	T	O	N	N	H	N	S	L	S	E
T	S	V	Q	U	N	E	F	D	S	A	G	L	S	P	S	B	O
I	Q	J	Z	V	G	N	S	C	L	G	J	D	L	E	B	E	N
N	F	J	A	W	C	U	W	T	T	F	P	V	W	E	O	P	D
G	C	E	V	H	W	T	R	Q	Y	K	C	B	X	D	B	L	J
B	X	O	R	S	F	G	B	P	D	L	M	N	N	S	F	Q	L
N	J	N	A	L	I	M	S	G	C	W	E	D	E	K	L	S	I
A	R	U	A	O	S	F	I	D	N	U	A	S	P	A	W	T	W
V	I	H	V	M	P	Y	W	C	C	O	H	H	K	T	P	X	C
S	K	I	M	O	U	N	T	A	I	N	E	E	R	I	N	G	M
K	R	J	B	H	E	F	A	L	W	R	M	E	D	N	I	Y	K
A	S	G	J	E	K	V	X	V	K	D	I	P	O	G	U	N	H
G	J	S	R	C	J	K	Y	B	M	V	F	J	W	C	N	O	G

Words

Milan
Cortina D'Ampezzo
Alpine Skiing
Biathlon
Bobsleigh
Cross Country Skiing
Curling
Figure Skating
Freestyle Skiing
Ice Hockey
Luge
Nordic Combined
Short Track Speed Skating
Skeleton
Ski Jumping
Ski Mountaineering
Snow Boarding
Speed Skating

Meaning

Main Host City
Main Host City

Solution will be posted in the January 2024 e-Bulletin!

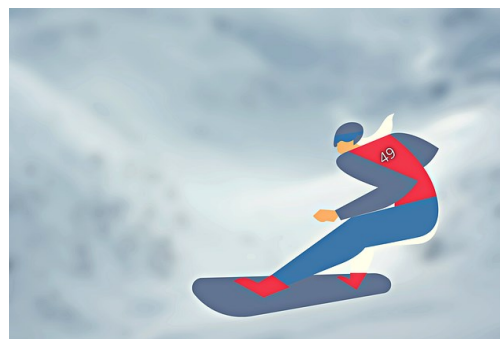


Image by Moondance - Pixabay.com



Good Will Notice

If you know of any member who is hospitalized, sick, or injured please contact Sonja Ruffell at:

victoriabranch@bcgre.ca with the information.

Branch Members Contact Update



Keeping track of all our members is no easy task!

So, if you are one of the members that has recently changed carriers or obtained a brand new email, please help us by:

1) updating your address by logging into the new Members Portal.

[Member Portal Access \(findjoo.com\)](https://bcgre.ca/branches/victoria-branch-1200/)

The first time you access the portal, you can use any password up to six characters. You can also change your password at any time later.

2) For those who prefer to send us an e-mail:

drop us a line to:

victoriabranch@bcgre.ca, Attn: Membership Director

Mailing Address and Phone number updates are welcome too and can be emailed above or sent to our mailing address. See How to Reach Us at the end of this newsletter.

In order to keep the branch strong and growing, please remember to share our website,

<https://bcgre.ca/branches/victoria-branch-1200/>

and tell your retired friends and family who receive a Public Service pension of the benefits of joining the BCGREA.

<https://bcgre.ca/join/>

How to Reach Us

President: Barbara Golder

Email: chair.branch1200@bcgre.ca

1st Vice-Chair: George Bowden

Email: vicechair.branch1200@bcgre.ca

Treasurer: Ed Forbes

Email: treasurer.branch1200@bcgre.ca

Secretary: Karin Heimlich

Email: secretary.branch1200@bcgre.ca

Membership Director: Jane Rutherford

Email: membership.branch1200@bcgre.ca

**Social/House Director: Marilyn Spencer
Communications Director: Laura Lam**

Email: victoriabranch@bcgre.ca

Gerry Buydens, Program Director

Sonja Ruffell, Goodwill/Telephone Director

Terry Prentice, Director at Large

Sarf Ahmed, Director at Large

Our thank you to our many volunteers who support the Executive and Directors at Large!

To message our team directly please visit our Contact Information on our website:

<https://bcgre.ca/branches/victoria-branch-1200/>

Our general branch email is:

victoriabranch@bcgre.ca

[Contact Phone: 250-751-8814](tel:250-751-8814)

[Mailing Address:](#)

**BCGREA Victoria Branch 1200, PO Box 9017,
STN PROV GOVT, Victoria, B.C. V8W 9L6**

Or: <https://bcgre.ca/contact/>

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