



## From the President's Desk

It is almost the end of one of the most beautiful Victoria summers that I can remember in a long time. With a few exceptions, we have had many lovely sunny days (23°C – 26°C), cool evenings and it has been very dry. In fact, Victoria has only received half of our normal annual rainfall amounts so far this year, and everywhere is tinder dry. We must be vigilant about fire, not waste precious water, and do what we can to mitigate climate change, because Victoria is as vulnerable as anywhere when it comes to climate-related natural disasters.

When I read about and watch on the news about the wildfires across Canada (especially in BC and the NWT), the US, Asia and Europe, tropical storms and cyclones, and the heating of the planet (July was reputedly the hottest month on the earth ever recorded), I thank my lucky stars that I live in a maritime climate. Many of us with family and friends in the Okanagan and Shuswap watched the devastation caused by the wildfires with horror. Luckily, there has been no loss of life so far, but the damage is immense, and we will need to help those who have lost everything to the inferno, so please help by donating to [The Red Cross](#). The coming autumn will be a relief to many, as the weather cools, nights are longer, and the rains come.

Going into fall for the BCGREA Victoria Branch means a new season of presentations of interest and opportunities to get together. Our program includes three talented authors in our Association who will make a presentation on their writing. We have had members give presentations on different topics in the past, so would encourage you to think about sharing your skills and experiences at one of our monthly meetings in 2024.

In October the BCGREA holds our Provincial AGM in Tsawwassen. There will be progress reports on our new status as a Member-Funded agency under The Societies Act. There is a lot of work going on to update our Constitution, Bylaws, and policies and procedures for our 11,000-strong Association. We have new systems and support to keep track of membership information, so I hope you will try the new members' portal on the website and help us by keeping us informed of changes in circumstances and addresses.

Thanks for your continued support and interest in Branch 1200.

Stay Engaged!

Barbara Golder

President, BCGREA Branch 1200



We have a new Board for 2023-2024, thanks to all of you who joined us for the Annual General Meeting on May 9, 2023.

**Our Board consists of:**

President - Barbara Golder

Vice-President - George Bowden

Treasurer - Ed Forbes

Membership Director - Jane Rutherford

Secretary - Karin Heimlich

House/Social Director - Marilyn Spencer

Communications Director- Laura Lam

Programs Director - Gerry Buydens

Goodwill/Telephone Director - Sonja Ruffell

Terry Prentice - Director at Large

Sarf Ahmed - Director at Large

Attached here is the President's Report:

<https://bcgre.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Br1200-PresReportMay2023.pdf>

The Minutes from the AGM will be available on the website.

If you would like to see the branch's financial statements, please contact the victoria branch email below.

Our Board continued to work during the summer to keep you informed, as well as provide opportunities for social engagement.

We value your suggestions so if you have any ideas for the Board to consider, please send them to:

[victoriabranch@bcgre.ca](mailto:victoriabranch@bcgre.ca)

## Speaker Presentations Follow-up

### May 9, 2023: The History of Capital Iron

Ron Greene, the former President of Capital Iron, presented us with a fascinating history of the company his father (who was born in New York City in 1900) established. The Capital Iron property featured a stone warehouse built in 1863, where ships would unload their goods until they could be shipped elsewhere. Some of the original stones from this warehouse have survived and are still present in the store.

In 1885, the property housed a milling company that cleaned and prepared rice. This rice was shipped from Asia, processed in Victoria, and sold to feed the Chinese workers who were constructing railways. The ship used for transporting the rice was called the Thermopylae. However, the government eventually expropriated the business, leading to the closure of the rice mill.

Morris L. Greene rented the building in 1934 and eventually purchased the property for \$50,000 in 1944, a true bargain by today's standards. He established a business that focused on utilizing scrap metal from marine salvage, with defunct warships serving as a notable source of supply after World War II. The store also sold military surplus gear, including uniforms and boots.

Ron spoke of the giant screwdrivers left over from military gear, which proved too large for average consumers seeking smaller tools. As a result, regular-sized screwdrivers were ordered, marking the beginning of their move into retail operations. Morris Greene continued to diversify the business, expanding into textiles.

Ron, Morris' son, eventually retired from operations but retained ownership of the land and building. However, in August of 2022, Capital Iron announced its closure after nearly 90 years in business, citing reasons such as online shopping, staffing problems, and inflation.

The Capital Iron name has since been acquired by a local appliance dealer who plans to open a storefront focused on outdoor goods. Other sources to read:

[A List of the Ships Scrapped or Broken Up By Capital Iron & Metals Ltd. in Victoria BC. \(nauticapedia.ca\)](#)

[Capital Iron & Metals Ltd. \(nauticapedia.ca\)](#)

MacFarlane, John M. (2011 updated 2013) Capital Iron & Metals Ltd. – From Ship Breakers to Department Store.

## September 12, 2023 Horticulture Centre of the Pacific

In lieu of our regularly scheduled meeting, step out this Autumn with us and enjoy the beauty and serenity of the gardens of the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific (HCP)! Located 12 kilometres north of downtown Victoria, these gardens are lovingly tended by staff and volunteers.

The Board is subsidizing the entire cost of the admission for our members. This is a Members only (no guests) event as attendance is limited to **50 people**. **Please RSVP via email your confirmation with Your Name, Phone Number, and Tour # by August 31, 2023 to:**

[victoriabranch@bcgre.ca](mailto:victoriabranch@bcgre.ca) Subject line: HCP Tour Attn: Gerry Buydens

**Date of Event:** Tuesday, September 12, 2023

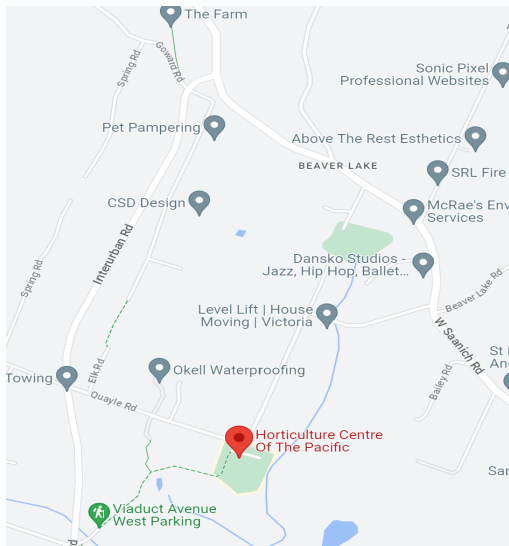
**Times:** Choose **Tour #1- 10:00 am** or  
**Tour #2- 1:30pm**

**Location:** 505 Quayle Road, Victoria BC

**We will be touring the gardens in small groups accompanied by a guide** so save your spot with us in this beautiful setting!

If you need to cancel your reservation due to illness, please email us as soon as you can so that we can offer your spot to others who wish to attend.

Thanks to Google Maps!



## October 2023 Speaker Presentation



Joe Mabel, CC BY-SA 2.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons

### October 10, 2023 - John Adams 1:30 pm via Zoom

This month we will have Guest Speaker John Adams give a fascinating talk on:

**“Historical and Cultural Perspectives on Victoria’s Chinatown”.**

Victoria’s Chinatown is the oldest Chinatown in Canada.

John Adams is a well-known local historian and author in Victoria. He owns “Discover the Past”, a company devoted to historical research, writing, lecturing and providing guided tours of the city and waterfront.

Please circle your calendar for this event, as John’s previous presentations have been very well-received and enjoyed!

Zoom meeting details will be emailed in early October.

Also, check out the new [Chinese Canadian Museum](#) located at 10-14 Fan Tan Alley, Chinatown, Victoria.

**Fan Tan Alley** is named after a gamblers game called “fan tan” and at its peak there were at least eight hidden clubs in the alley. At the time gambling was illegal so a lookout was placed at either end of the alley to watch for cops. There is still a lookout’s peephole in the brick wall close to Fisgard Street.

For more information visit: [Fan Tan Alley | Victoria's Chinatown \(uvic.ca\)](#)



## November 21 Speakers Presentation

We have some exciting news for the in-person Speaker Presentation scheduled for November!



We are planning to feature three local published writers, each giving a short presentation about their work.

Their published works will also be available for sale.

More details to come!

If you have a topic you would like to present for future presentations, drop us a line!

## Members Corner



### 2023 Monthly Gift Card Winners

A complete **list of winners for gift cards drawn during our General Meetings** is now on our website. Congratulations to our winners!

<https://bcgre.ca/2023-monthly-gift-card-winners/>

## 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](mailto:victoriabranch@bcgre.ca)

Subject: Life Member Pin

## Scam Warnings & Other Things

Recently, our Branch office received an email from an individual claiming to be the President of our Branch! While the email sender appeared legitimate, hovering over the sender's email address revealed that it was certainly not the official one.

How to recognize a malicious Email? There are some telltale signs of a malicious email:

- The sender's address is incorrect (inspect the full address and not the display name).
- The email or may not be personalized ('Dear Madam' or 'Dear Cardholder'). Exception: targeted phishing will refer to a person's name.
- It has embedded links with strange URLs (inspect them carefully - but don't click on them!)
- There are spelling or grammatical errors.
- It plays on your emotions, intimidates or threatens you if you do not perform an action.
- The content is bizarre, not believable, or offers a deal that is 'too good to be true'.
- It is 'phishing' for information.

How to avoid becoming a victim of a malicious email? There are a few safe practices:

- Inspect the components of your email including the sender, subject line and content.
- Do not open any unexpected attachments.
- Do not click on any unverified links.
- Do not click on 'unsubscribe', as it confirms your address is current and correct.
- Do not respond to spam emails, as this will intensify the number that you receive.
- If unexpected, confirm via separate email or call.
- Delete any suspicious emails, without opening.
- Outlook users, tighten up your spam controls in by going to Junk/Junk E-mail options.

Spoofing is when a perpetrator tries to imitate a website hoping you'll be fooled and provide sensitive information like your SIN, banking information etc.



How to stay ahead of the bad guys?

- Type the official website address into your browser and then bookmark it for future use
- Use the Company's app
- Set up notifications for account activity
- Use 2 factor authentication to provide an extra layer of security whether it be a code to your phone or email, or an code from authentication apps from Microsoft or Google.

For further information on enhancing your digital literacy, join [Gluu Society](#) for courses such as **How to be Unscammable !**



## Summer Luncheon, June 20, 2023

Forty six of us attended the Summer Lunch at the Pro Patria Legion Hall!

Along with the delicious food, some of our members won assorted door prizes such as plants, wine, BCGREA merchandise etc.

Thanks to our members who were able to participate in this gathering and we hope to see you at another event soon!

Photo (Right): Debbie with her new Burgundy Impatiens and Lin enjoying her new Peach Begonias.

Photo (Bottom): A delighted Kathleen with her prize!

And of course, the yummy food...

Special thanks to Linda Foubister for providing the photos!

Also a huge thanks to Marilyn Spencer and her team for all the legwork and effort needed to plan and organize this event!



Image by Freepik





### **Singing in retirement with Pacific Edge Chorus**

By Barbara Denbow and Norma Ritchie

Retirees from Ministry of Labour, and Ministries of Forests and Education

‘What will I do when I retire’ – is not a question that passed our minds while in the work force. However, well before retirement we were both drawn to a hobby of a unique style of choral singing.

Pacific Edge Chorus’ mission is to further the art form of four-part harmony, a cappella style. Each member sings the part most suited to their [vocal range](#) — tenor, lead, baritone or bass. As members of our international organization, [Sweet Adelines International](#), we promote a culture of belonging with membership open to women (including transgender women) and non-binary people assigned female at birth.

We invite singers to drop by any rehearsal and have a listen on Tuesdays 7:00-9:00pm at Gordon United Church Hall, 935 Goldstream Avenue (near Jacklin), Langford. Joining our auditioned chorus is a warm and welcoming process. Ability to read music is not necessary.

Each of Sweet Adelines’ 24 regions hosts an annual spring education convention where their choruses and quartets showcase their progress through performances in a supportive competition. The regional champions then compete internationally the following year. Pacific Edge Chorus’ 2022 score earned a wildcard slot at International competition in Louisville, Kentucky, in November 2023. On October 14 we will perform our competition songs and other entertaining repertoire at a Sneak Peek show taking place at Oak Bay’s Dave Dunnet Theatre.

For more information contact Suzanne at [membership@pacifiedgechorus.ca](mailto:membership@pacifiedgechorus.ca). And check out our website [www.pacifiedgechorus.ca](http://www.pacifiedgechorus.ca) and [Facebook page](#) for details of our upcoming events.

Do you have a hobby you love, travel tips, or something interesting or humorous you’d like to share with fellow members? Email us at: [victoriabranch@bcgre.ca](mailto:victoriabranch@bcgre.ca) and tell us!



## Understanding Your Pension

If you have questions regarding when your next pension payment is due, or want to track the history of your previous pension amounts, and/or change your beneficiary, you can register for [My Account](#) with the BC Pension Corporation, where you can view payment history for each month, payment dates for 2023, etc. It is very safe and secure and gives you information you need to manage your pension.

<https://myaccount.pensionsbc.ca/web/my-account/sign-in>



## 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 \(findjoo.com\)](#)

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](mailto: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.

## Good Will Notice

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

[victoriabranch@bcgre.ca](mailto:victoriabranch@bcgre.ca) with the information.

## Support for Family Caregivers

Family Caregivers of BC is a registered Canadian charity that provides support and valuable resources to family caregivers. It also hosts support groups for the Greater Victoria area.

For information and further resources, go to their website:

<https://www.familycaregiversbc.ca/family-caregiver-support-groups>

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](mailto:chair.branch1200@bcgre.ca)

**1st Vice-Chair: George Bowden**

**Email:** [vicechair.branch1200@bcgre.ca](mailto:vicechair.branch1200@bcgre.ca)

**Treasurer: Ed Forbes**

**Email:** [treasurer.branch1200@bcgre.ca](mailto:treasurer.branch1200@bcgre.ca)

**Secretary: Karin Heimlich**

**Email:** [secretary.branch1200@bcgre.ca](mailto:secretary.branch1200@bcgre.ca)

**Membership Director: Jane Rutherford**

**Email:** [membership.branch1200@bcgre.ca](mailto:membership.branch1200@bcgre.ca)

**Social/House Director: Marilyn Spencer**

**Communications Director: Laura Lam**

**Gerry Buydens: Program Director**

**Sonja Ruffell: Goodwill/Telephone Director**

**Terry Prentice: Director at Large**

**Sarf Ahmed: Director 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](mailto:victoriabranch@bcgre.ca)

**Contact Phone: 250-751-8814** Please leave a  
message on the voicemail.

**Mailing Address:**

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

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

Take care and see you next time!