



# The Steller's Quill

BCGREA New Westminster & District

Branch 800

“Fall 2023” Newsletter

**Contact info:**

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## 2024 Cash Pay Membership Dues

**Membership dues of \$20 are payable each year by January 2<sup>nd</sup> (Dues are in arrears after March 15<sup>th</sup>)** For members not on automatic deduction from their February pension, your cheque should be made payable to BCGREA and mailed to the Membership Secretary for the Branch: **Rita Pollock**, 302-1110 Howie Ave, Coquitlam, BC, V3J 1V1

**Branch 800 Meeting Place until further notice:**

**Royal Canadian Legion  
1025 Ridgeway Ave. Coquitlam**



**Free Parking underground and on the street**

## Report from the Chair

**Our branch membership has grown to over 800 members since the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Promotion began last year! We are the third largest branch in the province.**

**The Branch 800 AGM** was held on June 20, 2023 for the election of officers. This was our final meeting in the River Room at the Centennial Community Center at 6<sup>th</sup> Ave & Cumberland St in New Westminster. We anticipate a return to the new facility at the same location next year.

### Branch 800 Executive for 2023/24:

Chair: **Bonnie Billington**

First Vice Chair: **Vacant**

Second Vice Chair: **Mike Strath**

Secretary: **Vacant**

Treasurer: **Alfred Malcolm**

Membership Chair: **Rita Pollock**

Goodwill: **Jean Ing**

Telephone Convener: **Marilyn Melville**

Directors:

**Dennis Ishikawa**

**Donna Main**

**Andy McColl**

**Kathy Nelson**

**Anna Tremere**

**Marleine Wagner**

***A big Thank You* to outgoing executive: Navin Goburdhun who served for many years as First Vice Chair and to former Branch 800 Director Verna Cadwallader who served as Secretary for the past year.**

**The Finance Review Committee** (composed of **Loralee Wilkin** as Chair, and **Ross Tremere**) met on July 5<sup>th</sup> with Treasurer **Alfred Malcolm** and Branch Chair **Bonnie Billington** to review branch transactions and records for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023. The committee approved all records as presented. Thank you to the committee and to Alfred for keeping our records in good order, balancing the books and submitting records to Provincial BCGREA again this year. Our branch remains financially sound! **Special thanks to Val Davies, past Chair of this committee.**

### **2023 Life Membership List**

Congratulations to the following members who have achieved Life Member status, reaching 20 consecutive years of membership in the BCGREA:

**Shelagh Armour-Godbolt, Monifa Ayinde, Rosemary Cooper, Stella Diamond, Christine Dias, Wayne Isley, Henry Lee, Betty Leong, Renato Minchella, Kathy Nelson, Lelitia Pole, Joseph Scherba, Edward Sorel, Soo Hong Uh, Marleine Wagner, Movelle Walwyn, Garth Sparkes, Barbara Ann Sullivan**

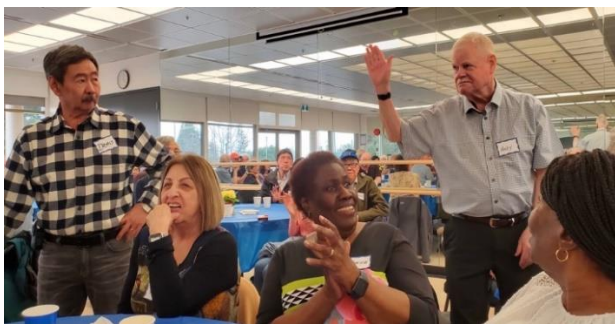
**Are you willing to help? We need volunteers to assist occasionally with hospitality, special events and phoning. Contact Bonnie Billington (Chair) at 604-761-5768 or [chair.branch800@bcgre.ca](mailto:chair.branch800@bcgre.ca)**

**Eighty-one people attended the 'Welcome New Members Lunch'** hosted by the Branch 800 on March 21, 2023 at the Bonsor Recreation Complex in Burnaby. Greek food (prepared by a local caterer) was served buffet style by our volunteers and enjoyed by all!

THANK YOU to **Joyce Yap** for the photos.







### **More news and announcements:**

**Important notice:** The process of branch delegate representation and voting at Provincial BCGREA meetings needs updating as discussed at the Directors' Meeting and Delegates' Workshop in Tsawwassen on April 25-26, 2023. Subsequently a *Delegate Formula and Voting Committee* was struck, but no consensus was reached on the proposals put forward including:

- Each branch sends a chair plus a single delegate *regardless of membership numbers*. Under this option the total votes would be 53 including table officers. **or** -
- Each branch sends a chair plus 1 delegate for every 500 members (or portions thereof) for a total entitlement of 64 votes. As discussed at the Branch 800 General Meeting on Sept 19<sup>th</sup>, our executive and AGM delegates support this proposal as the most fair and equitable representation of the membership, considering branch numbers range from 114 members in the smallest branch to 2746 members in the largest as of April 8, 2023.

Evidently a recommendation will be put forward at the AGM in October that an email will be sent to all members for their input on the two leading suggestions. Please consider carefully. We support the one delegate in 500 formula as the most democratic representation.

**Wednesday October 4, 2023** - 10:30 a.m. Weather permitting: Walk at Rocky Point Park in Port Moody, organized by Donna Main.

### **Tuesday October 17, 2023 – NO BRANCH MEETING**

**Wednesday October 18, 2023** - Provincial BCGREA AGM at the Coast Tsawwassen Inn. Branch 800 voting delegates at the AGM are executive members **Bonnie Billington, Myrna Cresswell, Donna Main, Marilyn Melville and Kathy Nelson**. Observers: **Dennis Ishikawa and Mike Strath**.

**Tuesday October 24, 2023** - **ADVANCE CARE PLANNING: Free in-person workshop (Session #1) presented by Fraser Health** at the Royal Canadian Legion - 1025 Ridgeway Ave, Coquitlam from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. Come and learn more about the 5 steps of ACP which includes discussion about related legal forms and the process of sharing your wishes for future health and personal care. *Resource materials and documents will be provided as handouts including the 'My Voice' workbook*. Members may bring a guest.

**RSVP is required by Monday October 16<sup>th</sup>. To register please contact:**  
**Bonnie Billington: 604-761-5768 or email [chair.branch800@bcgre.ca](mailto:chair.branch800@bcgre.ca)**

**Tuesday November 21, 2023: Advance Care Planning Session #2: to be confirmed.**



### **CHRISTMAS LUNCH is booked for Tues. Dec 5th - 11:30 a.m.**

at the  
Royal Canadian Legion (Ballroom) in Port Coquitlam.  
2675 Shaughnessy St. Entrance adjacent to the parking lot behind the building. Lots of free parking.

**Tickets** - \$25 members; \$30 non-members  
- must be purchased in advance  
- **available until November 21<sup>st</sup>**

A traditional turkey dinner will be served buffet style. **For tickets and further information, contact Ann Pratt: 604-464-5580 or email [abpratt@telus.net](mailto:abpratt@telus.net)**

Branch 800 continues to support the following organizations with affiliate (group) membership. We benefit from the information and links that provide education and advocacy on important issues for seniors.

**BC Health Coalition:** [www.bchealthcoalition.ca](http://www.bchealthcoalition.ca)

**Burnaby Seniors' Resources Society:** <https://www.burnabyseniors.org>

**Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of BC (COSCO)** [www.coscobc.org](http://www.coscobc.org)

**Disability Alliance BC:** <https://disabilityalliancebc.org>

### **Disability Alliance of BC (DABC)**

In May 2021, the BC Government passed into law the **Accessible BC Act (ABCA)**. DABC continues to engage with the Government to ensure implementation will be meaningful and create a positive change in reducing barriers for people with disabilities in our province.

On September 2, 2022, a new Regulation under Part 3 of the ABCA came into force which required more than 750 public sector organizations to establish:

1. An accessibility committee
2. An accessibility plan
3. A tool to receive feedback on accessibility

There is further criterion on composition of the committee (which must include people with disabilities and indigenous people). The plan and the feedback tool must also be available to the public.

The public sector organizations that must meet the requirements include municipalities, regional districts, Post secondary educational institutions, public libraries, municipal police departments, Francophone school districts, independent schools, School Districts, Health Authorities, Public Sector board, agencies, tribunals and commissions.

The majority of these agencies had a deadline to meet these requirements **by September 1, 2023**. Health Authorities, some boards, agencies, tribunals and commissions have an extra year to comply by **September 1, 2024**.

DABC received government funding to assist organizations in meeting these goals.

They have been conducting presentations, workshops and meetings with the organizations on the three requirements. They also established resource website: BC Accessibility Hub and an Accessibility Toolkit. These can be accessed at:

<https://bcaccessibilityhub.ca/> and

<https://bcaccessibilityhub.ca/plans/developing-a-plan/> .

To determine what agencies or offices are required to develop a plan can be checked here: <https://bcaccessibilityhub.ca/committees/organization-list/>

If you are unsure whether an organization has met the three requirements, you may inquire by email at BC Government's Accessibility Directorate here: [engageaccessibility@gov.bc.ca](mailto:engageaccessibility@gov.bc.ca) / .

More information about the Disability Alliance of BC, services and their free publications is available on their website at: <https://disabilityalliancebc.org/> . DABC is located at 605 Robson St #1450, Vancouver, BC V6B 5J3. Telephone: (604) 872-1278.



**To register for COSCO Health & Wellness Institute Fall Workshops – go to <https://seniorshelpingseniors.ca/> CLICK *Fall 2023 Free Personal Planning Workshops* and select: <https://seniorshelpingseniors.ca/fall-2023-personal-planning-workshops/>**

**The 55+ BC Games will be held in Salmon Arm from September 10 -14 in 2024.**

This is an annual multi-sport event hosted by a different community each year in the Province of BC. This is the largest annual sporting event for the 55+ population, with over 3000 participants annually. Here's an opportunity to try a new sport or activity being offered in the various "zones" throughout the province. **To visit the main website, search *55 + BC Games*.** The BCGREA Recruitment and Retention Committee would like to hear from branches with members interested in attending any of the group activities or to participate as a volunteer supporter. Contact [chair.branch800@bcgre.ca](mailto:chair.branch800@bcgre.ca) More information on sporting events, activities and registration to come in the Spring 2024 issue of the Quill.

**We encourage members with electronic devices to join the Branch 800 Facebook Page.**

This is a great way to share announcements, access up and coming events and connect with other members. This page has a high security setting, and you must be invited in. To join, please make your request to **Donna Dunedin Main** via email @ [donnaemain@gmail.com](mailto:donnaemain@gmail.com) and place 'Branch 800 FB Page' in the subject line.

**If anyone is aware of members residing in Assisted or Long Term Care, please notify Branch 800 Director Anna Tremere (604-936-3382).** As valued members of our branch it is important that we maintain contact, so they and their families do not feel forgotten.

**We thank the members who have already switched to automatic dues checkoff,** and we strongly encourage our remaining cash paying members to convert to automatic DCO for the following reasons:

- Collecting and safely depositing dues cheques is an onerous task for our executive volunteers who must ensure the confidentiality of your personal chequing information.
- You would qualify for the one-year free membership dues offer from Provincial BCGREA.
- Membership lists would be automatically kept up to date.

**Thank You BCGEU!**

Services provided by the BCGEU print room staff are invaluable and we appreciate their ongoing assistance with our copying needs and newsletter mailout.

**In Memoriam**

We regret to announce the passing of the following members:

**Fred Edward Hodson, Peter William Kane, Sandra Mooney,  
Abram Harold Thiessen (2021)**

The Executive and members of the BCGREA, New Westminster & District Branch 800 express sincere condolences to these families and their friends.