5 QUESTIONS (AND BOLD PROPOSALS) ABOUT THE FUTURE
Recipe for Fun

Take 300 students. Add thousands of biodegradable colour packets. Mix well. That was the basic recipe for the Campus Colour Fun Run at the end of the spring term. Organized by Vikes Athletics and Recreation in partnership with the Mental Health Initiative at UVic it proved to be an exhilaratingly messy way to blow off steam before exam time. Things wrapped up with music and refreshments — and a cold water rinse for those brave enough — at the beach at Cadboro Bay.
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EDITOR’S NOTE

Photographs and Memories

Campus as a multicultural microcosm

BY MIKE MCNENNEY

Sure, pictures might say a thousand words. But they mostly only hint at the back story.

When alumni contributed old photos to an online gallery set up during Alumni Week in February all kinds of great images from university life were posted. They were from recent grads. They were from athletes and scientists. There were pictures from decades ago.

In one of those shots, there’s a young couple and they’re dancing. It’s a formal setting, seemingly out of step with the times. It was taken in 1967, at the UVic grad dance, in Canada’s centennial year.

The couple who sent in that photo look happy, proud. Of course they are, it would seem, it’s a graduation celebration.

But what’s endlessly fascinating about life is that there is always something more beyond the surface. The tangles and twists of circumstance and society, when revealed to us, become the material from which we learn from each other.

We get inspired. We find empathy within ourselves. We see things differently and appreciate the things that other people overcome.

The graduation picture, of Corol and Rupee Pallan, captures a moment in which a simmering love affair — kept in the background for most of their undergraduate years — blossoms into open commitment.

It symbolizes something born out of racial tolerance in a time of racial tension. His family originated from India. Her family came from the UK.

One of the great things in Canada’s history is the 1971 adoption of multiculturalism as an official national policy. It was the first time any country had done so, embracing mutual respect, racial and ethnic equality, Indigenous rights, religious freedom, and two official languages.

I’m proud of that law, as a Canadian. I’m proud of its foresight, enlightenment, and decency. I also know that laws are about people and until we relate to each other’s experience we can’t, as individuals, fulfill the aspirations set out in things like the Multicultural Policy of Canada.

That’s why stories like those of Pallans, beginning on page 16, need to be shared, especially in this milestone year in the country’s history.

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UVIC ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
2017 Annual General Meeting

WHAT DOES BANKING HAVE TO DO WITH SOCIAL CHANGE?
A conversation with Vancity President and CEO
Tamara Vrooman, MA ’95, BA ’91.

Wednesday, June 21 | 6:30 p.m. | University Club of Victoria
6:30 p.m. Registration and refreshments
7 p.m. Alumni association business meeting followed by
Tamara Vrooman in conversation with Stacy Ross, BFA ’97
(CHEK TV news anchor and alumni board member).
Reception follows

Register online alumni.uvic.ca by June 16 or
call 250-721-6000 (toll-free 1-800-808-6828)

Please visit alumni.uvic.ca for board
of director nomination information.
Nominations must be received at least seven
days before the annual general meeting.

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Canada’s 150th Anniversary is our opportunity to actively create the kind of country we all want to live in. We are a nation of builders, doers, thinkers, seekers, and connecters, and all Canadians play a role in imagining how we will contribute to the betterment of our future and our rapidly changing global society.

As a university, UVic is in a unique position to bring people together from a wide spectrum of places, experiences, backgrounds, and perspectives to develop and exchange ideas through critical conversations. We are dedicated to working with our partners locally, nationally, and globally to make a difference. Universities are places of dialogue, discovery, education and knowledge mobilization — all of which we will need to imagine the future of Canada and it’s role on the global stage.

In January, I attended the Converge 2017 Conference in Ottawa where young Canadian entrepreneurs, creators and innovators joined leading thinkers from universities, businesses and communities to share ideas on building an innovative, prosperous and inclusive Canada for 2067. The message I took away was that universities have a central role to play in the continuing process of building our country; in particular, contributing to inclusive growth in a rapidly changing economy, responding to pressing social and environmental challenges, and reconciliation with Canada’s First Peoples.

Our vision at UVic is to be the Canadian university that best integrates outstanding scholarship, inspired teaching and real-life experiences. We aspire to be the university of choice for exceptional students, faculty and staff. We are deeply committed to equity and diversity as the necessary underpinnings of excellence in education, the development of new knowledge and cross-cultural understanding.

With our vision as the framework, we are setting policy directions to prepare UVic for the future. We will be guided with a suite of recently finalized plans, including our Strategic Research Plan, our International Plan and our first Indigenous Plan.

Our Research Plan provides an overarching account of our research capacities and sets out strategies to further support and advance excellence and impact. It emphasizes our goal of integrating research and education and describes areas of dynamic capability where we have achieved or have the capacity to achieve global leadership.

UVic has reaffirmed our commitment to act on the recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Report and to become leaders and partners in building reconciliation. In UVic’s first Indigenous Plan, we embrace our commitment to enhance educational opportunities for Indigenous students, to further develop education, research, outreach and engagement with an Indigenous focus, and to engage more effectively with Indigenous communities. We will provide opportunities and venues to foster intercultural understanding and connection, and to be a catalyst for reconciliation through both conversations and actions.

With the new International Plan, we will continue to work together to prepare globally competent students, develop and disseminate knowledge, and make significant contributions to global initiatives that enhance peace, health, environment and prosperity both locally and internationally. Globalization is among the most important forces shaping higher education, and indeed the world, today. Building stronger intercultural connections around the globe, and here on campus, will help our community.

As UVic helps to imagine the future of Canada, I am confident the values at the centre of our university’s vision — diversity, inclusion and mutual respect — will carry us forward. The search for ideas, knowledge and truth, and the effort to make a positive contribution to our world is critical in order to guard and strengthen our academic environment and the values upon which it depends. In keeping with UVic’s commitment to tackling essential issues, the university will hold events throughout 2017 that explore the key opportunities and challenges facing Canadians leading up to the country’s 2067 bicentennial.

Canada’s 150th is an occasion for us to live up to our obligation to connect with, be a part of, and contribute to our community, here and beyond. Join us as we envision the future of Canada.
Looking 50 Years Back

Of centennials and sesquicentennials

Officially opened in May 1967 by the Queen’s cousin, Princess Alexandra of Kent, Centennial Stadium rises in the foreground of this photo from the UVic archives.

Construction of the stadium, marking the 100th anniversary of Canadian confederation, was paid for by the federal and provincial governments along with the four core municipalities.

Victoria had wanted the stadium built at Topaz Park while Saanich favoured the Burnside-Tillicum area. UVic was the compromise site and it was built for about half a million dollars.

Centennial Stadium was the focal point of the 1994 Commonwealth Games opening and closing ceremonies plus countless other high-profile athletics events over the years.

Convocation ceremonies used to be conducted there too. In 1969, when Sir Edmund Hillary — mountaineer, explorer, philanthropist — received his honorary degree, he quipped that the notorious Centennial Stadium winds were as chilly as Everest.

Canada: In Art and Thought

The Legacy Art Galleries — downtown and on campus — have several shows lined up to reflect on Canada and the 150th anniversary of confederation.

Among them is Kwakwaka’wakw artist Marianne Nicolson’s video installation “There’s Blood in the Rocks.” It uses pictographic imagery and song in her telling of the history of the 1862 smallpox epidemic in Victoria that claimed thousands of Indigenous lives.

The university is also hosting a series of Canada 150 signature events throughout the year including, in November, the Victoria Forum on diversity and inclusion.

Details of all of UVic’s Canada 150 events and exhibits can be found at uvic.ca/Canada150.

...And 50 Years Ahead

Everyone has hopes and aspirations for Canada. What are yours, looking 50 years down the road? The university’s “Oh Canada! Video Vision Project” (uvic.ca/Canada150) is a chance for you to give your take on Canada’s future, the type of country you want, and the impact you hope to make. Post a one-minute selfie video from your phone or camera. A random $500 prize will be awarded Oct. 16.
NEWS AND NOTES

5 More Years
Prof. Jamie Cassels will remain as university president and vice-chancellor for a second term.

He was unanimously approved by the UVic Board of Governors, following a unanimous recommendation from the committee for the appointment of the president. His next five-year term will start July 1, 2018.

Board chair Daphne Corbett said Cassels represents a passionate commitment to UVic’s role in education, research and community engagement.

Under Cassels’s leadership since 2012 the university has adopted a new Indigenous plan; campus plan; international strategy; strategic research plan; and enhanced services for students and financial awards.

Consent and Respect
A campus-wide policy addressing sexualized violence — identifying support mechanisms, prevention and education measures, and implementation steps — has been adopted by the university’s board of governors. It follows a year of consultation and research by 16-member working group of students, faculty and staff led by Dr. Annalee Lepp of the Department of Gender Studies. The policy’s first purpose is to “instill and cultivate institutional, collective, and individual responsibility” for a campus environment where “consent and respect are foundational principles and practices.”

In Quotes

“Reconciliation is a big word. I think it begins with us being in the same room together. I really miss the Truth and Reconciliation Commission gatherings because they did bring us together, Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. We cried and we laughed at those gatherings. It was so important to be able to do that.”

— Chancellor Shelagh Rogers, an Honorary Witness to the TRC, from an interview she gave during Alumni Week about her CBC career, UVic, and her work in social justice. In the photo: Rogers with her friend Sharon “Gramma Suzie” Shorty after an impromptu leg wrestling contest during the interview. Final score: Shorty 1, Rogers 0.

War Stories

It’s been 100 years since the World War I Battle for Vimy Ridge and the UVic Libraries has a wealth of materials online (including photos, letters, artifacts) that tell the diverse stories of soldiers and their families. It’s in a digital exhibit called Victoria to Vimy.

Drawn from records and mementoes entrusted to the UVic Special Collections and Archives, the materials provide a compelling account of a moment in history that shaped Canadian identity since it was the first time troops from across the country fought together.

The above photo — showing the 21st Canadian battalion crossing the Rhine at Bonn, Germany — is from the collection of Joseph B. Clearihue, WWI veteran and UVic’s first chancellor.
NOSTALGIA

YouTunes

This issue’s alumni snap survey generated a Wurlitzer’s worth of responses about songs, bands and gigs that trigger UVic memories. What songs served as your perfect study accompaniment? The go-to track for the best parties? The song the guy in residence played over and over?

I found a recording of Respighi’s “Ancient Airs and Dances” and played that sucker until I wore out the grooves.
– Gabriele Wilson, BFA ’86

U2 epitomized my questioning faith of that time, my desire to take action for human rights, and sometimes just to rock out. I still live by “In the Name of Love.”
– Catherine Novak, BA ’85

Spirit of the West in the Cadboro Commons cafeteria in the mid-‘90s. Since we were living in residence, it was right on our doorstep! – Anonymous

I remember Friday nights at the Red Lion and a great Victoria band called the Pharaohs. I studied to Simon & Garfunkel. Good memories! – Shirley Martin, BA ’73

“Heat of the Moment” by Asia. The first song that came on my car radio as I drove up to Ring Road the first day of undergrad in 1982.
– Chris Alveberg, BSc ’85, LLB ’88

“Kids” by MGMT played at every soccer game at Centennial Stadium in my first term. Always associate it with (awesome) first days at school!
– Alexander Kurial, BA ’14

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University Centre Auditorium. An incredible performance.
– Kevin Paul, MA ’89

Cannonball Adderley Sextet at the Victoria College Young Building in 1962.
– Bill Hubbard, BA ’65

“Big Log” by Robert Plant was an eerily atmospheric song that evoked images of a solitary night-time drive along a dark and seemingly-endless road. Perfect for late-night studying! – Neil Stubbs, MA ’92

John Lee Hooker at a small club on lower Johnson around 1980 was a highlight. An inspiring break from biology studies that I have never regretted.
– Ed Dobyns, BSc ’82

Tragically Hip was the soundtrack for my UVic days. When I took running breaks from studying, the songs from Fully, Completely helped to inspire my runs, especially up the hills!
–Carolynn Smallwood, MA ’96

One morning when getting ready to ride my bike up to UVic, Nirvana’s “Smells Like Teen Spirit” came on. Music became grungy and got my creative juices flowing.
– John Runions, PhD ’97

Steely Dan’s “Reelin’ in the Years.” Floor parties in the purple lounge in Craigdarroch residence.
– Howard Robertson, BSc ’81

More responses and song clips at uvic.ca/alumni.

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Send in the ‘Bots
Undergrad’s research opens doors, robotically

BY MICHELLE WRIGHT, BSC ’99

“I’m interested in removing people — the human element — from dangerous situations,” says Thomas Gilmour, an undergraduate student in Mechanical Engineering who has a knack for robotics.

He sees a future in which smart robots have key roles in search and rescue, reconnaissance, surveillance operations — even in healthcare settings. “Imagine a robot on a hospital floor capable of delivering samples to another department, easily darting around hospital workers and patients.”

That’s what he had in mind when he designed and built his prototype for an autonomous mobile robot. It can make its own map, orient itself and plan a route, all while simultaneously avoiding moving objects. No small feat.

Gilmour did the design and build alongside one of his profs, as one of some 120 students supported this year with Jamie Cassels Undergraduate Research Awards (JCURA). The program includes a $1,500-tuition credit and in Gilmour’s case, opened the door to a cool co-op work term in Vancouver with virtual reality developer Archiact.

The company is developing virtual reality robots that — with a joystick and VR headset — could ultimately enable the operator to see what the robot sees. It might be used in a collapsed building or anywhere it’s too dangerous to send in search and rescue teams or other personnel.

His co-op term finds him doing “rapid prototyping” of hardware and software design concepts to improve the robot’s functions. It dovetails nicely with his undergraduate research. “The rapid development of a working concept for JCURA directly translated to my work at Archiact,” he says.

Long-term, Gilmour has an eye on several robotics companies in the Silicon Valley and, eventually, he plans to start up his own company once the right idea hits.

Undergraduate research, supported by Cassels awards, is incredibly varied. In another example
from this year’s crop, Annina Altherr, studying Geography, looked at ways to mitigate marine traffic noise in an environmentally sensitive area west of Haidi Gwaii.

She urges the precautionary principle. “The idea is to try to prevent some of the impacts while we are still figuring out what, exactly, the impacts are,” she says.

Noise from ships is now a dominant feature of the undersea soundscape, rising as much as 12dB in some regions.

“Shipping noise is ubiquitous,” says Altherr, “and chronic.” It’s also at the same sound frequency as baleen whale vocalizations. “It’s kind of like trying to have a conversation with someone in a room full of other people all speaking at once.”

Altherr focused her research on the 6,000-km² SGaan Kinghlas-Bowie Seamount Marine Protected Area (SK-B MPA).

It’s ripe with light and nutrients in an otherwise barren region of the Pacific — and a magnet for whales and Pacific white-sided dolphins. It also lies at the crossroads of busy shipping lanes.

Altherr set out to show how noise reduction, which she says is not currently a management priority in the area, could be achieved. She designed noise management scenarios based on those already in place elsewhere and used GIS software to determine the impact of various schemes on marine traffic patterns.

She spoke to stakeholders and experts, and met weekly with her two faculty supervisors. “We bounced around ideas, figured out challenges, and came up with new directions and perspectives together.”

Her conclusion? Buffer zones — spatial and/or temporal exclusion zones — would be the most effective way to address noise pollution in the area. The size of the zone would depend on industry and stakeholder agreement.

“Stakeholder input and approval is important,” says Altherr, “because it is the shipping industry, not the whales, that ultimately have to alter their behavior. It comes down to cost and the willingness of industry.”

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Helping Hands

The Victoria Hand Project — an off-shoot of the Mechanical Engineering department that supplies low-cost artificial limbs to amputees in the developing world — is getting a helping hand of its own.

It won $250,000 from Google Impact Challenge Canada, one of 10 grant recipients from a pool of more than 900 applicants.

The VHP, profiled in the autumn 2015 Torch, is led by Prof. Nick Dechev and employs 3-D printing technology to produce prosthetic arms and hands for about $400.

Of the 40 million amputees worldwide, 80 per cent live in low- to middle-income countries and less than five per cent have access to prosthetic care. VHP is in five countries: Nepal, Haiti, Cambodia, Ecuador and Guatemala.

The new funding will support planned expansion into Egypt and elsewhere. “I’m proud of the team,” Dechev says, “and really look forward to this next phase of VHP as we ramp up for a much bigger presence and impact worldwide.”
NEWS ABOUT PEOPLE, TEACHING AND RESEARCH

Across Campus

GUSTAVSON SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
UVic and Global Affairs Canada will co-host the Victoria Forum to mark Canada 150 and identify opportunities to further Canada's diversity agenda, domestically and internationally. "Emerging populist agendas, declining trust in our key institutions, increasing protectionism and anxiety about migration worldwide make the need to present an alternative narrative highlighting the benefits of diversity, openness and inclusiveness of vital importance," says Saul Klein, Dean of the Peter B. Gustavson School of Business and chair of the forum. In panels, plenaries and think-tank sessions, the international gathering will assess Canada’s successes and challenges going forward. This UVic signature event will be held on Nov. 17 – 19. uvic.ca/victoriaforum.

FACULTY OF EDUCATION
Dr. Tim Black (Educational Psychology & Leadership Studies) has joined Wounded Warriors Canada as its national clinical advisor, on a pro bono basis. Black specializes in post-traumatic stress disorder, military-to-civilian transition issues, and group counselling. It’s a new role for the organization and created in partnership with UVic. Black will provide expert overview of the organization’s growing programs of services for the well-being of veterans, first responders and their families.

FACULTY OF ENGINEERING
From 3D-printed prosthetic hands, stem cells and shoebox-size satellites to rockets, wave energy monitoring buoys and unmanned aerial vehicles, some of campus’ top tech labs took their most innovative projects-in-progress to demonstrate at the second BC TECH summit in Vancouver in March. Teams from the Victoria Hand Project, the Centre for Aerospace Research, and the West Coast Wave Initiative were among the 5,500 participants.

FACULTY OF FINE ARTS
Award-winning theatrical designer Patrick Du Wors, BFA ’02, is the newest faculty member in the Department of Theatre. As assistant professor of design, Du Wors steps in for the recently retired Allan Stichbury. “Having seen what other institutions are doing, I was happy to come back here,” says Du Wors, who also trained at the Royal Shakespeare Company, the Banff Centre and the University of Alberta. “I’m ready to make this position my own.” The only Canadian stage designer selected to participate in the prestigious 2017 World Stage Design in Taiwan in July, Du Wors was also one of only six Canadian design teams selected for the Prague Quadrennial in 2015... Fine Arts has also launched a new minor in Digital and Interactive Media in the Arts, designed to develop new skills, enhance
visual literacy and explore the intersections of art, media and culture.

FACULTY OF
Human & Social
Development
After hearing stories from outreach workers about vulnerable people dying in the streets, Dr. Kelli Stajduhar, co-associate director of research and scholarship in the School of Nursing and an affiliate with UVic’s Institute on Aging and Lifelong Health, launched a study on palliative care options for the homeless. She wrote and spoke publicly on the disconnect between the high value of palliative care and its lack of availability in Canada (and her efforts were profiled in autumn 2016 edition of the Torch). Her work has also earned her the 2017 Ebor Boyanowsky Academic of the Year Award — from the Confederation of University Faculty Associations of BC — for outstanding contributions to the community.

FACULTY OF
Humanities
One hundred and sixty-seven years after they were originally “signed,” the Vancouver Island or Douglas Treaties were translated into two local languages for a conference co-hosted in February by the Department of History, Faculty of Law, and the Songhees First Nation. The translations offer new insights into what the Indigenous peoples might have agreed to so long ago. James Douglas was representing the British Crown when he made 14 treaties with First Nations between 1850–54, covering small areas of Vancouver Island. Because the treaties were oral agreements, not committed to paper in the case of nine of them until months later, it has always been a question of what the First Nations agreed to. WSÁNEĆ elder John Elliot, one of the translators, says that the SENĆOŦEN language had no words to express the treaty phrase, “the land…becomes the entire property of the white people forever.” Instead, he says the treaties were understood as peace agreements — with no land surrender.

FACULTY OF
Law
This year the UVic Law Centre turns 40! The Law Centre, attached to the law courts in downtown Victoria, serves between 1,800 and 2,000 low-income clients per year and is the longest-running common-law clinical program in Canada. Since opening in 1977, the Law Centre has served over 70,000 clients in the Greater Victoria area and has become a pillar of student education at UVic Law, thanks in large part to Prof. Glenn Gallins, director of the centre and teacher of the Law Centre clinical term. He has mentored more than 1,400 students, giving them valuable, practical skills working with clients and in the courts. Join the anniversary celebration June 9th at 5 pm at the Law Centre, 850 Burdett Ave.

UNIVERSITY Libraries
Lara Wilson, MA ’99, Director of Special Collections and University Archivist, has been named one of BC’s top Change Makers for 2017 by the BC Museums Association. Wilson has collaborated with Dr. Aaron Devor on developing and promoting the UVic Transgender Archives, and continues to advocate for the transgender community through her work. She also works with colleagues on preservation and digitization initiatives, rare print materials selection and acquisition, exhibit planning and donor relations. “Rare books and archival materials only have value to society,” says Wilson, “if people have access to them.”

FACULTY OF
Science
A project co-led by biochemist Dr. Christoph Borchers from the UVic Genome BC Proteomics Centre has $3.8 million in new funding from Genome Canada to make mouse models more powerful and meaningful to the study of health and disease. The project, conducted with the Leibniz Institute of Analytical Sciences in Germany, will develop a prototype proteomics-based process for rapid analysis of 3,000 mouse proteins in 20 different tissues. Also funded is Dr. Fraser Hof, Department of Chemistry, who receives $238,800 to investigate “methylation” — the smallest form of biochemical control switch that has huge implications for how cells function, especially in diseases such as cancer. The project will advance a tool developed by Hof and his team that could transform diagnostics, therapies and research related to aggressive cancers.

FACULTY OF
Social Sciences
People are usually linked to degraded landscapes but 13,000 years of repeated occupation by BC’s coastal First Nations has actually had the opposite effect. Award-winning research by a team from the School of Environmental Studies, found that rainforests benefit from being close to shell middens left by shellfish harvesting as soils at habitation sites are higher in calcium and phosphorous. They say coastal BC is the first known example of long-term intertidal resource use enhancing forest productivity and they expect the pattern to be found at archaeological sites along other, global coastlines. The findings were published in Nature Communications and recently received an award from the Ecological Society of America.

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PHILANTHROPY

Steel to Sky

One of the major modern sculptors in the last half century, Jeffrey Rubinoff concerned himself with art history but he also had the future in mind

BY SARAH TARNOPOLSKY

In the shadow of Mount Geoffrey, a ridge on Hornby Island formed millions of years ago, sculpture Jeffrey Rubinoff one day last year led visitors around his more than 100 steel artworks that appear to dance across the landscape. Rubinoff, who passed away in January, stopped at each one to explain its form and significance, identify its place within a series, and each series’ place within his life’s work. He spoke not only about the siting of the piece on his acreage on an island in the Salish Sea — how it might echo, or even act as a counterpoint to its surroundings — but also about that sculpture’s place in the expanded field of the history of art.

He was an artist who chose to isolate himself from the commercial art world and he had an evolving theory about the interplay of creativity, art appreciation and time.

“My sculptural work is completely dedicated to art history,” he once wrote. “Original ideas grow out of original work, which led me to see art as a source of knowledge. Since these insights form the context within which the work becomes meaningful, it is imperative that the general public, artists and art educators understand them if the work is to be fully appreciated.”

Rubinoff first became acquainted with members of the Faculty of Fine Arts through his annual “Company of Ideas” forum, held at his 200-acre sculpture park (and home) on Hornby Island. The forum, which brings together international scholarly collaborators to share specific insights within their specialties, is part of the sculpture park’s educational program.

When Art History and Visual Studies Prof. Allan Antliff attended the forum, he and Rubinoff immediately hit it off. In subsequent discussions, Rubinoff began to see the role UVic could play in his goals for the advancement of education in the arts.

He decided to fund an ongoing four-year doctoral fellowship in modern and contemporary art history to support graduate and faculty research. “It’s local, and they’re there,” he said, meaning the faculty is in sync with his own ideas. He also provided funding for two graduate or undergraduate students to attend the Company of Ideas forum.

“Studying world art creates opportunities for intercultural understanding, as people instantly connect with the visual,” Rubinoff said. “(It) can add to the richness of our lives, engage us with the past and present, and inform how we think about our world.”

The late artist JEFFREY RUBINOFF, in 2016, at his Hornby Island sculpture park.
Burdwood Islands, Ten Years Later

BC poet Emily Nilsen, BFA ’03, evokes a precise sense of place — and the tenuous nature of relationships — in her debut collection, Otolith

Mostly the same.
Though I can hardly remember what it felt like to sleep on the beach beside you. We had both forgotten our toothbrushes and that night it rained the scent of wild mint. To get to the island we took turns rowing, facing each other, legs in legs, one backward, the other forward. Revisiting the beach now, I crunch over crushed clams, dried urchins, a jerry can ditched in the bush, and want to know exactly when and why the cedars dropped their branches. The tree we camped under is no longer a tree. It is gaunt. Sun-beaten yellow, soon to be twisted like the others that jut out from rockshore. I am writing to retrieve that forgotten part of us, the part we left behind.

Every rock I overturn is rimmed in dried-up rings of brine.
A CANADIAN LOVE STORY

TURNING POINT:
The 1967 graduation dance marked an even bigger milestone for Corol and Rupee Pallan.
When Rupee Met Corol

Their relationship began on a dare in a not-so-quiet section of the McPherson Library. Being from different cultures in the 1960s the odds were against them.

BY MIKE MCNENEY

“If we're going to get married we've got to make this work.”

The BiblioCafé isn’t the easiest place to find a seat at the best of times. On a March morning, with caffeine-seeking students nearing the end of spring term, the place was especially busy. But there sat Rupee and Corol Pallan at a table near one of the glass walls that afford a view toward the McPherson Library’s main stairs. They have memories for each and every step that climbs above the bustle to the third floor, to the spot in the back corner where they first met one day in November of 1964.

“It was a party zone in here. People just goofed around and socialized, which was fine,” recalled Corol, thinking back to chairs and stacks that used to be where the café now operates. She was a “frosh” trying to get through her first term. “I was determined not to be one of many who flunked out at Christmas. I went to find this quiet place, which I had been told was upstairs. It wasn’t any quieter up there.” She laughed and looked over at Rupee. “Especially because of these guys.”

“All the East Indian guys hung out up there,” Rupee picked up the story. “We were all good buddies (and) we’re still friends. I remember going up those stairs many times.”

Days went by until finally his friends grew tired of hearing Rupee go on about the “girl in the black coat” who always walked by their so-called study table. One of them bet him that he couldn’t get a date with her.

He smoothly walked over and as fate would have it she was reading up on Educational Psychology 101, a course he had already taken. “I just started chit-chatting her and asked her if she would like to meet for a coffee. She said yes. I went back to the table and said, Pay up!”

He won a $2-case of Lucky Lager — and the love of his life.

Mistaken Identity

Only a few weeks before they agreed to go for their first date, the Martlet carried a headline that echoed the struggles of the ’60s civil rights movement in the United States and brought to light a close-to-home example of the ugliness and ignorance of racism.

On the front page of the Nov. 6, 1964 issue, the student paper had a story with the headline: Coloured Date Questioned.
He took the family back to the Punjab during World War II, when the Canadian government was threatening to conscript Indian immigrants even though they couldn’t vote or own land. They returned in 1947, the year of India’s independence. Rupee was 3.

“My dad had forbidden me to date white women. He told me I would finish university and go back to India and get married the traditional way (in an arranged marriage),” Rupee said.

“My parents didn’t approve either. Which shocked me,” Corol added. “I was really quite astounded when my parents told me that I couldn’t date Rupee because they had raised me to be accepting and tolerant. I was young and I couldn’t go against their wishes, especially if I wanted to stay at home and finish university.”

For the next few years, although their relationship had the support of friends and siblings, they opted for friendship over boyfriend/girlfriend status and went about their preparations for careers as teachers.

In 1967 — Canada’s centennial year and four years before multiculturalism was adopted as an official policy — Rupee received his bachelor of education degree.

Grad ‘67: The Turning Point

After that initial meeting upstairs in the library, and against the backdrop of turbulent times, their romance began to blossom. But there were other, more personal obstacles. There were tensions between traditions — the way things had always been done and expected in families — and a dawning era of racial and religious tolerance.

Although Rupee was born in India, his grandfather was part of the first wave of immigrants from India, arriving in Victoria in 1906.

He was a labourer at a time when wages were determined according to ethnicity: 10 cents-an-hour if your skin was white, 9 cents for East Indians, 8 cents for Chinese, 6 cents for Indigenous.

The article revealed how the director of the student residences admitted she had chastized a female student, asking her “What would her mother think?” about her dating an East Indian. The incident ignited a controversy that spread from campus and to the broader community.

It wasn’t publicized at the time, but the “coloured” student in question was Rupee.

“There was this big party in a barn in Saanich. Everybody was supposed to go,” he said. “So I asked this young girl that I knew. She got a little looped with too much alcohol and she fell and she scraped her nylons. She was really getting quite drunk. So, I said to her, I think I’m going to take you back. This is not going to be good.”

When they got to the dorms they were met by the residences director. “She saw this East Indian guy with a lady with torn nylons and mud all over her and she said, ‘That’s just far enough, sonny. I’ll take her from here.’”

UVic’s student population was a relatively small group of 3,000 and only six or seven of the male students were East Indian. “Eventually the president called me into his office and said, ‘Was that you? I said yes. He said, Can you tell me about it? So I told him.’ The woman later left her job.

“I was in first-year English, sitting over there in the Elliott Building,” said Corol. “The professor came in and put the Martlet on the overhead projector and that was the assignment — to write about the issue in a 200-word essay, opposing or agreeing with the (residences manager). I never learned until a very long time afterward that Rupee (was involved). I remember being appalled that there was such a situation in Victoria. I felt it was racist. I didn’t even approve of it being called the ‘coloured date issue.’”

SHAKE ON IT:
Rupee Pallan and Tom Dheensaw at the 1967 convocation ceremony, about three years after Dheensaw lost the bet on whether Rupee would get a date with Corol.

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For the next few years, although their relationship had the support of friends and siblings, they opted for friendship over boyfriend/girlfriend status and went about their preparations for careers as teachers.

In 1967 — Canada’s centennial year and four years before multiculturalism was adopted as an official policy — Rupee received his bachelor of education degree. After the convocation ceremony in the Old Gym there was one of the last formal graduation galas — corsages, tuxedoes, gowns, orchestra — at the Empress Hotel’s Crystal Ballroom.

For Corol and Rupee, it also marked a major personal milestone.

“It was the day of the dance that I told my parents that I was going to Rupee’s graduation. That was the turning point in terms of our commitment to each other,” Corol said. “I told my parents, this is what I’m going to do. They came around and were extremely supportive of us. And they fell in love with Rupee, too.”
Two years later they got engaged and took their vows. But it still wasn’t going down so well with Rupee’s side of the family.

“When I told them I was going to get married to a Canadian girl, well Mom and Dad just flipped. They told me they had been let down, that their life had been ruined. My dad said he was going to cut me out of the will. It was just a horror show,” Rupee said. “He brought the whole family — aunts and uncles — to the house one time. He offered to bribe (Corol) to walk away.”

“Probably my father-in-law never accepted me. But he treated me respectfully,” Corol said. “When I provided him with two grandsons, that was very important. Had it been girls...I don’t know.”

They were married in 1969 in Vic West’s St. Saviour’s Anglican Church, by a Pakistani Muslim who had converted to Anglicanism. Even Corol’s paternal grandfather, initially “horrified” by their mixed marriage, came to the wedding.

“My grandfather figured that if a man of colour, a man of the Muslim faith could become an Anglican then probably there was hope,” she said. “He was very strict in his religion. It was quite interesting to see (them meet) at our wedding.”

“I remember telling (Corol), if we’re going to get married we’ve got to make this work,” Rupee said. “Because if it didn’t they would all say, ‘We told you so. You guys are idiots for doing what you did.’ We made a pact and decided to get married.”

Class Couple

Campus life at UVic in the mid-’60s was all about camaraderie. Big crowds went to Vikes hockey games on Friday nights. Rupee’s UVic East Indian Club held an infamous party one night at the Boilermakers Hall in Esquimalt. Students were close-knit. The Pallans still socialize and vacation with friends they met at university. Even now, coming back to campus brings back the feeling of those early days of the university’s history when everyone seemed to know each other.

And their academic life gave them the foundations of what turned out to be pretty rewarding careers in the public school system.

Teachers with education degrees were fairly rare in the ’60s and school districts were offering jobs left, right and centre to university grads. Even before she finished her bachelor of education in 1968, Corol had nearly a dozen job offers from across the province.

In the fall of 1967, Rupee started with the Sooke School District. His first posting was at Savory Elementary in Langford. “I was hired on the spot. I didn’t even have a resume. All I had were my marks.”

“Dad had forbidden me to date white women. He told me I would get married the traditional way.”

After three years, he made vice-principal (the first East Indian to do so in Sooke). Four years after that, he became principal and by the time his 35-year career ended he was the Sooke district’s longest-serving principal.

“I couldn’t have asked for a better job. Both of us,” he said. “Probably one of my saddest days was on the last day of school when I had to go to my office and take my name plate off the door, close it and walk out.”

Corol taught elementary school for 23 years, almost entirely in the Sooke district as well, and had a flair for computer-based education. She spent 10 years of her retirement researching 200 years of their respective family history. Her self-published book won the 2015 Family History Book Award from the BC Genealogical Society.

After all that time in Sooke schools, you get to be known around town. “There are so many (former students) I see in our community who stop and say hello,” Rupee said.

Corol smiled, rolled her eyes in mock resignation. “I don’t go shopping with him. He stops and chats with half the world.”
Fast Forward

Here’s something to think about. Suppose you were asked to consider what if? As in, if you could be free from the usual time, financial or political constraints what would you change about life in Canada.

As the country marks its sesquicentennial — and much like any birthday celebration — it’s a moment to not just mark a milestone and look back. It’s also a time to assess, set goals, possibly move in a new direction. It’s an occasion to ask something different of ourselves or our lives.

It begins with dreams. Big, audacious, bold dreams that are rarely easy to accomplish. But what if? What if you could implement a law, create a policy, raise public awareness...make something change. What would it be?
Canada should just give us our land back. Because Canada, and Canadians have committed to reconciliation, the assumption is that in doing so Canadians want to heal. They want to address the harms of the past, and they want to achieve a just relationship with Indigenous peoples.

It’s very strategic, on the part of the Canadian government, to frame it as reconciliation because it’s a hopeful vision. And a lot of people are drawn to it. But I think for people like me, and for people in the communities, that’s not what we were asking for.

The root of the matter is, our land was stolen. All of the social, psychological, medical problems that are plaguing Indigenous communities are because of that. If reconciliation doesn’t address the disconnection from the land, it is not really doing anything positive with lasting meaning for Indigenous peoples, and therefore justice cannot be achieved.

The Canadian government needs to honour the historic treaties that were signed between it and Indigenous nations. All those treaties have outlined in them a land base, and nationhood rights, and freedoms for Indigenous peoples in that land base.

Land claims today are mainly characterized as an effort by the Canadian government to restrict, or obscure, or confuse, or minimize what is outlined in the law. If the Canadian government just stopped doing that, it would be a huge step forward.

Most of the land we’re referring to is occupied by resource extraction companies. If Native people are brought into the contemporary governance of Canada, on the basis of treaties, it would not mean a mass exclusion of non-Indigenous peoples. What it would mean is a different ethic in terms of how powers are used, and environmental ethics as well. It’s not only positive for Indigenous people, it’s positive for everyone.

We weren’t asking for reconciliation. We were asking for our land back so that we can rebuild our nations. And people are starting to come to realize that reconciliation, the way that it’s built in the Canadian government’s agenda, is a way to distract from the root of the problem.

You can’t have collective empowerment without land, whether you think about it in spiritual terms, cultural terms, or economic terms.
Prejudice and discrimination have become a growing societal issue, not only in Canada but all over the world. Anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, institutional and structural racism against black people, Aboriginal people and other minorities, sexualized violence and homophobia — I am really worried about where all this is going to take us. 

As a black person, as a Muslim, and as an immigrant who does not have English as his first language, I can experience prejudice or discrimination from all directions. I have often heard from people that it is almost unavoidable to not be prejudiced or discriminated against for some reason these days. That is our experience.

If I could, I would give more teeth to human rights commissions and the institutions that can educate about discrimination and prejudice using non-partisan laws and educational curricula that do not favour one cultural worldview at the expense of others.

If I could, I would give more teeth to human rights commissions and the institutions that can educate about discrimination and prejudice using non-partisan laws and educational curricula that do not favour one cultural worldview at the expense of others.

I would say that anyone who is going to run for office in Canada, whether it is provincial or federal, should have to learn about prejudice and discrimination issues. These days, we are talking that judges should all undergo sexualized violence training and police officers and first responders for implicit bias, intercultural sensitivity and mental health training.

Politicians who use rhetoric that is oppressive, discriminatory, or racist — I think, should be weeded out. The law should be very clear that there is a limit to the freedom of expression and political immunity.

If leaders can go around demonizing communities, who am I to not do the same thing? Such leaders should be accountable to the criminal code.

Another sad thing in Canada and in many countries is that human rights organizations have lost credibility because of the adversarial and win-lose approach to human rights law. Human rights need to serve the cause of the people, not the whims of the lobbyists and the academics or the newsmakers’ agenda.

In schools, and especially from the primary level, children should go through a system where they learn and understand about human rights and its corollaries of social justice, intercultural communication, civic and democratic education and so on. High school courses about prejudice and discrimination should not be optional — they should be credit-based, in the curriculum.

I call this overall approach, a transformative civic education.

We all have the right to know and understand human rights. But most importantly, we need to know our responsibilities toward each other.
Canada, and BC in particular, has seen an extraordinary rise in overdoses in the past few years related in part to the emergence of fentanyl and other strong opioids. It shows no signs of abating.

What does the evidence say about how we can respond to this crisis? The answer lies in a public health rather than a criminal justice response to drug use, including ramping up a variety of harm reduction and treatment options, and creating policies to match.

There is a wealth of evidence that the “war on drugs” has failed to reduce the supply and demand of illicit drugs, while causing extensive harms to individuals and communities. People who use drugs have been criminalized and stigmatized, with negative impacts on their health and safety, their ability to access health and social services, and their capacity for recovery.

In contrast, there is evidence supporting harm reduction approaches (including supervised consumption sites, prescription of injectable heroin, distribution of clean needles and pipes, and drug testing kits). They reduce harm to the individual without increasing harm or risk to the broader community. For instance, they do not result in increases in local crime rates or property damage to nearby residents.

Harm reduction should be part of a broader package of health and social programs for housing, primary care, and evidence-based substance use treatment.

The one consistent finding of research to date is that there is not one type of intervention that works for everyone. We need an array of services joined, in turn, with a reduced emphasis on criminal justice approaches to controlling drug supply and demand.

As one example, decriminalization has been implemented in a number of countries over the past decade, largely in Europe and South America. In Portugal (the best evaluated experiment in decriminalization), drug use did not increase; in fact, there were declines in drug-related harms and health and legal costs in the decade following decriminalization in 2001.

Differing political and social contexts make it challenging to generalize findings from other countries to Canada, and the causes of drug-related harms are complex.

That said, the current situation in BC is a wake-up call. Our policies are failing people and they point to the need for a bold response. Given the evidence for a public health framework for addressing drug use, why would we not?
The term ‘echo chamber’ has been used a lot within the last year and a half. I saw it used more during the American presidential election. We get online and we end up following other people who share our world views, social views, political views. Gone are the days of agree to disagree.

Social media can be great as a connector, for sharing information. It’s great in the classroom. The big thing is, when you are online, on social networking sites, do your research.

Just as I tell my students when we’re looking at a research study: Who funded it? Is it reliable? Is it verifiable? Is it valid? Were more than 2,100 people surveyed? I tell them to use the sorts of norms found within quantitative research socials in social sciences. Some campuses are now offering workshops for students about how to spot real news versus fake news.

One of the things that lots of people have been talking about online and offline, is the importance of information literacy, or media literacy. And I agree with both.

I think that we need to educate everyone to think about their digital footprints, their consumption of information, their consumption of the different types of media and its forms. And this shouldn’t start in university, it should start when you hand that toddler that smart phone or iPad or something to play with.

What you disclose, it’s all part of communication, information literacy, and media literacy. We need to think about that within our daily lives.

Before you download that app, does it require you to use geolocation? Do you want to give all your data to someone? They may allege that it’s to make the app better, but then at some point (in the fine print) it says: ‘we may sell your information to third parties who will help us with our app.’

When I query my students about if they read the terms of service, or the privacy policies, no one does. No one does. It’s legalese, it’s painful. I tend to (read them) because if it’s (a product) that I want to vet or encourage people in my department to use, or faculty to use, I need to know more about it.

But (I admit) when I update my iTunes, I don’t read it anymore. Apple has me.
There is no shortage of policy ideas to enhance the protection of refugees and the displaced: more resettlement options, a revamped international refugee convention, rapid response teams, sanctuary cities, enhanced development aid, open border policies — the list goes on.

Among these options are ‘radical’ alternatives that garner little support and much opposition. There are minor adjustments that don’t address the root causes of vulnerability and displacement. Yet even minor changes face significant resistance and a lack of political will. Several powerful interests benefit immensely from the existing configuration.

To build grassroots support for more meaningful changes, I would have individuals produce their own displacement genealogy. This genealogy would not just focus on who moved where and when, but on why an individual’s family chose (or were forced) to pick up and move, and what happened to family and friends left behind.

Many Canadians would discover that their ancestors were forced to move due to a wide range of factors that defy easy categorization as ‘migrants’ or ‘refugees,’ but that severely restricted their family’s life chances.

Many would also discover they succeeded, in part, because they did not face the highly restrictive migration regime most migrants face today.

Beyond reasserting the platitude that ‘all Canadians (with the exception of First Nations) are immigrants’ and thus should be hospitable to immigrants and refugees, a displacement genealogy would provide a fuller contextual understanding of the forces and factors that led them, and others, to Canada.

It would, at the very least, challenge existing categories of migration and shake the belief that the existing system is working well for Canadians and those forced from their homes in another part of the globe.

While it is has become far too easy to dismiss others’ stories, particularly of groups we have been trained to distrust (such as asylum seekers), knowing and using one’s own story of displacement offers a potentially fruitful way to change the narrative around forced migration.

I also think the displacement genealogy would have a second benefit in terms of the Canadian relationship with First Nations.

In addition to showing how their own families were displaced — prompting the move to Canada — the displacement genealogy could focus on who they, in turn, displaced. It wouldn’t solve the ongoing issues around reconciliation and revitalization, it would personalize this shared aspect of Canadian history that is often neglected.
A pundit faced with predicting the outcome of a national vote today might be a lot more likely to hesitate than a year ago. Before the Brexit referendum and the rise of Donald Trump, experts were confident in opinions that were based on polling data and comfortable margins of error.

But when ballots defy predictions, and populist sentiment prevails, is it proof that insiders and elites just don’t get it? And what are we to make of populism? How is it different in today’s world and how does it echo the past?

In a recent Ideafest panel discussion on campus, and in subsequent interviews, four historians offered their insight. They acknowledge the rising populist trend but they also agree that it isn’t necessarily a new or unique sentiment. Nor is it tied to any one ideology.

Populism reflects the state of a democracy. Voters express hopes, anxieties, frustrations and populist leaders tap into those ideas and emotions by giving them voice. Such leaders are often charismatic, or at least different from the ruck of politicians, in that they appear unfiltered and unabashed. To supporters, they come across as real.

Ideally, populists can invigorate liberal democracies. Either the so-called elites sit up and take notice of people’s dissatisfaction or they are swept from power at election time. On the flip side, populists may foment anxieties out of all proportion to their causes and enact muddled, ruinous agendas.

What do historians say is behind present day populism? In America and across Europe, they cite widespread anger toward others who represent perceived threats (to their values, prosperity, or cultural identity). Wealth inequality is a big part of it too. Not since the 1930s has such a gap existed. Oxfam International reported this year that eight individuals have the same wealth as the poorest half of the global population. Terrorism looms. And there’s fake news (such as the ‘Euromyth’ about the EU banning bananas of incorrect curvature).

In the case of Brexit, the populist Leave movement blamed the European Union. Membership in the EU, the Leave side argued, deprived the UK of its sovereignty as Brussel’s civil servants made the rules, migrants took the jobs and the UK gave more than it got. The “America first” rhetoric expresses a similar sentiment: in deals with other countries, whether on trade such as NAFTA, on defence such as NATO, on the environment such as the Paris Agreement on climate change, the US was being deprived of a past glory.

Can bold populist campaign platforms become policies that deliver on their promises or will they prove to be near-sighted and backfire?

These four historians provide a few cautionary notes.
1. POPULIST MOVEMENTS ARE NOTHING NEW.

“In 1945, the United States, with six percent of the world’s population, controlled 50 percent of its wealth. The result of that for the next 25 years was high income, home ownership and consumer spending. In the midst of this prosperity, conservative populism bubbled. Joseph McCarthy spoke to it when he denounced the government elite that controlled US policy. And figures such as Barry Goldwater in the mid-1960s spoke to it when he spoke of the distrust of the rising liberal state, especially with regard to civil rights reform and the Great Society.”

JASON COLBY, Associate Professor of History, specializing in the modern US

“The Brexit referendum was not the first time the UK has grappled with questions related to freedom of movement or trade agreements. In the immediate post-war period and extending into the 1970s and early 80s, an influx of migration from the former empire resulted in substantial efforts towards restriction. These set of measures were widely supported by the public on the grounds that they feared the impact that immigrants were perceived to have or might be anticipated to have on welfare services such as schools, hospitals, housing and access to jobs.”

NICOLE LONGPRE, postdoctoral student in modern British history

2. Now, as then, populism is a consequence of frustrations.

“You could make an argument that populism is a corrective of liberal democracy, a reminder that many people feel disenfranchised; they no longer trust the political system, they don’t feel represented by political parties; maybe it is a matter of steering established actors in a direction that makes them more responsible.”

OLIVER SCHMIDTKE, Professor and UVic European Studies Scholar in the Departments of History and Political Science
3. ...and of failures to address those frustrations.

“Having visited the EU’s office in London and seen the kind of material they had available, it was really not designed to efficiently communicate their purpose and function to the general public, and there was very little effort to use the sorts of public service announcements that a domestic government would normally use (civics education in UK schools is really focused on the domestic government, not on the functioning of the EU). The Remain campaign also fell short on this score, taking for granted that everyone in the UK already knew what the EU was about and how it worked, which evidently they did/do not. This was exacerbated by widespread coverage in the mainstream and in the tabloid press, emphasizing the corruption and the opacity of politics at the EU level.”

NICOLE LONGPRE

4. POPULISTS MAY USE AND ABUSE THE MEDIA BUT THE PUBLICS’ MISEDUCATION IS ALSO SELF-INFLECTED.

“If you start calling everything fake news and you break down even more people’s faith in an objective truth we can all agree on, then the real fake news can become just as legitimate as other sources like the New York Times or CNN. It’s not that we haven’t seen a government criticize the press, but we’ve never seen the government go after the press as a legitimate participant in American democracy.”

JASON COLBY

“Often we think of social media as diversifying our news feeds. But we also know quite the opposite occurs. People go back to the very same news feeds. So we’re receiving from a narrower spectrum of the media, which adds momentum to the polarization.”

MARTIN BUNTON, Professor of History of the modern Middle East, world history and colonial land policies

5. AFTER THE VOTES ARE COUNTED, ISSUES MAY PERSIST — OR WORSEN.

“The Vote Leave campaign bus that traveled around the UK for six weeks famously claimed: ‘We send the EU £350 million a week, let’s fund our National Health Service instead. Vote leave.’ Not only was the statement an ‘alternate fact’ in that the UK receives money back from Europe, but once the referendum passed, the leaders on the Leave side abandoned the idea.”

NICOLE LONGPRE

“Populism often doesn’t have a coherent policy agenda. To the surprise of Trump, he realized that health care is very complex. Once people realize these promises can’t be easily implemented by shutting the doors to immigrants or by slapping high taxes on imported goods, the frustration may lead to a new spiral of disillusionment. You don’t know where this is going to lead.”

OLIVER SCHMIDTKE
6. Which brings us to the fact that liberal democracies are not a given.

“What allows democracies to work is well educated and engaged citizens. We don’t put our trust in one charismatic leader. It needs to work on the ground level and by citizens who take ownership. What we’ve learned is how fragile democracy is. We take it for granted; it can be taken away and that’s what historians can also tell us.”

OLIVER SCHMIDTKE

“Multiculturalism has become a defining mark of Canadian national identity allowing this country to be defined by the commitment to inclusiveness and tolerance regarding cultural diversity. Populism with its renewed emphasis on narrowly defined national interests and values is directly opposed to this vision. Populism proposes traditional modes of national identity linking the notion of what constitutes the national community to a particular ethno-cultural group (with the implied exclusion of those who are deemed alien to this community). The competing vision is one in which the collective identity is tied to fundamental rights and values irrespective of origin and ethno-cultural background.”

OLIVER SCHMIDTKE

What then is the right response to populist leadership? I caution against the idea that one ought to respond to a right wing populist leader with a left wing populism because the only path that it seems populism can lead to is one of increasing polarization, increasing breaking of the social trust on which democracy relies and risking key elements of the democratic process: the rule of law, the role of a free press, the judicial system and the welfare of minorities.”

MARTIN BUNTON

7. And that Canada seems to be more populism-resistant than elsewhere.

“My impression is that young Canadians often take for granted the social contract and the mutual obligation that Canadians have built. They don’t understand that it’s more fragile than it seems. The peril is that when large sections of your country respond to economic change and immigration with fear, which is understandable for people to react that way. The danger is in no longer seeing your fellow Canadians as part of you, that you’re all in this together.”

JASON COLBY

“The biggest barrier to the rise of a populist movement in Canada is the first-past-the-post electoral system. It’s incredibly difficult to get elected to office without affiliation to a major political party, so if you were a populist, you would have to win the leadership of one of those parties in order to win office. This would change if we adopted a different electoral system, obviously. Regionalism is also a major problem, since in order to be successful the movement would have to have support across most of Canada.”

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What then is the right response to populist leadership? I caution against the idea that one ought to respond to a right wing populist leader with a left wing populism because the only path that it seems populism can lead to is one of increasing polarization, increasing breaking of the social trust on which democracy relies and risking key elements of the democratic process: the rule of law, the role of a free press, the judicial system and the welfare of minorities.”

MARTIN BUNTON

The biggest barrier to the rise of a populist movement in Canada is the first-past-the-post electoral system. It’s incredibly difficult to get elected to office without affiliation to a major political party, so if you were a populist, you would have to win the leadership of one of those parties in order to win office. This would change if we adopted a different electoral system, obviously. Regionalism is also a major problem, since in order to be successful the movement would have to have support across most of Canada.”

OLIVER SCHMIDTKE
Tapestry

Borders divide cultures, they don’t have to do the same to empathy

BY ASHLI AKINS, BA ’09

I had worked with indigenous Quechua weavers in Peru for almost a decade when one day I noticed something new in their weavings. They had invented a symbol (or changed the meaning of an older one) to represent the value of education in their communities: open and closed books stitched along the tapestry edge.

When I told colleagues in Canada, I was met with comments like But they can’t do that! It’s not part of their tradition! Those reactions sum up a key problem with globalization and development: the “museumification” of culture; that somehow tradition is fixed and stagnant, unchanging.

As part of my work with Mosqoy, the charitable organization I founded 11 years ago to promote educational and cultural rights in the Peruvian Andes, I lead Canadian students on culturally responsible field trips. Youth who start with romanticized mantras of museumification change after they meet an elder, take part in a natural-dyeing workshop, or learn from the land. They no longer think in terms of us and them.

As we mark Canada 150 at a time of such political polarization and socioeconomic disparity, and the impacts of development and colonization. Perhaps we can use this moment to push ourselves and each other toward greater empathy, to critically examine our roles as friends, collaborators, allies, and supporters, and to ask how we can make a positive impact for future generations who will live on this land, inside and outside our nation’s borders.

Vancouver embraced the motto “City of Reconciliation” after talking to First Nations elders, and it named the celebrations “Canada 150 Plus: Moving Forward Together.” To me this is the greatest honour we could do to celebrate what we consider home.

My work in social justice and human rights keeps me abroad more than half the year. I am grateful to come home to a country that supports independent artists, acknowledges women’s rights as human rights, and welcomes many immigrants and refugees. But it’s also a place that denies genocide and indigenous sovereignty, and that gentifies urban neighbourhoods by rendering housing inaccessible to many. Mine is a complex home and we are a complicated family.

When I’m away, these are the stories I share, not the sugar-coated “I am Canadian” slogan. Some of the most interesting cross-cultural dialogue stems from these juxtaposed stories because every country — and every culture — reveals its own complex layered truths once the mask of romanticization is removed. It’s okay to be grateful and confused, to be proud and ashamed, as long as we do something with these contradictions. Words themselves do not make change and are too easy to hide behind in this digital age of “slacktivism” and “clicktivism.”

In my work, I’m surrounded by activists who often feel paralyzed by pain and guilt. Their ambition fades to apathy. I too have lost and found my breath too many times to count. One of the most important tasks Canadians can do right now is to not become paralyzed. To understand where we sit within the bigger picture, focus on what inspires us — and act. We are needed. If those who care the most become the most burnt out, silent, and broken, so too will our country and communities.

Let’s tackle the many challenges by supporting one another. Let’s start by listening to those who are most affected and marginalized. As individuals, let’s focus on one or two issues and engage with the rest simply by being educated, empathetic citizens.

I will choose to honour strangers on the street by not objectifying or ignoring them. I will vote. I will host potlucks. When I can, I’ll buy from local artists and retailers, and support socially and environmentally conscious businesses. And I will support others’ causes through social media shout-outs and simple acts of gratitude.

The Quechua women have taught me the beauty of celebrating histories while interweaving new meanings, tools, and methods. We are the protagonists of our living history, the curators of a story that future generations will read. Let’s make it a story about empathy.

Vancouver embraced the motto “City of Reconciliation” after talking to First Nations elders, and it named the celebrations “Canada 150 Plus: Moving Forward Together.” To me this is the greatest honour we could do to celebrate what we consider home.
A Canadian Champion

Ryan Cochrane’s performance in the 2008 Olympics saved Canadian swimming

BY ALISTAIR OGDEN, BA ‘18

Often in sport, there’s an expectation of a final moment of glory, one where a competitor defies the odds, achieves victory, and is cheered off into the sunset. But for the majority of athletes, that goal is never reached. After winning medals at both Beijing 2008 and London 2012, Rio 2016 was supposed to be swimmer Ryan Cochrane’s final triumph. The Canadian swim team’s co-captain had his sights on a medal in both the 400-m and 1500-m freestyle events. But two frustrating performances later, he’d finished well back. A storybook ending wasn’t to be but his legacy of achievements in the pool and his impact on the Canadian national team are profound.
The national team was at an historic low point. Cochrane’s teammates had been unable to reach the podium and Canada’s eight-year medal drought in the pool looked set to continue.

But after a performance in the preliminaries that briefly gave him an Olympic record, Cochrane launched himself firmly into the running for the 1500-m freestyle. On the last day of competition, Cochrane dove into the pool to take on the world’s best. Fourteen minutes and 42.69 seconds later, he’d won bronze — the first Canadian Olympic medal in swimming since Sydney 2000, and the first Canadian medal in the 1500-m freestyle in 88 years.

“I don’t think when I went through the process of my first Olympics that I really appreciated living in the moment or how long I’d dreamed about that,” Cochrane mused. “It took probably four or five years to really think, ‘I was able to accomplish that at 19’… Everything (was) so quick and exciting.”

Seven months after Rio, Cochrane announced his retirement from competitive swimming and took on a job with a software company in Victoria.

“It’s been a shift,” he said. “(There are) parts of being an athlete I miss an incredible amount already. The newfound freedom I have is really nice, but working a nine to five job at a desk is quite a substantial change. It makes you very thankful for the experiences you’ve had.”

In the months between his last race and the announcement, Cochrane toured the country with the Swimming Smart campaign, completed a project-management diploma, and spoke at the Walrus Talks Victoria. But an inner debate between retirement and a return to competition was going on throughout.

“I took some time after the games to reflect and try to see a more holistic view of my last 20 years,” Cochrane explained. “Everything that I’ve done is intertwined with the sport and so (deciding) was very difficult. I thought there was going to be a moment of clarity and there really wasn’t.”

Cochrane has no shortage of fantastic experiences to reflect upon. After entering the pool for the first time as a competitive swimmer at age nine, he medalled and won in race after race, earning opportunities to travel and compete for over a decade.

The first indication of Cochrane’s potential came at the 2005 Canada Summer Games in Regina, when he won five medals. The following year, he came to UVic and established himself on the international stage with strong performances at the Pan Pacific and Commonwealth Games.

Then, at the Beijing Olympics in 2008, Cochrane earned a quintessential place Canadian swimming history.

Ryan’s Reach

Ryan Cochrane, BA ’14, was Canada’s most decorated international swimmer when he announced his retirement in March. Some of his career highlights:

3 Olympics
5 World Championships
3 Commonwealth Games
1 Silver medal, 2012 Olympics (1500-m freestyle)
1 Bronze medal, 2008 Olympics (1500-m freestyle)
8 World Championship medals
3 Pan-American Games medals
4 Commonwealth Games gold medals
by. “I look back on my time at UVic and I wish I had been more invested in student life,” he said. “I was always one step out the door with sports.”

“One of my favourite memories is the professors I had who appreciated that I was in sport but also really pushed me to excel at school,” said Cochrane. “(They) were invested in how you were doing, they wanted to see you succeed, and whether that was in the classroom or outside of it, it was about creating the best person that that student could be.”

Despite Cochrane’s early introduction to the Olympics in Beijing, it wasn’t until he attended the Vancouver 2010 winter games that he understood how strongly Canadians can get behind their athletes. “I wasn’t really aware, up until that point, how many Canadians were that passionate about sport,” he said. “That (memory) was something I carried with me every year that we were away. Knowing that there is a pride in being Canadian.”

Cochrane’s coach, Randy Bennett, died of lung cancer in 2014. Cochrane described Bennett as a “mentor, a visionary, and a friend” who had been training him since he was a teenager. But the pair got to share the experience of earning a silver medal for Canada at London 2012, a performance Cochrane considers one of his finest.

“When I was standing on the podium... (I knew) second was the best I was going to do and that made me very proud to see the flag going up in that position. It’s another reminder of how many steps and how many people it takes to get to that opportunity. Yeah, you dive in the water and it’s an individual sport but there’s no way you could do that without all of (that support).”

Now that he’s back on dry land for good, Cochrane hopes to be involved in a similar support system for the next wave of Canadian Olympians. “I think it would be exciting to be able to share (my knowledge) with our next generation of athletes,” he said. “Everything I’ve known is sport-related and it’s exciting to take a job outside of sport and apply those skills to the working world. But I also think (sport) is one of those things I can never give up.”

Joy Barrett’s home in Esquimalt — built with her late husband Bill 55 years ago — sits high enough on a rocky hill that, when it’s clear, she can see the Gulf Islands. “I can call my son and daughter-in-law (Salt Spring residents) and tell them whether it snowed overnight.”

She makes regular visits to a local Starbucks where the staff treat her like family. She’ll have the odd beer. She keeps tabs on the Canucks. And as she reaches the age of 90, she maintains a big role on the board of the UVic Alumni Association, representing the Victoria College Alumni Chapter.

In the last several years, she helped organize and emcee nearly two dozen of the group’s “Lunch-and-Learn” events featuring talks by UVic researchers and grad students. Vic College alumni also support a pair of bursaries that last year provided financial assistance to five students.

She’s a career educator who can’t help but keep teaching. She makes it a point to remind younger alumni board member about UVic’s history and how it was founded on academic traditions that began in 1903 with the opening of Victoria College.

“To me it’s very important that (the other board members) know their roots,” she says. “The first thing that strikes me is her commitment to UVic and Vic College, how highly she values it,” says Alumni Relations Director Terry Cockerline. “The other thing is her open mind, how willing she is to engage others. She’s a taskmaster. I love how she keeps people going with wit and humour. She’s an absolute pleasure as a volunteer and Victoria College alumni wouldn’t be nearly as involved if it wasn’t for Joy.”

Barrett attended Victoria College in 1945-46, when classes were in Craigdarroch Castle and she would take the street car from the family home in Vic West. But World War II veterans had come home and the college was bursting at the seams.

The next year, classes moved to the more spacious Lansdowne campus. It also housed the Victoria Provincial Normal School, which is where Barrett took her teacher training.

Her great-grandmother was in the first class of new teachers who graduated from the Nova Scotia Normal School, in 1855. Her mom taught. As did her aunt and other relatives. “My mother wanted me to keep the family tradition going,” she says. “I didn’t let them down.”

Barrett’s first teaching job was in Duncan in 1947, where the Vimy Dancehall had been converted into a schoolhouse. But most of her many years of teaching were spent in elementary schools in Victoria, interrupted for a few years when she had her son. Mothers, in those days, were forced to retire from teaching jobs.

She returned to the classroom in 1959, teaching elementary school — first at Sir James Douglas and then at Willows — for the next 28 years. She made lifetime impressions on countless young people, including Helen Raptis, PhD ’01, now a professor in the Faculty of Education.

“When I entered school, I spoke very little English,” says Raptis. “I was as shy and quiet as a mouse. I remember being taught how to read by Mrs. Barrett. She — and other teachers who followed her — led me to a career in teaching. She continues to serve the educational community long after retiring (and that’s) truly exemplary.”

Another satisfied customer.
For Lesley Patten, BCom ’06, June brings an end of her two-year term at the helm of the UVic Alumni Association’s board of directors.

Her time as president, she says, has been highlighted by association’s growth and engagement, and more contributions to the Alumni Fund. She also points to the association’s student-focused support of the new Centre for Athletics, Recreation and Special Abilities.

Bursaries funded by alumni provide access to CARSA’s incredible options for healthy living.

“A letter we received (from a bursary recipient and future alumna) as thanks for the CARSAmembership shows what we can do,” Patten says. “It enabled her to go to the gym, improve her grades, improve her mental health and give back to her community.”

Patten will remain on the board (as past-president). Peter Jong, BSc ’03, takes over as president.

**Vrooman at AGM**

The alumni board wraps up the year’s business in June. The Annual General Meeting (on the evening of June 21 at the University Club) will also feature Tamara Vrooman, MA ’95.

The president and CEO of VanCity credit union will talk about banking and social change in a sit-down discussion with alumni board member (and CHEK TV News anchor) Stacy Ross, BFA ’97 following the association’s business meeting. Visit uvic.ca/alumni to book your seat.

**Events**

**June**

Health Information Science Pub Night
June 8 | Victoria

UVic Law Centre 40th Anniversary
June 9

UVic Spring Convocation
June 12–16

**July**

Canada Day All-Canadian Alumni Celebrations
June 29 | California

**September**

Class of ’67 50-year reunion
September 15

Vikes Championship Breakfast
September 26

Details + registration:
Alumni.uvic.ca

**UVic Alumni Relations and Annual Giving team organized the university’s first foray into Giving Tuesday on Nov. 29, raising money to support students and the Alumni Fund. Giving Tuesday is the international effort to promote charitable giving as an antidote to pre-holiday season commercialism.**

$21,286
Total gifts received.

209
Hot chocolates given out across campus served with Countless Sugar sprinkles in UVic colours.

27
First-time donors.

63
Volunteer hours.
Class Notes

News and photos from around the alumni world

1970s

JOHN “DEKE” D’ARCANGELO, BA ’70 (History), produced A Trail to Remember, a popular collection of stories about the city’s “good old days” which he published in cooperation with the Trail Historical Society. Due to an editing error, the title of the book was incorrectly identified in the autumn 2016 edition of the Torch.

STEVE GUPPY, BA ’77 (Writing), MA ’88 (English), has published a textbook for poets and creative writing classes. Writing and Workshopping Poetry: A Constructive Introduction was published in December 2016 by Broadview Press. Steve also retired in December after over 29 years as a professor in the department of creative writing and journalism and the department of English at Vancouver Island University.

KELLY MANNING, BSc ’77 (Physics/Mathematics), attended the 2017 Privacy and Security Conference in Victoria. “Reminisced with attendees about: being the technical architect for the dialup version of BC Online in 1988, and about solving the ‘highly visible problem’ with BC Pharmanet name search performance in 1995; seeing news reporters waving BC Online printouts showing Premier Bill Vander Zalm was still on the board of Fantasy Gardens, and that Fantasy Gardens had purchased a Petro Canada property without going to public sale offer — an unintended consequence of BC Online.”

1980s

TERRY COLLIS, BEd ’85, has an update: “Completed my MA in psychology from Adler School in 2000. Just retired as principal of special education in an Okanagan school district. Enjoyed helping students with special learning and behavioral needs. My wife SUSAN COLLIS-DURRANT and I just moved back to Victoria and are loving it! Susan taught primary students for many years in the Okanagan and loved to teach reading to Grade 1 students. Life is great with travel, family and our first grandchild.”

SUSAN COLLIS-DURRANT AND TERRY COLLIS

JOHN GOMEZ, BA ’87 (Economics/Sociology), has been appointed president and CEO of Vancouver-based mineral exploration company, Inomin Mines.

J. KELLY HOEY, BA ’87 (Political Science), is a venture capitalist and author of Build Your Dream Network: Forging Powerful Relationships in a Hyper-Connected World (published by TarcherPerigree). The book, released in January, promises “a fresh new approach to mastering this timeworn skill in a world where everyone is posting, liking, and friend fast and furiously, but many are failing to leverage their connections successfully.” Forbes named her one of the five “women who are changing the world of VC/entrepreneurship” and in 2013 Fast Company included her on its list of the “25 smartest women on Twitter.”

JOYCE THIERRY LLEWELLYN, BA ’88 (Writing), was recently in China to teach screenwriting for four months in the Vancouver Film School’s campus at Shanghai University.

TONY WILSON, LLB ’85, was appointed the honorary title Queen’s Counsel by the BC attorney general and minister of justice. An elected bencher of the Law Society of BC since 2012, he’s also been a small business columnist for the Globe and Mail since 2010. He continues to practice franchise law at Boughton Law in Vancouver and remains active in law reform as a member of the BC Law Institute.

1990s

PHIL CHOW, MPA ’91, writes: “What’s new with me is that I started my own digital consulting agency, noticedwebsites.com. I was working in the public sector, but wanted a change. I started an Internet-based business because of its many advantages and opportunities. I can’t say I miss the office cubicle. Because I can...”

CEILIDHE MAHER, BA ’16 (History), and LAUREN HUME, BA ’06 (Psychology), were part of the crowd at the 10th anniversary launch of Alumni Week in February at the UVic Welcome Centre.
now also work anywhere there’s Wi-Fi, I plan to travel for up to a year, once my business becomes self-sustaining. Always glad to hear from fellow grads, classmates or students if any questions or like to connect or reconnect. I hope to visit UVic in the near future. From pictures, it looks like the campus has changed a lot since I last visited. I don’t see any bunnies in these pictures!”


** PETER FAST, BCom ’95,** received the UVic Alumni Association’s Volunteer of the Year Award. Since 2000, Peter has been behind the formation, growth and success of the Vikes Men’s Soccer Alumni Chapter. In that time, the chapter has raised more than $120,000 for student awards and team operations. The annual alumni game, dinner and silent auction usually draws about 60 former players.

**ANN ERIKSSON, BSc ’94 (Biology/Environmental Studies),** published her fifth novel, *The Performance,* in October 2016.

**PING KITNIKONE, MPA ’94,** was named as Canada’s ambassador to Vietnam last year. She joined the federal department of external affairs and international trade in 1994, working in a range of positions in Ottawa and overseas, including consul general in Mumbai.

**2000s**

**JEFF ANGUS, BCom ’09,** runs marketing for PlaySight Interactive, a global sports technology company. After

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**New Sensations**

Neuroscientists and engineers at the University of Pittsburgh — led by Dr. **ROBERT GAUNT, MEng ’00** — have created a natural sense of touch for a paralyzed man.

As reported in the journal *Science Translational Medicine,* the team implanted electrodes in the patient’s sensory cortex. The electrodes received signals from the robotic arm. When a researcher pressed the fingers of the prosthesis, the man felt the pressure in the fingers of his paralyzed right hand, effectively bypassing his damaged spinal cord.

It’s the first time technology has been used to safely micro-stimulate the human brain to create a natural sense of touch. “There were places on his hand where he hasn’t felt in 10 years,” Gaunt said.

The findings drew international media attention and the researchers demonstrated the technology during a lab visit from former President Barak Obama.

With a sense of touch, users of artificial limbs would have more precise control over their ability to pick things up.

“For this project we are (now) trying to show that performance in realistic tasks such as grabbing a cup or fragile object is improved because he can ‘feel’ the objects he is holding,” Gaunt said via email. “This is a tough problem though!”

The goal is to create an artificial limb that can be controlled by thought and provides natural-feeling feedback to the user.

Gaunt’s contributions to advances in sensorimotor control and neuroprosthetics are a long way from his days in the Saanich school system and helping to lead Science Venture camps during his undergraduate years at UVic.

“It’s getting to be a long time ago now,” Gaunt recalled, “but the things that really stand out to me from that time were the fourth-year design class, my various co-op experiences — and the robotics and mechanisms classes with Ron Podhorodeski and my classes with Ned Djilali.”

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**HANDIWORK:** Alumnus Robert Gaunt is helping to restore the sense of touch for people with spinal cord injuries.
starting out at the company’s US headquarters in New Jersey, he moved to Los Angeles last year to open a west coast location. He received his MBA at the University of Oregon in 2015 with a focus in sports marketing.

**Cynthia Korpan, MA ’09** (Anthropology), is one of two inaugural recipients of the Educational Developer Leadership Award from the Educational Developers Caucus. It recognizes her “exemplary contributions to educational development in Canada.” Cynthia works at Uvic’s Learning and Teaching Centre where she manages professional development programs and teacher assistant training. Her ground-breaking work led to the collaborative development of the TA competency framework, now used in multiple institutions across the country.

**Brad Gemmell, BSc ’06** (Biology), an assistant professor at the University of South Florida, earned a 2017 research fellowship for early-career scholars from the Alfred P. Sloan foundation. He joined USF’s department of integrative biology in 2015 where he studies zooplankton and other small marine organisms and the impacts of climate change on their ecosystems. “It’s an extreme honour to be recognized by the Sloan Foundation for the work that I am doing and for colleagues to see the potential in my research to make a large-scale difference,” he said. His focus — which spans from Norway to Central America, and from the Pacific Northwest to the Gulf of Mexico — seeks explanations for how marine organisms use the dynamics of their environment to grow, feed and thrive. The $60,000 US fellowships (126 were handed out in the US and Canada) support the next generation of scientists in furthering their research programs.

**Anita Deneault, MA ’02** (Indigenous Governance), Secwepemc (Shuswap/Cree), has written and published *Sunflower: A Flow to Light*, a “journey in my experience of energy.” A reiki master, she has worked for 14 years in the healing field.

**Jesse Koovik Eyer, BSc ’02** (Physics), made it all the way to the shortlist of 72 candidates (whittled down from nearly 4,000 applicants) to become one of Canada’s next astronauts before missing the cut. Born in Iqaluit, and also raised in Pond Inlet and Cape Dorset, Jesse says he dreamed of becoming an astronaut.

**Travellin’ Band**  
Japandroids — the Vancouver-based power-punk pairing of singer-guitarist **Brian King** with **David Prowse** on drums — is touring behind its third album, gathering critical praise and US network TV appearances.

King, BSc ’05 (Geography/Earth Science) and Prowse were students when they met and formed the band in 2006. Their new release, *Near to the Wild Heart of Life*, launched with an appearance on The Late Show with Stephen Colbert at the end of January, earned a four-star review from *Rolling Stone*.

It takes its title from a passage of James Joyce’s novel, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. King, who grew up in Nanaimo, says that novel, and Clarice Lispector’s *Near to the Wild Heart*, influenced the new record’s themes of awakening and the band’s evolution from the raw energy of their previous recordings.

The album was recorded in Vancouver, Toronto, New Orleans and Mexico City. The mult-city recording approach is fitting. Like most recording artists trying to make a buck these days, they have well-worn passports.

In support of their last album they went through the “heaven and hell” of performing more than 200 shows in 40 countries. That tour ended, after more than 18 months, in 2013. They took a badly needed break and didn’t go on stage again for three years.

Album three finds them back out on the road with a string of tour dates that, by the end of the year will have taken them across North America, Europe, the UK and several festival dates including Barcelona’s Primavera Sound.
Alumni Leaders

Meet the 2017 Distinguished Alumni Award recipients, selected by the faculties, divisions and the UVic Libraries. Unfortunately, snow forced cancellation of the award presentations during Alumni Week in February. We admire them, no matter what the elements bring.

CONTINUING STUDIES
Denise Blackwell, Cert ’94, member of Langford council since 1992. She is also a Capital Regional District director, after previously serving as chair and vice-chair.

EDUCATION
Andrea Minter, BA ’04, is the owner of Russell Books in Victoria, the business her grandfather started more than 50 years ago.

ENGINEERING
Maher Fahmi, MASC ’94, works in semiconductor design and telecommunications and is VP of product development for Microsemi Corporation.

FINE ARTS
Althea Thauberger, MFA ’02 — an artist, filmmaker, and educator — creates social documents with lasting engagements with the communities in which they are produced.

GUSTAVSON SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
Lenora Lee, BCom ’02, was the first woman promoted to partner in KPMG’s Victoria office and she’s a trusted advisor to clients in the public, private and non-profit sectors.

HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
Simon Hall, MSc ’10, is the provincial director of health sector information management and IT, building on his master’s research on BC’s non-emergency health information service.

HUMANITIES
Bev Sellars, BA ’97, is a former chief of the Xat’sull (Soda Creek) First Nation and the author of They Called Me Number One: Secrets and Survival at an Indian Residential School.

LAW
Herman Van Ommen, LLB ’84, QC, is president of the Law Society of BC and nationally recognized for this work in arbitration, securities, and dispute resolution.

LIBRARIES
Martin Segger, BA ’69, former director of the Maltwood Art Museum and Gallery, served on Victoria council and has produced books and films about the city’s art and architecture.

MEDICAL SCIENCES
Dr. Murray Fyfe, BSc ’81, is a medical health officer for Vancouver Island communities, leading large outbreak investigations and influencing public health policies.

SCIENCE
David Hannay, MSc ’95, and Roberto Racca, PhD ’90, are two of three principals of JASCO Applied Sciences. Their partnership in environmental marine noise monitoring, modelling and mitigation has helped to make JASCO a leader in ocean sciences, with about 75 employees in several countries.

SOCIAL SCIENCES
Bob Cummings, BA ’89, WestJet executive vice-president, commercial. He led his team’s creation of the airline’s “owners” advertising campaign — the most successful branding effort in the company’s history.
astronaut since he was a child. “Around nine years old, I made a conscious decision that I wanted to become an astronaut,” he told CBC News. “I was already fascinated with space.” After his undergrad, Jesse got his master’s degree in aerospace engineering from the Georgia Institute of Technology, and a PhD in aerospace engineering from the University of Toronto. He works as a space systems engineer with Planet Labs in Germany, specializing in Earth-imaging satellites.

DAGMAR ROTHWELL, BA ’03 (English), has a tasty update from Armstrong, BC: “Lex and I have a new venture! It starts with ‘c’ and rhymes with ‘please.’ That’s right. We’ve dropped everything and jumped feet first into the cheese business. No more llamas and alpacas for Lex (dangerous!) and my book project on the Armstrong thrift shop scandal has been delayed (lawyers!) for now. Instead, we’ve caught the bug for cheese-making and we’re up to our elbows in squeaky curds. Our goal is to open a cheese-theme bed-and-breakfast.”

2010s

LINDSAY KATSITSAKATSTE DELARONDE, MFA ’10 (Visual Arts), MA ’16 (Indigenous Communities Counselling Psychology), an Iroquois Mohawk artist, has been named the City of Victoria’s indigenous artist-in-residence. The new program is an opportunity to develop artistic works and engage the community for a one-year term.

Born and raised on the Kahnawake reservation, she is a multi-disciplinary visual artist working in print-making, painting, drawing, video and performance. “I hope to create artworks that reflect the values of this land, which are cultivated and nurtured by the Indigenous peoples of this territory,” she said. “I see my role as a way to acknowledge that reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples is a process in which I can facilitate a collaborative approach for strong relationships (and) co-created art.” (Corina Fischer photo.)

HUGH KRUZEL

HUGH KRUZEL, Cert ’10, writes: “I have to credit the Gustavson Master’s Certification in Project Management with my recent career and assignment successes. I am now in my third year with the Northern Centre for Advanced Technology (in Sudbury). Innovation, occupational health and safety training, the world of start-ups, and in day-to-day operations — NORCAT is a vibrant contributor to regional economic prosperity. What a wonderful sandbox to play in.”

LINDSAY J. MCCUNN, PhD ’16 (Psychology), first graduated from UVic with a BA in psychology in 2004 before working for the BC provincial government in various capacities until 2008. She returned to UVic do an MSc and a PhD in psychology, specializing in environmental/architecture psychology. “I was very pleased to be hired as an assistant professor of psychology in 2015 at the University of Washington Tacoma, but will be returning to Canada to take up a position as professor of psychology at Vancouver Island University in the fall of 2017.”

JASON MOTZ, BA ’11 (English/Professional Writing), sent in this about his post-UVic life so far: “Six years ago this August, I wrote my last exam at UVic. A week later, diploma in hand and gown in the wind, this Victoria-born would-be writer/editor packed up his life and moved to the heady streets of North Vancouver. Despite a rough landing, things stabilized to the point where I can look back at the move and say, yeah it was all worth it. I’m a graduate of the Professional Writing program, where Dr. Elizabeth Grove-White instructed me in the art of killing my ‘darlings’ and Susan Boyle opined that I’d ‘never be an editor. I have spent the past three years as the managing editor of Positive Living magazine. The publication, which services the HIV-positive community of BC, has been the perfect vehicle to put into practice the skills taught in PW. Though I miss The Martlet offices every now and again, I am placated by the occasional publication in The Vancouver Sun or whatever website will have me. I have worked, volunteered, and interned with the Dalai Lama Center, Arts Umbrella, Color, Western Living, and Whitecap Books since arriving on the mainland. I have just finished a slate of workshop and speaking engagements. This spring, I leap into the deep end: I am set to outline a continuing education course proposal for Capilano University so that I can use the summer to work on a book. (Detective fiction or essays about Bruce Springsteen, yet to decide.) Of course, the money is horrific, and life in Vancouver is unsustainable by any sane metric, but I couldn’t be any happier with my present station if I was slathered in ranch dressing. And though I will never be the success...”
that my younger, less cynical self yearned to be, I am doing things that I love. Without UVic, PW, The Martlet, and all of the profs who challenged and/or encouraged me, I would have been another casualty of self-doubt, a balloon adrift in oblivion. This is much better.”

MIKE NESSELBECK, BComm ’16, says inspirations from the University of Victoria related to entrepreneurship led to his creation of Businessideainsight.com. It’s a resource built to help aspiring entrepreneurs think of business ideas. “No one should be discouraged from starting their own business from a lack of ideas,” he says.

AMELIE PATTERSON, BSc ’15 (Biology) has been named Banff’s first poet laureate and will spend the year as a public ambassador for the arts in her hometown. After leaving UVic she opted for a career as a folk-rock singer and songwriter instead of pursuing her initial plan, veterinary medicine. She returned to Alberta and immersed herself in the Calgary music scene. “I read a lot of poetry. I love poetry anthologies because I find them similar to a good playlist when you’re driving,” she said in a media release.

MELISSA YUE, BA ’13 (Applied Linguistics), writes: “I’m part of a new worker co-op here in town called Real English Victoria Language Co-op. We’re an innovative English as a second language school that uses project-based learning to give students an authentic language learning experience.”

The Young Alumni Council’s first PAINT NITE, initially postponed by snow, attracted about 40 would-be Emily Carrs who picked up a brush (and a drink, for inspiration of course).

What’s New With You?
Be in the next Class Notes. Send news and photos to: torch@uvic.ca

Farewell

THOMAS EDWARD BURGESS, BSc ’64 (Biology), was regional wildlife biologist in the Lower Mainland from 1973. He and colleagues surveyed mountain goats, tracked grizzlies for census purposes, manned hunter-check stations, established elk herds, and banded and transported Canada Geese. Tom and Judy (Smirl) were married in 1964 and raised three children. He passed away Feb. 6, 2016, two weeks before turning 74.

VIC DERMAN, BA ’67 (English), died on March 17, 2017 at 72. First elected to Saanich council in 2002, he was respected for his environmental advocacy, especially on climate change, recycling and bike lanes. As a teacher at Cedar Hill, Lansdowne, and Shoreline middle schools and Spectrum Community School he introduced students to computers and multimedia arts.

BRIAN J. LAMB, died on Jan. 27, 2017 at the age of 72 following a lengthy illness. Admired for his gentleness, patience, wisdom and integrity, he served on the UVic Board of Governors from 1995 to 2001 and as chair from 1997 to 2000. He was awarded a 1999 Fellowship of the Institute of Chartered Accountants for contributions to the profession and to the community.

LORNE LOOMER, founder of the UVic rowing program in 1965, passed away on Jan. 1, 2017 at age 79. In his rowing career, he won gold for Canada at the 1956 Melbourne Olympics and silver in Rome in 1960. He also won a gold medal at the 1958 Commonwealth Games in Cardiff. He was among the first inductees into the UVic Sports Hall of Fame.

DR. ANDREW RIPPIN, former Dean of Humanities, died on Nov. 29, 2016 in Victoria. Donations in his memory can be made to the BC Cancer Foundation or the Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada.
FAREWELL

Legend and Enigma

Peter Verin, Jan. 10, 1945 – January 9, 2017

It was Sunday morning, December 29, 1996. The entrance to UVic was blocked by a snow drift that towered above the head of anyone foolish enough to try and gain access to campus. There was no easy way in or out. Over 65 centimetres had fallen overnight, snowing in campus security staff and one lone volunteer DJ at CFUV, the campus radio station.

That volunteer was Peter Verin, well known to many who studied and worked at UVic from 1970 onwards. Peter was on the phone with the station manager, who had tried and failed to make it to the station, in the Student Union Building. The snow was as high as the diminutive man’s shoulders. He had been in the station preparing for his early morning radio slot when the snow had started to fall overnight and soon found himself snowed in.

Over the next three days Peter kept on broadcasting, making the required announcements and weather updates, catching snatches of sleep whenever he could. He stayed in touch with campus security via phone and was finally relieved by a handful of fellow volunteers and staff.

The “Blizzard of ’96” added to the legend growing around Peter when I started working at CFUV in the late ‘90s. At that time Peter had two regular radio programs, one a news and talk program on the environmental issues he cared so deeply about, the other a freeform and often chaotic mixture of music and monologues.

During those years, I worked late into the night on the station’s monthly music magazine and would find myself drawn into long, intense conversations with Peter about anything and everything: from minutely analyzing the lyrics and music of his beloved Dylan; to the ethics of vegetarianism or the politics of the day. But despite his eagerness for dialogue, his personal background, even to good friends, remained an enigma.

Homeless largely “by choice,” a rabid collector and sorter of campus debris, various rumours swirled around Peter. Rumours he would rarely confirm or deny: that he was a former professor; held a PhD in philosophy; spoke multiple languages; some even compared him to Socrates.

Articulate and often insightful in conversation, Peter was a well-loved and sometimes controversial figure on campus. In addition to his radio programs, he wrote opinion pieces for The Martlet and volunteered with the Vancouver Island Public Interest Research Group (VIPERG).

It’s only with his passing, in hospital after a brief illness in January, that a few facts have come to light. Peter was fluent in French and seems to have been raised for a portion of his life in Montréal, but lived most of his life in Victoria. He had family in eastern Canada who regularly sent him money, which was often used to rent storage spaces around town for the sorting and recycling of refuse.

On any given day Peter could be seen in the library or at the Student Union Building, leaning casually against a wall and engaged in deep conversation with an intrigued undergrad or graduate student on a whole host of subjects. His main passion though was the environment and he could be found climbing undaunted into dumpsters to collect and recycle what he found. A common sight was Peter lugging around huge bags of the “trash” he intended to recycle and he kept numerous stashes hidden across campus.

Eventually due to disputes with the student and university administration he was removed first from the Student Union Building and then the entirety of campus.

For the last decade of his life Peter relocated to the Mackenzie and Quadra area where Rev. Al Tysick of the Dandelion Society held a well-attended memorial service. Rev. Al spoke movingly of the many people that Peter touched and showed kindness to over the years. The crowd was an eclectic mix of UVic employees, former students, city workers, politicians and members of the homeless community.

Close friends note that Peter was a proud man who refused to use off-campus shelter, accept most forms of aid or eat anything other than raw vegetarian food. Considering the often rough and ready conditions he lived under he was amazingly resilient and gentle and will be missed not only by the campus community but the wider community of Victoria.

– Randy Gelling, BA ’00, former CFUV station manager
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Flight for Canada

Canada 150 brings back memories of the Unity Rally

BY MARK LEIREN-YOUNG, BFA ’85

It’s not every day you get the chance to save the country. And that was pretty much what my friend Donna told me when she called and asked if I was going to buy a ticket on a “Unity” flight.

It was Oct. 25, 1995 and Canadian Airlines announced a sale on all flights to Montréal, so people from outside of La Belle Province could attend a rally to convince Quebecers to cast their votes to stay in Canada. Donna was going, she thought I’d want to go too.

As we prepare to celebrate Canada’s 150th anniversary — and mock the British for Brexiting — it’s easy to forget just how close we came to losing our country.

The first referendum in 1980 I knew I didn’t want Quebec to go, but I didn’t know why. Quebec was an abstract concept like gravity or getting a date.

By 1995, I’d spent some time in Québec and fallen in love with the idea that somewhere east of the Rockies there was a part of Canada that made our country cooler instead of just colder. I’d travelled all the way across Canada and was smitten with the idea that if a country that included BC, Québec and Newfoundland could stick together (and unite in our hatred of Toronto) that there was hope for the world.

There were a hundred reasons for not going but I couldn’t come up with one reason that wouldn’t sound hollow if I woke up Halloween morning to the scary news that my country was gone.

When I told people I was going to Montréal I assumed they’d think it was crazy or corny. Instead, everyone thanked me and wished me luck.

Two days after Donna’s call, I was one of 100,000 people from “the rest of Canada” who showed up to do the least Canadian thing possible — wave a flag.

I thought of buying a BC flag, but I’m still not sure I’d recognize one — and I was born here. So I figured I’d wear the one symbol all Canadians would recognize. I arrived at the rally in my Vancouver Canucks jersey with the name of my fave player, Cliff Ronning. And I brought a Québec flag that Donna wrapped around my neck like a cape.

As I walked to the rally people on the street stopped me to talk. Some sounded Anglo, some sounded distinctly Quebecois and all of them were asking the same question. “Are you really from BC?”

“Yes,” I said. Or sometimes I said, “Oui.”

And their response was almost always a variation of thank you or “wow” — and not just because I was brave enough to wear a Canucks jersey in Habs territory.

I decided Donna and I would follow the people putting in the security railing and hold onto it, like we were helping them to position it. That’s how we ended up in the front row, shaking hands with dignitaries like New Brunswick Premier, Frank McKenna.

I saw big Canadian flags, really big Canadian flags and the huge Canadian flag that made it into all the news coverage. And I listened to the politicians make their pitches from a few dozen feet away. But mostly I did the same thing as everyone else in the crowd. I ignored the speeches and sang O Canada as loudly as I could, over and over and over.

A few nights later Quebec Premier Jacques Parizeau bitterly blamed “money and the ethnic vote” for the narrow loss for separatism — just over 50,000 votes. There was also one other villain in his scenario — all the people like me who’d flown out to “interfere.”

You’re welcome.

Happy Canada 150.
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An unusually long spell of overcast skies on the south coast this winter (Environment Canada said Vancouver had the gloomiest March since 1951, when it started tracking daily sunshine) gave way to good old, dependable springtime blossoms.

Photographer KEVIN LIGHT found these prime examples, on Japanese cherry (sakura) trees, in the Fairfield neighbourhood of Victoria.