

University of Victoria Retirees Association

Events Committee Report 2010 -2011

The events of the past year provided diverse cultural, social and nature experiences as committee members led us through fascinating locations. We began the year with a toast of honey mead at the Tugwell Creek Meadery followed by lunch at the spectacular Point No Point Resort where Jean Whiffin provided us with the stories and history of this special place. We were then immersed in the 100th anniversary of the Canadian Navy as we toured CFB Esquimalt including state of the art training ships moored alongside some of the oldest buildings in Victoria. The Diwali Festival of Light invited us into the music and dance of the Hindu culture providing an evening of the colours, sounds and energy of dancers and musicians of all ages. Our first term ended with the traditional Christmas Buffet at the University Club highlighted by a reading by Tony Hubner of Garrison Keiller's Christmas memories.

We continued our seasonal celebrations in February with a Chinese Buffet at Crystal Jade Restaurant. John Adams provided an informative and compelling talk about his travels through rural China and the connections to our own Victoria Chinatown. With a focus on local history we toured the Ross Bay Villa learning about the lifestyle of early Victoria from UVRA member and restorationist Nick Russell and members of the volunteer restoration team at the villa. The history lesson continued as we walked across the road for a tour of the Ross Bay Cemetery. The cold spring was favourable for our walk along the Tod Creek trail to Tod Inlet. The wildflowers including trilliums, yellow violets and calyposos lined the trails and a brief explanation of the restoration project taking place at the traditional first nations village site and cement plant location gave us a greater understanding of the park. Spring weather arrived for the Saturna Island tour and long time resident Jean Combes gave the members an insider's tour of the island including the natural features of the new National Park Reserve and the Saturna Island Family Estate Winery.

The average attendance for the events was 25 with the traditional Christmas and Chinese New Year gatherings attracting the largest numbers. In March we also assisted with the organization of the UVRA Town Hall meeting with Grant Hughes, Valerie Kuene and Julia Eastman, to provide input into the UVic Strategic Planning process. We are looking forward to an additional event in June as we join Agnes Lynn for a tour of significant campus trees and plants.

Although we were unable to recruit enough registrations for more ambitious trips such as the UBC Museum of Anthropology and the MV Uchuck West Coast Adventure we will continue to explore ways to make these events available to interested members. Thank you to our committee members :John Fitch (past chair), Jim Currie, Trevor Mathews and Trudy Beyers and we are pleased to welcome Donna Molin and Bob Allen to the Events Committee. Sadly Trevor and Trudy will be leaving the committee after many years of organizing successful events. We are very appreciative of their commitment to continue to assist the committee as well as their involvement in other UVRA programs.

With a year that began with a Sooke honey mead toast and ended with a Saturna Island wine tasting, we hope we have provided the members with stimulating activities and wonderful memories.