

UVic Retirees Association

President's Report, 2012-2013

This has been another busy year with many successes and some frustrations. The 50th Anniversary Project, involving interviewing UVic Retirees and recording some transformative moments, was successfully completed and archived thanks to the efforts of Peter Liddell and the Language labs. In addition, Ian McPherson completed his comprehensive pictorial and written history of the University and Victor Neufeldt kindly compiled the history of the UVic Retirees Association from its inauguration in 1992 to present day. Together these documents provide a valuable resource for the University and will serve as an accurate record of the evolution of the Institution and the Association. Everyone involved deserves congratulations and thanks for taking on these tasks.

The participation in UVRA-sponsored activities exceeded any other year. The Masterminds series saw record numbers for all four presentations thanks to the outstanding effort and commitment of David Turkington, coordinator for the UVRA, and the support of the Centre on Aging and the President's Office. We also had incredible response to all the events that were organized thanks to the work of Winona Pugh and her committee who offered trips that attracted many participants. There seems to be great interest in these types of activities and the opportunity to meet up with friends and former colleagues. We are intending to offer more opportunity in this area including monthly get-togethers for coffee followed by a presentation that will grab your attention and interest. We hope to have a full slate of presenters starting in September and running until June. Stay tuned for topics and locations in the near future.

The Board had a retreat in November 2012 to discuss where we are at in regard to our evolution as well as looking for additional ways in which we can better serve our members. Following on from some of the ideas we heard at the CURAC Conference we hosted in May, 2012, we identified a number of actions. One priority identified was to create stronger ties with the University as well as enhance our profile. We are currently drafting a Memo of Understanding (MOU) that we trust will enhance our profile in the University as well as clarify our relationship with the Institution. In addition, we circulated copies of Grey Matters to all units in the University which was well received and something we plan on continuing. We plan on hosting a number of workshops for current employees nearing retirement dealing with topics related to "I wish I knew then what I know now" as well as a short feature article in each newsletter. There were other ideas that we discussed and plan on implementing as time permits.

There have been a few frustrations this year, particularly in regard to the Elder Academy and the offering of an optional Extended Health and Travel Insurance, with Johnson, to what is offered by Pacific Blue Cross. However, thanks to the tireless efforts of Peter Liddell, ably abetted by Lois Jones, the EHB and Travel option is closer to being signed and sealed. The Elder Academy, under the watchful eye of Bev Timmons, seems to be back on track. I hope to be able to provide more details on both these initiatives at the AGM.

Thanks to the thoughtfulness of Kathy Harris, ably assisted of course by Winona Pugh, the UVRA hosted the first Volunteer Thank You Luncheon. It was a great success and included a short presentation by Lois Edgar on the value of volunteering. It was fascinating to hear that volunteers are happier and healthier people compared to non-volunteers. So if you want to be happier and healthier the UVRA can really help you and you don't even have to huff and puff!

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This coming year will see many changes to the Board, but I am happy to report it is more a change of roles, or a caucus shuffle, than people stepping down. Peter Liddell has accepted the position of Vice President, and Walter Muir has kindly offered to serve as a member-at-large. Kathy Harris is turning over the role of treasurer to Rashna Charania. Cled Thomas will be taking on the mantle of Membership Chair. Earlier in the year, Linda Metters assumed the position of Secretary. Winona Pugh has stepped down from the position of Events Chair, but will continue on the Committee, as well as serve on the Board as a member-at-large. We are most grateful to Winona and Kathy for the fine work they did in their roles, and are happy they will continue to make important contributions to the UVRA. Unfortunately, we are losing the services of George Smith who has been our Membership Chair for a number of years as well as the voice of reason. We have also lost the valuable contribution of Peter Zingeler who has resigned from his position as editor of *Grey Matters!* We are indebted to Peter for all the work he has done in conjunction with Mel Klassen, in enhancing the look and content of the newsletter. We are also losing the services of David Turkington, Coordinator of Masterminds. He has done an outstanding job taking over this program from the success of Bev Timmons, and will leave a big gap for us to fill.

The Board has worked hard this past year on behalf of the members of the UVic Retirees Association, and pushed ahead with a number of initiatives. My thanks go to all the Board members for their work and commitment. Also, many thanks to the volunteers who help in so many ways, and without whose valuable contributions we would not be able to operate. We want to do more so if you have ideas about what we can and should be doing, and especially are interested in helping, we would love to hear from you. We are looking forward to this coming year and seeking ways to make the UVRA even more vibrant and active, and to serve you better.

Respectfully submitted.

David Docherty,
President,
UVic Retirees Association.