



NEWSLETTER

PROBUS CLUB OF VANCOUVER

PO Box 74539, KITSILANO, Vancouver, BC, V6K 4P4

Enriching members with topical, entertaining speakers and social activities

www.probusvancouver.com

June, 2020

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Next Meeting: Tuesday, June 9th at 10 am
Location: Your Home via Zoom
Speaker: Olga Campbell, Artist & Author
Topic: "A Whisper across Time"

NEXT MONTH'S SPEAKER
July 14: Prof. Andrew Trites
Professor of Zoology, UBC
Topic: The Chinook-Orca Study

OLGA CAMPBELL



Olga Campbell is a visual artist and writer whose art includes photography, sculpture, mixed media painting and digital photo collage. She has written two books, *Graffiti Alphabet* in 2009 and *A Whisper Across Time* in 2018. Twenty years ago, after listening to a radio programme about second generation Holocaust survivors, Olga Campbell experienced feelings which she had spent a lifetime repressing. Her experience of grief, sorrow and sadness had its origins in events which happened to her family during the Holocaust. She started to confront these feelings by creating a solo multimedia exhibition in 2005 called *Whispers Across Time*. Around three years ago she felt compelled to tell her family's story. It felt as if her ancestors were whispering to her, encouraging her to do this. Olga's book, *A Whisper Across Time* is the result of these whispers. This is the story of one family's experiences in the Holocaust told through prose, art and poetry. It is a multi dimensional snapshot of family losses and intergenerational trauma. The art and poetry in the book reflect the theme of sorrow and sadness created by this dark period of history. This is a story of remembering and healing. It is also a cautionary tale asking the reader to look at what is happening in the world today. *A Whisper Across Time* has received three awards: Ippy Award 2019 for Outstanding Books of the Year; Eric Hoffer Award 2019; Davinci Eye Award for Book Cover Design and the International Book Awards 2019, Award winning finalist— American Bookfest for Memoir category. This book was also long listed for the 2019 George Ryga Award and is currently short listed for the 2020 Western Canada Jewish Book Awards - to be announced in the fall of 2020. Olga will be talking about her book; her talk will consist of an audio visual presentation followed by a conversation with Brian Hall-Stevenson and then a Q & A session.

FUTURE MEETINGS DURING COVID 19

For the foreseeable future and following the enormous success of our May 19th meeting, we will continue to schedule Zoom meetings on the traditional 2nd Tuesday of the month at 10 am. Huge thanks to Jack Zaleski for setting up the meeting with Dan Kalla—we had 150 members and guests participating.

KEN'S GROANER (a pun submitted by Ken Yule)

During the Second World War, Wolf Kissinger – no relation to Henry – was a most successful spy and saboteur. His success was due to the fact that he was a master of disguise. Once he was an old flower woman selling posies with a quavery voice. By the time the bouquet exploded he had disappeared. In turn he was disguised as an Oriental merchant, then an English squire, then a Portuguese sailor and then an African tribesman. He played every role to perfection with wondrous makeup and perfect dialect. The Nazis desperately sought him everywhere but they were never able to find him. In Berlin the top brass of German intelligence met to try to figure out how to trap their enemy's most valuable undercover agent. Their problem was that they had no idea in what guise their quarry might next appear: one of Rommel's staff? A Mussolini aide? As they struggled to calculate his next disguise one of the Generals sighed, "I wonder who's Kissinger now?"

Report of the May 19th Meeting Attendance: 150 Members and Guests

Due to the covid 19 virus, the last regular meeting of The PROBUS Club of Vancouver was held in March with former premier of BC, Mike Harcourt giving a fine talk on Sustainable Cities. We were unable to hold a meeting in April but thanks to 21st century technology and some quick work by your board of directors and particularly past president Jack Zaleski, our very first virtual was held on May 19 at the unusual hour of 8 pm, this in order to accommodate our speaker, Dr. Dan Kalla. Jack acted as host of the meeting which attracted more than 150 viewers. That was the maximum number that was shown on the screen but we all know that in many homes, spouses were also watching with interest, to see how it worked and to hear the speaker, whose very appropriate topic was Pandemics Then and Now. Due to the format, no new members were introduced and there were no announcements about Activities as those have all been cancelled while we wait for whatever the "new normal" looks like. President, Hugh Chaun, introduced our speaker. Daniel Kalla is very familiar with pandemics. He is an ER physician and in 2003, he served the Vancouver SARS task force as Director of Physician staffing for the SARS screening clinic. He also writes medical thrillers that combine his experience in emergency medicine, his interest in the history of pandemics, and his love for creative writing. His novels demonstrate how pandemics can bring the best and worst out of society and help shape how things move forward.

The world has seen a few major pandemics including the Black Death and the Spanish Flu which each took the lives of an estimated 50 million people over the span of a few years. Over the course of a century, smallpox was responsible for 300-500 million deaths, and many more prior to that. With only 364,000 deaths at the moment, COVID-19 has a long way to go before entering the history books next to these heavy hitters.

The Black Death was the mother of all plagues. Known at the time as the Great Mortality, the disease was a specific form of the Bubonic Plague which ravaged Europe in 1346-1353. The spread of the Black Death was notable in a time of very limited travel. With no antibiotics and limited science and understanding of hygienic practices, the disease spread from Sicily, to Norway to Russia in under three years primarily through sailors on trading vessels. Lawyers, doctors, priests all died from person to person contact while preparing wills, treating patients, and visiting death beds. The death toll was an unparalleled, killing 30-60% of Europe population. It took 500 years before Europe finally reached its pre-Black Death population levels in the 1850's. With over 1,000 deaths a day in cities like Paris and Venice, people, including children were left for dead and bodies were dumped into the sea. However, the Black Death also led to some good changes. Prior to the pandemic, Europe was overpopulated for its infrastructure and there was a shortage of land to be cultivated. Due to overcrowding, the Black Death selectively led to increased deaths in the working class, which led to a shortage of labourers. The remaining working class gained a certain degree of empowerment and ultimately the inversion of the land/work relationship led to the end of feudalism. With a severely depleted human population, peasants were better nourished which gave way to a time of enlightenment and the Renaissance.

From 1918-1919, the Spanish Flu infected an estimated 1 billion people, half the world's population at the time. Unlike COVID-19, the disease mostly affected young adults. So much so that the average life expectancy dropped by 20 years by the end of 1919. With three mortality peaks, the Spanish Flu took more lives in a single year than the entirety of WWI. The Spanish Flu

epidemic taught us hard lessons about the importance of quarantine and social distancing. In May 1918, St. Louis cancelled their wartime fundraising parade and Philadelphia decided to go ahead with theirs. These two cities were of similar population size and geography, but 4,500 Philadelphians died from the flu or complications only a week later, while St. Louis managed to flatten their curve.

Dan Kalla also wanted to shed light on an unexpected epidemic that he highlights in his newly released book, *The Last High*. The Opioid Epidemic has taken over 500,000 lives in the last 20 years. Many of these overdoses have occurred in young people often in their mid-30's. This number includes many first-time users, accidental overdoses, and relapses. While addiction isn't a disease caused by a virus or bacteria, it is a genetic condition and an inheritable trait. The Opioid Crisis is entirely man-made, with 9 out of 10 addictions stemming from legitimate prescription. These highly addictive drugs bind to the receptors in the spinal cord and brain to disrupts pain signals and release dopamine. Chasing this high is addictive and furthermore the withdrawal is extremely unpleasant so it's even harder to stop using opioids. The potency between different opioids varies so much and there is no quality control for the products available on the streets. Fentanyl is 100 times more potent than heroin and carfentanyl is 10,000 times more potent than heroin. While fentanyl and carfentanyl are much deadlier than heroin, they have almost the same production cost. With its increased potency, the same amount of fentanyl can provide many more hits and has a revenue of \$1.6 million/kg as opposed to the \$80,000/kg of heroin. The profitability makes fentanyl much more appealing to dealers despite the risk to human life.

In BC, we've managed to avoid an estimated 5,000 overdose deaths through harm reduction strategies like take-home Naloxone kits, safe injection sites, enhanced addiction services, and replacement therapies with suboxone. We were finally starting to flatten the curve on the Opioid crisis, but because of COVID-19 we're seeing another spike. At the end of March, 113 people died of overdoses, the highest monthly death rate in two years. Because of social distancing measures, fewer social services are available and users are more likely to use opioids alone to avoid exposure to the virus, despite the fact that they are much more likely to die of an overdose than they are of COVID-19. Through Dan's talk we see that pandemics are cyclical and inevitable, but society can get through them. Furthermore, there are things that we can learn from each crisis that can help us better manage them in the future. COVID-19 is no different. If we're lucky, this pandemic will demonstrate the need to address the societal issues that it has highlighted and amplified such as homelessness, drug addiction, and poverty. COVID-19 has caused so much pain and hardship, but hopefully we can come out of this more resilient and better than ever.

Peter Couperberg thanked the speaker who had declined receipt of an honorarium. Instead, he asks that everyone buy a copy of his latest book!

Recommended Reading: [The Last High](#) and [Pandemic](#) by Daniel Kalla

In response to some of you who enquired, Chapters/Indigo has *The Last High* on sale for 25% off right now at: www.chapters.indigo.ca/en-ca/books/the-last-high/9781501196980-item.html.

To read the Questions & Answers, please go to our PROBUS website at www.probusvancouver.com, click on "Speakers" and then on "Dan Kalla"

THE PRESIDENT'S COMMENTARY



Greetings, everyone, we hope that you are all fit and well. It is with pleasure we report that we have had a successful inaugural Covid-19 Zoom videoconference on Tuesday evening, May 19. We had about 150 participants. For those of you who attended, I hope you found the meeting a captivating experience, as expressed by many who commented afterwards. I could not resist emailing Jack Zaleski immediately after the event: "It's a late hour but never too late to say that the key to this evening's success was unquestionably your superb emailed reminders and your clear Zoom instructions that are a prized addition to the members' comfort and confidence. Many thanks again!"

To repeat a quote from my introduction at the meeting, originally from 'The Fellowship of the Ring' by J.R.R. Tolkien, "I wish it need not have happened in my time," said Fondo, "So do I," said Gandolf, "and so do all who live to see such times. But that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us." It has been observed that every crisis has a silver lining. Ours at Probus was certainly the privilege of having Dan (Dr. Daniel Kalla) as our guest speaker, on a most timely topic, 'Pandemics, Then & Now.' There are ample reasons to include him as among just a handful of eminent authors who have also been (medical) doctors over the last century. Unlike one Anton Chekhov, who wrote, 'Medicine is my lawful wife and literature my mistress; when I get tired of one, I spend the night with the other!' For Dan, an internationally acclaimed writer, he spends his days and many nights taking care of patients in the Emergency Room at St. Paul's Hospital. We thank him also for the extraordinary work he does there. His newest novel, 'The Last High', is a story of the opioid crisis based in part on his observations of patients he has seen in the ER.

Dr. Bonnie Henry announced on May 21 that a second wave of Covid-19 is inevitable, and current lessons will guide response. From the experience of pandemics in the past, some second waves were stronger, some less severe, than the first. While the timeline of the availability of an effective vaccine remains uncertain, adherence to social distancing continues to be the prime preventive measure. There are variable patterns of community 'testing' across the Canadian provinces, aimed at contact tracing and data collection. The difficulty is magnified by significant numbers of false negatives and false positives. This all indicates that we have to be prepared to conduct our monthly speakers' meetings with the use of Zoom technology. Having had a successful outcome with our first, just over a week ago, we can now move forward with confidence. Until we meet (in person) again, a couple of lines from Rudyard Kipling are relevant... "If you can wait and not be tired of waiting,... If you can dream - and not make dreams your master"

Rotarians' Investment Club

Our April & May Meetings were successfully held as Zoom meetings, and we had a lively online dialogue with Watchdog Reports on our portfolio, and two "Round Table" presentations, plus several stock ideas for the next meeting to be presented by Members. A decision to sell one stock was made, but no "Buy" decisions were made at our April Meeting, but at the time for the Press, the decisions at the May Meeting were not available. We were also able to welcome a lady from our Rotary Club to join R.I.C. who has the advantage to invest at our slightly reduced portfolio valuation! But we do have about a 30.0% cash balance in hand for the bargains out there today!

These Meetings were held in the afternoon for about 1 ½ - 2 hours being a more convenient time for Members to attend from their homes.

Since we do not plan to have Guest Speakers at our Zoom Meetings, it was decided that interested individuals from Probus and Rotary would only be invited when we return to our regular meetings at RVYC—hopefully by September 24th.

When we are able to confirm our next regular Dinner Meeting at the RVYC we will email those Probus Members on our Guest List, and any other Probus Members who would be interested in joining our Club.

Our Investment Club was formed in April 1998 by members of your Probus Club and the Rotary Club of Vancouver, and provides members with interesting thoughts, ideas and knowledge in a convivial atmosphere.

Please contact me for information about our Investment Club which was formed in April 1998 by members of your Probus Club and the Rotary Club of Vancouver.

John Sullivan, Membership Chair, R.I.C.

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PROBUS FRED COTTON BOOK CLUB



During the current time of physical spacing, The Book Club will meet at 9:00 a.m. on the first Wednesday each month via Zoom. Upcoming books we will discuss:

June 3—Educated by Tara Westover

July 8—The Plague by Albert Camus

August 5—The invention of Nature by Andrea Wulf

A list of books read since the Club began in 2008 may be found on the Club website by clicking the "Book Club" link.

For further information contact Ken Yule at
kjyqc@shaw.ca or 604-266-4563.

Ken will send out the invitation to join the meeting



JACK ZALESKI HONoured BY ROTARY

Our Past President and Honourary Member was honoured recently with the award for Rotarian of the Year for the Rotary District 5040 in recognition of the work that Jack has done and the time that he has contributed to the Rotary organisation.



CONGRATULATIONS, JACK!



IN MEMORIAM

It is with regret that we announce the passing of Don Farquhar on April 29

Our condolences to his family and friends

Don was a long-time member of our PROBUS club and was the president in 2002-2003.

Following his retirement and move to Beach Grove, Don gave up his membership in our club

THE JUNE FUNNIES PAGE!

Quickies

Only Irish coffee provides in a single glass all four essential food groups: alcohol, caffeine, sugar and fat.

My wife and I play this fun game during quarantine, it's called "Why Are You Doing It That Way?" There are no winners.

Sure there's love, respect, communication, blah blah blah. But the real secret to a long marriage is to never, ever, share a closet.

Marijuana is legal and haircuts are against the law. It took half a century but Hippies finally won.

Once again The Washington Post has published the winning submissions to its yearly neologism contest, in which readers are asked to supply alternative meanings for common words. Here are the first 10:

1. Coffee (n.), the person upon whom one coughs.
2. Flabbergasted (adj.), appalled over how much weight you have gained.
3. Abdicate (v.), to give up all hope of ever having a flat stomach.
4. Esplanade (v.), to attempt an explanation while drunk.
5. Willy-nilly (adj.), impotent.
6. Negligent (adj.), describes a condition in which you absentmindedly answer the door in your nightgown.
7. Lymph (v.), to walk with a lisp.
8. Gargoyle, olive-flavoured mouthwash.
9. Flatulence (n.), emergency vehicle that picks you up after you are run over by a steamroller.
10. Balderdash (n.), a rapidly receding hairline.

An elderly man was stopped by the police around 2 a.m. and was asked where he was going at that time of night.

The man replied, "I'm on my way to a lecture about alcohol abuse and the effects it has on the human body, as well as smoking and staying out late."

The officer then asked, "Really? Who's giving that lecture at this time of night?"

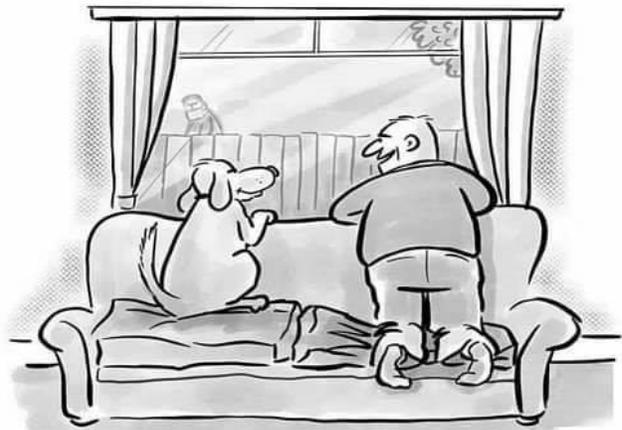
The man replied, "That would be my wife."

Gus took 4 tires to a friend's garage sale and was asking \$35 apiece. He needed to step away for a bit so he asked his friend to watch them for him. "In case someone makes an offer, how low are you prepared to go?" Asks his friend. "Try for more" says Gus, "but I'll accept \$20 for each tire." When he returns, he sees the tires have gone and asks his friend how much he got for them. "\$20 each" he's told. "Who bought them?" Asks Gus. "I did" said his now former friend.

Our cleaning lady just messaged us and told us she will be working from home and will send us instructions on what to do!



The Trikini 2020



"Until now, I never understood why you got so excited when someone walked past the house."

This Month's Quote

A horse is an animal that is dangerous at both ends and uncomfortable in the middle.