



# Heron Rocks Friendship Centre Newsletter

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## HILARY NEWITT BROWN

Born March 31<sup>st</sup>, 1909 - Died September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2007

*special thanks to Wayne Wiens for permission to use his photograph of Hilary*

The photograph of Hilary on the front page captures the mischievous side of Hilary Brown's nature, which was there until the end of her days. What a life Hilary had! An intellectual, but also unafraid of hard work and taking risks. Seriously ill with pneumonia, she only agreed to go into hospital when it was explained to her that the hospital was where she could get the medical equipment she so desperately needed at that time. Hilary decided to go. After a few days she started to bounce back, and to give the hospital staff a rough time because they gave her too much food, when there were starving people in the world who needed it more! After two weeks Hilary returned to her home on this island she loved, raised her hands to the sky and said "I'm home". She was frail, but so peaceful. The joy of being at home continued. After six days of being surrounded by people she loved, gazing at the garden she loved, she left on another journey by herself. This incredible woman who did so much for all of us on this island and others around the world was gone.

*by Meg Parrish*

*Following is the text of A SHORT HISTORY OF HERON ROCKS by Hilary Brown. It was presented at the First Annual General meeting of the Heron Rocks Friendship Centre on May 19<sup>th</sup>, 1989 and, in a slightly revised version, on May 16, 1992.*

## A Short History of Heron Rocks

by Hilary Brown

In 1937 Harrison Brown and I came to Canada from London, England. "H.B." was a free lance journalist and had travelled the world for many years, after spending four years in the British Army in World War I. He had also worked for several years as the European Representative for the American Committee on the Outlawry of War, in which role he met most of the prominent foreign ministers of Europe and spent much time at the League of Nations in Geneva.

I had studied French in Geneva and later lived for four years in Germany, studying German, Economics, and Sociology at Frankfurt University, where H.B. and I first met. When the Nazis came to power in 1933, fifty percent of the Frankfurt University faculty was dismissed, arrested, or forced into exile, and I was unable to complete the Master's degree for which I had been preparing.

Returning to England I worked in London for the Union of Democratic Control—a research bureau on foreign affairs—and for the International Federation of Business and Professional Women, European Headquarters. I became very interested in the position of women in various societies and wrote a book called *Women Must Choose*, which was published by Victor Gollancz in 1936.

During the later 1930's, H.B. had been asked each year to do several lecture tours in the U.S. and Canada. He was getting more and more disillusioned with what he saw as the betrayal of the hopes of people everywhere for a peaceful world. But there were still large parts of the world where he hoped perhaps to find a country and a people who would somehow effectively oppose the darkness of war and fascism, which he knew were about to engulf the world.

So he left London in Spring 1936 and travelled through Scandinavia, Finland, the USSR, Japan, Korea, and China—sending back letters and articles, taking many photographs and always finding the world on the edge of chaos, but also, in some places, finding the seeds of resistance and renewal.

When we met again in April 1937 on a station platform at Spokane, Washington, he was just finishing a U.S. lecture tour which had forced him to cut short his travels in Asia. And he was tired. He always loved the outdoors and always spent many days hiking with a rucksack throughout Europe and elsewhere whenever he had free time. More and more he wanted to find a quiet spot,

somewhere where he could "create a garden by tidewater" and have time to think, to read and to write without deadlines. But he had deadlines for more articles and another lecture tour booked for the Fall and we had to find a place to live.

We headed up to Canada, travelled up and down Vancouver Island and one day, on a hunch, hired a fish boat at Deep Bay and landed at Ford's Cove on Hornby Island. By that afternoon H.B. had decided. We both fell in love with the first place we saw—ten acres of uncleared property on an isolated bay facing southwest. Soon we moved over from Qualicum and cabled London to send out our possessions—mostly books!

By the end of summer we had a small house (24' X 24') built to the lock-up stage by Pete Ostby, a local Norwegian carpenter, with my unskilled help. H.B. was forced to sit at his typewriter for most of that lovely summer. Actually, lock-up stage was pure fiction, since no doors were ever locked and no windows could be secured. In spite of this and during our long absences from home on lecture tours to the U.S. and other money-earning ventures, nothing was ever lost or stolen. Of course H.B. found some time to plan a garden, at least on paper. It combined the beautiful native trees and wildflowers with shrubs and plants from all over the world, mostly grown from seed.

Life was fairly primitive on Hornby in those early days. There was no electric power, so no "mod cons." We had a wood stove for cooking and heating, a hand pump from a dug well, outside toilet, kerosene lamps—and always water shortage in late summer. All water was used over and over—"recycled" we would say today. The last use was to water the precious garden seeds.

In 1955 things changed. The Hydro brought power to Hornby. As well, regular ferry traffic was established to Denman Island and Vancouver Island. Visitors who had previously been fetched from the main island by rowboat or fishing vessel were now able to drive their cars all the way to our doorstep.

About that time we acquired an adjoining piece of property extending along the beach and including an unlogged forest area. Someone suggested that a campsite might be a good use for it, to avoid selling the timber rights to the ever-eager logging interests or selling pieces of the land to real estate developers. It was then that we called the place "Heron Rocks" and opened the campsite in 1956.

For the next twelve years the campsite took up most of our energy from June to September. It

became very popular. However, after about ten years H.B. realized that he would soon be seventy-four and that the garden was suffering by his preoccupation with scything the grass, collecting and carting garbage, escorting campers to their sites, socializing, and patrolling the beach at night to watch for fires. All this for \$1.00 per family per night (later \$2.00). As the maximum number of campsites was never allowed to exceed 25, it was not exactly a money-making proposition.

In 1967 H.B. told the campers that next year Heron Rocks Campsite would have to close. Consternation reigned. After a summer of consultations under the big Maple Tree in our back garden, lubricated by rounds of the homemade Double Dark Brew (which I should have patented—much better than Fosters), a decision was reached. The campers themselves would run the place. We offered them an option to buy the land adjacent to our original property within three years, if they still wanted to do so. And so the “Heron Rocks Cooperative Campsite” came into existence. The campsite has been a most successful mutual arrangement for all concerned, and it looks like it’s going on to the third and fourth generation, who already spend part of each summer camping at Heron Rocks.

By 1970 the campsite was no longer absorbing all our energies but community activities were taking up a lot of my time. First there was the Credit Union, of which I was Treasurer from 1942-1965, and later, the Hornby Island Coop Store, for many years a shoestring operation which required a lot of volunteer work.

Meanwhile the Gulf Islands to the south had been invaded and almost taken over by large real estate promoters. Huge subdivisions were altering the peaceful lifestyle of the Islands. North of Nanaimo, we smugly felt, was too far away to tempt such large scale development. But we did decide that developing a well constituted community plan would be a useful exercise in self-defence.

In 1973 the B.C. Government brought in new legislation to “preserve and protect” the Gulf Islands in the Islands Trust Act. In 1974 I was asked to become the first Chairman of the General Trust. H.B. urged me to accept and after great hesitation I did so. This decision meant a drastic change in my lifestyle, since the work was centered in Victoria and involved much travel around all the Gulf Islands near Victoria, in Howe Sound and in the Strait of Georgia. Although Hornby was the northernmost of the designated islands, we soon found that our

smugness had been ill-founded. Real Estate had come to Hornby.

It was a big challenge to implement the new Islands Trust Act. It was, in fact, a totally new concept of area conservation. For two years, I was totally involved in Trust responsibility, able to come home to Hornby only at weekends. During the winter months, H.B. joined me in Victoria, but he preferred to stay at home during the spring and summer months.

By late 1976 my two year appointment had terminated. Marc Holmes, a Vice-Chairman, was appointed to be the new Trust Chairman and I returned home. Soon after H.B. developed a serious heart condition and was no longer able to work in his beloved garden. In September 1977 he died, at the age of eight-four.

Since then, for the past fifteen years, I have lived alone at Heron Rocks. Now I am eighty-three and I want the future of Heron Rocks to be safeguarded. While H.B. was still alive, he and I often would talk about the future. Various ideas for Heron Rocks were suggested and eventually discarded. Since his death I have had to make the decision.

Strange things had happened during the years we lived here. We felt less and less that we owned the land and more and more that the land owned us. It had become the focus and centre of our lives and we had long ago decided and declared that our remaining part of Heron Rocks was NOT FOR SALE.

That being agreed, we had then to realize that no property nowadays can exist in limbo without some maintenance. Even a wilderness needs someone to care for it and to protect it. Important to us was the idea that any future use protect not only my property but also the area to both sides of it—Olsen’s farm to the south and the Campsite to the north. All three properties’ are in the Agricultural Land Reserve, which imposes both restrictions and protections. Because the ALR has diminished in area over the past years, we may have to find other ways to protect the land in the future.

With a group of friends, I discussed how to put all this into legal language suitable for the documents necessary for incorporation in Canada. It took us the best part of four years to draw up a constitution and by-laws and to get our Society incorporated. We then received word from Ottawa that our application for tax-deductible status had been approved.

Because H.B. and I were both lucky enough to travel to many other countries and because we were always concerned about those areas of the world less fortunate than us in material advantages, I hoped that this property might be used to promote activities that would bring people together from many countries. Hence the name "Heron Rocks Friendship Centre".

The programmes we have organized over the past six years include workshops, weekend conferences, and talks on current affairs, peace issues and educational concerns. As a "charitable organization" we are not allowed to take any part in partisan politics, but must deal with matters on an educational level. Since the most urgent task for all of us today is to promote global understanding and environmental responsibility and to work for responsible social change, we have a wide range of options.

The past year for instance we have focused on the environmental problems of coastal B.C. The water we need to live and the water that surrounds us face great pollution problems, while our natural resources in the forest and the sea are threatened by clear cutting and over harvesting. The programmes have also included visits from many interesting speakers from far away places such as Africa, China and Europe. All of these programmes have convinced us that our community is not just a small Gulf Island in a far western province in Canada, but is related to communities around the world.

A recent interest has been an ongoing inventory of the Heron Rocks area, its abundant bird life and the rich inter-tidal biology. At present we are doing a bird count in the Heron Rocks area every three months and plan to compare the results with earlier records to see what changes are occurring and if possible deduce why they have happened. As you can see, my life on Hornby continues to be busy and interesting, and I have no wish to move elsewhere.

I had left the property to the Heron Rocks Friendship Centre in my Will. However, since I perhaps may follow my family's record of longevity, I felt that transfer of the ownership should happen now. Also, frankly, I want to be part of it so long as I can be helpful. To hand on to you, my friends, and to future generations a part of Hornby that has long been a part of me gives me great pleasure.

I hope you will forgive the amount of personal history recounted here. Only a few of you remember H.B., and Heron Rocks is very much his creation, as

well as mine. I think he would be pleased with what we have accomplished together: During his last weeks I asked him what he wanted for the future of Heron Rocks. "Just that people can be as happy here as I have been." And that is what I also want.



Hilary with Opal Clarke and Muriel Rogers at the 2006 AGM.



Hilary, Muriel Rogers and other attendees enjoying Daniel Arbour's Under the Maple presentation "The Cougar Anne - Heron Rocks Connection" on August 1st.

**Liaison Meeting HRCCA and HRFCS**

*by Meg Parrish based on meeting notes taken by Margot Bushnell*

On August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2007, representatives from both Heron Rocks Friendship Centre (HRFCS) and Heron Rocks Camping Co-op (HRCCA) met in the HRFCS Annexe. This meeting had an important purpose as it was time for the Letter of Understanding between the two groups to be reviewed and renewed. This happens every other year. New HRFCS Board members, Margot Bushnell and Rudy Rogalsky were there, accompanied by Phyl Robinson, Ann Zielinski, Pam Gordon and Meg Parrish. HRCCA representatives were Margaret Wyeth and Kate Deakins.

The Letter of Understanding recognizes the fact that “the respective properties were originally a common parcel, stewarded by Harrison and Hilary Brown, and though they are now legally separate entities, both represent a common ecosystem that we must continue to treat as a whole”.

The Letter of Understanding, (LoU), was studied by the group, and accepted with one minor grammatical adjustment. It was also agreed that a copy of a hand drawn map would be attached to the LoU in the future.

HRFCS raised the topic of the driveway down to Heron Rocks. The road needs annual attention because of potholes, a situation which has been exacerbated during the two last exceptionally wet and windy winters, and for which gravel is currently provided by HRCCA. Of particular concern is the increasing deterioration of the apron where the Heron Rocks Road turns off Central Road. This was deferred in Spring 2007 because of machinery breakdown, but HRCCA still plans to have this job done. It was agreed that each group would remind its members to drive slowly.

It was also agreed to remind members of both groups about observation and respect of individual boundaries.

Margaret Wyeth introduced the idea of creating a storage facility, on HRFCS land, to be used by HRCCA members. After discussion it was agreed both HRFCS and HRCCA needed to take the issue to their respective Boards for further discussion and clarification.

*Sharron Millstein and Gerald Hodge have kindly offered to present a 90 minute slide show evening as a fund-raiser for the Heron Rocks Friendship Centre on Sunday November 4th, at 8:00 p.m. at New Horizons. The following is Ann Zielinski's description of what you might see.*

**On the Road with Sharron Milstein and Gerald Hodge**

*by Ann Zielinski*

Come to an evening of visual images that are beyond reality: they are highly artistic, imaginative and will leave you with the desire to tag along with Gerald and Sharron on their next photographic trip.

As part of the presentation, you will experience two slides of the same subject simultaneously on screen as each photographer expresses a unique vision.

Gerald and Sharron spent two months last year exploring and photographing along remote back roads and scenic byways in Washington, Southern Utah, and California. They blend gorgeous images of red rock formations, sand dunes, rugged coast lines and L.A. architecture with music and narration.

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## HRFCS AGM June 17, 2007 Report from the President

*by Mae Pagdin*

In case you are wondering, we decided to change the **HRFCS** Annual General Meeting from September to the 3rd Sunday of June because it is closer to our fiscal “year end” - March 31st - and so makes our annual reports more relevant. At the same time, we moved our annual “Board Retreat,” which was formerly held in June, to the afternoon of our September regular board meeting to better accommodate our busy lives. Busy, indeed! When you hear the committee reports, you will be amazed at the generous commitment of time and energy your Board members - and volunteers - have given this year.

Maintenance of grounds and buildings are a constant challenge. This year we have been dogged by problems related to electrical, plumbing, and winter storm damage; as well as delays in our effort to improve our water quality. However, we have been truly blessed with the donated services of electrician, Ron Doucette; of plumber, Rick Morrith; and of certified arborist, Allan Pagdin. They have donated hundreds of hours of professional expertise, time and energy. We thank them from the bottom of our hearts - as well as the faithful volunteers on “Meg’s list”, who arrive with their tools and enthusiasm when Meg calls a work party.

Bouquets, also, to Charmaine Chartrand, who provides daily, loving companionship to Hilary; and to Daryl Bohn and Betty Nightingale who, although employees of the HRCCA, “lend a hand” to us in a myriad of ways. We deeply appreciate these “special three,” and their involvement with us.

We value the *esprit de corps* we enjoy with our neighbour, Heron Rocks Camping Cooperative Association. When I think of the “Camping Coop”, I am reminded of the signboard at the Blaine border crossing between Canada and U.S.A., which states that we are, “Children of a “Common Mother”.

We are proud that Hornby’s Water Stewardship Committee operates under our umbrella. And we commend the Orchard Committee for caring for that aspect of the property.

Our Mission Statement and Core Values were reflected in our many programs, including our annual, informal “Seed Swap”, where gardeners share seeds, gardening tips, and an old-fashioned visit. And the three issues of our Newsletter kept our members connected with “Heron Rocks”, and what we stand for. Money we donate from our Hilary Brown Youth Scholarship Fund assist young people

in projects of their choice which fit these values, as well.



*New Board Members Roberta Pagdin, Rudy Rugalsky, Margot Bushnell and Ondrea Rogers*

We reach out to the wider community by supporting other organizations that embrace our core values. Thus, we hold membership in ISLA — “Island Secure Land Association”, of Hornby and Denman Islands, and “Mines Action Canada”. In April, we helped sponsor the Housing Conference that was held on Hornby under the joint auspices of HICEEC (Hornby Island Community Economic Enhancement Committee) and ISLA. We donated \$250.00 toward the registration fees of participants from Hornby and Denman Islands who couldn’t otherwise attend, as well as sponsoring Ed Hoepfner’s workshop entitled, “Hydro-lodge-ical Cycle” - about water use and conservation, subjects dear to our hearts.



*Retiring Board Members Wendy and Don Reimer with Mae Pagdin. Missing from the photo is Marcel Poulin.*



Fundraising is a large part of what we do. Once again, we featured stalls in Hornby's Fall and Christmas Fairs. In May, we staged our major fundraiser - Plant Sale and Berry Tea - and this year, a Gardeners' Clinic as well as the musical offering of Darryl Bohn, Betty Nightingale, Peggy Devost & Dana Inglis, added to the pleasure of the event. We thank you, our members, for supporting these events with your donation of sale items and with your attendance - whether as worker, buyer, or friend who came to visit! These activities provide excellent opportunities for camaraderie - as well as the much-needed funds to keep the Friendship Centre alive and well. Also, over \$2,000 was contributed in outright donations - another very important source of our funding.

*You, our members, are most appreciated!*

For the past seven years, the Board has been very stable - rarely more than one retirement a year, often none. This year we have four retirees! I am one of these four; but after seven years on the Board, I can tell you that this Board is the finest group of people to work shoulder-to-shoulder with, bar none. I know I'm going to miss these folk, especially on the last Monday morning of the month - however, I know within myself that my time has come to move on. When Paddy Tsurumi retired from the Board a couple of years ago, she stated, "Instead of being an enthusiastic board member, I'm going to be an enthusiastic volunteer". I hope to follow her example! This influx of "new blood" onto the Board will bring new ideas and ways of doing things. So hang on to your hats!!

Thank you, one and all.



*Soup servers at the Fall Fair Ellen Ward, Meg Parrish, Bev Lownie, Barb Bragg, and Anne Currie .*

## HORNBY FALL FAIR

*by Meg Parrish*

Saturday, September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2007 in the magnificent setting of Arne Olsen's farm around 9.00 a.m., groups of people started to drift onto the grounds to stock up their stalls. A splendid setting where the people of Hornby would gather together to meet friends, to celebrate the harvest, and to wonder, not just where the summer went, but also about the coming winter.

As usual Heron Rocks Friendship Centre (HRFCS) had a fundraising stall selling homemade soups, breads and buns, tea and cookies. As in past years, our stall was tucked in beside the Hope Kitchen and the Elderhousing stall of pies and corn. We were happy to be in the same good company. The wonderful food was dished up to the sound of turkeys gobbling, ducks quacking and cocks crowing, as they strutted their stuff nearby for the judges. There was the sight of two little puppies being walked past the stall and then the double take - not puppies, but a matched pair of baby goats!

Many congratulations to the organizers who managed everything so apparently effortlessly and with such good nature. The parade was considered by many to be the best ever. It started the day's happenings off so well. The musicians throughout the day were all splendid, and made work fun.



*Non-stop dishwashers Kim MacKay and Mike Parrish.*

HRFCS thanks all those who contributed the wonderful food we served on the stall, and the many others who donated time during the day serving soup, making tea, staffing the cash desk, and washing dishes. The crews setting up the tents on Friday and then packing them up again on Saturday were efficient and cheerful. Thank you all.

The Hornby Fall Fair is always distinguished by its good nature but this year the atmosphere and the moods were so relaxed and mellow. It was wonderful to be part of a great event.

## West African Hand Drumming

by Bev Lownie

Our first Under the Maple program took place unexpectedly in the Heron Rocks annex due to rain. There, on a Wednesday afternoon, 35 people were introduced to West African Hand Drumming by Ron Sitter. Ron provided djembes (West African hand drums) to the group. Ron's drum was from Africa while several of the other drums had been made on Hornby Island. He explained that drums can be made from hardwood or softwood and are hand carved. There are 3 metals rings on the drum. Two rings on the top of the drum hold the goatskin in place. The third ring is at the bottom and holds strings in place. The sound comes from both the top and bottom of the drum.



Ron Sitter drumming.

First everyone played only **bass** notes which come from using the entire hand and hitting the drum in the middle. Next **tone** notes were introduced which are made by using the fingers only on the edge of the drum. Then the group did basic hand patterns using a combination of both notes. Another time Ron played the melody while everyone else beat the background. There was also a call and answer segment when Ron beat out a series of notes and the group repeated it back to him. A great time was had by all.

Ron has taught djembe drumming to both adults and children and facilitated drum circles when he resided in Calgary. Ron states "*research has shown that the primal rhythm of the drum is therapeutic in nature. It impacts people in different ways depending on specific needs and circum-*

*stances. For some it energizes, for others it provides stress relief, while others may find it a way to express individuality or explore creativity".*



Ron and novice drummers enjoying the djembe experience.

Novice drummers of all ages were delighted with the opportunity to try the djembe. Many of you who expressed the wish for more drumming sessions will be pleased to know that Ron will give another drumming class next year. Ron says he will bring more drums too!

## CHRISTMAS FAIR ANNOUNCEMENT

Heron Rocks Friendship Centre will once again be participating in Hornby Island's Annual Christmas Fair on Saturday, November 24th. The Christmas Fair is one of the three main fundraising events for HRFC throughout the year, and we appreciate that so many members are willing to donate items for our table. We ask members, if they wish, to contribute five or six items that can be sold for approximately \$5 to \$10 each. Popular items include home baking, preserves, jams, magnets, Xmas decorations, cards and wreaths or anything else that you think would be of interest to sell.

Please deliver your contributions to a Board Member before the sale or bring them to the Christmas Fair between 10 and 10:30 a.m. You will find our table in the school gym.

If you would like to spend an hour or two setting up, selling at the table, or taking down at the end, please let us know. You can contact Meg Parrish at 335-1131, Bev Lownie at 335-0017 or Roberta Pagdin on Denman at 335-2974 for further information.



## Volunteering in Kenya

by Wendy Reimer

Our second Under the Maple program took place on July 25<sup>th</sup> with a presentation by Don and Wendy Reimer entitled "Give a little, Get a lot: Volunteering in Kenya". It was based on their experiences while volunteering with the "Canadian Harambee Education Society" CHES in Kakamega, Kenya, from March through September 2006.

Wendy spoke about the beginnings of Canadian support for very bright but very needy Kenyan teenaged girls in the Western Province of Kenya. In 1982 Lorrie Williams, a teacher from New Westminster, saw students being 'chased home' because they couldn't pay their school fees. Lorrie began assisting several girls and when her friends got involved the number kept rising. The CHES society was formed in 1985 and donors provided money to pay fees for students. At first both boys and girls were supported, but later financial support has focussed on girls because boys are more likely to be funded by their families if they have any money at all.

Don and Wendy went to Kenya because they had been following the work of other retired teachers John Bowbrick and Alinda Ware, also from Vancouver Island, and because they prefer to see the world through working and giving a hand. 'Work' consisted of supervising the scholarship money as it passed from CHES to the girls' schools, interviewing the 460 girls at the end of each school term, equipping them where possible with needed supplies, helping when they were sick, especially the poorest girls who had no other resources.

Except for accommodation, CHES volunteers pay all their own expenses including many vaccinations, extra medical insurance, air fare to the other side of the world, food, and local transport. Kakamega is located an hour's bus ride north of Kisumu on Lake Victoria, almost on the Equator. There is plenty of rainfall, but inadequate water storage. The land is green and lush, but worn out by traditional farming practises and very dependent on the weather and expensive chemical fertilizers. Recent changes in weather have played havoc with food supply. Western Province is a very poor part of Kenya, where the population is mostly subsistence farmers. Don and Wendy lived in a compound with security guards always on duty around the house and travelled by bus or by SUV with a driver when leaving Kakamega. Less reliable (Wendy would say 'more exciting') transport around the town included bicycle taxi and ancient vehicles.

Six months seems a long time to be in one town, but the Reimers felt they were just beginning to figure things out by the time they left. Although at first Wendy said she couldn't tell one girl from another as most of them had shaved heads and wore heavy boarding school-style uniforms and oxfords, the girls said the same about them! The students worked so hard, got sick so often (malaria, TB, pneumonia) and were so appreciative of any help they were given, that you couldn't help but love them like daughters. Through e-mail the Reimers sent home a request for 'twoonies' that would buy one mosquito net to put over a girl's bunk bed and protect her from malaria. The response from Denman Island and elsewhere was so great that they were able to buy nets and deliver most of them personally to all the CHES girls spread throughout 13 boarding schools in the area. Being able to track the huge decrease in malaria just three months later was so rewarding. It was incredible to be able to do that.

The Reimer family sponsors a young woman, Esther Eshiwani, aged 21, who is completing her delayed high school career. She 'sat home' for 3 years waiting for a sponsor. Her family invited the Canadians for lunch at their shamba (farm). This was both an exciting and humbling experience. The people are so proud, well mannered, having a great respect for age and showing exuberant resilience in the face of incredible adversity. Sadly the average life span for Kenyans today is only 47 years because of AIDS, malaria and TB. Hopefully CHES girls will live longer lives because of their education and knowledge about staying healthy.

The participants under the maple were extremely interested and asked many questions. Several were already supporting a child in a developing country. Don recommended an excellent book African Friends and Money Matters by David Maranz as a good reference for anyone who is interested in volunteering in Africa. Other recommended reading includes the work of Geoffrey Sachs, Dr. Paul Farmer, and a thought-provoking article, "A Continent's Curse" by Larry Krotz in the United Church Observer, July/August 2007. Krotz tells us we need to be very careful about our attitude and motives towards Africa.

The Reimers encouraged listeners to think about why we volunteer in developing countries and to beware of "appropriating" such countries. We often speak (fondly!) of "my project in Africa", "my African daughter." Is this any worse than the attitude

of the colonizing European nations? Something to think about.



*Under the Maple presenters Wendy and Don Reimer with Calvi.*

What can people do on a one-to-one basis to help others in developing countries? Wendy and Don suggested the following options and reliable organizations.

1. CHES and ACCES – both BC organizations which focus on secondary/post-secondary education.
2. Stephen Lewis Foundation – one of its projects being “Grandmothers to Grandmothers”. Grandmothers (and grandfathers) raise money in Canada to send through the SLF directly to grandmothers who are sole-supporters of their AIDS orphaned grandchildren.
3. Doctors Without Borders (MSF)
4. Oxfam
5. Save the Children
6. Rotary International – which digs and drills village wells in rural areas, changing the lives of women especially, forever.
7. HIV/AIDS organizations which support research, orphanages, hospices for AIDS patients.
8. Push our federal government to increase its international development aid to 0.7% of GDP – a level that Canada committed to years ago, but has never honoured. Read up on the Millennium Goals, and Stephen Lewis’ talks on AIDS and development.

It all may seem like a drop in the bucket, but the Reimers have seen how even a twonie for a net gives a girl a chance to finish school.

## **The Cougar Annie–Heron Rocks Connection**

*By Ondrea Rogers*

On August 1<sup>st</sup> under the big maple tree behind Hilary Brown’s, thirty-three people were fortunate to hear Daniel Arbour talk about the legacies of two extraordinary women, Hilary Brown and Cougar Annie. Daniel has extensive knowledge about Cougar Annie’s life and her garden since he worked there for 4 years while living part-time on Hornby Island. He is currently doing his Master’s thesis on private land donations, with a particular interest in Hilary’s donation of her property to the Heron Rocks Friendship Society. As most of you know, this society came into existence in 1992 when Hilary decided her nine acre property would not be sold and deeded it to the Society as a land conservancy.



*Under the Maple presenter Daniel Arbour with his wife new Board Member Ondrea Rogers*

Daniel talked about how the relationship people have with the land seems to be the most important aspect of preserving property. Both Cougar Annie and Hilary absolutely loved the land around them and have inspired others to cherish and protect the land almost as intensely as they did themselves. Most of us are familiar with the story of how Hilary and H.B. came to Hornby in the thirties and were integral parts of the community all their lives. Hilary was especially noted for her involvement in starting the Co-op Store, an early island credit union, and the Elder Housing Village. Of course she and H.B. also ran the Heron Rocks campsite for many years, giving wonderful summer memories to hundreds of summer visitors, many of whom have since become integral members of the Hornby Island community themselves. Over the years Hilary has made many lasting friendships and these friends continue to support Heron Rocks.

Cougar Annie was also very attached to her

piece of farmland carved out of the west coast wilderness. She moved to Boat Basin in 1911, with children and husband in tow, and rarely left until shortly before her death in 1985. This despite all the trials of raising small children and a huge garden amidst the wilderness and cougars, watching four husbands come and go, and somehow having to make a living out of it all. Her main income was from a mail-order bulb business and the post office that she ran from 1930 to 1984. Convincing the authorities to keep a post office open in such a remote location was quite a feat. Visitors would often find themselves signed up as residents of Boat Basin and they were usually convinced to buy stamps in bulk to help support Cougar Annie's cause!

One of Cougar Annie's regular visitors was so inspired and impressed that he has spent the last twenty years or so dedicated to honouring her memory and restoring the garden that she loved so much. This now well-known heritage site is the subject of a book, appropriately titled *Cougar Annie's Garden*, and is managed by a non-profit group called the Boat Basin Foundation. The creation of the Temperate Rainforest Fieldstudy Centre, which consists of a magnificent hall and a cluster of cabins, has been a recent addition to the site. This centre allows classes access to the remote area in order to do field work in their areas of study.

*(Daniel Arbour is completing his Master's Degree in Environmental Education and Communication from Royal Roads University. He is a Project Co-ordinator for Ecotrust Canada and divides his time between Hornby Island and Clayoquot Sound.)*

*Note: In light of Hilary's recent passing we can all breathe deep and remember Hilary's hope that "people can be as happy here as I have been."*

## Oh! CANADA

*by Meg Parrish*

In 2006 Noah Richler published his book *This Is My Country, What's Yours?* The book was the result of three years work during which Richler travelled around Canada talking to what is described in the book's blurb as "a veritable who's who of Canadian literature". In fact Richler spent time with approximately one hundred Canadian authors and the result is a fascinating look at this amazing, exciting and puzzling country of ours.



Amidst glowing reviews last year *This Is My Country, What's Yours?* was short listed for the British Columbia Award for Non-Fiction, and chosen as one of the best books of 2006 by both Amazon.ca and the Globe and Mail.

Richler sub-titles his book "A Literary Atlas of Canada". In the first section of the book, called *The Virtues of Being Nowhere* – he talks to Margaret Atwood, Jane Urquhart, Barbara Gowdy, M.G. Vassanji and Rohinton Mistry – to mention only a few of the eminent Canadian authors he interviewed at that stage. In the course of these discussions Richler identified three stages and called them *The Age of Invention, The Age of Mapping, and The Age of Argument*. Regarding these, he interviewed many more Canadian authors.

As people of Canada we have come from every corner of the earth to become Canadians. Our private experiences create a powerful personal involvement as we read this book. Some of us came to this huge land under our own volition, some were brought by parents, yet others belong to families who have been in Canada for generations. Some came because it was their choice for a future, others came seeking refuge from dangers in their country of origin. Others came to escape danger, then were abused by the Canadian government of the day – yet still stayed. We all share the opportunity, and the challenge, of learning from our neighbours, and respecting their right to be themselves, however different from ourselves. Books like *This Is My Country, What's Yours?* can open doors between Canadians. Could *The Age of Argument* become a tool to help in the learning and growth of Canadians as a people? Could we choose to work toward understanding, accepting, and respecting *all* our neighbours? This troubled world could use an example like that at present.

*This Is My Country, What's Yours?* A Literary Atlas of Canada - by Noah Richler. Paperback edition published in 2007 by McClelland and Stewart.  
Cost: \$24.99

## Coming Events

### ON THE ROAD with Sharron Milstein & Gerald Hodge

Sunday, November 4th - 8 p.m. at New Horizons

Here is a description of their 90 minute slide presentation.

*Gerald and Sharron spent two months last year exploring and photographing along remote back roads and scenic byways in Washington, Nevada, Southern Utah, and California. They blend gorgeous images of red rock country, sand dunes, rugged coastlines and L.A. architecture with music and narration in recreating their trip. Join them on that journey.*

**Written contributions and photos are most welcome.** Please send material or suggestions to: HRFCS, P.O. Box 64, Hornby Island, BC V0R 1Z0

Newsletter produced by Meg Parrish, Mae Pagdin, Paddy Tsurumi, Margo Bushnell, Roberta Pagdin and Bev Lownie assisted by Hornby Desktop. Photos by Bev Lownie

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#### HRFCS Membership Fees

\$15 individual membership  
\$25 family (2 or more people)  
\$10 youth membership  
Friend of Centre – Any membership plus donation of \$100.

\_\_\_\_\_ Please direct my donation toward  
the Hilary Brown Youth Fund.

#### Name, address, phone:

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Please make cheques payable to  
**Heron Rocks Friendship Centre Society.**  
Send to HRFCS, P.O. Box 64,  
Hornby Island, BC V0R 1Z0

HRFCS is a registered non-profit charitable organization. You will receive a receipt for tax purposes for memberships as well as for donations. *Each member receives three newsletters annually, and receives notice of our many events throughout the year.*

To find out when your Heron Rocks membership expires check the mailing label on this newsletter.

