

March 20/2020 It's the small things.....

A journal of everyday life during the Coronavirus pandemic.

Our new phrases : social distancing, flattening the curve, unprecedented times.

There is a new normal, totally abnormal in many ways.

Life goes on and we must live it to the full. Creativity abounds and the opportunities are endless.

Canada is closing in on 1,00 cases of Covid-19, but much is being done and we look beyond this pandemic with hope for the future for our children and grandchildren

PROLOGUE

It was last evening during my exercise/ stretching regime that I decided to document this personal journey .Many others are blogging, but for me, there is a therapeutic element in putting pen to paper.

It's a dog's life.....March 12th – 14th

We spent three lovely sunny days last week with our longtime good friends Judy and Nod, enjoying a dyke walk and a couple of hikes in Golden Ears Provincial Park, sunny but cold. Accompanying us on these hikes was Navie, a sweet dog, rescued from Taiwan. She now has a wonderful new life here in Canada. Her meals come at regular times, she can run freely, and yet she knows nothing of the humankind struggle against Coronavirus. Run free Navie.....

The overwhelming seriousness of the current situation set in on that first evening in Maple Ridge. The St. Pat's 5K race slated for Saturday 14th was cancelled, and then a flood of emails from businesses, associations, entertainment venues etc. all bearing the same grim message – cancelled, cancelled, cancelled.

A stop at North Vancouver Superstore on the way back to Bowen confirmed people's paranoia – empty shelves in the cleaning supplies/soaps section, eggs in short supply, and bins of large quantity nets of potatoes, onions, oranges, apples, all emptied out.

March 16th.

A day of laughter, Scrabble games and home cooked food, even the occasional hug as Denise and Diana join us. The last day of it's kind for the foreseeable future

March 17th

There's absolutely NO time for complacency.....

Out running the trails of Crippen Regional Park, I realized that “ social Distancing “ did not seem to be on people’s radar here, so the time for action, pro – action is NOW

Phone calls to BC Ferries please announce on every sailing the importance of social distancing

Bowen Municipality please put up signs in the Cove re: social distancing

Bowen Undercurrent weekly

Response is proof that one can make a difference, just reach out and make it happen.

March 18th

Municipal signs re: social distancing are on many telegraph poles and higher traffic areas in Snug Cove

March 19th

BC Ferries announcements on every crossing, a long spiel, far and above the one liner I had suggested.

BI Undercurrent devotes its whole paper to Covid-19 and a copy is delivered to every BI household. Let’s get the message out, no time to lose.

And so to today, March 20th, our friend Paul’s birthday.

Our days are bookended by CBC- radio during breakfast, and The National TV pre – bedtime.

We are also grateful for Knowledge Network, Netflix and Spotify, minor distractions with a sense of normalcy.

The sun has been shining for a week, so time to while away some time in a sheltered spot outside the library or adjacent to the ice cream window.

Walking, running, sunning, all free and available, they will not run out.....

Pro-active moves today while we still have our trusty Subaru porter – put on the roof rack and head to the Building Centre (just anticipating that it may eventually close) to buy wood to finish the deck, and packets of seeds to grow a vegetable garden. It will be good for us to have a choice of activities to do daily.

Currently a couple hours of yard cleanup every day provides extra exercise and fresh air. There is always something to be done, we will never be bored.

The days are lightening and yet my body feels heavier -my running legs are plodding. So, while I feel good and optimistic on a larger scale, I guess this pandemic affects me by osmosis and enters the sub conscious mind. Striking a balance every day will be optimal for physical and mental wellbeing. Educate oneself but switch off the continual coverage and take a break.

We have come to the BI distillery to obtain hand sanitizer, we have none, but are leaving with 70% alcohol cleaner to be used for touch points not hands. Shipments of the necessary additives are in short supply.

Other thoughts.....

How do we resolve the situation of seeing our family ? Myles, Briony, Maisie 5, Ira 3- a weekly walk together yet apart might be the best solution.

March 21st.

It's the small things.....

Daisies popping up through the grass at Queen's Park, New Westminster. The cheerful produce department staff stacking up piles of bananas from Guatemala, and the unflappable and friendly barista at the Safeway Starbucks, all doing their part to keep us well nourished. Give thanks whenever you can.

So how come we strayed so far from Bowen Island today ? Yes, it felt weird and scary and I wished all the time that I was at home. But our trusty Subaru had to be " put down " at Scrap It in Surrey. Had to play it as safe as possible to get the \$6000 refund before all non-essential businesses may be mandated to close. It was also good to re-stock fresh produce, eggs, meats and cheese

Extra appreciation for Randy Bachman's Saturday night music – dancing in the kitchen, crank up the favorites – music therapy.

March 23rd.

The ally of this virus is complacency. Too many people are not adhering to the social distancing mandate. So glad that the mayor of Bowen has said " don't come ".

Today, the first day in many without sun and a clear blue sky. It's Monday, dull and damp. Solution – put on some bright clothes and give thanks for rain – it will bring beautiful flowers and will keep our streams and ponds topped up.

Phone call of the day was to Denise P., sharing our thoughts and frustrations over some of our non – compliant friends – what is intelligence, education ?

It's the small things.....

Robins chirping their chorus as they scurry through the ferns, blissfully unaware. Will they wonder why picnickers are not coming and leaving crumbs on the tables, no, this is human perspective.

It's quiet, and life for us on Bowen Is. Is not a whole lot different than usual. A break in gardening and Scrabble games today. Intersperse the activities, switch up daily routines.

March 24th – Changing colors and the Wave

Put away the blacks and greys, time to resurrect the fuchsia Adidas from the back of the closet. Brightening the trails and lifting one's spirits.

Try the Wave – to those in the distance and passing by in cars- you'll be surprised at the response.

Morning chats with local friends and email catch ups with overseas friends. Connect, connect, connect.

Noticing how timelines are going askew – 9 days feels like forever ago, things happening so quickly when nothing is happening.

March 25th – Rediscovering trails and racing red shafted flickers.

Golf course trail rediscovered on a beautiful sunny afternoon. Soaking up warmth and rays overlooking fairway, attractive man-made lake which irrigates the course, and beyond to the ocean and hills of Gulf islands and Vancouver Island. El Paradiso comes to mind.

All accomplished because of my test drive of our new Nissan Leaf2019. Beauty seen with more clarity, flowers, trees and grasses.

Flickers, usually pecking around the tree base, full of energy and chasing each other up and down a tree trunk, shrieking with glee at their newfound game.

March 28th It's the small things.....

Feeling much gratitude for life skills learned -self reliance and good coping mechanisms. Happy to run and exercise alone – always new goals and challenges that one can set for oneself. Have fun imagining different options.

It's definitely a bigger challenge to contend with when skies are grey and cloudy, rain continues to fall – absolutely necessary but it nevertheless dampens our spirits.

Have had a feeling of confidence in how Justin Trudeau and his government are handling the crisis. P.M. addresses the country seven days a week from his residence where he has been self - isolating since his wife Sophie tested positive for the virus. It's a call to arms and a way of connecting us all.

And yesterday there came a minute glimmer of hope from the BC Health Minister Dr. Bonnie Henry that the “ signs are promising “ re: escalation of new cases. This is no time to be complacent or smug, the fight continues, the rules to be obeyed.

March 29th Zoom zoom

No, it's not the Mazda commercial !

10.00 a.m. Logged into Zoom, to pick up Barb Crompton's Hatha Yoga class from her home on Gambier Island on her 4th day of 14 quarantine, having returned from Mexico. So very neat to have her in my

room, talking to me.....after all it's only about 36 years ago that I used to attend her aerobics classes 3X week @ The Fitness Group in Kitsilano. As a Mum of 2 toddlers she was a life line then, and now ,all these years later she is again one of my life lines.

April 1st – a new month but nothing has changed significantly.

More people are getting sick, dying, as the world spins more and more out of control.

In the midst of this, yesterday will always be remembered as a big day for us, a day that we marked our elder daughter Amy's passing eight years ago. Something far larger than Coronavirus, something that is forever, not a temporary blip in the history of the world.

Feeling mad.....conflicted

A new feeling for me in this pandemic. I felt that my emotions were so entrenched in the everyday, that I didn't have much left to give to March 31st. Was I short - changing Amy? Are my feelings and pain surrounding her passing being minimized ? Are we absolutely brain washed in Coronavirus ? Please go away and let me grieve.

The memorial bench at Van Tech High School was financed by the Student Council and provided a social distancing for Briony and I to meet up as per usual on 31st. I had not seen her since March 11th, for the kids it will be much longer, and yes Ira, I so want to hug you too. We exchanged a container of veg/coconut curry for a home-made loaf and a couple of kiddy treats.

The rest of our trip to the mainland was for stocking up on produce, staples and some toiletries. Along with us we had latex gloves, face masks and 70% alcohol cleaner, but I didn't feel totally safe until we got home, and I could scrub up properly with soap and water. So nice to get home – will this turn me into a recluse, a social misfit ? Likely not I say with confidence.

Cash has pretty much been eliminated which was a bit problematical in getting a trolley @ the Superstore. A friendly fellow shopper offered her key tag, very Canadian, everyone helping each other without a second thought. We are all in this together. No one is alone.....

Phone chat this afternoon with a friend - I admit to reaming her out over spending time with grandchild and doing 98% isolation – what is wrong with this Math ? It doesn't work ! I am feeling so strongly about people loop holing and I'm not afraid to say so. Our friendship is solid - I received an email thanking me for my actions ! A mutual friend felt the same way, but wouldn't have spoken out.

Aim to constantly remind people, we have to all care for each other and we are all in this together and for the long haul.

April 2nd.....Loss

For the past few days, a brown moth with beautifully patterned wings has been sharing our space, but alas, this morning I found it totally still on the living room floor. Did it crash land on the hardwood or was its time up? Little questions that I will never know the answer to.

Very dire news out of the U.S. today re: the virus - their graph trajectories are so much worse than China or Italy. It is totally mind boggling what may ultimately happen.

Pleased to hear that the grandkids fully approve of Nana's bread and are eating it at every meal. Apparently for little Ira it was a hunger strike breaker! Glad to be of assistance. Plan to drop off a couple of loaves next week, it's a very simple yet much appreciated gift.

Enjoying the little video clips that come through the phone, text messages, face time and short phone convos. We hear that Maisie is thriving in her new "norm" - Mama and Dada are always around, Mama is giving school lessons in French and English, and she gets to have afternoon naps! What's not to like?! A different scenario for Ira who is missing his friends. But at least they have each other at home and out. Give a thought to all the "only children" out there - a tough situation with a lack of kid energy in the home day after day.

Have gratitude for all we have.

April 5th - In the porch!

New pandemic buzz words: modelling, stark, sobering. These all relate to the Provinces' projections of new virus cases and deaths.

Thinking of all my friends worldwide who have aged parents, some independently living, most in sheltered accommodation. How are they all coping, will they see each other again? Indeed sobering thoughts.

Once again Dr. Bonnie Henry offers up some positive signs re # of new cases in BC.

The front patios are de-mossed, and we are ready to move furniture into its summer locale. Forecasts are for good weather this week, so hopefully it will get quite a bit warmer. While we wait for outdoor sitting weather to arrive, we will hike the beautiful trail uphill behind our house.

Briony has suggested a "meet-up" with take out supper in HSB. Feeling very conflicted. Having reamed others out for non-compliance, I feel it would be really hypocritical to do this, much as the heart strings yell out "yes, let's do it!"

April 6th - It's the small things.....

A sunny day brought a flurry of activity to get outside chairs and tables in place, and then the reward - that first post winter cup of coffee outside on the back deck. The day's other major event was an hour-long phone chat with the Swankeys - wonderful to catch up on family news, and if we can't get together let's use the phone - it can happen again.

April 7th - Happy Green Shirt Day !

Helping BC Transplant in their awareness campaign to have more people register their decision to be an organ donor. Bringing awareness to the trails of Bowen, one step at a time. Digging in the garden, one fork full of dirt at a time.

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who tested positive for Covid -19 on March 27th has been admitted into the ICU at St. Thomas' Hospital, London.

Kudos big time to Metro Vancouver for the very large " social distancing " notices in the Parks, especially liking the cougar one. They really want to keep the Parks open, we are truly lucky, let's not abuse the privilege especially this coming Easter weekend if it is sunny – this will be a real test to people's compliancy and patience.

It seems that I may have access to some yeast from the General Store. This commodity is like gold and has been flying off store shelves at a similar rate to toilet paper and cleaning products.

Face masks will become more prevalent when people head to the grocery stores, it's okayed by the head honchos. Our friend Angela is sewing them in her Yaletown condo. Thanks for doing your part A.

April 9th - Outing to West Vancouver and 2716 Cambridge St.

It was gloriously sunny today with temperatures up to 16C. The perfect day for a " social distancing " picnic lunch and visit with family. Maisie and Ira were very excited to see us and shrieked notice of our arrival throughout the neighborhood. Set up our lawn chairs in their backyard and the family stayed on their back deck, kids frolicking around on the grass behind us. All were well but we did not outstay our welcome.

Second stop was Westview, a successful shop at Safeway, Kin's Market and the Bakery for Good Friday's (tomorrow) Hot X buns. Back in the safety of our home by 5:00pm

YEAST – I have a 1 lb. packet good until March 2022 from Bowen Island general Store- just fresh in today.

\$6 + - very reasonable. Shhhh.....it's like gold dust and will likely have gone within a couple of days. Alongside the pandemic is the continuing price battle of oil between Russia and Saudi Arabia. For the first time in years, gas prices were less than \$1 a liter – registered 95.9 cents !

April 11th - catching a backyard break.

Yesterday was GOOD Friday which prompted me to reach out to all my single friends and colleagues. Thinking of all things GOOD in our lives -interesting to scan the brain and make a mental list pre and during Covid-19. It was interesting to see how similar yet different the two lists were.

Noticed that Bowen had put up beautiful colored signs (yellow print on turquoise background) at both starts of the Killarney Lake trail, likely because there will be off island visitors around. Sadly not everyone is adhering to the advice of our experts -only essential travel – please !

Sun feels wonderful.....unfortunately the strong wind will start to blow all the tree blossoms down – enjoying it while we can.

Ontario and Quebec are not faring as well as BC currently. Their number of confirmed Covid – 19 cases continues to grow rapidly, as do the numbers of deaths.

At the same time Dr. Bonnie Henry, BC's Chief Medical Officer, is starting to give hints that certain relaxations may begin to start happening after month's end. Notably, cancelled surgeries of a serious nature may be able to be performed. Alberta too, is performing OK.

The first sowing of salad greens went in today.

April 13th – It's the small things.....

Sun drenched tootsies feel SO good !

No long-sleeved top needed for today's run

New bedding purchased at Ikea on March 14th is now on the bed. It feels good to have something different in these times when there is so much sameness. Whoever would have thought that new bed sheets would lift one's spirits ? Strange times we are living through/

In UK Boris Johnson was released from hospital yesterday just as the projections for that country are dire, and will likely turn out to be the worst hit in Europe – right now it is hard to fathom being in a worse situation than Italy, Spain and France.

April 14th – It's the small things.....

Woodpeckers with their tap tapping are adding to the cacophony of backyard noises, joining the chickadees, juncos, robins, hummingbirds and towhees. I love the “ call and response “ with the towhee. Is he really answering me ? Probably not, but I like to believe he is.

A home baked batch of biscotti to enjoy with our morning coffee. Barb – you shared this recipe with me many years ago – it is still going strong, as are all of us.

So many people out of work.....the bees remain as busy as ever.

April 16th - Apocalypse Now.....

The pandemic is joined by the first wild fire of the season in Squamish BC. And somewhere soon the Spring floods will join and take their toll. Early this morning we could smell the smoke blowing down Howe Sound. It's early to have forest fires already.

If one were to believe the over simplified idea that only bad things happen to bad people, then we all must have been very bad. Does this compute as to how we have disrespectfully treated planet earth ? Is climate change rearing its ugly head and feeling it is payback time ?

April 17th - and now the Politics

US President Trump has ordered his Administration not to pay their contribution to the WHO. Valuable \$\$\$ for research, definitely needed at this time as Scientists race to find a vaccine for Covid-19, and possibly drugs that could alleviate symptoms in those suffering the most. I thought his decision stemmed from him believing that the WHO had bungled the whole pandemic outcome, but apparently it was to do with the pressure that China had put on the WHO in the early days of the pandemic and how it had responded. President Trump has also said he may close down Congress – both the Senate and the House of Representatives. It is within his presidential powers to do so and would effectively make him the Dictator ! Scary times indeed.

He is also moving towards certain relaxations in public behavior in some of the States in order to kick start the economy. Fortunately, it can be hoped, that calmer heads will prevail - several State governors are banding together against his idea and may introduce their own timelines as and when appropriate.

And then there's the scams.....

UK was caught out big time. A company in China offered Covid -19 test kits @ a cost of 20,000,000 pounds, cash to be paid upfront, no viewing of the kits, and they had to be fetched from China. Now who would fall for that ? All that money and zero guarantees.....I need not mention that the kits did not work as promised !

April 20th - a sunny Monday afternoon.

“ New breaking news “ filled the airwaves since yesterday morning – a mass shooting of unimaginable tragedy has struck small village Nova Scotia. The lone gunman's rampage began late Saturday night in Portapique, then spread to other villages for more slaughters and houses ablaze. The last death toll number I heard this morning was 19, but the fear is real that maybe more bodies will be recovered from the remaining shells of several homesteads in different villages. The lone attacker, who is included in the death count was Gabriel Wortman, a dentist. One of his victims was an RCMP Officer, another a volunteer fire fighter who, as a first responder answered the 911 operator's call for help. Two Corrections Officers were also slain, did this guy have an issue with people in authority, had he aspired to be an RCMP Officer ? Many details we will never know, but new evidence will come to light as the days and weeks unfold. Our hearts and virtual hugs go out to all those people in the tight knit communities of Nova Scotia, the families who are mourning the death of a loved one.

Giving a thought too to the agony being endured as other community members await potentially devastating news of their family and friends. So much will be uncovered in a short space of time.

Stay strong Nova Scotia ! It's unimaginable the strength people will need to work through this extra layer on top of Covid – 19 . Hugs would make a world of difference, so mean of the Coronavirus to rob us of these at this time of devastating grief.

The “ curve is flattened “. We are hearing this more often now as BC's # of new cases is decreasing. Some people are antsy to reopen businesses and restart the economy - let's not be too hasty and not undo all the good we have done by being so vigilant and compliant. Baby steps.....

Today is Alison Rose's birthday. Who knows whether she is still alive, what her married name might be, and where is she living ? Why did my brain spew this fact out as soon as I woke up this morning ? She lived near me when we were young kids in 1950's/60's. We attended different elementary schools but played together on weekends, attended Sunday School, Brownies and Guides at the Hunts X Presbyterian Church, Liverpool. Alison's younger sister was Glynis, and they lived on the Kingsthorpe Road housing estate. They attended Kingsthorpe Road Primary School, but I had to take the bus for over 3 miles to Childwall C of E (Church of England) Primary School, all because of where my house was. Yes, school boundaries were a pain in the butt in that era too.

April 22nd. Happy Earth Day.

How amazing that on this day we receive the much-needed rain, nature's way of looking after itself and producing a greener than green Earth Day. Although the light levels were definitely lower this morning, the leaves on the trees look fresh and vibrant. Seeds are drinking up the moisture and the pollen is being washed off the skylights. Every cloud.....

The Nova Scotia death toll climbed to 23. Deep shock and grief pervade our airwaves.

Zoom yoga with Barbara continues to be my Wednesday morning constant.

Today the electrician finally shows up to connect our high- speed charger for the car. I'm waiting for him for him to finish so that I can bake this week's muffin batch- I'm thinking oatmeal / cranberry / coconut.

It feels almost claustrophobic being in all day so far, I have got very used to spending long stretches of time outside on my land. Hopefully, we can fit in a late afternoon walk. That sounds so funny – “ fit in “, as though we are busy beyond words !

It's quite amazing how quickly the days slip by, pondering on past and present and wondering about how the future, our future will look.

So has BC “ unflattened its curve ?” There is a Covid – 19 outbreak in another Seniors' Residence, plus many have tested positive at the United Poultry processing plant on East Cordova St., Vancouver. The latter is a concern for our food chain, as this plant joins a beef processing plant in High River, Alberta. From this facility there have been more than 70 positive test results and 1 death. Workers who were feeling unwell “ needed “ to continue going to work in order to get that paycheck to cover rent and food. In the end the facilities have closed down anyway.

This evening the Premier of PEI (Prince Edward Island) reports that he believes his Province is ready to start relaxing some of the restrictions as early as the beginning of May and will assess the results in two-week increments. Baby steps, please.

In these different times our roads are so devoid of cars and trucks, skies are silent overhead except for the occasional Medi Vac helicopter that lands in Crippen Park.

On several occasions we have been drawn to look outside , what is it ? The clip clop of horses' hooves on blacktop – it feels as if someone has pressed the rewind switch -a throwback to simpler, less hurried lives. As Earth Day 2020 (the 50th Anniversary) draws to a close it is interesting to reflect on one silver lining in our daily lives – pollution levels in most of the world's largest cities have fallen so low that they

set new records. People with asthma can breathe so much easier. Is it too much to hope for in this era of climate change that this could be the new status quo ? If only..... Maybe we will return to pre Covid -19 pollution levels as soon as everyone gets in their car to return to the office, or maybe not. We the humanoids have that choice to make. Let's choose wisely to try and save our planet.

April 23rd – frustration, gratitude, reward.

A frustrating morning trying to register by phone for my second CERB (Canada Employment Relief Benefit) installment, \$2000 per month, total of 4 months. There always seems to be glitches when dealing with government agencies – why can they not make processes simple ?

How to rid the frustration? Yes, of course, a good workout upstairs in our “ home gym “ – a lose term as it only consists of a yoga mat, 2 x 5 lbs., 1x 8 lbs. free weights and an elastic chest expander. The stillness and quiet of the space along with the outdoor views of flowering salmonberry bushes and mossy slopes allowed me to focus on all the things I have gratitude for.

The list is lengthy – my family, friends, work colleagues, my beautiful home and sanctuary on Bowen Island, my good health and physical fitness level, my numerous travels. The birds and the bees, flora and fauna, the changing seasons. My resilience, positive attitude, strong coping skills and self reliancy.

And by the afternoon some amazing rewards - large plumpious purple starfish basking in the sun against the wave lapped rocks of September Morn beach. And I had actually gone there just to look for rocks for a small project.

Two types of brilliant yellow flowers both beginning with the letter “D “. Daffodils practice back to back social distancing, dandelions clearly do not. (Insert 2 photos).

And I did resolve this morning's frustration.

April 25th.

Looking out at the rain washing all the maple pollen off roofs and ledges reminded me of “Listen to the rhythm of the falling rain. “So, I decided it would be fun to fit a song title to each day of the coming week, music being such a big part of our lives from the 1960's to present days. So, starting today “Rhythm of the Rain” 1962 The Cascades. Did the group name or song title come first?

Barking California sealions relaxing on a float off the Cape Roger Curtis coastline, Bowen Island.

April 26th “Sunday bloody Sunday” 1983 U2.

Pausing to remember the lives lost in Nova Scotia last Sunday. Love and strength to their families, friends and community.

April 27th “Monday Monday” 1966 Mamas & Papas.

Laura Swankey / Andrew Furlong livestream concert from their home in Toronto.

April 28th “We shall overcome,” many artists

1962 Pete Seeger

1966 Joan Baez

1972 Mahalia Jackson

1998 Bruce Springsteen

Playing journal writing catch up, it has been a couple of days. Ref. to April 16th and the probability of adding floods to our catastrophes. Now it has come true with dire reports from Fort McMurray, Alberta and the Chilcotin area of north central BC. Extra layers added – how to make sure people can social distance when they are being evacuated to recreational centers etc. It never rains but it pours.

It is the small things..... Opportunities and creativity abound.

How often in our adult lives do we or can we press pause, even rewind to some childhood activities?

My first ‘play’ was a couple of weeks ago when I took my descant recorder out of its case and figured out the fingering and the notes of “Twinkle, Twinkle little star”. I wondered if my daughter could still play this on her violin. It was the first tune she learned.

A few days later while I was tidying out my sewing basket, I found 3 knitting needles and 2 small balls of wool. Could I remember how to knit? Cast on, knit one, purl one, cast off, the terminology is familiar. Yes, I remembered. There are so many things that are “like riding a bike”, one does not forget. It is quite fun to knit a few rows while waiting for dinner to finish cooking. My effort could be a Covid -19 era bookmark or small scarf for one of the grandkid’s stuffies.

And thirdly, painted rocks. I have noticed these along the trails and at the beaches. Some have faces, some flowers, some designs and some words of encouragement. I cannot recall that I ever painted rocks during my childhood in England, but I wanted to give it a try. My results are rudimentary, but there are plenty more rocks in the yard and on the beach, and we do have the gift of plenty of time in our lockdown should I want to hone my skills. Thanks for loaning me your glitter glue stick ,Maisie.

April 29th “ Downtown “ 1964 Petula Clark.

The song title does stretch the truth somewhat as we do not actually go downtown. Our weekly trip to West and East Vancouver is however symbolized in the title. It is an off-island experience, and a happy focal point in the week.

April 30th “Good day sunshine” 1966 The Beatles

And in tandem is “Both sides now” 1968 Judy Collins/1969 Joni Mitchell.

Yes, the day started off sunny hence my first choice of song. Then I all too quickly recalled that tragedy struck again yesterday with the Canadian Military helicopter crash in the ocean off Greece. The Prime Minister's daily address this morning focused on this, just the second time since mid-March that the focus has shifted off Covid 19. So far, the body of a young female engineer has been recovered. Once again, the country mourns.

Today I submitted a photo of myself holding a photo of my elder daughter Amy and a printed sign reading "My daughter gave the gift of life. Please think twice, and stay home for our organ recipients", to BC Transplant for its awareness campaign on social media. All organ recipients are immunocompromised because of the anti-rejection drugs they take daily. This makes them especially vulnerable during this pandemic.

Planted my sweet pea seeds. My father was an avid sweet pea grower in England during my childhood. At our local horticulture show he submitted beautiful blooms in various class categories, and also volunteered on the Judge's panel. Nothing smaller than four blooms per stem was acceptable, but for me it is more about the numerous colors and lovely perfume. Dad and I agreed to differ much of the time.

May 1st. "Sound of Silence" 1964 Simon and Garfunkel

Happy May day !

Nothing exemplifies this pandemic more than today's song title. Busy streets and sidewalks are deserted, very few planes are flying. The silver lining is that we can hear and appreciate nature's sounds. The birds are busy building nests and caring for their fledglings. The crows in particular are very noisy at this time of year as they protect their own.

This morning I was reminded of a quote from Maya Angelou "Be a rainbow in someone else's cloud".

How appropriate this feels , especially as windows everywhere have rainbows and hearts painted on them.

Today marks the sixth week from when I started this journal. At that time I commented on the fact that Canada was homing in on 1,000 cases of Covid 19; today we are at 53,000 plus.

How much longer will I be writing this ? Who knows ? What I do know is that I will not stop until we are all clear....