

THE JOURNAL OF Creative Aging

SAGE-ING

with Creative Spirit, Grace & Gratitude



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KNOW YOURSELF. BE YOURSELF.
LOVE YOURSELF. SHARE YOURSELF.
ONLINE AT www.sageing.ca

FROM THE EDITORS

Play will lead you on a magical journey. Play shapes the brain, opens the imagination and invigorates the soul. Play can often wisely inform career decisions to create a meaningful vocation. Although we are born with the urge to play, education in the twentieth century has focused mainly on the 'rational' intellect. In this twenty-first century, neuroscience researchers are urging us to probe our internal landscapes, the vast resource of the inner wisdom that is our full potential. Limited research (Gariépy & Howe 2003; Mindell 1998; Ryce-Menuhin 1992) suggests that inner wisdom can be expressed in the therapeutic play of children diagnosed with cancer. Researchers in play and sandplay therapy have noticed that those who succumb to the illness construct play scenes that remain static from session to session; play that moves and is attuned to the moment heals. [please change and reposition as you like] Our issue was inspired by *Play: How it Shapes the Brain, Opens the Imagination, and Invigorates the Soul* by Stuart Brown and Christopher Vaughan.

Although shorter than some, this issue begins with five artists from our Sage-ing community whose practices are enriched by play and often experiences from childhood days, and by keeping that passion alive as they create and build their 'work' life. It's a beautiful issue that stimulates contemplation.

In PLAYING FOR KEEPS AND KEEP ON PLAYING Penn Kemp, London Ontario creator, having just turned 80, advises a lifetime practice of play. Heidi Thompson shares how PLAY: Purposeful Learning About Yourself shapes her practice and began at age 5 as she played in the mud. CREATING PLAY: A Life Journey presents sculptor Doug Alcock at one with nature, as he preserves, works and plays within his environment. GROWING AS I PLAY presents Annabel Stanley who looks at the life and works she has created and how her playful spirit has directed her. "Often I find inspiration from the lived, playful moments that I have experienced [I changed this in the text so am changing it here too; please change both back if you prefer]. Then I pick up the brush and paint my first mark on a canvas. I let myself be guided through the

creative process with a playful attitude," explains Suzanne Chavarie in I CREATE PLAYFULLY. Retired surgeon Jacques G. LeBlanc endorses the value of play to well-being in DON'T PLAY WITH YOUR FOOD. In CATHERINE, proud grandmother Martha Ellen Johnson recalls how "diamond days" playing with Catherine gave incentive for her granddaughter's successful career in the theatre. Dawn Sutcliffe In EMBRACING THE JOY OF CREATION concludes our issue of celebrating play by sharing her satisfaction found in transforming discarded materials and reimagining the everyday.

The thoughtful sharings presented in these articles frequently mention how deep, creative exploring can be strongly related to interactions with nature and its lessons. Searching understanding of the spiritual and emotional life of the individual inspired 19th century transcendentalists who advocated soul growth through nature rather than books. Theirs was a reaction to the materialism and rationalism at that time. A century later there is a return to their philosophy and its exploration through creative works.

In our next issue we invite submissions exploring how nature inspires creative expression and introspection.

– Karen, Johanna, Laura

References:

- Gariépy, N., & Howe, N. (2003). The therapeutic power of play: examining the play of young children with leukaemia. *Child: Care, Health & Development*, 29(6), 523-537.
- Mindell, N. (1998). Children with cancer: Encountering trauma and transformation in the emergence of consciousness. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 25(1), 3-20.
- Ryce-Menuhin, J. (1992). *Jungian sandplay: The wonderful therapy*. London, UK: Routledge.

HOW TO SUBMIT

The theme to consider for our next issue will be in the FROM THE EDITORS in each issue. Your story is to be original, related to creativity in any of its many forms, as a path to gaining self awareness and wisdom, and/or the act of harvesting your life's wisdom as a legacy for future generations.

Please attach it as a word document (.doc) – not a PDF - to enable editing, using calibri font, 14 pt, 1.5 spacing. 500 – 1500 word maximum (use word count).

Please attach 3-4 photos, separately, including: Your headshot, 2-3 photos related to your article. All photos should be numbered, given a caption, and attached in high resolution jpg. format. Insert the word "photo #" with its caption within the article where you would like each image placed (we'll try to honour this request as layout permits). Please include a brief bio note, written in the third person (one or two short paragraphs of up to 200 words). Your bio will be placed at the end of your article and is intended to give the reader an idea of who you are, your passions and/or what you do and have done with your life that feels relevant to the article. Please include your preferred contact information, including email, website, blog address – whatever you want included in the publication. In your cover email, please share how you found your way to submitting to Sage-ing. Please email your article and photographs to Karen Close at karensageing@gmail.com

Quarterly issues of The Journal go online around a solstice or equinox: March, June, September, and December. We need to receive your intention of submitting an article by the first day of the preceding month or earlier. **Your complete submission is required by the first day of the month preceding publication.**

WHO WE ARE

Karen Close, Editor,

taught English and Visual Arts for 30 years. Retirement in 1995 gave her the opportunity to meet vibrant senior Canadian artists and to hear their stories.



Indigenous cultures teach us, “All Elders have medicine—physical, emotional, musical, story. Let’s give our unique medicine to the world.” In 2011, believing in the medicine inherent in creative expression, Karen began editing the free online arts and aging journal *Sage-ing With Creative Spirit, Grace and Gratitude*. She is the author of two books. *Unfinished Women: Seeds From My Friendship With Reva Brooks* and *The Spirit of Kelowna: A Celebration of Art and Community* profiles a community art project in Kelowna, BC. In January, 2015 Woodlake Publishing released *Creative Aging: Stories from the Pages of the Journal Sage-ing With Creative Spirit, Grace and Gratitude*. Karen is the recipient of the 2016 City of Kelowna Honour In The Arts award.



Johanna Beyers, Copy Editor, is a poet and mixed media artist. She began her career as a marine paleontologist, and holds a PhD in environmental policy

and a Master’s of Social Work. She is a certified sandplay therapist. Johanna is the author of *Sandbar Islands* (The Caitlin Press, 1988) and *Wearing my Feathered Hat* (Wind Oak & Dove, 2013). Her work has been published in *The Capilano Review*, *Sage-ing*, *Room of One’s Own*, *CV2*, *Waves*, and elsewhere. She has been copy-editor for *Sage-ing* since 2018.

Laura David (Foster), Assistant Editor,

Artist Laura David (Foster), MPS, CCC, formerly a registered art therapist and clinical counsellor (with Foster Art and Wellness in Edmonton/Kelowna) is now retired and enjoying life as a grandmother. She has worked therapeutically with individuals and groups in various organizations, but now has chosen to return to her first love: to focus on her own work as an artist. She has developed a passion for the healing power of art that stems from her lived experience of mental health issues, recovery, spirituality, and creating and teaching art. She pursued this passion by completing a Master of Psychotherapy and Spirituality degree at St. Stephen’s College with an Art Therapy specialization. Laura agrees, “Feeling is the power that drives art” (1991, David Milne).



Robert MacDonald, Designer and Publisher, has lived by his wits, some hard work, and a good lashing of luck. Almost completely

unschooled, he has, over several decades, invented identities as graphic artist, typographer, printer, community activist, publisher, information architect, program director, programmer, and designer. He hasn’t finished with inventions. Having spent most of his life thoroughly urbanized (Toronto, New York, San Francisco, Vancouver) he is now nestled into the grasslands and orchards of the Okanagan valley. He finds profound solace in the virgin wilderness upland from his habits. His works have appeared in the journals *Kosmos*, *Image*, *Sage-ing*, and more, and he has chapbooks: *Dead Drop* and *Headwinds*, with more anticipated. He is transcribing several decades of writings from notebook to manuscript, and is otherwise biding his time.

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www.sageing.ca

Email karensageing@gmail.com

Cover image: *My Weavings* by Annabel Stanley

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PLAYING FOR KEEPS AND KEEP ON PLAYING

Penn Kemp



I remember my own early discovery of and delight in language. As a child, I did not coddle my dolls. I sat them up and read the poems, stories and nursery rhymes my mother had read to me. The words she read would sink into the well of my hearing and become part of me; their rhythms would dance inside my body like northern lights. I ate up those words with a necessity as strong as hunger. Even at first hearing, the words were somehow familiar as if I recognized in them old friends. I remember swelling proudly with the power of words, in learning first to read and then actually to write, to put down the letters so that they made sense to anyone who could read.

I wrote my first story when I was six, excited and amazed at having created through apparent magic something out of nothing with marks on a page. I glimpsed a world in which words had a life of their own, just as toys did. I knew that if I could wake at the right time at night I would catch my toys at play. So too, I felt words could be surprised and fixed onto the page.

Writing that first story was the first time that I recall consciously feeling that I was creating something entirely on my own, assuming independence – growing up! I felt like the *Little Red Hen* in the nursery story: “‘I can do it myself,’ said The Little Red Hen, and she did.”

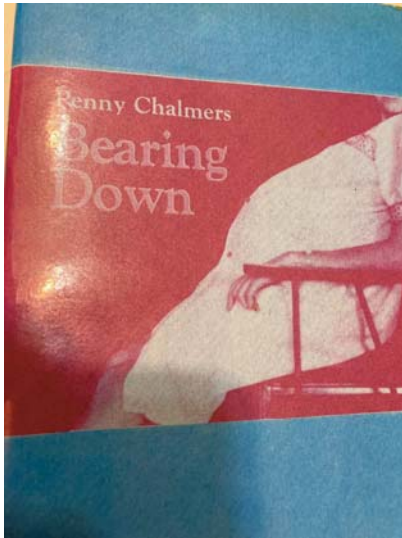
Twenty years later, in the process of giving birth physically to my second child, I gave birth to myself as a poet. My first book, *Bearing Down*, was published nine months after the birth of my daughter in October 1972. Writing that book helped me to maintain my own separate identity; it kept me connected with the world outside diapers.

For years afterwards, while the kids slept, I would scribble away like mad and then, feeling that I had done something for myself, I could begin the day for others. I would dream of floating in a tidal sea of laundry, get up and write my way through a morass of imagery and do the wash when the kids woke up.

The children wanted to play with me and I wanted to write. So we compromised. When I typed, it was often to write down their dreams or their stories as they told them or as I heard them chattering away to themselves or each other. Whatever amazed me was likely, with their consent, to be written down. My children’s discovery of the world, their

Penn: 1950, reading Tom Sawyer

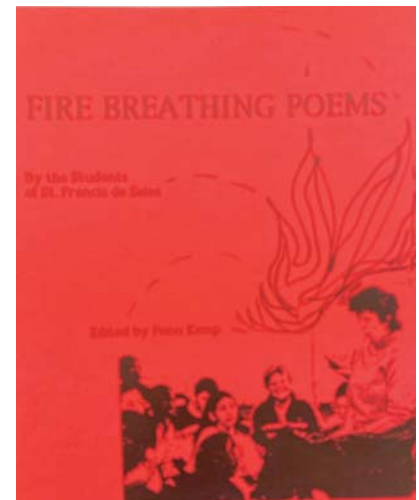




Left: *Bearing Down* (1972, Coach House Press)

Middle: *Some Talk Magic* (1986, Ergo Productions)

Right: *Fire Breathing Poems*, a magazine I edited of my students' poems



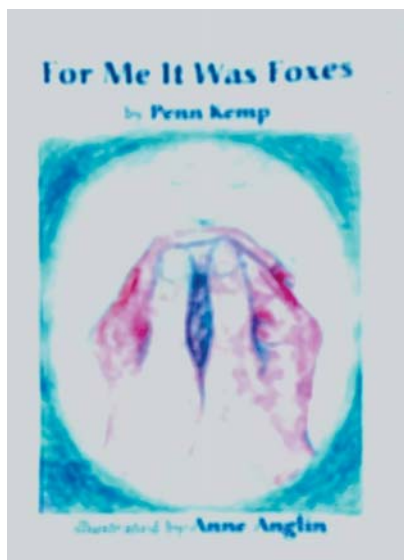
By re-creating a childlike state of wonder, participants can recover a spontaneous creativity that is entirely their own.

way of making sense of their perceptions through story and song constituted 'field notes' that became the basis for a collection of poetry. *Some Talk Magic* was written partly in amusement and partly in angst, as a record and an exploration of how language patterns are developed.

From listening to my children's language and imitating the way they constructed a world out of words, I became a sound poet. For decades now, I have been travelling to perform, often in surprising and unusual venues. For the past 58 years I have also been teaching creative writing to people of all ages, in and out of the school system. One teacher remarked that I "lead students step by step into a world of creativity". This comment captures for me the paradox of the creative act, an act by which we progress in a linear, step by step fashion into the magic of writing. During Creative Writing workshops, I encourage the people I work with to remember their own history, how they came into language. We summon a kid's freedom of play to experiment without self-consciousness in the spirit of curiosity and fun. By re-creating a childlike state of wonder, participants can recover a spontaneous creativity that is entirely their own.

When we write from the freedom of play, we begin an adventure equipped with everything we know about ourselves and the world. By the end of the day, everything we knew and thought may be transformed or discarded. It intrigues me how what we know and start off with is the very means for realizing what is unknown to us. Once again like the Little Red Hen, we create something out of nothing by marks on the page.

Being playful is crucial to happiness and living a creative life. Everything that we think, sense and experience can always be taken with a grain of salt, with tongue firmly planted in the cheek. Some might fear that not taking things seriously is being irresponsible. However, reducing our continually-changing being to a few narrow story-lines about that being to which we then cling is more irresponsible yet. Responsibility lies in the recognition that our being exceeds any temporary interpretations or expressions of it. Responsi-



Left: *For Me It Was Foxes* (2012, Pendas Production)

Right: "Believe", a poem chosen by The League of Canadian Poets for "Poem in Your Pocket Day"



bility for me lies in the playful affirmation, through impartially embracing all of existence, of a being that ultimately transcends that existence at every moment.

Our childhood choices in play can guide us in later life. The following story, "For me it was Foxes", illustrates how my father used imagination to dispel childhood fears and to encourage my own creativity.

I was sleepy, sleeping in my mother's lap. Nestled. When. A fox ran in front of the car. And. Was transfixed by the headlights. Ran and ran in front

of the car but could not escape the trajectory of light. Caught. Turning head back, tongue lolling, as in the pictures of foxes hunted. The eyes like cats' catching the light and transmuting it phosphorescent, bouncing it back. Look! He shook his head and ran into the woods. Finally. I did not wake up.

But that night, and for nights afterward, there was a fox in my bed. Under my bed. In the closet. Mommy, there is a fox in my bed. Make him go away. He was very large and his coat shot off sparks in the dark. His eyes were lit coals. He had sharp white teeth. He was hungry. He smelled musty. He was growling. He was prowling. The sudden switch of the light evaporated him. I could just catch his tail glimmer away, up into the fixture. He would curl behind the light, cunning, until the light was turned off. Then he would continue to search.

My father for comfort explained that foxes were quite small, really, like little dogs, and they were more scared of me than I was of them. Well, I couldn't imagine the extent of their fear then. The fox I knew wasn't scared one bit. He was going to eat me up. Unless I played dead. I froze into the mattress. The folds of the sheet turned marble, a frieze. The fox could not smell out the stiff and still. I could sleep. Warily.

By day my father used his imagination. Foxes are really tiny, he said. So small you can hardly see them. That is because you watch from daylight eyes, I thought, and foxes come out in the dark. So small you can never see them. Look! There's one now. He followed something flying and caught it, cupping it in his huge hands. Slowly he opened them to let me see. Shh. It's a fox, he said, and they scare easily. Be very quiet. I peered into the dark cavern of his hand. The 'something', nothing, was gone, not in the palm's hollow, nor the crevices between fingers. Look, there he is! Flying, there!

I followed his eyes, their darting, dubiously, till catching on. Hey, another one! He pointed, exulting. I'll catch it, I squealed and caught it. I've got one. The nothing in my hand brushed my skin like a moth's wing, tickling, powder. See? Dad looked in. The fox flowed out and perched atop

Our childhood choices in play can guide us in later life.

the china cabinet where no-one could reach. Never mind, there's another! We were all around the room after the foxes. They never stayed in my palm for inspection the way they did in dad's. I tried to see their wings. I didn't know foxes had wings. They were all around the room, hovering, at the edge of sight, and prancing. Tiny pairs of eyes glowed from the chandelier, from the top bookshelves. They were like fire-flies whose lights went on, went out.

If we stay with whatever engrossed us in play as kids, we are likely to find our choice of vocation much more satisfying because it comes from source. Play on!

If we stay with whatever engrossed us in play as kids, we are likely to find our choice of vocation much more satisfying because it comes from source.

Poet, performer and playwright **Penn Kemp** has been celebrated as a trailblazer since her first publication of poetry by Coach House (1972). She has been called a "poetic El Niño"; a "one-woman literary industry"; and "a towering icon of modern Canadian poetry". She was London Ontario's inaugural Poet Laureate (2010-13) and Western University's Writer-in-Residence (2009-10). Chosen as a foremother of Canadian poetry and Spoken Word Artist (2015) by the League of Canadian Poets, Kemp has long been a keen participant/activist in Canada's cultural life: see www.pennkemp.weebly.com. Her latest collection, *Incrementally*, text and album, is up on <https://www.hempresbooks.com/authors/penn-kemp> She is delighted to appear again in beautiful *Sage-ing*!

PLAY: PURPOSEFUL LEARNING ABOUT YOURSELF



Heidi Thompson

The rain had stopped, and sunshine broke through the clouds. Sparkling drops of water glistened off trees and fields. I sat in a sizable mud puddle, patting a warm clump of muck on my bare legs. Delicate wet blobs splashed over my skin, igniting a thrill. I squeezed the slippery slur between my fingers and patted my bare chest, delighting in the slapping sound. A delicate pattern of ripples spread across the water. Their changing shapes and colours transfixed me. My heart soared. I felt soaked in a timeless moment of oneness with the universe.

Then a shadow fell across the puddle. I looked up. It was Mom. There was a moment of silence as she watched her five-year-old daughter at play. I waited and wondered what reaction would follow. To my relief, there came no criticism. No scolding. No reprimanding. No disdain. No advice. No complaints. The only thing Mom offered, the greatest gift of my life, was a loving smile. At that moment I felt accepted, encouraged, and believed that what I was creating made her happy. Confidently I said, “Mom... I love muck!” She nodded respectfully and returned to gardening without a word.

That moment marked the beginning of the rest of my life. Well, we all know time doesn’t stop. The years passed and the memory of that glorious puddle evaporated. Or did it?

I struggled as a student, with poor grades and slow reading skills. Despite my academic limitations, in Grade 3 I realized that creative interpretation of assignments could lead to good marks and praise. During our study of the Egyptians I sketched pyramids. I depicted crusty old sailors like Christopher Columbus with pipes and eye patches. I drew cavemen, dinosaurs and tigers. Despite my lack of academic aptitude, I slid through grade school thanks to my creativity; I discovered how to make schoolwork into play. By the time I reached twelfth grade my academic education seemed pointless. Also, my creative approaches weren’t succeeding. Attending college was something I couldn’t envision for myself. I looked to my teachers for inspiration. I examined their faces and saw signs of resignation, fatigue and lack of joy. Had they given up pursuing their passion to be teachers? Were they stuck in a work rut? Of course, that may not have been true, but what I saw convinced

“I love muck!”... That moment marked the beginning of the rest of my life.



Top: 'Heidi painting with cat'
Above: Work in progress

me not to follow their path. I vowed to live differently and avoid at all costs falling into the trap of work – if work was what made others stressed or unfulfilled.

In 1974, two weeks after graduating, I travelled to Europe. I dreamed of seeing the world, of finding out who I was and what I could become.

During the flight to Paris I wrote in my journal, "Wings have found freedom, freedom to fly, no one can tell me how high." This became my motto. Every decision I made after that promise was to follow my heart. To pursue what felt right and made me happy. First, I worked as an au pair in Switzerland. Playing with children was certainly enjoyable. Learning a new language and meeting people was also fun. In my free time I hiked into the Alps and painted. People who saw my work encouraged me to apply to the *Kunstgewerbeschule* in Zürich (*Art Trade School*). I

did and was accepted. For four years attending school seemed like heaven. I painted, sketched, sculpted, took photographs and studied art history. I was inspired by artists Van Gogh, Pissarro, Picasso, Rembrandt, Klee, Mondrian and countless others. I identified with their lives and undying commitment to art despite rejection, loneliness and poverty. I accepted the difficult path ahead and became increasingly committed to art.

Sometimes I wonder about my passion. What was driving me? Why art? Why painting? Who am I? The answer was always ... because when engaged in doing art I felt free of pain, doubt, loneliness and depression. I saw beauty in everything. I felt happy.

Also, when reviewing my artworks, I began to see something. Everything I painted or drew seemed to reflect back a part of me hidden inside. Sometimes it was dark and fearful; other times full of light and inspiration. The more I painted, the more I learned about myself. The advantage of doing something over and over is that you develop skills. Seeing my abilities improve builds confidence. As they say, success breeds success. I believed that, if I kept "working", one day I would succeed in becoming the artist I dreamed of. For eight years I lived by myself, attending art schools in Zürich, Nürnberg and Budapest. Evenings and weekends were spent sketching people in cafés or writing in my journal. While doing art I had a sense of purpose, although I was unsure what my purpose was.

By 1982, I felt I had acquired what I needed to continue art if I returned to Canada. I was afraid of falling into the trap of getting a job and forgetting everything I had worked towards. I moved back to Vernon, opened a photography studio and continued frequenting cafés and bars to sketch. It



Heidi, in front of *Yellow Painting*

was in a bar that I met Ted, a guitar maker. We were instant soul mates and married soon after. A few years later we had a beautiful daughter. My expectations of living a lonely life in poverty and pursuing art changed. During our forty-year marriage, my husband was not unlike my mother, though he would strongly contest it. But whenever I showed him a new painting he smiled, nodded and offered unconditional support.

It was 2006 on a warm August morning on my fiftieth birthday when it happened. I was working in my studio. The sun's rays streamed through the window across a sizable, textured canvas lying on the floor. I leaned over it with a brush heavily laden with blue paint. It dribbled a pathway across the canvas. I marvelled at the colour flowing over the texture. Suddenly, I tripped. The pot of paint in my other hand spilt everywhere. Wet splatters tickled my face, covered my clothes. I became transfixed by the beautiful splatters. I marvelled at the blue ripples and patterns that sparkled in the sunlight. I started to pat up the mess and my hands got covered in blue. All of a sudden I felt a rush of pleasure flood through my body. I felt soaked in a timelessness

and at one with the universe. Why was this experience so familiar? Ah ha! I then realized that I had just re-experienced who I was – that five-year-old blissful child playing in the mud. The memory resurfaced as clearly as if I were back in 1961.

Now I understand. Each of us is born unique. Each carries genetic potential that may take a lifetime to grow and blossom. How many children show signs of who they will become while playing? How many of us as children may have been redirected away from our play? Or even discouraged? I believe that when we discover our passion, the thing that thrills us, we come closer to knowing who we are.

Although they are no longer here, I am forever grateful to my mother (an artist herself) and my loving and supportive husband. They recognized and respected my joy, withheld criticism and judgment, and let me play.

When you discover your passion and what work makes you happy, it becomes play. If you grow skilled at your play, there may come a time when it helps you make a living. But most importantly, when you find your play you have found the path to learning about yourself. Play is the way. My tip: surround yourself with partners, family and friends who nod and smile with sincerity at what you do. Their supportive feedback will help you grow and continue following your path of self-discovery. Protect and nurture your play

When you discover your passion and what work makes you happy, it becomes play.



Heidi at an exhibition in San Diego

– whatever play makes you happy. Realize the gift you have found in play – the secret to fulfilling your greatest purpose: to know yourself.

Heidi Thompson was born in Vernon, British Columbia. In 1974, after graduating high school, she moved to Switzerland to work as an au pair. In her spare time she painted, and her love for art grew stronger. In 1975 Heidi was accepted into the *Kunstgewerbeschule (School of Art and Design)* in Zürich. After completing a four-year program, she earned the Swiss Diploma for Professional Photography. Pursuing her passion for painting, Heidi moved to Germany and apprenticed with the artist Oskar Koller. Koller recommended that she continue her education at the *Akademie der Bildenen Künste Nürnberg*, where she studied Painting for one year. Heidi then moved to Budapest and studied Painting at the *Hungarian University of Fine Art* for a year before returning to Vernon in 1982. She set up a studio and worked as a photographer, publisher, teacher and painter. Later she married Edward Thompson, a guitar maker. They lived in Coldstream for 40 years until Edward's passing away in 2023. Currently, Heidi paints full time, exhibiting her work in Europe, Canada and the USA. Her paintings have been collected by the Royal Family of Saudi Arabia and the Dupont and Dell families, and are included in the Canadian Senvest Collection. In 2024 she opened the Heidi Thompson Art Gallery in Coldstream. To visit the gallery, please email: htcthompson@hotmail.com. Instagram: www.instagram.com/heidithompsonart Facebook: www.facebook.com/htcthompson Telephone: 250 542-1551

**Realize the gift you
have found in play –
the secret to fulfilling
your greatest purpose:
to know yourself.**

CREATING PLAY

A LIFE JOURNEY

Karen Close



Doug Alcock

“The quality that work and play have in common is creativity... At their best, play and work, when integrated, make sense of our world and ourselves.” ~ Charles Schaefer, American psychologist considered by many to be the “Father of Play Therapy”

Karen Close interviews artist Doug Alcock, as they tour his outdoor and indoor studios in Carr’s Landing, B.C.

As we talk, we walk through Doug’s carefully undeveloped natural acreage. His reverence for nature and desire to interact with it is immediately apparent. I feel myself relaxing into deeper knowing, at one with nature, as Doug has preserved, worked and played within his environment. When I enter the acreage, I stop to photograph *Blowing Your Horn* and imagine hearing a tune of harmony.

Doug has saved his plot of land from a sprawling, engineered golf course and manicured luxury homes’ complex. It pushes at his borders. The contrast is startling. As we begin our walk I notice, “There’s nothing that you throw away, right?”

“No, it’ll all get pressed in eventually. I have an attraction to old riveted pipes. You’ll see a lot of these throughout my work. These pipes were part of the old siphon pipes that brought the water down for the orchards at the turn of the century – down from King Edward Lake in the high-alpine Aberdeen Plateau. This is a section of that pipe.”

“Oh, I didn’t see the little guy at first. He’s great.”

“That’s not something I’ve made. He was just like that. I bought three of them at a yard sale. They’re kind of fun, you know, and they hook on anywhere.

There’s a few of them around the place climbing things.

“This is a *Star Trek* series. The chem trails in the sky above are kind of fun.

“This work is kind of cool too. It’s a lot of fun. You know, with that convex mirror. In the winter you get this beautiful winter light. The reflections are starting now with the leaves. You get this beautiful carpet of gold. In the winter, you grab that evening light and it reflects differently depending on where you are, you can see the other pieces. It’s always fun to photograph the dogs around this piece. I can just interact with it.”

“So do you have titles for each of these pieces?”

“Yeah, yeah, this one is a passage, or like a passage in a time warp. You step into another dimension. So I call it *Passage Between Dimensions*.

“That glass piece on the top there. It’s inserting in there. It’s always fun when you find something that drops into place on its own. You know it fits. That’s kind of one of the rules I use.”

Blowing Your Horn





Top left: *Syphon Pipe*
 Top middle: *Star Trek*
 Top right: *Passage Between Dimensions*
 Above left. *Portal*: the glass just fit
 Above right: *Untitled*

“When I lived at the coast, I’d collect driftwood,” Doug remembers.

“I don’t think you can go anywhere without bringing something back.”

“I’ve kind of curbed my collecting a little. That being said, you know, I’ve been contacted by several widows lately who are selling the farm.”

“You’ve become known as the collector, right?”

“That’s an interesting story in itself. As these things that have been part of the community, they have had their own place but now they have come to find rest. Often people would say you know, we’re selling the farm. It’s been

in the family for five generations. We know the work you do, and we wondered if you might like to have a look before we get rid of things. My property has become a depository. I try to keep all the elements of each farm in one place. If I came in with two truck loads I’d deposit all of that in one spot. So I could have that context and reference for when I am building, and often that has played into the title. That’s part of my play – associations that I make when I try to juxtapose the unexpected together. My sculptures kind of play



Top left: *Botero*
 Top middle: *Folded 1*
 Top right: *Folded Form 2*
 Middle right: *Storage*
 Above: Doug in his workshop

between the history and the now of this area.”

Perhaps Doug’s play with the old syphon pipes he salvaged best shows how he might work. He has many bits of the pipe. In one piece he felt an allusion to a Colombian sculptor and his enlarged figures. For others he might drive his bobcat into a piece of the pipe and randomly shape it or he might pair it with other bits.

Doug’s salvaging and manipulating emerge from his well organized shelves and come together in his studio. His fascination with collecting, preserving and creating are a very personal process that shapes his daily life.

Smaller works are displayed in a marvellous church-like gallery. The gallery is open to the public for two weekends mid-summer for the Carr’s Landing Art Tour.

Market Gardener has found, forged and fabricated parts, each paying homage to those who grow our food.

Montana Silver features a fragment of a spade and a horse bit. This is part of a Western series that utilizes artifacts from the past to represent a sense of time when the horse was king.

Doug explained how lectures by Wade Davis, a Canadian cultural anthropologist and ethnobotanist, informed his directions with *Wayfinder*. Ethnobotany is a subdiscipline of botany that studies how plants are used – often as medicine. With a nod to the elongated forms of Swiss sculptor Alberto Giacometti, Alcock has created a leaf form spiralling upwards – seeking eternity perhaps. My imagination hears Doug’s earlier remarks that



many objects “have come to find rest” on his property.

Perhaps the generosity of Doug’s playful spirit best comes together in a small room that borders on the manicured street of the deluxe home complex. Often told that he looks like Santa Claus, Doug has created his own Santa’s workshop, which he and ‘Mrs. Santa’ open to visitors prior to Christmas.

The whimsical workshop entrance can be viewed, year-round, at the Hole In The Wall Gallery through the window at street level on Longspoon Avenue, Carr’s Landing. This gallery is located on the wall of Doug’s property separating it from the manicured luxury homes across the avenue. The gallery is a strong statement of Doug’s playful life journey. His work and play allow him to “make sense of our world and ourselves” – a wisdom gleaned from experience, reflected upon and generously shared.

Top left: *Market Gardener*
 Top middle: *Montana Silver*
 Top right: *Wayfinder*
 Above: *Pre-Season Greetings*

GROWING AS I PLAY

Annabel Stanley



I have early memories of playing in the two-acre family garden that I grew up in. I would pick flowers and arrange them in my doll's house. I loved to sip the dew from the nasturtium flowers – it was so peppery and refreshing. Other times I would gather moss and flowers and create miniature gardens to enter into the annual harvest festival in the village hall. When I was older I loved the arrival of the supplier from Wales at our flower shop in London, U.K. He would come with tree branches covered in moss, rocks and wild finds, which we could use in our displays. These were materials that made me feel well-grounded, and we used them in our arrangements at places like Tiffany's or Harrod's or other clients'.

I was very fortunate to grow up under the umbrella of an artistic family. On my father's side, my great-grandfather was Charles Henry Augustus Lutyens, a famous portrait painter and father to Sir Edwin Lutyens, an architect, who, along with garden designer Gertrude Jekyll, was very influential in the Arts and Crafts Movement of the early 20th century. My mother, Bridget Lutyens, studied with Miss Havergal at Waterperry Horticultural College; as I said earlier, we had a beautiful garden. It had outer areas of woodland to explore, stimulating my curiosity. I am very creative, but with a horticultural interest, so I suppose it was inevitable that I started to weave with materials that I grew or gathered. My brother, Mark Lutyens, is a landscape architect in London, and my sister, Lucy Lutyens, is a bronze artist in Essex.

I started to weave with willow, harvested alongside a local river, when I lived in New Zealand. I didn't have a great deal of money so the material was

free and my time was my own. In addition, I had a flower shop that I owned and ran. I have been weaving now for nearly 30 years, and I still go out and gather dogwood, willow, alder, moss and anything else that will regrow. I love the experience of being out in nature, usually with the dog at my side. The gathering process is peaceful and gives me time to absorb the beauty of the trees and wild animal encounters. I am all about texture and colour and have created unique designs that have become my own style. A realization that I am happy with the person I have become in my quest to work with a natural product that is sustainable in this fragile world makes me proud.

My weavings





Left: Weaving for *The Circle of Life*
Right: Workshop



I love the meditative peace that I experience whilst weaving.

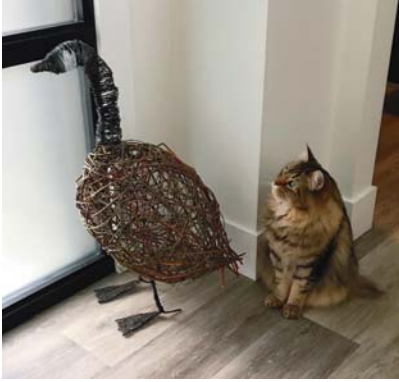
I have been teaching for over 25 years. The piece of land that I purchased 20 years ago in West Kelowna has become a haven to host workshops (see <https://www.sage-ing.com/Sage-ing16.pdf>, p. 36, “Under The Rainbow”). My property overlooks my vineyard (which is being replanted) and is surrounded by forest with views of the mountains on the other side of Lake Okanagan. My workshops not only teach my students what to gather and weave with, but also build a great sense of community. I had a wonderful compliment this summer from a student who said how much she enjoyed the day, but also that there were a couple of younger women who seemed to benefit from the company of the older women present. Conversations run freely and hands create under the (usually) blue skies of the Okanagan. The sense of oneness with nature is really soul-enriching.

I love the meditative peace that I experience whilst weaving. I also weave with wire, but my hands prefer the natural fibre when I am weaving for an extended time. If I were never to sell these pieces – they are really sculptures – I wouldn’t mind keeping them and giving them a home.

Luckily for the bank balance I do sell and have time to go back in the studio and create all over again. There are a few working pieces that surround my table; they remind me of a process that I tried and can improve on, or of quirky creations that stay as a memory.

I never mind the cold and rug up with an inadequate heater at my feet in the winter; I am weaving with a fresh, living fibre that is best woven between October and June. I rarely dry and resoak: the vines have a different energy then and the colours are never so vibrant.

The home screen of my computer has a picture of me driving my tractor, towing the ’69 Airstream I had bought two months prior filled with my worldly possessions, the huge sky behind me filled with one big cloud of smoke. The McDougal Creek fire started behind my house on the 15th of August 2023; within two days I and 35 000 other people were evacuated from our homes. In the space of two weeks 33 000 acres were burnt and 190



Top left: At home 1
Above: At home 2
Top right: *Raven*



structures were lost. Although I suffered damage to the irrigation system, which was the death knell to my vineyard already stressed from two years of harsh winters and a severe heat dome, unbelievably I had the great luck to return to my home. How lucky am I? My home of 20 years is the place where I have farmed two acres of grapes and built my business. Separated from my husband in 2020 after a 30-year marriage, I relied on the grapes for my sole income, but through these natural disasters that path was forked and my destiny changed. I have had to adapt. I have had to expand the weaving income by using the vine canes for sculptures, planting willow to harvest and increasing workshops. Walking into the burnt forest after the inferno was traumatic: old friends gone, blackness replacing a busy ecosystem I knew so well. My gathering grounds were incinerated, but as the year passed the beauty of new growth reminded us that we can all arise like a phoenix from the ashes. I hunted for morels, but was diverted by the abundance of wild flowers that have flourished, grasses growing to waist height, willows reaching up with new growth and colours that change with the seasons. Maybe this is a metaphor of my life!

In January I will sit down and prepare for another year of workshops. I am a director of the Okanagan Folk School (OKFS) based at the School House in Peachland, where we share a space with the Peachland Art Gallery and BEEPS (Bat Education and Ecological Protection Society).

Many of my workshops are organized with OKFS, and I will continue to teach basket weaving and spheres there or at my property. I also teach how to create armatures, such as quail, geese or hearts, and weave over the frame. I have just finished an exhibit at the Peachland Art Gallery in collaboration with Jim Elwood and Coralee Miller featuring the tricksters, "Coyote and Raven". I enjoyed portraying such playful spirits.

I sell my woven creations at the Okanagan Folk School's gift shop or by appointment in my studio. If coming to the studio, it is best to contact me first by phone at 250-769-1206.

Please visit my website: <http://www.annabelstanley.com>

Maybe this is a metaphor of my life!

I CREATE PLAYFULLY

Suzanne Chavarie



Often I find inspiration from the lived, playful moments that I have experienced. Then I pick up the brush and paint my first mark on a canvas.

I let myself be guided through the creative process with a playful attitude. While allowing myself to be immersed in moment-to-moment experiences of what is happening on the canvas, I express myself. I enjoy the painting process and the lustre of the paint, trusting it will reflect my first mark on the canvas as it comes alive stroke by stroke through the colours I choose.

Particularly I enjoy abstract art, that field of art that does not attempt to represent physical reality, but rather aims to convey emotions and reflections through shapes, colours and other properties.

This piece that I am sharing is inspired by being playful in the waves while surfing in the Pacific Ocean and experiencing a sense of openness and curiosity as the waves tossed and moved me around.

As a student, my art teachers taught me the basics of drawing and painting. I also learned about great painters of the world – Picasso, Van Gogh, Michelangelo, da Vinci, and many others. I then started experimenting with drawing and painting to develop my own style. Over time my playful attitude has guided me to develop a strong sense of intrinsic motivation to make time to enjoy the freedom for my artistic practice. Catch my smile.



Suzanne Chavarie is an artist, educator, facilitator and a lifelong learner who is passionate about play. She enjoys being part of the fabric of the Okanagan community by volunteering with the Central Okanagan Hospice Association and working as an educator for the Public School District. She is a member of the Dog-Eared Book Club, Kelowna Art Gallery, Lake Country Art Gallery, Kelowna Running Club and the End of Life Doula Association of Canada. Her favourite saying when running is Cha cha cha ... and, to her friends, "Catch my smile."



Top left: Surfing in Tofino
 Right: *Life in British Columbia: Surfing near Tofino*. Acrylic on canvas
 Left: Close-up of painting

DON'T PLAY WITH YOUR FOOD



Jacques G. LeBlanc, MD, FRCS

We have all seen the happiness on the face of a young child while playing with food. What is more pleasurable than throwing tomato sauce or chocolate on the floor, and laughing. It is blissful abandon. I am sure my experience is not any different from others; my mother told me many times not to play with my food or throw it at my younger brother. Through play, children can create fantasy situations that may meet their need for self-expression. Play can repair, develop and protect the emotional, mental and physical health of the child. It reflects the emotional and cognitive world of children and provides a natural opportunity for their development. At the same time, we have all heard, “Work hard and play hard.” Many of us live by this motto for better or worse. Still, play is a vital activity that should continue throughout life, not just in the world of children.

As people age they may experience social and psychological challenges, including loneliness, social isolation and worsening mental health, all of which are associated with increasing physical multi-morbidity and mortality. Globally, the population aged 65 years and older is growing at a faster rate than all other age groups (7 million seniors in Canada and 62 million in USA, comprising around 18% of the North American population). Advancements in health care have helped people to live longer, but are we living better?

The concept of healthy aging includes a combination of physical, emotional and psychological well-being, which are aspects of life that are recognized as being interconnected. It is thought that healthy aging requires the establishment of health-promoting habits, one of which is socialization and community engagement, and I suggest play. A large body of research has shown that hobbies can enhance multidimensional aspects of older adults’ mental health and well-being, countering clinical diagnoses of depression and other psychiatric conditions.

How to define play in aging adults is complex. Stuart Brown, in his book *Play*, writes that play in aging adults holds significant value for physical, emotional and cognitive well-being. While often associated with children, play remains important throughout the lifespan and can take various forms. For aging adults, the meaning of play can encompass engaging in playful activities like puzzles and board games, or creative tasks that help keep the mind sharp. The activities can improve memory, problem-solving skills and cognitive flexibility, reducing the risk of cognitive decline. Play, in the form of physical activities such as dancing, sports or exercise games, promotes

Play is a vital activity that should continue throughout life.



My Work of Art: my dining table.

Jacques LeBlanc retired after being a paediatric and adult cardiovascular and thoracic surgeon at B.C. Children's Hospital in Vancouver. Realizing that he had a lot to give back to his profession in the way of experience as a doctor, a teacher, a student of life, a husband and a human being seeking wellness in this rapidly changing world, he created leblancwellness.com. For the last few years he has been a regular contributor to *The Journal*, sharing a belief in recovering the connections we have lost and engaging the new skills we have gained to mitigate loneliness and create wellness.

mobility, flexibility and cardiovascular health. It can also reduce the risk of falls by improving balance and coordination. Social play reduces feelings of loneliness and isolation, which are common in older age, and encourages positive interactions with others. Play reduces stress, anxiety and depression by fostering a sense of joy, freedom and relaxation. Play allows adults to express themselves creatively, experience fun and engage in activities purely for enjoyment, which enhances life satisfaction. Play helps older adults maintain a sense of purpose and identity by continuing to engage in meaningful activities. Whether it is through hobbies, games or creative expression, play can help individuals find fulfillment and maintain a positive self-image.

Therapeutic play is thought to be effective in part because it integrates somatosensory and cerebro-modulatory brain processes and because pleasure from play stimulates the release of dopamine in the brain. "Play is a learning partner." (Stuart M. Brown Jr.)

While I do not play with my food anymore, I do play with food. I understand I am not a Michelin-star chef, but I find cooking interesting, challenging and stimulating. As

my wife says, I never really follow a recipe (what chefs do in their creations). I am always adding my own touch – a little similar to my experience as a surgeon. I have no fear of not following a recipe and having it turn out poorly or be inedible. There is always the go-to pizza restaurant for rescue. I enjoy cooking different dishes from around the world, creating different plating, mixing the colours of food for a great presentation on a plate. I call it "my work of art" and I am always looking for a new recipe. I now have a new challenge ahead of me: pairing food and wine. I am just discovering how wine pairing can add to the taste of the wine as well as the taste of the food. This combining will be my new learning (play) endeavour.

For many the concept of aging is shifting from accepting life diminishing to an emphasis on lifestyle and well-being. This emerging philosophy aligns with the idea of 'the third age', which suggests that older adults who enter the retirement age are now presented with opportunities for self-development and are liberated from the previous labels of an 'old age pensioner' and 'the fourth age' of decline and dependency.

Play, such as physical activity, arts and cultural engagement, or social and community participation, has the potential to lengthen the third age and make it one of 'productive aging' by protecting against age-related declines in mental health and stimulating or enhancing well-being. Particularly in tough times we need to play more than ever, as it is the very means by which we prepare for the unexpected, search out new solutions and remain optimistic.

CATHERINE

Martha Ellen Johnson



Grammy

My granddaughter, Catherine, always loved pretending she could fly. It was my task to come up with her Halloween costumes. They always had to involve wings and flight. At first she was a baby butterfly cradled in her mother’s arms. Later she would run to meet me every October to see what new flight suits awaited her. There were many fairies, one more butterfly and an angel, too. Soon she needed costumes for other things like school plays or simply to bring magic to ordinary days. She had no reservations when going to the grocery store donning wings over her hoodie. Never knew when she may need to take flight. Often her toys had wings. We would play long hours with her pastel-winged baby unicorns threatened with impending danger, confined to a castle tower, by some baddie and needing rescue by a lavender Pegasus. Every time I could visit she would run to meet me when I arrived, certain the trunk of my car held all sorts of surprises and perhaps new wings – maybe even ones with sparkles or streamers that would flutter behind her as she ran through the yard.

In school she leaned towards theatrical productions, sometimes playing wingless characters who nevertheless always saved the day, as angels and fairies often do. In my memory of diamond days with her, we would often sit at the top of her staircase and tell secrets or plan new adventures.

Listening to Catherine

“Grammy, let’s fly away.”
We are sitting on the top step of the second floor staircase. Down the hall is her magical kingdom bedroom. She’s wearing fairy wings over her street clothes as usual, a sign of a theatrical life to bloom in later years. “I can’t. I don’t have any wings” I said. She doesn’t want to hear it. “Hold my hand. We can fly together.” And I do. We fly down the hall soaring into another realm hovering far above the ordinary, held aloft by the imagination of the most innocent. Her life in theater bloomed. She flies with some Portland troupe now. Maybe she’s Puck.

Left: Catherine making wings
Right: Catherine in wings





Catherine in character as a magical forest dweller

Maybe she's Clarence visiting
George to earn her wings.
She's not here. That I know.
Into a beautiful, magical world
she flew away as she should,
without me. A woman all her
own. The plan from the beginning.
And yet I keep my good ear
turned to my front gate. I listen.
It may open. She may light
upon my porch one day soon.
Until then, I toss peanuts to
Jack the Crow when he visits
my garden. I take rest on my
front porch. I delight in the
hummingbirds darting
about the fuchsias gathering
nectar to nurture their young.

Martha Ellen Johnson is a retired social worker. She lives alone in an old Victorian house on a hill on the Oregon coast. The history of social justice activism has been a focus for her. She has an MFA and has poems and prose published in various journals and online forums. She is an enthusiastic doll collector, a seamstress and an avid knitter. She enjoys writing stories and poems about her life.

EMBRACING THE JOY OF CREATION

My Artistic Journey

Dawn Sutcliffe



Art has been a constant source of joy in my life, a vibrant thread woven through my experiences and emotions. From an early age I discovered that creativity has no boundaries; I have never confined myself to a single medium or style. Instead, I thrive on the philosophy of “something from nothing,” finding immense satisfaction in transforming discarded materials and reimagining the everyday.

My art room is a testament to this belief, a treasure trove of potential waiting to be realized. It’s meticulously organized, allowing me to dive into my creations whenever inspiration strikes. This space is a sanctuary, filled with items that have stories waiting to be told.

One of my earliest artistic endeavours was papier-mâché, a medium that remains a favourite. The tactile nature of this art form, with its messy, hands-on approach, offers a unique kind of joy. It’s forgiving and creatively satisfying, allowing me to explore without the fear of failure. Painting has also



Papier-mâché birds



Top left: GB (Game Boy) camera, front
 Top right: GB camera, back
 51. photo: Painting of a bird
 Above: Painting of a bee

been a passion of mine for over two decades. Balancing it with a full-time job means that my painting sessions are often sporadic, yet the freedom it brings is unparalleled. The comforting realization that I can simply paint over mistakes encourages me to take risks. Each brushstroke is a lesson, an invitation to try and express myself, reinforcing the idea that creativity is a journey, not a destination.

As a self-taught stained-glass artist, I find fascination in how the smallest pieces of glass contribute to a larger picture. Recently, I was touched by a call from a high school friend who shared the story of her mother's passing. Years ago, I had gifted my friend three heart-shaped stained-glass pieces, each in matching colours for her, her mother and her sister. One of these had adorned her mother's room in a care facility, bringing joy to all who visited. When she passed away, the family sought out that glass heart, realizing its significance. It brought me to tears—both sorrow for my friend and joy in knowing my art had positively affected their lives. It made me reflect on how many pieces of my creations

exist in the world, all given as gifts of love.

My artistic journey also includes baking, particularly gingerbread, which began in high school. Inspired by a *Good Housekeeping* article in the early '80s, I turned baking into a 3-D art form. Now, I affectionately call myself a "Gingineer," a title I wear with pride after more than 40 years of creating intricate gingerbread designs. Food art captivates me; it's a feast for the eyes and the palate. One of my latest passions is crafting beautiful edible displays for grazing tables, merging aesthetics and culinary delights.

In every home I've owned, I've incorporated art using pennies, gluing them onto doors, walls and countertops in elaborate patterns. In my current



Top: Stained-glass maple leaf

Art is not just a hobby for me; it is woven into the fabric of my life. It has provided therapy without me even realizing it.

home, I created a feature wall in the hallway, transforming the wall into a tree adorned with a whimsical birds' nest. Around my kitchen island I laid down pennies in a design reminiscent of a Moroccan carpet. The warm, grounding presence of copper brings me peace, serving as a daily reminder of the beauty found in everyday objects.

Art is not just a hobby for me; it is woven into the fabric of my life. It has provided therapy without me even realizing it, a joyful outlet that allows me to express my innermost thoughts and feelings. My creative mind infuses everything I do, making art my happy place, a realm where I can truly be myself.

In a world that often feels overwhelming, I find solace in the act of creation. Art is my language, my therapy and my joy. Each piece I create is a reflection of my journey, a testament to the power of imagination and the beauty of transforming the ordinary into the extraordinary.

Dawn Sutcliffe lives in British Columbia, close to her grown children. The goal was to raise them to be inspired by nature & make something from nothing. As adults, they still enjoy making art, music and are both avid readers.

MOMENTO MORI

Robert MacDonald

I wonder if anyone will notice when I've gone into the wild blue, into the wonder, off to discover the beyond?

I'm way old now. Who's to wonder?

I wonder whether I should wonder if I should, in anticipation, send myself an invitation to my own funeral. Should I write my own obituary – just in case they don't publicize the troubling news that I'm dead?

It's most likely a joke of course but you've gotta wonder sometimes whether we make any kind of difference while we wander through our too-short lives trying to figure out whether any of anything makes any kind of sense, real or otherwise.

Just in case it's not possible, post diem, I want to set the record instead, make the following just in case, notes that might help explain otherwise.

You've got to wonder, at least sometimes.

Books

There is a kind of madness in the ordering of books on my shelves. It only became obvious to me after a troubling episode of brain freeze that had nothing to do with ice cream, or cubes. Or much else, really.

I was looking for a particular book and stumbled on another that I hadn't read because back then I was sick, tired of being lectured to by experts who weren't. I flipped it open to a random page and the word "tree" caught my attention, and held it for a long, long time.

I can't be sure how long it was I stood there, leaning against the bookshelf, the book in my left hand, my right hand holding the pages open, my mind adrift in a spell of vast emptiness.

Insanity

It occurred to me that I should look into getting my head examined. Not the thing with hair but the stuff inside that decides how good or bad things are going to go.

It's hard to figure, however any of us might figure it.

There's a guy down the street I stop and chat with on occasion when I'm out and about in the neighbourhood, stumble upon him.

He says being really old has it's ups and downs, and some sideways tell a story worth repeating. His eyes are bright, but the rest of him sags, he's not too steady on his feet, his mouth is full of store-bought teeth, and he is prone to wandering.

He once said that he most often can't remember what he had for breakfast, but can vividly recall every second of the first baseball game his club won in the town he grew up in, and that was more than 75 years ago, or thereabouts.

I doubt I'll turn out as well turned out as him when I'm his age, but I'm giving him, and maybe me, the benefit of the doubt.

Fish

The point of fishing is to catch fish, but that has proven lost on me.

I take the pole and trundle down to the creekside fully expecting that one of the flies I have in the little box in my jacket pocket will find favour underwater, or fleeting on the sparkle of surface, and result in a short and decisive battle from which I will emerge the victor.

But, alas, it doesn't work out. Time after time I've trundled back

at the end of the day to my battered truck parked in a forlorn byway, nothing to prove that I'm a man of accomplishment, no matter how humble.

When the topic of fishing comes up in conversation – not often, thankfully – I keep my humiliation to myself.

I let on that I'm a conservationist, that I'd rather just enjoy nature and not indulge in wild speculation.

I sometimes dream that I'm standing on the soggy shore of a creek and sticking a stick into a fat fish and later roasting it over a fire of my manuscript of writing that no one is ever likely to read.

Dementia

I think I got that dementia. It's hard to tell.

First, my doctor refuses to return my calls, or discuss the matter with me when I show up on her doorstep when she searches her heavily manicured lawn for the newspaper I hid early morning.

It kind of crept up on me.

I started losing more track of things like what the names were, where the good stuff was hidden, when it was time to show up. None of that makes any sense.

I'm perfectly capable of keeping all three of my ends up, okay?

My wife and grandkids are looking at me like I've escaped from the nuthouse, and keep talking about my socks, like that explains something.

I don't know, and, in the end, I don't want to.

The Journal of Creative Aging

SAGE-ING

WITH CREATIVE SPIRIT,
GRACE & GRATITUDE

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EDITOR: KAREN CLOSE
COPY EDITOR: JOHANNA BEYERS
ASSISTANT EDITOR: LAURA FOSTER
DESIGNER: ROBERT MACDONALD

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Our Manifesto

This journal (and our associated website) is about you, and the possibility of you creating the next chapter in the book of your life.

You're familiar with how the other chapters worked: early, childhood, teenage, tempest, tragedy, trial, temptation, partnering, breaking, birthing, making, solving, earning, learning, building, growing, mentoring, celebrating, wising up, and ending up here after all that.

The road of life goes on from where you now find yourself, you're still on it, and the vistas that open before you promise more and maybe better rewards, but only if you engage in the possibilities.

You now get to decide if this next chapter will be a rich and fulfilling one for you, or only the last.

Rather than fading into that good night, might we offer an alternative?

Creative aging is a powerful social and cultural movement that has stirred the imaginations of many communities and people. Also referred to as sage-ing, creative aging takes many forms, and elevates people in many ways.

Most importantly, creative aging encourages and facilitates individual and collective creative pursuits, including writing, crafting, painting, dancing, and an almost unlimited number of other ways to express your creative energy.

It encourages you to find your inner artist, to discover the opportunity to celebrate and elevate, to make the most of the wisdom you've accumulated through the lessons of your life. It pleads for you to speak the truths you've learned, to share your wisdom, to be wise, to sage.

Creative aging helps you discover the source of wellness, which is in your spirit, your will to be, to be well, to share your gift, to explore, to create, to be whole.

Creative aging encourages you to engage with your inner life, to experience the grace of knowledge, to express gratitude for your gifts, and to share them with others on the same journey. By doing so, you open the door to the creative person that lives inside you, the insights you possess, the lessons you can learn through your experience, the discoveries you can share with fellow creators, and the wisdom you can gift to future generations.

Sage-ing: The Journal of Creative Aging exists to help you document your creative pursuits with care and integrity, to honour your truth. It's time for you to join us. Tell your story, make your next chapter.