

News from the Feminist Caucus, by Anne Burke

This month, the case of York University and its handling of a male student's request to be excused from attending a study group with female students on religious grounds. With reviews of Allison Grayhurst's *Into My Mortal* and *The River is Blind; Spain Is a State of Mind*, by Patricia Young, *Brother*, by Annie Dealey, *Volta*, by Susan Gillis, *My Name is Lola*, by Lola (Estes) Rozsa. Also: "The Issues: Manuals on Being Woman", by Susan Hagan. A recent feminist article explores "How to be a CEO", "How to be a Mom", "How to heal our psyches", "How to have larger purpose." Here, with Book sources, all the Newspaper/Magazine/Web site sources, and End notes. Excerpts follow.

What is wrong with women? After wading through countless Manuals on Being Woman, the only thing that I find wrong with women is that we are conditioned to accept narrow definitions and unsatisfying answers.

It doesn't make sense that Liberation would mean twice the work, no time to love our babies, and no energy to live the hell out of our lives.

We blame our homes, our partners, and our lovely babies; and try to fix it all by rewiring our psyches in ways that they prescribe.

We could hold responsible the misleading narratives, our corporate overlords, government's disregard, and opportunists that hi-jack our health and our freedom.

They keep us seeking a sanitized sanity that hobbles intellect, and keep us distracted with hectic lives that make us crazy. Meanwhile, most of the world will be unfit for human existence by 2100.

Sisters, we've been had.

According to "The Issues: Manuals on Being Woman", by Susan Hagan,

The government did not include women as a unique group for study in Canada's 2012 Mental Health Strategy, indicating that it preferred to remain gender neutral. The Canadian Women's Health Network says that women's mental health requires specific study and treatment. The gap in the public sphere leaves opportunity for the marketplace, as with the arts, education, and general health care.

(*WestWords, Magazine of the Writers' Guild of Alberta*, 34, No. 1 (January-February 2014, note 3)

Alternately, Andrew Coyne reported, in "Rules are comforting but judgment is best", on the case of York University and its handling of a male student's request to be excused from attending a study group with female students on religious grounds. He suggests the temptation will be to see the outcome as representing the opposite approach to that

proposed by the Government of Quebec in its Charter of Values. According to his article on calgaryherald.com (Sat. January 11, 2014) the university overruled the student's professor, accommodating institutionalized segregation by sex, insisting the Ontario Human Rights Code required collusion with a reluctance to "soil" oneself with the company of women. It could do so without contradicting a commitment to gender equality, so long as nobody told the girls. The issue made its way through the department, the dean of arts, the director of the university's Centre for Human Rights, and the provost.

Allison Grayhurst is a full member of the League of Canadian Poets. She has more than 290 poems published in over 170 international magazines/journals/anthologies. Her book *Somewhere Falling* was published by Beach Holme Publishers, a Porcepic Book, in Vancouver in 1995. Since then she has published ten other books of poetry and four collections with Edge Unlimited Publishing. Prior to the publication of *Somewhere Falling* she had a poetry book published, *Common Dream*, and four chapbooks published by The Plowman. Her poetry chapbook *The River is Blind* was recently published by Ottawa publisher above/ground press December 2012. The reviews were written from uncorrected proofs.

<http://abovegroundpress.blogspot.ca/2012/12/new-from-aboveground-press-river-is.html>



Grayhurst admits, "I don't have the patience to write a novel. I wanted to be a writer, not a poet, but the poem is what is best for me. I'm too impatient to put in all the cushioning that a novel needs around it to get to the point. I just want to get right to it."

And get to it she does, "If you're a writer, you're not going to let anything stop you from writing. I wake up every morning at five-thirty to do my writing." Her poetry is beginning to reflect her spiritual growth or journey, in a new title "Journey of the Awakening" (in *Oh!* Fall 1996, pp. 9-10.) In "The Poetry of Allison Grayhurst", by Blaise Wigglesworth, a third-year journalism student, we are told,

Her poems read like the journal entries of a mystic - perhaps that's what they are. They are abstract and vivid, like a dreamy manifestation of soul. This is the best way, in prose, one can describe the music....

I had the opposite reaction. Her poetry appears visceral, not for the faint of heart, and moves forward with a dynamism, with a frenetic pulse. If you seek the truth, the physical blood and bones, then, by all means, open the world into which we were all born.

Review of *Into My Mortal*, by Allison Grayhurst (Edge Unlimited Publishing, 2004) 111 pp paper.

Although the iron mask resembles that of the Count of Monte Cristo, she expresses the poetic nutrients that keep her/mind's eye vivid ("It is told again"), and declares, "I am thirsty, still/a poet" ("Desperation/Affirmation"). This collection is primarily devoted to the conception, gestation, delivering, and raising of children.

A foremost wish "as we walk, born as one" ("Vacant Underground") for a home of three turned into four ("SomeOne New"). As she makes room for the newborn, she learns laughter from an unborn child ("I Do Not Try To Understand"), feels a kick, does not fear "the boy you will be" ("Under My Skin") or a babe that needed constant tending ("In The Name"). Rather, she welcomes the infant sound ("New Tree in the Garden"), harkens "little boy, welcome" ("Six Months Pregnant"). However, she feels the weight of preparation ("For Life"), as with a child and another child ("Kind Escape"). There is a child's mind: "One little girl", "One little child", "One little heart" ("One Little Heart"). Elsewhere, a child is peering ("Storm"), there are nursing infants ("Listening to the Talk", and the hands of a child ("Pure and Plastic"). I spot some children ("Tribe), when hope feels like a new body ("Legacy"); children weeping ("On this Dock"), playing games ("Mustard Seed"), changing body ("Overpass"), like my children ("I see the things"). Birth contains the death that brings rebirth ("I Sleep in The Rain"), "to be alive with you there ("Always There"), a child's gift ("Slice the Pony"), a perfect lullaby ("A Place For You"), a child watching ("Learning Temperance"). At your stroller side ("Little boy born"), my children ("Dad, I think of you"), and of "Siblings", a thousand parents but their only child ("Turned". My children autumn born ("Into My Mortal"), a baby's teething ("The Bane of My Hypocrisy"), the smell of my baby's neck ("Just Believing"), a bay's mouth ("What Can?"). A child surging ("Friend"), my happy family ("Happy Summer Coming"), the thrashing of children" ("Junkie"), the bloody aftermath ("The Thing Ahead"), children wait ("Weather"), third birth ("The Hand That Came"), my children ("A Better Life"), two children ("Because"), funerals and baby births ("The Flood")

I would recommend "Six Months Pregnant", "Born" "that wondrous child", "Days Before Birth" of a wonderful new creation. "Little Boy Born", "Son, Almost One" infant glory, and especially "Daughter Almost Five", a friend like no other.

Allison Grayhurst lives in Toronto, Canada with her husband, two children, two cats and a dog. She also sculpts, working in clay. Some of these poems have first appeared or will be appearing in: *The*

Greensilk Journal; Beatnick; Pirene's Fountain; Studio Journal; PoeticLicence; Bursting Plethora of Rainbow Colors; Extract(s.)

Contact the author: allisongrayhurst@rogers.com;
www.allisongrayhurst.com

Review of *The River is Blind*, by Allison Grayhurst (Edge Unlimited Publishing, 2012) 99 pp. paper.

This poetry is private, about women who can be "brutal", "like a smile", as well as "gloriously giving", razor sharp, but "androgynously/beautiful". In "What face?", the embryo appears as if "you are neither/masculine of feminine." Throughout, she employs reiterated tropes of swallowing and being consumed, spatial fullness and emptiness, shut-in, caverns, chasms, cavities; angels, archangels, blasphemy, psalms; satiation or starved.

With a conceit of unrequited sex as "my desire", nocturnal emissions, awakening in the morning, the poet lives at capacity, uninhibited, dancing. ("Deep Breath In") She personifies a star as having "sweet blood" but plugged and unwholesome. In "this prevails", she seeks a sponge to saturate.

The extended conceit of death, using the metaphor of "a stream" which, paradoxically, the poet must "undress" in order "to know its cool wetness" ("Body of Water") she implores the muse to rescue her from "this drowning", to be released from sleeplessness. Her lover abandoned her, sick, with sensations of choking, near death, in a cave. She needs to soothe her despair, mid-day, as a serpent emerges.

In "It starts", "where water sinks or where water concentrates, "either way, [it] falls/but does not flow." In "Claimed", she wants more space in which to swim, "between clouds". In "Box", there are "tossing waters", wet breath, a stream. In "Will you keep me", drink me, stream through rainclouds. In "Seamless", there are raincoats and rainy seasons, past is an outpouring. In "Desires traversed", my liquid garden. In "I turn the corner and "wet river stones and floating. "Intimacy" is but "chilled water". "Our Time" involves "melting waters together."

In "Emptied", "a wave never crests." In "I heard a poet say", one sees God everywhere, even "in the swimming pool while treading water." In "Yes", the acts of weeping, showering, and dripping are linked. A squid's tentacles are "pulled from pulsing water". ("Our Light Cannot Always Burn Whole")

In "Matrimony" she explores the "wavelength". In "I wait for you", the words are "like lard", but "I have sky-dived into a torrent wave for you", now she is "drenched". In "Surrogate Dharma", she believes she could be transformed as a fish, "weaving with one full-body stroke."

She sets the scene of a phallic steeple which enters the sun's skin, in order to liberate "a liquid radiation", an act which is "brutish", "pillaged", "frozen", emaciated", "seeping".

("Open Valve") The same poem culminates with "overflowing, so overflowing" "drowns", and "downpores", "currents and currents".

In "Quagmire", the known becomes "blindness", a drooling city, with fluid boundaries. In "Changing Skins", we learn that "lust is water", but more than lust "is worth every star."

She confronts the afterbirth, with "a growing, encroaching wave", while she rests on a raft, the fish are curiously contented swimmers, under seawater. ("Thirst")

In damp places she observes tree bark as living wood, but she insists on a new geography, with a private island ("I would not thirst"). In "Myth", outpourings are "insatiable". The body as garden, is capable of "rich waters", "curvy undercurrents", a mirage, drained of natural oils, and, ultimately, unsatisfying due to "this thin-stream garden hose" ("Trickle")

The path to tranquility is paradoxically through mania:

of our mutual exposure. I will speak in your ear and you
will step into my voice
like stepping into a river

("River")

Review of *Spain Is a State of Mind*, by Patricia Young (North Vancouver: The Alfred Gustav Press, 2013) 8 pp. paper

This is an example of The Holm Poems, "holm" meaning a small island in the river, an occasional series. Young published a chapbook *Amateurs at Love* in Series Eight.

She has published ten collections of poetry, recently *Night-Eater* (Quattro, 2012). She was awarded the BC Book Prize, the CBC Literary Award, and the Pat Lowther Memorial Award.

The title poem playfully introduces My Fair Lady (Shaw's *Pygmalion*) "and rain falls mainly on the plain" a mellifluous line which begins and concludes a poem. W.B. Yeats' the dancer and the dance, art as performance, is colourful, ritualistic, and about an ancient story.

These are precise and meticulous poems, resembling cultured pearls which are linked by a narrative line about the Mediterranean, including Barcelona, Sacromonte, Menorca, and Granada.

An overt allusion to Wallace Stevens ("Of Mere Being") is reinforced elsewhere by references to an actual bridge and pic. The poet draws the reader to the bridges between

reality and illusion, a mythological Odysseus “et. al.” and the neoclassical Gothic Quarter. The locus “on every street corner” is juxtaposed with the historical “holy” wars between Christians and invading infidels, the Moors.

Poised between the different blues of sea and sky, the stink of “blue ink” comes not from the poet’s pen but arises from squid, which are diurnally washed up on shore. Her mind is emptied then refueled. Young has an eye for minute details, an ear for vernacular speech, by mean of which she converts Romeo and Juliet into a boy and a balcony, the inner courtyard, and, in every doorway, a girl named “Malvina” resides.

From: The Alfred Gustav Press: Series Eleven
<http://www3.telus.net/dzieroth/alfredgustav.html>

Review of *Brother*, by Annie Deeley (North Vancouver: The Alfred Gustav Press, 2013) 18 pp. paper.

The opening poem is stark, medical malpractice, and a botched birthing. (“Arrival”) Sibling rivalry is reduced to cooperation at best and coexistence. Big sister feels responsible due to birth order rank. He matures, abandoning crutches for an old Chevy which barely moved. Their cross-addicted mother loses face, now a virtual stranger. Children of alcoholics display specific characteristics. Her father weeps in this dysfunctional family. (“Pitchfork”) The poet uses images which are sharp-edged and penetrating. She personifies parts of the body which, in turn, display sensations. Figure skating offers her release from a scene of “dad” and “his crippled boy”. A ’59 Buick is the means of transporting the boy to “the Home for Retardates” as the disabled were termed. He suffers from a seizure disorder. (“Waving Goodbye”) Aged thirteen he lives in the Men’s Building, at the Home. She worked in the dish-room nearby. Yet, she runs away. She contemplates his sufferings. However, she fears him. One of the new therapies is assisted communications, holding his wrist over a computer keyboard. He views a naked dancer in Las Vegas, which he had somehow learned to spell.

In her “Afterword”, Deeley explains her central character “or his presence” lingers in these poems. With a diagnosis of cerebral palsy, the boy became “the centre of gravity in our family.” These are brave, bracing poems which never flinch. She heard someone’s voice “Write more, like this.” Her childhood home was recreated in patchwork, a mosaic, bits and pieces of what became “images to tumble forth.”

Annie Deeley is a Winnipeg poet. When she is not writing or working to support seniors, you might find her in her kayak, on her bike or on the porch with a book. This is her first publication. She is working on a longer collection of poems.

<http://www.mcnallyrobinson.com/event-12626/Annie-Deeley----Poetry-Reading#.UthZebRmMyc>

The Alfred Gustav Press is a micro publisher of poetry, producing mini-run chapbooks. Louis Dudek emphasized the importance to the genre of poets having the means of

production, from Shakespeare's folios and Contact Press to TISH's mimeographed leaves, and, more recently, Leaf Press, and others.

In general, the mandate of press is to publish about a dozen pages of either one not-too-long poem or a sequence of discrete, connected poems, concluding with an illuminating afterword. Copies are available by subscription, for example the deadline for May 2014 is 1 April. Patrons are welcome. An unacknowledged forbear is Garry Geddes' subscription-based press, Quadrant.

Series Eleven (November 2013) contains *Three*, by Ian Adam, *Brother*, by Annie Deeley, and *Pray Goodbye*, by Kevin Spent.

Forthcoming in May 2014 Series Twelve will offer Catherine Owen's *Rivulets: Fraser River Poems*, Suzanne von Rennenkampff's *In the Shelter of the Poplar Grove*, and Calvin Wharton's *The Invention of Birds*.

Series Ten (May 2013):

John Donlan, *Call Me the Breeze*
Maureen McCarthy, *Nine Steps to the Door*
Tara Wohlberg, *Cold Surely Takes the Wood*

Series Nine (November 2012, out of print):

Gerald Hill, *Streetpieces*
Sandy Shreve, *Level Crossing*
Douglas Burnet Smith, *Nine Kinds of Light*

Series Eight (May 2012, out of print):

Dorothy Field, *God Is*
Cornelia Hoogland, *Gravelly Bay*
Patricia Young, *Amateurs at Love*

Series Seven (November 2011, out of print):

Allan Briesmaster, *After Evening Wine*
Louise Fabiani, *Cryptic Dangers*
Chris Pannell, *Everything Comes from Above*

Series Six (June 2011, out of print):

Barry Dempster, *Disturbing the Buddha*
Richard Lemm, *The Gold Flash*
John Reibetanz, *Laments of the Gorges*

Series Five (December 2010, out of print):

Shane Neilson, *Elision: the Milton Acorn Poems*
Rob Taylor, *Lyric*
Diane Tucker, *Sandgrain Leaf*

Series Four (June 2010, out of print):

The Narrow Room by Jeremy Harman from Toronto/Dublin

Okanagan Galilee by Nancy Holmes from Kelowna, BC
How to Beat the Heat in Bodrum by Leonard Neufeldt from Gig Harbor, Washington

Series Three (December 2009, out of print):

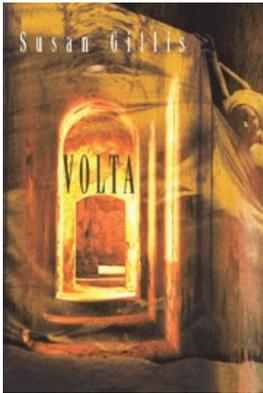
Brian Bartlett, *Being Charlie*
Allan Brown, *Excursions*
John Terpstra, *Elder Son*

Series Two (May 2009, out of print):

Christopher Levenson, *Habitat*
Susan McCaslin, *Persephone Tours the Underground*
Matt Rader, *Reservations*

Series One (December 2008, out of print):

gillian harding-russell, *Apples & Mice...*
Richard Therrien, *Water, Language, Faith*
David Zieroth, *Dust in the Brocade* (see the [New Poems page](#) for an excerpt.)



Review of *Volta*, by Susan Gillis (Winnipeg: Signature Editions, 2002) 80 pp. paper.

In poetry, the volta, or turn, is a rhetorical shift or dramatic change in thought and/or emotion. Turns are seen in all types of poetry. A turn in a sonnet is a part of virtually all sonnets; the volta is most frequently encountered at the end of the octave (first eight lines in Petrarchan or Spenserian sonnets), or the end of the twelfth line in Shakespearean sonnets, but can occur anywhere in the sonnet.

The epitaph is entitled “Beaufort Scale”, a found poem which confounds us. At the core of the collection is a series of similes which function as analogies between love and various contexts (pp. 27-43) Her mock heroic tone is not from St. Paul’s *Epistles*, love forgives all. The paradox is her assertion, “The one constant is my love for you”, immediately followed by “To love you not, but through you, to love”, because she has been rejected. (“The Sufficiency of Love”) The lust lingers, affection is at first encounter, but should “the gouge” be “gorge”, given “the “cascade” which “shimmers?” (“Love as Stone”) The first-person speaker engages in conditional tense, testing the hypothesis, she thirsts, a cautionary tale, comparing “His skills” with “His person”. (“Love as Pure Desire”) The lines elongate and undulate. She considers stoicism, posthumous ideals, planetary correspondences; enduring reproach, even betrayal, before the finality of “Love’s Bewilderment”.

Of Durer, in three examples of her technical versatility, there are a concrete or shape poem, a narrative, and a prose poem; demonstrating a dialectic between art and the world, a watercolour, the poet offers ekphrasis or ecphrasis, a rhetorical exercise. She imagines

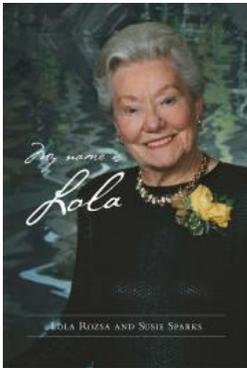
the vanishing point, a matter of perspective, describing the aesthetic display, as a performance or projection, of what might have been.

Black Death is associated with a spider, “he’d push with all seven legs”. (“The At Home Spider”); a dragonfly wing, like a violin motif. (“The Shell”) A song of lovers, “*never mind, my sister*”), resembles the “flute” and musical accompaniment of “One Gingko”. Only a “Whistle” is followed by companion poems about and for “Crane. 1” and “2.”, imagist and spare. A scholar and feminist can also be Khalid’s wife, yet “No one asks me in the mosque, Why?” (“This too is widely known.” Someone sang along with tape of Oum Kalthoum, Empress, Nightingale, Star of the Nile. (“This is not a loss exactly”) She contemplates a still-life of fruit, belongings lost in transit, a tourist of human nature, the I Ching.

In “Gossiping with Cassiopeia” she fashions a prose piece about a sonnet by Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey and Thomas Wyatt’s poems which brought the Italian sonnet form into English, with an allusion to Emrys Jones, *Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey: Poems* (Oxford, 1964) and an extended a story about an Ethiopian queen. In writing fifteen poems, she proceeded as though translating Surrey’s sonnets. Translation involves the writing of poems which interpret and represent other, earlier poems. One of Surrey’s sonnets “pays pre-and post-lapsarian worlds against each other.” (p. 70) She concludes, “In the end, translating Surrey is gossiping with Cassiopeia. She should know a thing or two by now about disruption.”

Gillis taught English in Montreal. She produced *Swimming Among the Ruins* (Nuage/Signature 2000) and “Kitchen Floor”, a limited-edition broadside by Loris Doody (Delerium Press, 2002). She was shortlisted for the 2001 Pat Lowther Memorial Award and *Volta* was her second book.

Anne Burke



Review of *My Name is Lola*, by Lola (Estes) Rozsa, as told to and written by Susie Sparks (University of Calgary Press 2013) 336 pp. Cloth \$39.95. Indexed. black-and-white and full colour photographs.

This is an autobiographical account by and about Lola Rozsa (1920-2012) and her immediate family, husband Ted and their three children. The couple's move to Calgary, in 1949, places her as an eye witness with first-person observations of the decades which followed; in particular, the volatile economic climate, and ends with their philanthropic efforts, especially for the arts. Their acts of "giving back" constitute an entertaining story of Rozsa Petroleum, the establishment of the Rozsa Centres, in Calgary and at Michigan Tech, Houston. In 2003, Bob McFee received the first annual Rozsa Award for Excellence in Arts Management. Anne Green, the founding director of Wordfest (a Banff-Calgary

International Writers Festival) received the second annual Rozsa Foundation Award for Excellence in 2004.

This memoir is coloured by political persuasion, economical class, and social tastes, in which the emphasis is less on the subject's developing self and more on the people and events she has known or witnessed. As a avowedly unreliable narrator, she acknowledges that one of her sources was also the private diary or journal, "Manners of the Manse", in which her mother kept a day-to-day record of the events in her life; written more for personal use and satisfaction, with little or no thought of publication. (Was it not published until after her death, if at all?) This source work is about her mother's life as the Preacher's wife in small-town Cumberland Presbyterian congregations.

Other sources are Frontier Geophysical, the Petroleum Oral History Collection at the Glenbow, the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra Archives. One of the many asides is about Don Harvie's father Eric who invested his fortune in the Glenbow Archives. Others allude to the filming of the Hollywood movie "River of No Return", with Marylyn Monroe and Richard Mitchum at Banff Springs Hotel.

The present memoir is inherently interesting but the more so because it is linked with the historical development of Calgary. The Stampede was born in 1912. The first Calgary Philharmonic was founded in 1910 and, in 1947, the new Calgary Symphony was assembled. The Women's League of the Philharmonic was launched in 1955. Of particular note are "It'll Just Be a Year" (Chapter Ten) and "Where's Alberta", Turner Valley, in 1942, and, of course, the requisite Leduc strike, in 1947. The Earl Grey Golf Club and Oilmen's Golf Tournament (no women members or players allowed) was at Banff Springs, in 1951 and finally dissolved in 2007. Lola became Vice President of Alberta Ladies' Gold Association in 1982-83, then President in 1984-85. The American Women's Club was an important component. They organized the first Women's Auxiliary of Theatre Calgary, an event which fundraises to find domestic violence solutions.

The *genus loci* are everywhere in evidence, the Palliser, Hudson's Bay, the downtown *Calgary Herald* Building, Rideau Park School, Bowness Park, Grace Presbyterian Church, when the Rozsas lived on Westmount Boulevard, near Elbow Park Elementary. In turn, this is a voyage of self discovery, a private life made public

Overall, with broad strokes, the narrative relies on Women's Suffrage and the Temperance Society, the Spanish Flu. There are Oklahoma, the oil industry, Shell, seismic teams in the early 1940s, in New Orleans, the hurricane of 1947, and moving to Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The chronology is punctuated by The Cold War, Dr. Spock and Jonas Salk, but not before 1950s conformity followed by the 1960s, the JFK assassination, the Vietnam War.

This is a leisured class structure, the Earl Grey Golf Club, the Glencoe Club, the Petroleum Club. Before all of that, she was a Texas girl, daughter of Charles William Estes, preacher, and Nannie, with seven children, in Whitesboro, Oklahoma. Her high

school education was supplemented when she was college-educated, unusual for girls, at Trinity University in Waxahachie, Texas. On her wedding day, the bride was nineteen, the groom was twenty-four. "I'm afraid Errol Flynn was coming in a distant second." (p. 46)

Ted was chief geophysicist in the New Orleans office and they moved to Baton Rouge, Louisiana. By 1950, Ted left Shell to found his own consulting company. With Prime Minister Trudeau's National Energy Program, by 1961, investment was pulling out and there was a slump in the oil industry. Frontier staff were being cut, (and there was "fraudulence" in the air), but, subsequently, there are Rozsa Oils, Basset Oil and OPEC, 1969.

"My Name is Lola" was one of the founding members and later president of the Calgary Philharmonic Society Women's League. She and her husband Ted focused on philanthropic contributions to the CPO, as well as other arts organizations. She was named a Women of Distinction in 2001 and received an Honourary Doctorate of Laws from the University of Calgary in 2002.

Susie Sparks is interested in history and was given the opportunity to write about how profoundly we are shaped by the contexts of our times. She is the author of *But Who Are Her People?* and the editor of *Calgary: A Living Heritage*. Not surprisingly Sparks is director of an extensive oral history project for the Calgary Bar Association. She was founding Director of Leadership Calgary and former Executive Director of the Famous 5 Foundation. She is currently working with the International Women's Forum.

Sparks is more than an amanuensis to her muse's stories as historical events are almost seamlessly interwoven with her subject's far-ranging memories; while she does function as a personal secretary or scribe who transcribes from dictation - or the equivalent of oral epistolary sources.

This is not a biography in the sense of Boswell for *The Life of Samuel Johnson*, although it does comprise an account of events arranged, -more or less- in chronological order, based on a series of epistolary conversations.

Oral history is the collection and study of historical information about individuals, families, important events, or everyday life using audiotapes, videotapes, or transcriptions of planned interviews. These interviews are conducted with the individual who participated in- or observed- past events and whose memories and perceptions of these are to be preserved as an oral record for future generations.

Oral history strives to obtain information from different perspectives, and most of these cannot be found in written sources. Oral history also refers to information gathered in this manner and to a written work (published or unpublished) based on such data, often preserved in archives and major libraries.

The term is sometimes used, in a more general sense, to refer to any information about past events that an individual who experienced them tells anybody else, but professional historians usually consider this to be oral tradition. It tells us less about events as such than about their meaning, the unique and precious element which oral sources force upon the historian is the speaker's subjectivity.

(Source:http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oral_history#Legal_interpretation_and_relationship_to_historical_truth)

Our community association hosts a seniors' group of about forty-five active members. One individual, who is aged ninety-nine, is in relative good health, has recall of her homesteading parents, the "lesser" depression, The War to End All Wars, the "Great Depression", "Dirty Thirties", the Second World War, and all the activities she pursued last week. What is basically missing is the writing down of these observations, the recording of events accompanied with the wisdom born of living a lengthy and important lifetime.

This title is Number 6 in The West Series following 1- *Looking Back: Canadian Women's Prairie Memoirs and Intersections of Culture, History, and Identity*; 2- *Catch the Gleam: Mount Royal, From College to University, 1910-2009*; 3- *Always an Adventure: An Autobiography*; No. 4- *Promoters, Planters, and Pioneers: The Course and Context of Belgian Settlement in Western Canada*; and 5- *Happyland: A History of the "Dirty Thirties" in Saskatchewan, 1914-1937*.

For additional information see:

http://www.signatureeditions.com/index.php/books/single_title/volta

Anne Burke