

**VSC Newsletter July 2020**

1 message

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# Victoria Sketch Club Newsletter

**July 2020**Contact Information:**Secretary** [victoriasketchclub@gmail.com](mailto:victoriasketchclub@gmail.com)**VSC website** [www.victoriasketchclub.ca](http://www.victoriasketchclub.ca)**Facebook** <https://www.facebook.com/victoriasketchclub/>

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## Summer 2020 *en plein air* Program

**Upcoming Dates****Aug 4** Starling Lane Vineyard**Aug 11** Beach at Telegraph Cove**Aug 20 (note: this is a Thursday)** Craigdarroch Castle**Aug 25** Geoff Buck's garden and nearby options

Note: August 25 will be a wind-up, bring-your-own in Geoff Buck's garden (no pub lunch this year).

Three questions for discussion over our bagged lunches...

- 1) do we continue Tuesday outdoor painting through September?
- 2) if so, do we return to some favourite sites or try new ones?
- 3) is there interest in contributing again to a fall revival of the *Art Connections* newsletter as a vehicle for "showing and sharing"?

**Questions? Contact:**Avis Rasmussen ([avis.rasmussen37@gmail.com](mailto:avis.rasmussen37@gmail.com))Rand Harrison ([randharr@telus.net](mailto:randharr@telus.net))

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## Scenes from July 7th





Fort Rodd Hill was a glorious venue for VSC artists, with its picture-perfect Fisgard Lighthouse and interesting 19th-century coastal artillery fort surroundings. This was the first lighthouse on the west coast of Canada, and the area is now managed by Park Canada. Rodd Hill was named after John Rashleigh Rodd, 1st Lieutenant on HMS Fisgard.



## Scenes from July 14th





Esquimalt Gorge Park was first established as *BC Electric Gorge Park* in 1905, but has been in use as far back as the 1860s. In 1907, BC Electric officially opened the Japanese Tea Gardens along with an amusement park and floating sampan tearoom. Sadly, the gardens were destroyed by anti-Japanese angst in 1941, and the park's popularity went into a decline 'til the '50s when it was handed over to the Township of Esquimalt. Through generosity of the Kinsmen Club, the park was upgraded in 2006 and now bears its name.







Scenes from July 21st



Saxe Point Park in the Township Esquimalt was designated as park land in 1934. During World War II, many trees on this 7.5 hectare site were cleared and a searchlight was installed as part of the DND's shoreline defense. Saxe Point has spectacular views of the Olympic Mountains and Strait of Juan de Fuca. Saxe Point, Saxe Place and the park were named for Prince Albert in 1850s. Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha was Queen Victoria's consort.



Scenes from July 28th





Island View Beach / Michell's Farm

Another picturesque and a favourite VSC venue. Michell's Farm was established in the 1860s by Bill Michell, who purchased his 100-acre farm on the Saanich Peninsula with money made during the gold rush. The 1980s discovery of golden nematode resulted in a potato-growing ban and prompted experimentation with other vegetables. It's 400+ acres is still owned and operated by the Michell family members (6th generation!).



## History Corner

*by John Lover*

John James Shallcross, Charter Member and first President of the Island Arts Club (IAC) in 1909, was a prominent businessman and influential figure in the community and able to offer impressive leadership to the new organization.



Born in Liverpool, England in 1858, Shallcross arrived in British Columbia in 1893 and became a partner in a lucrative insurance and import business, Shallcross, Macaulay & Co. He served as President of the Victoria Board of Trade, and was an Oak Bay alderman and a Victoria City councilor, also accepting a war-time commission in the Victoria Fusiliers.

After purchasing land in Oak Bay from the Pemberton estate, in 1908 he engaged his IAC colleague Samuel Maclure to build him a home, which he named *Tor Lodge*. Carefully restored in 2008, this magnificent residence still stands on its rocky site at [935 Foul Bay Road](#), capturing magnificent sea and mountain views, an example of the Arts and Crafts/Chalet architectural style to which Shallcross, like Maclure, was devoted.

Although not an artist himself, Shallcross held trenchant views on the subject of art. In a 1917 lecture, entitled “Art after the War,” he predicted that Cubism and Futurism would disappear, a view strongly supported by his equally traditionalist friend Dr. Edward Hassell, but much to the resentment of the few “progressives” in the IAC such as Emily Carr.



The Irish-born wife of Shallcross, Ethel Maude, also an IAC Charter Member, was a competent watercolourist whose works were featured in the IAC annual exhibitions from 1912 to 1917.

Shallcross was succeeded as IAC President by Dr. Hassell in 1914 and died in 1921 while still an Oak Bay alderman. His wife survived him until 1948.



*Tor House interior as it appears today*

## Members News

### **The Power of Art Gallery 5 Turns 10**

Exhibit continues to October 2020, including the art of VSC members Niramón Prudatorn and Maureen Ness. Located on the 5th Floor Blanshard Wing.

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## The Sooke Fine Arts Show

Carrying the works of a number of VSC members, this show runs until August 3, 2020.

Go to <https://sookefinearts.com/show/> for more information.

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## Victoria Arts Council Gallery Summer Show

July 10 - August 22, open Tuesday to Saturday, noon to 5 pm. Artist talks every Wednesday at 4 pm with limited attendance. Contact director Kegan McFadden for details and to reserve a place, at [ed@vicartscouncil.ca](mailto:ed@vicartscouncil.ca).

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## Item for sale by donation to the Club!

This table can be yours for a donation to the club! We're moving stuff out while renovating, and we no longer need this desk.

The table top is 42" wide x 31" deep, and can be adjusted to different angles from flat to vertical. The height is also adjustable.

It's quite heavy, but I can deliver it to your door (as long as there aren't stairs) but not inside.

If you're interested, please contact me!

Email: [termcb@gmail.com](mailto:termcb@gmail.com)

Phone: 250-477-1906



-- Terry McBride

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## Beautiful Things in COVID Times

*by Virginia Hutzuliak*

### A Bird's Tale

In place of my usual quotes, I thought I'd share with you an uplifting story in text and photos that happened on my patio.

It all started on 17 May 2020, resting on my sofa in the early evening and my attention is caught by a most unusual thing. A hanging pot of pansies starts shaking! Soil was flying out, too.

After a few minutes, I take a peek to see what had caused the "whole lotta shakin' going on." There was a hole dug into the potting soil. Hmmm. The next morning I look again and ....

Oh my! Some type of bird was preparing a beautiful nest! So delicate and well made with the exterior of more hardy grasses and softer grasses lining it.



The very next day I take a peek and here's what I found ...





So... one egg a day was laid for four subsequent days. Have you guessed what kind of bird has chosen my patio hanging pot to raise her family in?



It is a Dark Eyed Junco! They began frequenting my patio garden area after I put out a small birdbath last summer. Coming from North Central Alberta, I'd never seen one before. It's from the Sparrow family.

Given maybe a week to 10 days go by and now the real work began for the Mom and Dad!



Only three hatchlings at this time. Interesting mouth linings...wonder what color the parents see...?

Less than a week later, the last egg hatched! Welcome, little guy! Its siblings all have some pin feathers or proto-- feather fuzz and seem to have doubled in size! Now there are four. I don't hold out much hope for the survival of the last little

one.

I am honoured and humbled to be witness to this saga. Growing up on a farm, we



weren't strangers to conception, birth, and death. But I was never so fortunate to have a front row seat to a wild bird story. By the way, each morning I would knock on the pot....couldn't find the door...to let Momma know I was there. Then I'd gently take the pot down and snap a photo quickly. No touching. All told, maybe I was there about 45 seconds each time. She got used to me, actually and learned to trust me. She'd fly out and land on a branch maybe only 3 feet away....scolding me all the while until I hung her home back up. They make a scolding noise, like one uses to *giddy-up* a horse....you know the one.....



This is about a week later. There are only the three again. No sign of the little one. Maybe underneath? (No way can I check.) Their feathers are maturing incredibly. By the way, I thought I'd be woken up by their chirping, but as long as they were in the nest, there was not one peep ever!

Here is the Dad, I think. He's been working hard feeding his family, too!



One day, around 28 days since I notice the pansies shaking, this I find a wee birdie on my patio floor!

Oh my ! One's out of the nest! Already? I'm now worried if this is a good thing or did he fall out? I try to catch him in a towel or small bucket to maybe put him back....

Holy Crow, they're fast! There is no way I'll be able to catch him. Mom and Dad are not impressed either. Dad flashes his bright tail feathers at me and clearly is not happy.

So, fine, maybe he can't fly? All of us are upset. I'll make him a ladder of sorts to get out of the patio..... (box, broom handle, step stool) and leave Nature to take care of it. I'm off to do dome errands.

When I come home, I see no activity in my patio. I take down the pansy pot and... surprise! There are NO birds in the nest or anywhere. They've flown the coop! I can't believe it.... all in about 28 days! Empty nest, literally! As I'm sweeping the patio a bit later, Mom and Dad came from somewhere, flew near me for a bit, then disappeared. I never saw them again. I like to think they came to say goodbye. And it all happened in less than a month.

Now, I have a question or two. What happened to the empty eggshells and the littlest baby bird that didn't make it? Do parents clean the nest periodically? (P.S. my pansies succumbed to mildew-- it wasn't the birds fault.)

Certainly the nest is completely empty. Juncos can have three broods a year. If I were still teaching, I'd already have made a study unit out of this. Perhaps I'll make a children's science booklet....to give to Primary schools that might like it.





AND NOW, a different planter, new flowers, a new Junko family in the making, again, on my patio! How lucky I am!



Hope you enjoyed my little summer excitement!

Stay safe,

Virginia

## Fun Stuff in Sequestered Times



This painting started from a Colorado scene but all the other elements, river and trees, are fantasy. When I started this I had just taken Ken Campbell's course, *Painting Like the Group of Seven*. At one point I Canadianized the scene with snow on the mountains but then went back to the Colorado colours. I guess now it's a hybrid, BC below and Colorado above, hence, a fantasy. Medium is oil.

-- submitted by Janice Graham





"A Quarantined Point of View" (12" X 16"), oil on canvas.  
I painted a few weeks ago, and I'm glad to report I feel much happier now!

-- submitted by Mary Brackenbury

**Do you have news or fun things to share?  
Forward your news along with relevant pictures or links to  
the [newsletter editor](#).**

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