



Meetings: Tuesday 12 Noon

President: Brenda Jenkins
Secretary: Libby Nelson
Editor: Peter Boekhorst

Phone: 604-816-6961
Phone: 604-868-4674
Phone: 604-462-0377

[E-mail the President](#)
[E-mail the Secretary](#)
[E-mail the Editor](#)



JANUARY IS VOCATIONAL SERVICE MONTH

Happy Birthday		Happy Anniversary	
Jan 27: Sharon Kyle	/	Jan 28: Mike Davies	

UPCOMING SPEAKERS:

Jan 23:	Jan 30:	Feb 06:
---------	---------	---------

LAST WEEK'S MEETING

Laurie Anderson presided.

Guests:

Barbara Pope (attending to hear **Alex** give his "Who's Who" today – to see whether she could learn something about her husband that she did not already know?)

Happy and Sad Dollars

Matt was happy to report that Adrienne's and Warren's dog is doing well after a recent operation.

Barbara Pope was sad to report that her family's dog went to doggy heaven this last December, but they are happy to be able bestow their affection, if only on a temporary basis, on a dog they are looking after for Dave Rempel's wife Sharon, while she recovers from a C-section (the dog, not Sharon).

Laurie noticed in 2022, after working in the garden one day, that his wedding ring (which he wore every day for over 57 years) had slipped off his finger. He even bought an electronic metal detector in an unsuccessful attempt to locate it among the leaves and soil in his yard, and thought that it was gone forever. But shortly after Christmas 2023, he was delighted to find the ring at the bottom of a drawer where he keeps his garden gloves. It had obviously come off his finger when he was removing a tight-fitting glove from his left hand, where it was waiting patiently to be found.

Ineke's had to call on Peter to help fight their garage door (in a hand-to-door combat) to get it to open after the electronic door opener went on strike because it didn't like the freezing weather. After Ineke left a message to her fellow Rotarians on our Rotary's What's App, Alex responded with the name of a good service repair man (it pays to have a Rotary family). She was also kept busy rounding up 300 new granola bars (for Starfish packs) when she learned that the ones she bought in December had been recalled.

Sharon Kyle and Ron had two-reasons-in-one to be happy. They had a number of sleeping bags and pillows stored in their house, which they donated to Coquitlam's Gordon Avenue homeless shelter. So they were (1) happy to be able to help the homeless, especially in these cold times of the year, and (2) also happy to get some New Year's housekeeping done.

Club Business and Announcements

Lynda Lawrence advised that the venue for this year's Wine Fest has been secured, and that it will take place on **May 15, 2024**.

Pres-Elect **Laurie** and Vice-Pres **Eric** will attend the **Grants Seminar** on **March 2** at the Silver Reef Casino, near Bellingham. (In order for a club to be "Qualified" - that is, to be eligible to receive a Foundation Grant, Presidents-Elect and one other Rotary member must attend the Seminar.) If anyone else wishes to come along, please let Laurie know.

This month's **Pub Hub** will be held as usual on the last Thursday of the month, that is **January 25, 2024** at 5:30 pm (location to be advised).

Program: Club member **Alex Pope** gives his Who's Who/Bio

Alex is our incoming Vice-President, meaning he will serve as our President in 2026-2027

Alexander Pope was born to a 44-year-old mother on May 21, 1688. He grew up in London, England, where he had no siblings because he was an only child. (His father, Alexander Pope Senior, passed away in 1717, and his mother Edith died in 1773.) He taught himself French, Italian, Latin, and Greek, and read widely, discovering Homer at the age of six.... [Wikipedia]



[OOPS – Sorry, wrong picture ☹ and wrong bio ☹]



Birth to Grade 12

Alex Pope was born to a 16-year-old mother who put him up for adoption. He was adopted by Jean and Kenneth Pope. He grew up in North Vancouver, where he had a younger sister who was also adopted. (His father Ken passed away from cancer in 1990, and his mother Jean died in 2011 in Holyrood

House, a long-term care facility in Maple Ridge.)

When in elementary school at Cleveland Elementary, his favourite comic was Casper the friendly ghost (and he still remembers that his grade two teacher's favourite comic was Charlie Brown and Peanuts). While at Handsworth Secondary School, Alex claims to have been a quiet/introverted average student who was thinking of becoming an accountant. But after taking both accounting 10 and Computer Science 11 while in Grade 10, he finished that year with the award of top student in Computer Science 11, and in Grade 11 was awarded the top student in Computer Science 12. In Grade 12, he taught himself Pascal programming language and wrote some software that he took to the Vancouver Regional Science Fair and won first place, including a trip to the Canada Wide Science Fair in Halifax where he received an honourable mention.

UBC

Following high school, Alex went to UBC to get his B.Sc. in computer science, where he was allowed to skip the first-year course because he already knew Pascal and went directly into the second year CPSC 215 course. At UBC he met his friend Sergio who later ran for (and was elected) president of the Computer Science Student Society (CSSS), the student club for undergraduates in Department of Computer Science. Alex got his first experience with politics when he was appointed secretary of the CSSS. Alex was responsible for promoting participation in Intramural Sports by the Computer Science students, and they were successful in winning the intramurals trophy that the Engineering students had been consistently winning previously.

Early work and marriage

In 1990, Alex started working as a programmer four days per week for a Third Party Administrator (TPA) of group insurance benefits (a TPA is an organization that manages employee group benefit plans on behalf of an employer). Two life-changing things resulted from this job. Firstly, his employer paid for a Dale Carnegie Course for him because they felt Alex would benefit from it. "I was somewhat shy and introverted", said Alex, "so this course made a big difference to me. I went back as a graduate assistant in the course once per year for the next seven years." Secondly, his employer referred him to a friend to write some software to do billings and reconciliation for their Telus Mobility franchise. That is where he met Barbara because she was working there as an office administrator. Barbara and Alex were married in May 1996 (and Sergio, mentioned above, was his Best Man).

Cycling

Alex cycled regularly during high school, and commuted from North Vancouver to UBC by bicycle after getting frustrated with cancelled buses. He also did some bike racing during the early 1990s and participated in various fund-raising rides, including doing the 200 KM BC Lung Association Bike Trek in several

consecutive years. After a subsequent hiatus from biking followed by encouragement from Barbara to check out the weekly bicycle rides with a Triathlon Club, Alex was introduced to the BC Randonneurs Cycling Club and the Burnaby Velodrome for track cycling, and spent quite a few years racing. During that time, he won two provincial championships in track cycling as well as a few second and third place medals. He also served on the board of the BC Randonneurs Cycling Club for six years, on the Cycling BC board for six years, and later was on the Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Bicycle Advisory Committee for seven years.

Politics

Alex ran for Maple Ridge Council in 2011 and again in 2014, and for MLA representing the BC Green Party and 2013 and 2017.



As a result of running for Counsel and participating on the Bicycle Advisory Committee, Alex met Linda King who was responsible for recruiting him to the Haney Farmers Market Society Board in 2015. Through his involvement with the BC Greens, he met **Aird Flavelle** who recruited him to the BC Greens Provincial Council and, more recently, **convinced him to join Rotary**. (Aird Flavelle is "a successful Fraser Valley IT entrepreneur, a community volunteer, a pilot, a valued donor to the University of the Fraser Valley, a would-be politician – he has run in five civic elections as independent and three provincial elections as a Green Party candidate – and about ½ dozen other things" [google].)

Further Graduate Studies

in 2018, Alex had been working for a company for 12 years that contracted him to the College of Physicians and Surgeons. The company had been making some management changes that resulted in what Alex felt was a toxic work environment. In March, when they turned down his request for a day off on Barbara's birthday, he handed in his resignation. After doing some contract programming, he decided to revisit the possibility of earning a Masters of Business Administration. Alex applied to the University of Fredericton that offered an online Executive MBA which focused on applicants who have plenty of work experience, and which did not have the requirement of a Graduate Management Admission Test; and was accepted. Alex said he was somewhat nervous about affording \$30K over the next 2.5 years, but took "a leap of faith" and started his studies in September, 2019. Given his experience with nonprofits, including being on the Farmers Market board, he selected Social Enterprise Leadership for his specialty stream. He graduated in April, 2022, with an A average.

Current Work

In mid-2021, Alex was offered the role of interim Executive Director of the Farmers Market Society, and near the end of 2021 decided to continue as the permanent Executive Director to give himself time to improve processes and put the Society in a better position for longer-term success. He continued there until December 2023, and has now passed the reigns of the organization to Ron Gorman. In the fall of 2021, he was approached by his friend Sergio who operates a consulting business in Vancouver, and who had a project that he wanted Alex to work on. So, Alex jumped on board at 20 hours per week, which allowed him to accommodate his time at the Farmers Market. He has now worked on three different projects with the fourth project in the pipeline for later this year. Starting January 2024, Alex is now doing this full time.

Family Life, and search for his birth mother and biological father

As noted above, Alex married Barbara in 1996. They have three children, namely: Casey (1999), Danica (2001), and Eddie (2006). In 2001, Alex decided to try to find his biological parents. In 1995, British Columbia became the first province in Canada to have open adoption records, meaning that family members could obtain the identifying information of the family member they have lost to adoption. He made a Freedom of Information request, and obtained a copy of his original birth registration, but it did not provide sufficient information to disclose his biological parents. In 2018 he took a DNA test with 23andMe, a company that provides a report that "will tell you about your genetic ancestry, and (from which) you may learn that you share recent ancestors with a group of people who identify as belonging to a particular ethnic group". This DNA test report did not provide much information about the identity of his birth mother or biological father. Through much further research, however, he was finally able to track down this information. Instead of just phoning them, he obtained advice about the best way to approach them. He wrote a letter to his mother and father and sent pictures of himself and his children. To his delight, his birth mother phoned him about a week after receiving his letter. He has since met in person with his mother and other members of her family, and they now have a good relationship. Although his father also emailed back to Alex, he elected (for privacy reasons) not to meet in person.

Club Business

The Ridge Meadows Quilters Guild made over 300 Christmas stockings that were given out with the Starfish food packs prior to Christmas. Our club gave \$500 to the Guild, for which we received the following thank you card:

January 4, 2024

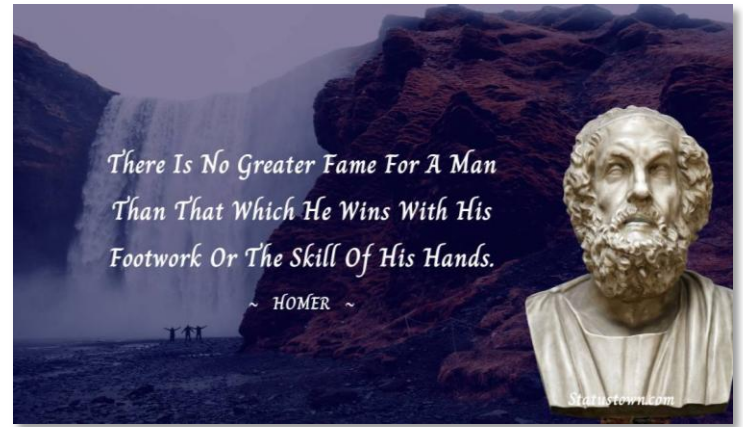
Dear Members of Rotary Club of Meadow Ridge,

I would like to thank you on behalf of all the Guild members for your support and generous donation of \$500 to go towards our Community Quilts Program. This donation has allowed us to purchase batting so we can continue making quilts for babies, children/youth and seniors, as well as quilts for Residential School Survivors, and others. Your generosity is very much appreciated.

Sincerely,

*Kat Potter
President, RMQG*

Quotes for the Day



Submitted by Laurie Anderson

CLUB CALENDAR:

Jan 27, 2024 - **Grants Management Seminar**
Rotary Fieldhouse, South Surrey

Mar 2, 2024 - **Grants Management Seminar**
Silver Reef Casino Resort

Apr 13, 2024 - **District Assembly** - Kwantlen Polytechnic
Langley Campus - new location!