

Fraser Valley Christian Writers Group

Shortly after arriving in Abbotsford I started attending the meetings of a group of Christian writers. Even though the Fraser Valley Christian Writers Group had a great meeting co-ordinator, Ingrid Shelton, they had minor problem of getting people to lead the meetings. In 1987 after they asked me, they had a major problem: they couldn't get rid of me; I was chairman for 15 years! I mean, what more could I ask? Ingrid, one of the three cofounders of the group in 1979, arranged for the speakers and did the work the group; all I had to do was chair the meeting and get the glory!

As an introduction at the first meeting I chaired in January of 1988, I asked each person to think of something special, clever or funny to help us remember their name.

This appeared to stimulate the writers and it simulated me so much that I kept asking the members present similar

questions about their experiences in life on various topics about a hundred more times over the next 15 years!



Fraser Valley Writers in 1989 – Joy Neufeld, Helen Lescheid (co-founder), Rody Lake and Ingrid Shelton (co-founder).

At the first meeting I chaired, Helen Leschied, cofounder of the group, shared Psalm 102:18 with the group. This was deemed an excellent scripture of the group and it has been our motto for 15 years.

**Let this be written for a future generation,
that a people not yet created may praise the Lord.**

Psalm 102:18

Ingrid was an extremely capable co-ordinator for 23 years; then, in 2001, she moved to Vancouver. After that I actually had to organize speakers.

I was never defeated in being elected as chairman: I just didn't call an election. Even this fall when I asked the group to get a new leader and they selected Sandy Newstream.



Hilda Born, (cofounder) recorded our activities and did so faithfully for the first four years that I was chairman. Then Marlene Vigh took over and kept diligent records for

another four years. In 1995 Mildred Linquist accepted the position of recorder and has been very conscientious for the last eight years. It is due to their efforts that I can report on what happened.



In the early years the group came together for Christmas dinner at our home. In this 1989 photo shows, Hilda Born (left), with Joy Neufeld and Jake Born.

The meetings gave me a forum for showing off the variety of talents of my children. Heidi played Claude Debussy solo on the Piano (1990), Rena played a violin solo (1990) and sang at a Christmas dinner (1993), Dan talked on ***Using computers in writing*** back in 1997, and Martin talked on ***Writing emails while travelling*** (2001).

Marlene Vigh (back, left) was at the pot luck Christmas dinner at the Fandrich residence in 1992. To her left is Myrtle Everett and Ina Friesen and to her right is Miriam Dunn & Mr. Grace Kurian..

It gave me a chance to talk about Gerda and my trips to Russia (1990)



I tried to get out of being chairman several times. I almost succeeded in 1995___ when I was really demoralized in life. I even was given a certificate for ___ but that didn't help. I was back being chairman ___ months later.



Fred Moore (standing bottom left) has been assisting the group with his talented leadership for a decade, connecting the members through emails and chairing meetings when Helmut was away on trips.

