

300 words, column #1
Java Talk
(for April 26 to May 2, 2007)

Every Age Is The Best Age

Old Mr. Jennings and His Sheep

Mr. Jennings, who will be 93 in August, is no longer around to take Belle, his “Blue Merle” collie, out for daily walks, let alone tend his sheep and Garry Oak meadow. I thought he was well over one hundred, which makes me think I might have had a skewed idea of what old was when I moved out here a few decades ago.

These days, the local folks are still seen, with their wheelbarrows filled with yard clippings, walking down lovely wide sidewalks, to feed the sheep and lambs. I doubt I am the only one around here who knows there is one day, in May, when all the Oak trees’ leaves will completely open. The sight is breathtaking, even after thirty years.

But what about Mr. Jennings and his old sheep, now? Who cares? One local girl took a bag of raw wool to Journey Middle School in Sooke, which she attends, to learn how to turn raw wool into a finished knitted project. She is also learning from the two women across the road how they are caring for his sheep and lambs. Savory Elementary students who pass this pasture during their physical education runs, if not every day walking to and from school, might have some ideas.

Maybe the neighbours can let him know we are all thinking about him and really missing him. I, for one, am wishing dear Mr. Jennings a much longer life, one that goes on to at least 110 years, with many fond memories of his old home, which for those of us around here, still includes the sounds and sights of sheep and Garry Oak meadows, with love and thanks to Mr. Jennings. Greetings can be sent to him at Central Care Home, #333 844 Johnson Street, Victoria, BC, V8W 1N3.

Deidre Hill