



President's Message

The Times They Are A-Changin'

*"...Come senators, congressmen
Please heed the call
Don't stand in the doorway
Don't block up the hall
For he that gets hurt
Will be he who has stalled
The battle outside ragin'
Will soon shake your windows
And rattle your walls..."*
~Bob Dylan, 1964

Stéphan Möller, President: PSSA

As I am writing, the SARS-CoV-2 virus has infected about 3.2 million people globally, with about 220 000 lives lost as a result of the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). If ever, Bob Dylan's protest song of yesteryear is even more relevant now, than before, *albeit* for very different reasons.

Life as we knew prior to the world closing its borders has changed permanently, with far reaching consequences. Most of these changes we are yet to experience. We are indeed in unknown territory on several fronts. We have to adapt. We have no other choice.

The writing of this piece has evolved like no other, over the course of about 5 weeks. First I saw the anger and defiance in my own writing. Then I deleted it all and wrote a factual piece with the latest data and information I have received from the NHS in the United Kingdom. This was also deleted – we are all thoroughly fatigued by unending information, the media primarily, focussing on all angles of COVID-19.

After careful consideration, my only goal with this piece has been reduced to sharing my faith in you, to state my hope that we will find successful and safe methods of treatment and demonstrate my neighbourly love to you with words of encouragement and unwavering support.

I am so proud to be associated with you.

And in the midst of the battle, allow me to share some food for thought that may at the very least entertain you for a while, and at most, hopefully allow you a glimpse of how to interpret life from a different angle.

A poem was written about timely reflections and social distancing by a lady called Catherine (Kitty) O'Meara, a retired teacher from Madison,



Wisconsin during March 2020. As it happens with fake news, Ms O'Meara's poem was taken, and made up as a poem written during the 1869 Irish potato famine and re-printed during the 1918 Spanish Flu outbreak. As with COVID-19, we will find ways to live with fake news (or fake poems in this case). Be that as it may, I have enjoyed her poem very much and with it, also enjoyed a fashion-forward photograph from the end of the 19th century. I do not know the providence of this photograph, yet if our current reality is anything to go by, the fashion designers of our time could do worse than incorporating a face mask in our daily attire.

So, with all due acknowledgement to Ms O'Meara, herewith then her poem. May it be the salve to your tired mind as it was for mine.

In the time of pandemic

And the people stayed home.

*And they listened, and read books, and rested, and exercised,
and made art, and played games, and learned new ways of
being, and were still.*

*And they listened more deeply. Some meditated, some prayed,
some danced. Some met their shadows. And the people began
to think differently.*

And the people healed.

*And, in the absence of people living in ignorant, dangerous, and
heartless ways, the earth began to heal.*

*And when the danger passed, and the people joined together
again, they grieved their losses, and made new choices, and
dreamed new images, and created new ways to live and heal
the earth fully, as they had been healed.*

~C. O'Meara, 2020