

FROM THE GUEST EDITOR'S DESK

Kuldip Gill

Amphora, the journal of the Alcuin Society, has graciously invited the Mission District Arts Council to participate in an edition of its journal with arts across all the disciplines featured. Through this edition of the journal, it is my hope as the new vice-president of the Arts Council as well as guest editor of *Amphora*, to reach a greater public including that outside the main cities, and at the same time to interest that public with art across all segments of our artistic traditions, including the book and literary arts. At the Arts Council we are indeed off to a strong start for 2005.

In this issue on the Mission area of the North shore of the Fraser Valley, readers of *Amphora* will be interested to read about Barbarian Press, jointly operated by the husband and wife team, Crispin and Jan Elsted who produce exquisite letterpress work, deep in the wooded hills above Mission City. Well known throughout Canada and internationally, the proprietors of the press shared some time to talk about their press work, the fonts, inks, papers and importantly the philosophy that drives their passion of making fine books. They tell us what is most important to them about its books and texts. Terry Stillman, himself a bookseller, tells us about Murdoch's Bookshoppe, a bookstore in Mission owned and operated for the past eleven years by Brian and Ann Murdoch who are well known by book aficionados throughout the Mainland and Fraser Valley. Enter the store and you will be amazed at the books you will find. The knowledge of its proprietors covers not only books, a search service, local history, folklore, but also insight into colourful historical local personalities, all within the welcoming ambience of a new and used books storefront on Main Street Mission.

Our featured artist Dean Lauzé's art work for the cover is "Mission Abbey", © 2005. It was commissioned and produced in record time. He showed me his workplace — a studio that must be seen to be believed. Here, I saw a flatbed press of a size I would not have believed possible, heard the amazing history of its provenance, and the life story of the previous owner who was a remarkable artist. Lauzé's portfolio shows the work of an artist working in commercial enterprises, as well as finding time for personal interest in etchings and fine press work.