



# Elena Harriet Petrali-Cicognara

(1948 - )

Elena Harriet Petrali-Cicognara (1948 - ), a highly respected veterinarian, was born in Bergamo, Italy. Her family emigrated to Canada in 1955 and started a dairy farm near Langley.

From the age of 10 onward, Elena worked on the family farms whenever she could, nurturing her inner fondness and respect for all creatures. After graduating from high school at the age of 17, she completed a Bachelor (1969) and a Master of Science in Physiology (1972) degree at the University of British Columbia. She then went to Saskatchewan where she obtained her doctorate degrees in philosophy (Biological Psychiatry 1977) and in veterinary medicine (1985).

She moved to Mission in 1985 to be closer to her family and began working at the Mission Veterinary Hospital. With the assistance of her mother, she opened her own clinic in 1989 and initially ran it as "a house call practice" during the construction of "North Fraser Veterinary Hospital" on Logan Avenue.

In 1998 she completed courses in acupuncture and began treating animals "not just to relieve pain but also to recreate balance." After developing a thriving practice, in 2001 she decided to take a "one year sabbatical to pursue the study and practice of acupuncture". She also relocated her practice in her home and scaled down the services offered.

She started working with the BC Veterinarians Association and the Canadian Association of Veterinary Acupuncture to help develop standards and set up programs for continuing education in alternative medicine.

Along with her clinic manager and companion, Sharon Gardner, Elena also generously volunteered her time, sponsoring Mission students to complete an "on-site work experience" in the clinic as well as founding and donating services to the Fraser Valley Humane Society, established in 1999 to help animals in need.

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