



MAPLE RIDGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter February 2011

COMING EVENTS



February 17 – The COMMUNITY HERITAGE COMMISSION holds its annual Awards Night at St. Andrew's Heritage Church Hall at 7:30pm. These awards are presented in a number of categories to acknowledge a wide range of efforts to protect, preserve and share our heritage. All are welcome to attend. There is a reception with goodies after the awards and the Lava Lights Jazz Ensemble will provide musical entertainment.



March 24 – POT-LUCK SUPPER AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING. Please let us know how many people are planning to attend, and what dinner-dish you will be contributing to the meal at 6:30 pm.

April 2, 1 – 4 pm. HERITAGE TEA AT THE SENIORS CENTRE. We need contributions of cookies, loaves and squares. Those wishing to take advantage of Al Bowen's antique appraisal and identification may now buy a \$15 ticket at the Maple Ridge Museum. This will entitle you to admission to the tea, plus the opportunity to bring two antique or collectible items to be appraised. *sn*



WAPATO has played an important role in Katzie traditional lifeways. Also known as arrowhead, arrowleaf, Indian potato, swamp potato and duck-potato, wapato produces starchy tubers which were an ethnographically known food source for native groups throughout much of North America. (Terry Spurgeon)

PROGRAM FEBRUARY 24



On February 24 at 7:30 pm we will be treated to the third instalment of the Katzie First Nation archaeological dig in Pitt Meadows. The many artifacts that were found made of wood and plant materials

were well preserved in the wet site.

Analysis and radiocarbon testing show that an active settlement existed here from 6000 to 3000 years ago. Stephanie Huddleston and Amy Homan will present new information, and be available for discussion and a question period.

This will take place at our usual meeting place, St. Andrew's Heritage Hall at 22279 116th Street. Members are admitted free, with a \$2 drop in fee for visitors. *sn*

LIBRARY DISPLAY

During February, Heritage Month in BC, make a point of visiting the Maple Ridge Library to see the displays created by Curator Allison White.

Subjects are "Picturing Our Parks" and "Communications then and now."

These displays in the library showcases help us bring the Museum to the public. *sn*



October 1975 by Daphne Sleigh

“The Maple Ridge Museum? Where is it?” This is the usual reply to any mention of our local museum. And the next most frequent comment is: “That’s in the old brick church, isn’t it?”

It’s not surprising that this state of confusion exists, considering the checkered history of the museum. Exhibits are no longer kept in the old church, which would probably collapse around you, if you entered it now. (An engineers’ report of two years ago estimated that it would cost over \$40,000 merely to restore the church as a shell.) Instead there is a newly opened museum in the Haney Library on 225 Street. Here is the story of what happened.

At one time, in the late 1950s, the hopes of the Historical Society did centre around this early church, St. Andrew’s, on Calligan [Callaghan] Street, as a home for the museum and, more than that, a focal point for the historic associations for many Haney residents and [it] seemed an ideal repository for the artifacts collected by the Society.

The dream of a museum faded away, as the ancient structure deteriorated. The collection, which has never been on display there, was finally transferred in 1967 to a corner of the Haney Library, where it gathered dust for many years.

Fresh impetus came in 1974, when a group of L.I.P [Local Initiative Program] grant workers began to sort and catalogue the artifacts and to press for a new museum building alongside the brick church. The building never materialized, but a 23’ by 33’ area of the library was partitioned off and allotted by Council as a museum.

Later that year the Historical Society was reactivated and the members set about making the best use of the space in the library. Since June of this year, the little museum has been open to the public manned by volunteer workers, and has attracted over 350 visitors.

Considering its small size, the museum has quite a comprehensive collection—everything from ox yokes to lace baby dresses. Items are grouped in special sections: Indian history, farming, lumbering, home life, churches, and schools. Each section is decorated in some suitable style.

DISPLAY CASE PROJECT

The museum has undertaken a fund-raising effort to replace our existing cases with modern cases that will make better use of available space and meet a higher conservation standard. The new cases will have their own lights and will have storage in their bases. Also we hope a slimmer profile will improve access for wheelchairs and strollers.

We are aiming for \$7,500 and have already accumulated \$3,800 thanks to **Meadow Ridge Rotary Club**, the **Maple Ridge Chamber of Commerce** and private donors. If you belong to a group that does capital grants for such projects or if you yourself would like to contribute, please contact Val at the museum. As a charitable organization, we issue tax receipts for all donations over \$20.

vp

BC PARKS TURN 100 YEARS

British Columbia is known around the world for its natural beauty, and unspoiled wilderness. This year marks the centennial of the designation of the very first provincial park in British Columbia: Strathcona Provincial Park on Vancouver Island. The Heritage Week theme for 2011, “*A Century of Conservation*,” was selected to honour the occasion.

This month the Maple Ridge Museum has on display at the library photographs from the “Picturing Our Parks” contest that ran this fall and winter. Although the contest is over, we would still welcome additions to our collection. If you have any photographs of parks to add to the collection please send them to <picturingourparks@gmail.com>.

There are over eighty parks within Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows covering a variety of landscapes and terrain. If you’re not sure where they are or are looking for a new venue or trail to discover on your weekend, the Parks and Recreation department offers a guidebook equipped with a map – a fabulous tool.

The best way to celebrate our parks this year is to visit them! *aw*

WILLIAM SAUNDERS'S PHOTO COLLECTION

Included in the large accession from the Marjory Saunders estate was a very large collection of the photographs and equipment that had belonged to her brother William Saunders, who passed away in the later 1990s. Bill was a camera enthusiast who had all manner of equipment for making still and moving images. Our collection has not included movie cameras before so they are a very welcome addition.

With great timing, in regards to our park photography contest, Bill's photos contain many shots of our local parks in the 1940s to 1960s. He was keen on camping and travelled our region and the province with his tent and cameras.

During the Second World War, Bill served overseas as a medic and he later worked as a nurse orderly at Riverview and Allco Infirmary. He is now identified as the photographer of almost all of the best images we have of Allco.



Bill Saunders on left. Just before the war, Bill changed his name to "Norton" due to an interest in Numerology. All his military papers are in the name "Norton Saunders."



The first picnic shelter in Allco Park, c. 1960

A very interesting character at Allco Infirmary was C. F. Nielsen who produced model sailing ships at a prodigious rate. Known in the mid-1960s as the "Boatman of Haney", little is known of his origins or of the fate of his ships. We would love to obtain one for the museum collection. *vp*

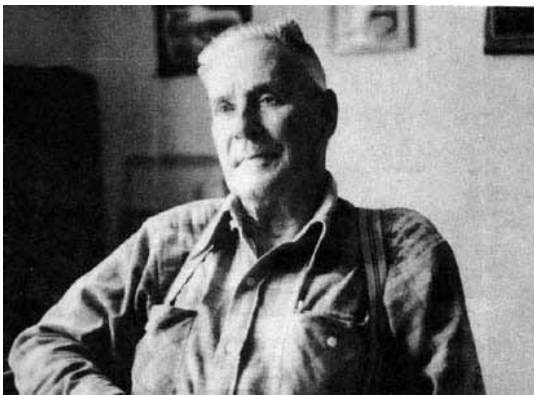


C. F. Nielsen, the Boatman of Haney, posed with some of his models at Allco Infirmary in 1964.



DARS DISPLAY

If you have not visited the world-class model railway diorama on the lower level of the museum for a while, do it: you are in for a treat! The club has been very busy adding new buildings and signs and more details than I can list. Above is a sample! In addition to their monthly open house on the last Sunday of every month between 1 and 4 pm, the diorama can be viewed any time the museum is open. *vp*



IT IS WITH GREAT PLEASURE that we have learned that Hancock House is planning a reprint of Ruskin historian Charles Miller's 1981 book *Valley of the Stave*, "This is," Miller writes in his foreword, "a true story of the middle area of the Fraser Valley, too little of which has been recorded or written." Miller is a great storyteller and although his book has a few flaws it is a unique source of information about people living around the Stave in the early days. Photo: Charles A. Miller. *The Gazette*, Wednesday 27 May 1981.

DEWDNEY-ALOUETTE



Visit the Dewdney-Alouette Railway Society's diorama in the museum.

On the last Sunday of every month, members of the Dewdney-Alouette Railway Society are present to "talk trains" and operate the Diorama. Model Railroaders are welcome on the Tuesday and Thursday evenings before the last Sunday of the month.

Info: Dick Sutcliffe at 604-467-4301 or E-Mail: ras1@uniserve.com



January 1975

Photographic Exhibition at Museum

The Maple Ridge Museum will shortly be presenting the fourth in its series of winter exhibitions. A collection of Don Waite's historic photographs will be on view in the Museum (at the far end of the Library) from January 20 until February 12. Some of the pictures are copies of old photographs; others are recent views in the Maple Ridge district.

Don Waite will be well known to most residents as a writer of several books on the history of the Fraser Valley and as a photographer with his own private archives covering local history.

In 2005 Don Waite donated the negatives of his historical collection to the Maple Ridge Museum and Archives.

