



MAPLE RIDGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter January 2011



FEBRUARY MEETING

Stephanie Huddlestan and **Amy Homan** from Katzie Development Corporation will present us with a final summary of the excavations on the Abernethy connector route. This fascinating habitation site on a sandy ridge overlooking wetlands dates back more than 5,700 years. Save Thursday, February 24 for this rare archaeological treat!

HERITAGE WEEK DISPLAYS

To celebrate Heritage Week (February 21-27) the Maple Ridge Museum will be showing three displays at the library: two about the History of Communication; detailing the importance of both the postal service and how telecommunications helped shape Maple Ridge and the surrounding areas. The third will have on display photographs from parks, past and present, be fitting in with the theme of this year's Heritage Week; "Celebrating Our Parks: a History of Conservation." We hope to showcase the various entries we received in our "Picturing Our Parks" contest. Don't forget to drop by the library during the month of February to see our displays! *vp*

HERITAGE AWARDS EVENT

As every year the Community Heritage Commission celebrates Heritage Week with the Maple Ridge Heritage Awards event. This event is intended to honour and celebrate those whose work has demonstrated excellence in community heritage conservation. Date: Thursday, February 17th @ 7:30 p.m. at St. Andrew's Heritage Church Hall. Entertainment by the Lava Lights jazz ensemble. Refreshments will be served.

For more information, please contact Lisa Zosiak at lzosiak@mapleridge.ca or 604-467-7383.

JANUARY MEETING

Our first program meeting for 2011 will be a presentation by President **Duane Vandenberg** about the Alouette Field Naturalists. This will take place on Thursday, January 27th at 7:30 in our usual meeting place, St. Andrew's Heritage Hall at 22279 116th Avenue.

Duane joined the Alouette Field Naturalists two years after its formation in 1972. The group doesn't just study the natural world, but members get outdoors every Sunday to learn about bird identification, to examine mushrooms and wild flowers and the health of the ecology. Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows have many parks and wilderness areas, but some are threatened by human and commercial activity. One of the ongoing concerns of the group is the dwindling nesting habitat for Sandhill Cranes. *sn*

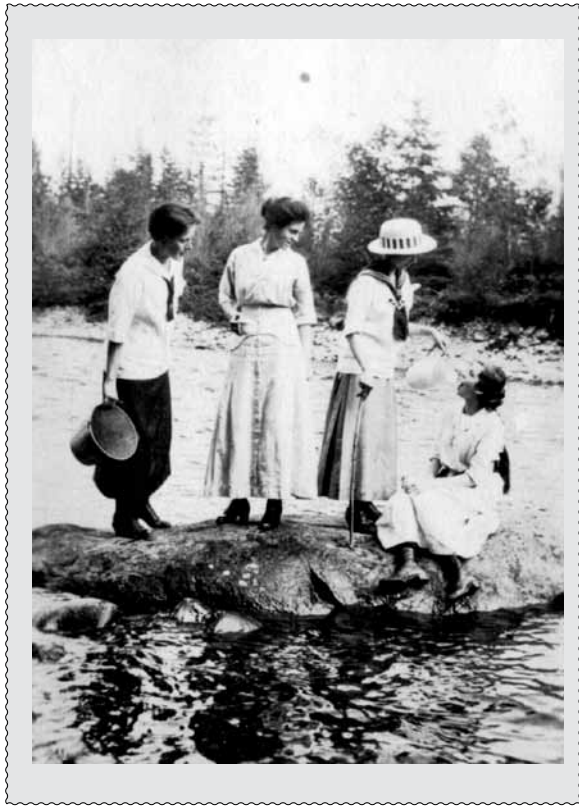
THANK YOU TO OUR MEMBERS!



Our members have been very generous with donations that have been sent in with their membership renewals.

So far, we have received more than \$1,220 with \$275 of that earmarked for special funds in memory of **Marjory Saunders** and **Don Merkley** or in honour of the marriage of **Sheila Nickols** and **Dick Middleton**.

A special thank you to these generous supporters! For those of you who have not yet renewed, please consider adding a donation. *vp*



The Hampton girls at Maple Ridge Park in 1916.

“PICTURING OUR PARKS”

There is still time to get your photographs in for the Maple Ridge Museum and Pitt Meadows Museum photography contest:

Categories Maple Ridge

- Municipal, Regional and Provincial Parks - East (Maple Ridge)
- Best Recent Photograph (shot between 2005 and present day) – adult
- Best Recent Photograph (shot between 2005 and present day) – youth
- Best Archival Image Maple Ridge Park or Previous Use of Park Site (shot 1980 or earlier)

Categories Pitt Meadows

- Municipal, Regional and Provincial Parks - West (Pitt Meadows)
- Best Recent Photograph (shot between 2005 and present day) – adult
- Best Recent Photograph (shot between 2005 and present day) – youth
- Best Archival Image Pitt Meadows Park or Previous Use of Park Site (shot 1980 or earlier)

For information on how to submit please call 604-463-5311.

Deadline: February 1, 2011

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MARJ SAUNDERS

Our Maple Ridge community has lost another extraordinary member with the passing of Marjory Saunders at the age of 97 on November 26, 2010.

Marj was best known as an athlete and adventurer. In 1937, she became a local hero when she rode her one-speed bicycle into Vancouver, participated in the 7-mile race around Stanley Park and won, and then rode back home to Maple Ridge.

As Ed Villiers noted in his wonderful eulogy: “Then she told me of another bike ride she took earlier that year, a ride which I later found reported under ‘Hammond News’ in the *Maple Ridge Gazette* of March 19, 1937. It stated that ‘Miss Marjorie Saunders and Miss Evelyn Olson of the Hammond Guides had accompanied the Haney Scouts on a bicycle trip last Sunday.’ Marj elaborated that she and the group pedalled to Mission, crossed the bridge to Abbotsford, went through Langley (There was no Albion ferry then) went over the old double decked swing bridge at New Westminster and then home. The old double-decker bridge was replaced 8 months later by a new four-lane Patullo Bridge. ‘We were all pretty tired by the time we got back,’ she admitted. They had pedalled about 80 miles.”

Her bicycle adventures were only beginning. She rode into the Okanagan looking for work as a fruit-picker in the early days of travelling the Fraser Canyon after the opening of the highway. She later travelled all over BC on a motorcycle, being her own mechanic all the way.

In 1938, she took up marksmanship in the form of rifle shooting. By 1942, she won a Dominion Marksman Expert Shield with a score of 5,933 out of 6,000 in competition. She was only the third woman in Canada to win that award and the second in BC.

In 1942, she joined the RCAF and spent the remainder of the war as a wireless operator in Prince Rupert and other west coast locations.

It was after the war that she became passionately involved in the sport that would dominate the remainder of her life: archery. She was involved in the creation of the Maple Ridge Archery Club and on a personal level, improved steadily until she was considered one of the top archers in Canada.

When Marj was a child, she got it into her head that a primary goal of her life would be to go to the Olympics, not because of the great honour that would come to such an athlete, but because she wanted to see them release the pigeons at the opening ceremony.

Her chance to “see the pigeons” came in 1972 when archery was returned to the summer Olympics after a long absence. She was part of the Canadian team, and at 59, the oldest participant. At those Munich Olympics, Marge achieved a personal best score and qualified for a FITA star, of which only 15 were given in Canada at any one time.

Marj’s connection to the archery club continued until her 92nd year when she finally retired from coaching.

This extraordinary woman left life as she had lived it – on her own terms – in her own home in her favourite chair, looking out over the garden she had tended for 76 years. *vp*

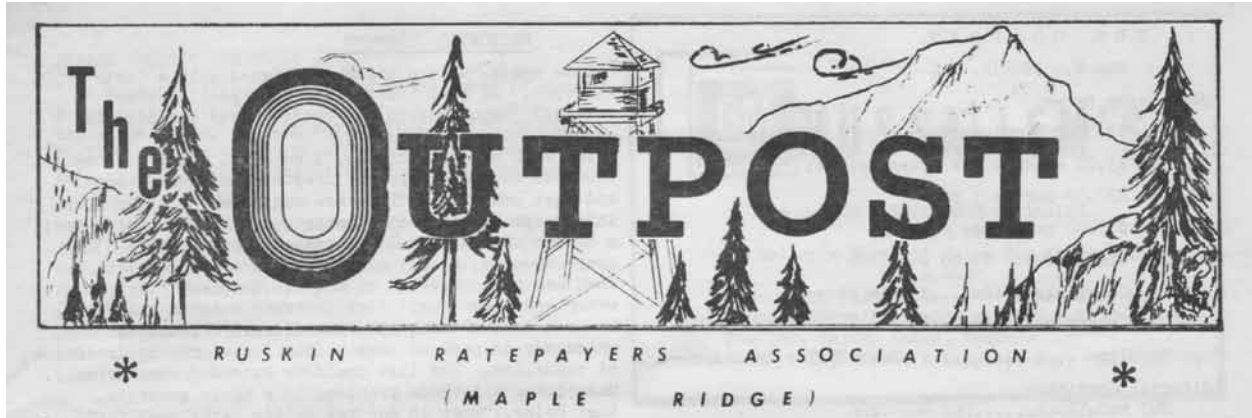
Photos:

⇐ Marj in 2002 with her favourite poppies.

Marj on the practice ground in Munich, 1972 ⇒

Marj in uniform of the RCAF in 1943. ⇒





MUSEUM HAS OFFICIAL OPENING

by Daphne Sleigh

Twenty years is a long time to wait for something but this is how long the local Historical Society has had to wait for the opening of its museum!

This important event in the Community took place on the evening of October 20 [1975] with an official reception and ribbon-cutting ceremony in the Haney Library where museum space is allocated. The President of the Historical Society, **Frances Sinclair**, made a short address: she referred to the Society's hopes for preserving historic sites in Maple Ridge and she thanked the museum custodians, **Thelma Mutas** and **Daphne Sleigh**, for preparing the museum display and cataloguing the exhibits.

In the absence of the Mayor, Alderman **Belle Morse** consented to cut the ribbon, which **Marge Crow** (convenor) and **Ed Villiers** were holding across the museum door. Alderman Morse spoke warm words of good wishes, saying: "My heart is with you." M.L.A. **Peter Rolston** also expressed his concern for local history, noting that his grandmother, **Tilly Rolston**, was the second white woman to be born in Vancouver.

Hostesses **Margaret Smith** and **Sheila Nickols** dispensed refreshments from a table prettily decorated with chrysanthemums, trailing cotoneaster sprays and crimsoning peony leaves.

It was a pleasure to see so many members of the original Historical Society among the guests. There was **Gordon Byrnell** (charter member), **Joan Byrnell**, **George Mussalem**, **Ernie Adair**, **Marge Dunning**, **Ed Villiers** (writer of many interesting "Gazette" articles on local history) and **Alan Woodland** (author of a book on the history of New Westminster): all of these struggled to keep local history alive in the fifties and sixties.

Frank Street, President of the B.C. Historical Society, was another welcome guest.

The large gathering of people appeared to enjoy reminiscing over the museum exhibits and recognizing familiar buildings and faces in **Marge Dunning's** collection of blown-up photos of early Haney. Many visitors, on their tour of the museum, helped to identify some of the more puzzling items on view: more help is needed here. Particular admiration was expressed for the beautiful array of Depression glass, which is on special loan until the end of November.

The Outpost, Volume 1 No. 11, November 1975

In May 1975 The Ruskin Ratepayers Association started *The Outpost*, a monthly publication. After the Ratepayers a group of Ruskin residents continued publication until its last issue, printed in May 1978. An effort is being made to find as many issues of this paper as possible to be microfilmed for use in libraries. If you happen to have a copy of any of the issues that did not end up to light a fire, perhaps you could call Fred at 604 462 8942 or drop them off at the museum

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

