



# MAPLE RIDGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## Newsletter February 2010

## AGM March 25



### FEBRUARY 25 PROGRAM MEETING

**O**UR HERITAGE MONTH program will feature Amy Homan of the Katzie Development Corporation. It will take place in St. Andrew's Heritage Church, 22279 116th Avenue, at 7:30 pm. Members of course attend free, with a \$2 drop-in fee for visitors.

Amy Homan has been working with archaeological finds from the Golden Ears Bridge construction site dig of 2008 that recovered many fascinating pre-contact items. Her specialty has been the rare wet-site artifacts that are organic, including wood and fiber artifacts over 3,500 years old. One important find was the recovery of wapato tubers, an important food source for the Katzie First Nations. We hope to have as many people out for this significant program as we had in January to hear about Slumach's Gold! *sn*



The distinctive arrowhead-shaped leaf of the wapato plant growing in the marshy ground near the Pitt River.

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### CONSIDER A BOARD POSITION

**A**S A MEMBER of the Maple Ridge Historical Society, you have already indicated your interest in history so why not take that next step and volunteer on the board of our society. Join a cheerful, dynamic group of volunteers who are committed to preserving local history by operating our museums and historical sites in a manner which does the whole community proud. It is an opportunity to learn about all the different elements of managing a non-profit society and the challenges we face.

We are always looking for people with skills in project management, fund-raising, financial planning, public relations, marketing, human resources, or law, but we also need people with deep roots in the community and a wealth of experience in the appreciation of history. If you

have questions about what is entailed in board work, call Val at 604 463 5311. Elections will be held at the annual general meeting. *ja & vp*

### AGM POT-LUCK

**T**HE MARCH 25 Annual General Meeting will begin with a pot-luck supper at 6:00 pm. Please sign up for this with your choice of food item to bring at the February 25th meeting, or contact the Museum at 604-463-5311 or <mr-museum@uniserve.com> We need to know how many to set up for. Don't forget to bring your own plates.

As a backdrop for the evening, the museum staff will put together a wide assortment of images from our photo collection to play on the wall screen. The AGM and elections will follow at 7:30 pm. *sn*



**A**NOTHER BUSY MONTH has gone by. While we're waiting for our renovations to happen, we prepared three displays for the library, put in applications for two different grants for summer students, got caught up on the accessions, and started working with the Chamber of Commerce on historic displays for their 100th anniversary gala.

Most of the main floor of the museum will be painted and re-carpeted during the first week of March. We will close on Sunday, February 28 and Wednesday, March 3 and will re-open on Sunday, March 7.

Please note that this will not affect the Dewdney-Alouette Railway Society's regular month-end open house on February 28. Entry will be by the lower level door. *vp*

### THE RUSSIANS ARE COMING !!

**K**UDOS to our Web designer, **Andrea Lister**, for tagging our Web site so effectively that it comes up first on searches for Fraser Valley museums. That is how it caught the attention of a Russian reporter who is part of the team coming to Vancouver to cover the Olympics.

Writing from Moscow, she outlined her interest in doing a piece on the Gold Rush and the role of First Nations in it, given that our gold medals have a First Nations designer. Val was able to direct her to appropriate resources in the region. *vp*

Мэпле Ридге  
Музей &  
Цоммунити  
Арцхивес  
ат уoir  
цервице  
алњаус!



### HERITAGE TEA

**T**HE ANNUAL HERITAGE TEA will be held on Saturday, April 10, a week later than usual because Easter week will be at the beginning of the month.

The planning committee would like people to sign up for volunteer sessions on the day. We need baked items such as cookies, tarts, squares and loaves to be brought in by 11:00 am on April 10.

Please sign up at the February 25<sup>th</sup> or March 25<sup>th</sup> meeting, or call the Museum at 604-463-5311. *sn*

### WHO LET THE FROGS OUT?

**B**ULL FROGS were first noted in the wild about 1940, and soon after they were found in many lakes throughout the Lower Mainland. These huge frogs, not native to BC, came to BC courtesy of "frog farmers" in various parts in the Lower Mainland. It was not a lucrative business and many farmers gave up, releasing the frogs into the wild.



One of those farms located in Maple Ridge, most likely on Kanaka Creek, was destroyed by the 1948 flood and the frogs escaped. An article from the *Vancouver Sun* dated October 23, 1945, identifies the frog farmer as a Ray Reynolds, a First and Second World War veteran who had started his farm two years previously. The problem is that we can't find anything in our local papers about Ray or his frogs so if this story rings a bell for any of our readers, please contact Val at the museum. *vp*

*"In 1954 (or 1953) the Fish and Game Department poisoned Mill Lake [in Abbotsford] to replace the coarse fish species with stock more suitable for the fishermen. Fish and Games gave us [Brian and Isabel Byrnes] permission to move tadpoles and adult frogs to Whonnock Lake." By 1960 they were fully established..." (Brian Byrnes in Whonnock Notes No. 4, "Through the Eyes of Brian and other Friends."*

## TRAIL FROM PITT MEADOWS TO PEMBERTON

New Westminster May 22nd 1877

To: F. Geo. Vernon, Chief Commissioner of  
Lands and Works, Victoria BC

Sir

In accordance with your instructions I have explored from Pitt Meadows in the direction of Pemberton Meadows and have hereinwith forwarded a rough sketch giving altitudes and appropriate distances. I am confident that this is the only practical route from Pitt Meadows. All the passes from the head of Pitt Lake being as high if not higher and the heavy expenses in constructing a trail around Pitt Lake would preclude that route from being adopted.

The cost of constructing a trail by the route marked in red and yellow will be about the average of trail making in the mountains (probably a small percentage lower) part being very heavy and expensive, while by the far the greater portion being easy of construction.

There are two summits to cross, the first 1225 feet; second 2950 feet. The descent of the first summit to Stave Lake, very steep and rocky. The last ½ mile of the ascent from Stave River to the 2nd summit, also very steep and rocky. The altitude of the route marked in yellow is about the same as the one marked in red, if not higher.

The reason I did not explore this line through was, that when at an altitude of 2000 feet the pass then being very steep and rocky continued so as far as we could see from the mountain side. I came to the conclusion that this could not be the pass spoken of by an old Indian as being so low of altitude and easy of ascent. I then returned and explored the main valley and continued the red line route.

I am confident the pass is as high if not higher than the red line, but should it be decided to contract a trail in this direction, I would advise that this pass to be examined through and compared

with the other for distance, cost of construction &c.

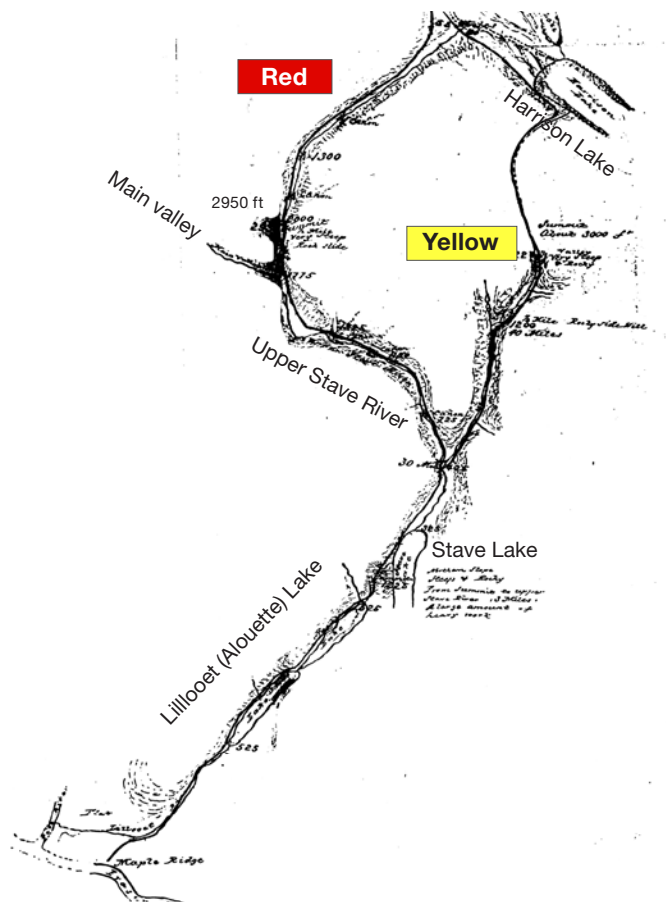
It will be impracticable to cross the Lillooet [Alouette] river so as to make the present wagon-road from Douglas available the current being so swift that it would be dangerous to swim cattle across. I did not examine the route any further than about 10 miles above its intersection with the Lillooet river, but from information I am satisfied that there are no serious difficulties to contend with in constructing a trail around Lillooet Lake to the wagon-road.

The only feed worth mentioning is at the head of Stave Lake, that being limited. There are two beaver meadows one about 5 miles from the second summit, the other on the summit.

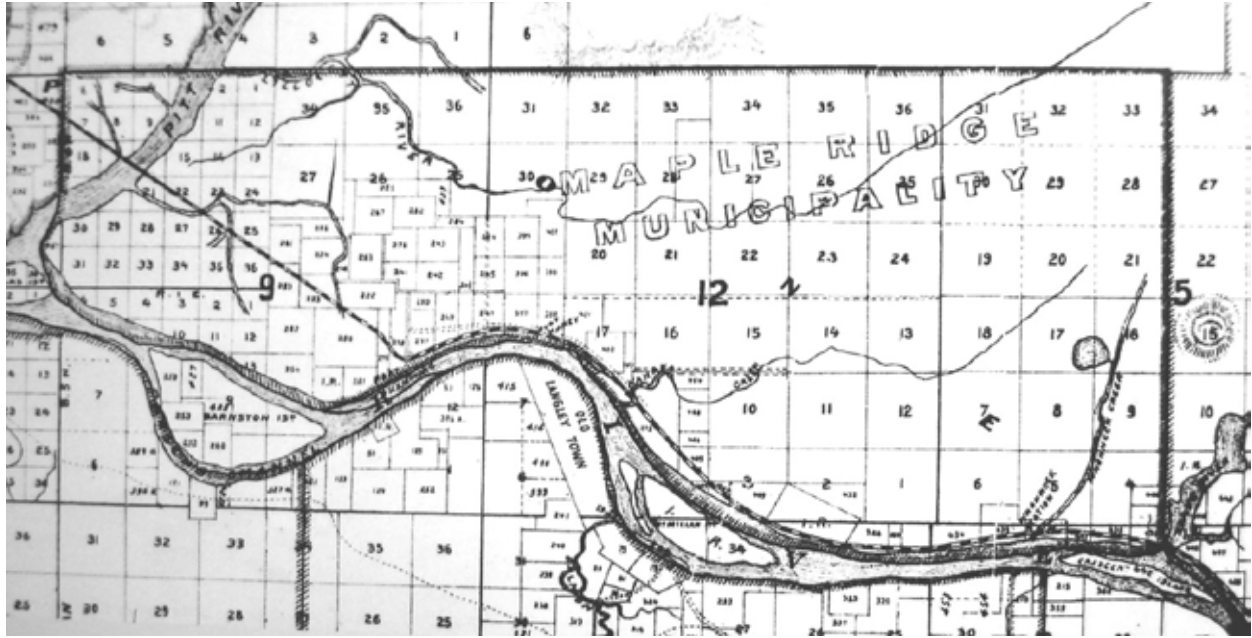
The distance from Maple Ridge to Pemberton is about 125 miles and the total distance from Maple Ridge to Lillooet is 190 miles about.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient Servant George Turner







### THIS LAND IS MY LAND

FROM BURQUITLAM we got a request to identify how much of what is now Port Coquitlam had originally been incorporated into Maple Ridge in 1874. That land on the west side of Pitt River was once the northwest corner of Maple Ridge and it was a substantial piece of land amounting to close to 1,300 acres.

In our Letters Patent in the *BC Gazette* of September 12, 1874, the boundaries (see the 1902 map above) are described as

"This 1908 map shows the boundaries of Coquitlam, which exclude a triangle of land adjacent to the Pitt River, then part of Pitt Meadows and Fraser Mills (not named), near New Westminster. Port Coquitlam, created in 1913, is not on this map."



(*Historical Atlas of Vancouver* by Derek Hayes.)

"all that piece of land included within the lines commencing at a point on the right bank of the Fraser River at its junction with Pitt River; thence running Eastwardly following the bank of Fraser River for the distance of fourteen and three-quarter miles; thence Northerly for a distance of six and three-quarter miles; thence Westerly a distance of fourteen and three-quarter miles; thence Northerly [southerly ?] to point of commencement . . ."

The *New Westminster Columbian* of 22 December 1893 mentioned that "Representatives of Coquitlam Council had a meeting with Premier Davie this week, anent [about] the desire to have included in Coquitlam that part of Maple Ridge lying west of Pitt River," and the whole matter "would be carefully considered by the Government, before any decision was come to thereon."

That decision may have taken a few years and probably it did not happen until the incorporation of Port Coquitlam (1913) and Pitt Meadows (1914). *vp*

### 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](mailto:ras1@uniserve.com)

