



Victoria Historical Society Publication

September, 2007

EDITORIAL

Welcome to a new and interesting season of the VHS. The list of talks, noted herein and on the enclosed flyer, will cover a wide variety of subjects and will be sure to stimulate and entertain.

The Society's membership is increasing and this can in no small measure be attributed to the quality and variety of our speakers.

On a less happy note, the Society notes the passing of long-time member, Herbert Pidcock. A short obituary appears inside.

The response to the invitation to the George Vancouver anniversary reception held earlier this year, was extremely disappointing, particularly considering his importance to the Island and the Province. The Provincial Government could have been more pro-active in celebrating this significant anniversary and perhaps could have taken a lesson from King's Lynn which enthusiastically embraced the concept of celebrating their native son and, no doubt, reaped a significant financial benefit therefrom.

As usual, contributions for inclusion in the newsletter are always welcome. Immediate publication is not guaranteed, but all suitable material will be used. Articles that may be too long for the newsletter may be published on our website which you are encouraged to use not only for its VHS content but for the many useful links it provides to other sites likely to be of interest to our members



SPEAKERS FOR THE 2007 ~ 2008 SEASON

All meetings, except December, will be at the James Bay New Horizons Centre 234 Menzies Street at 7:30.

September 27, 2007

Tim Willis ~ *Museums in the 21st Century.*

Tim Willis, Director of Exhibits for the Royal BC Museum, will speak on what makes museums relevant in the age of the Internet, and overview new museums around the world & future of visitor experience at the Royal BC Museum.

October 25th, 2007

Dierdre Simmons ~ *St Margaret's School — A 100Year Legacy.*

Deidre Simmons is the author of new book *Servite in Caritate: the First 100 Years of St. Margaret's School.* This independent school established in Victoria in 1908 has a distinguished history and alumni.

November 22, 2007

Anne-Lee Switzer ~ *Emily Carr in her Own Words*

Anne-Lee Switzer has compiled Emily Carr's unpublished life stories in a new book, *This and That.* She will introduce and read from the collection that shows another side of Emily.

December 6th, 2007

The Christmas Dinner and Seasonal Celebration at the Gorge Vale Golf Clubhouse 6 pm

Arla Taylor ~ *The Life and Times of Rev. Edward and Mary Cridge.* Ms. Taylor is a director of the Cridge Centre for the Family.

January 24, 2008
Michael Layland ~ *Ripple Rock: Its Discovery and Demise.*

Michael Layland, historical geographer, has done research on this BC coastal navigational hazard blown from the waters of Johnstone Strait in 1958.

February 28, 2008
Dr. Barry Gough ~ *Fortune's a River: the Collision of Empires in the Pacific Northwest.*

Dr. Barry Gough, historian and author, will give an interpretation of the clash of European imperial ambitions off the Northwest Coast of North America in the 18th & 19th centuries.

March 27, 2008
Terri Hunter ~ *Charles Bayley – Hudson's Bay Company Employee and Vancouver Island Pioneer.*

Ms. Terri Hunter will give an illustrated talk on this important pioneer of the Colony of Vancouver Island. Illustrated lecture.

April 24, 2008
Maureen Duffus ~ *A Most Unusual Colony, Vancouver Island 1849 -1860.*

Maureen Duffus, author, will speak based on her research. Mary Yates' fictional letters give an authentic picture of Fort Victoria seen through female eyes. Illustrated

May 22, 2008
Richard Mackie ~ *Steam in the Mountains, A people's viewpoint of the logging history of Vancouver Island.*

Dr. Richard Mackie, UVic historian, has researched and written on this subject giving the point of view of the loggers who worked in the woods. An illustrated lecture.

(The Society's AGM will precede this talk which will begin at 8:30.)

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT

2006 ~ 2007

This, by our reckoning, has been our 84th year of existence – and it has proved another successful one. We continue to recruit new members, attract excellent participation at our meetings and we remain in sound financial health. The year has been crowned by the society proudly co-hosting the annual conference of the BC Historical Federation, here in Victoria.

I am also proud to note that one of our members, Dr. Pat Roy, is to continue as the president of the BCHF. Another member of our society currently serves on the same council.

We enjoyed a most interesting series of monthly lectures on a diverse range of history-related topics. These were arranged and introduced by the multi-tasking Arnold Ranneris. Arnold was also the speaker for our closing meeting of the season, as well as our nominations officer.

I would also like to single out for thanks Michael Harrison, who, as editor of our newsletter, breathed fresh life and energy into this publication, and to Russ Fuller whose publicity efforts stimulated the welcome flow of visitors and new members.

At our Christmas dinner meeting, four stalwart members were recognised with certificates of appreciation for their long and invaluable contribution to the society. They were: Pam Odgers, Shirley Cuthbertson, Liesel Jakeman and Pendril Brown.

The executive for the year 2007/2008, together with their coordinates, is listed on the back page.

Michael Layland



BCHF
Award Ceremony at Government House

CHRISTMAS DINNER

As has been our custom for the past several years, the annual Christmas dinner meeting will be held at the Gorge Vale Golf Club on Thursday 06 December, 2007. You are encouraged to register early for this event, and to this end a registration form is included as a flyer with this newsletter.

Last year, two of the ladies present came dressed in period costume. It was a wonderful idea, and one which our past president proposes we develop for the future.

So, this is a timely reminder, if you like the concept, to start preparing your own costume for this year's dinner. I feel that we should interpret "period costume" as widely as possible – naval explorers (including Frances Barkley!), HBC-ers, early military types, gold rushers, brideship beauties, colonial dignitaries and their ladies, war-brides, remittance-men - you get the idea, go for it!

If there is an enthusiastic response, we could even consider awarding prizes.

All this, of course, is optional. Those less enthusiastic or extrovert are still warmly welcomed to attend the dinner, attired conventionally.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Most of you are by now aware that ALL memberships are due in September for the year 2007-2008. A great many of you have already paid for the year. Some of you who renewed your membership after September, 2006 will have a credit toward this year's dues. If you are unsure of the amount owing for this year's renewal, phone Eric Domke at 389-1418. If you plan to pay at a meeting, please pay by cheque, if that is possible, as it is always difficult to find change.

Eric Domke

FIELD TRIP ~ 1

A field trip has been arranged for 03 November, 2007, from 2:00 to 4:00 pm to the regimental museums of the Canadian Scottish and 5th Regiments. Both regiments have long and distinguished histories.

The 5th traces its origins to 1851 when the Vancouver Island Volunteer Rifle Corps was formed. It was the first militia unit in Western Canada. In 1878, in response to concerns about the Russo-Turkish war, four coast batteries were

constructed. To serve these batteries, a Militia Order on July 19, 1878 authorized the formation of the Victoria Battery of Garrison Artillery. Its primary role was the defence of Victoria and Esquimalt from seaborne attack. This was the beginning of the 5th Regiment's history. The 5th have had troops in Bosnia and Afghanistan and they lost a man in Afghanistan. About a third of their reservists are away at any one time.

The Canadian Scottish Regiment (Princess Mary's) originated on 3 September 1912 when the 88th Regiment, Victoria Fusiliers was authorised. The current unit is the product of an amalgamation of the 50th Regiment and the Victoria Fusiliers. Among its notable commanders is numbered Lieutenant General Sir Arthur Currie, KCMG, who rose to command the Canadian Corps during WW1. Currie was a master tactician whose skills led the Canadians to victory at Vimy Ridge and Amiens. In addition, four members of the regiment have won the Victoria Cross.

The barracks was built in 1915, designed by architect W.R. Wilson who also brought us Wilkinson Jail. It has a Neoclassical plan, a huge galleried drill hall and apparently a gym, two rifle ranges and a swimming pool. A crenellated tower holds a caretaker's suite. It was named a national historical site in the 1980s.

The museums will not charge for the visit, but they welcome donations, so there will be a charge of \$5.00 per person, to be donated to the museums.

There is plenty of parking available, with access from Field Street, which is off Douglas, one block south of Bay. If anyone wants lunch, there are several places nearby including Los Taquitos on 2522 Bridge St., which is very nice.

To register for this interesting visit, please see Ann Moon.

FIELD TRIP ~ 2

A field trip to Abkhazi Gardens has been proposed for the Spring. This would involve a conducted tour with perhaps afternoon tea to follow. If you are interested in such a tour please contact Arnold Ranneris.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

A friend of mine, who was a foster child of the Haig-Browns, has asked my help in working with the family to organize a Canada-wide

centennial celebration of their life and work next year. Both Ann and Roderick were born in 2008.

Do any of you know any “Haig-Browners” – apparently there are H-B groupies – experts in things legal, piscatorial or literary?

Ann Moon

IN MEMORIAM

The Society notes with regret the passing of Herbert Pidcock, one of our long-time members.

The following is a copy of the notice which appeared in the Times Colonist.

Herb passed away peacefully, although unexpectedly, on Friday June 8, 2007 aged 91 years at Blenheim Lodge in Vancouver. Herb was born on 23 December, 2915 at Craigflower Manor in Victoria. In 1922 his family moved to the Oyster River/Courtenay/Comox area where he grew up and spent his early adult years working for the BC Forest Service. In 1941 he started working for the Provincial Government moving to Merritt Penticton, and in 1952 settling in Victoria. An avid tennis player, he met Betty at the Victoria Tennis Club. They were married in 1953 and had two children. He continued to work for the Department of Highways and the Department of Education until 1980, and then spent many years enjoying retirement.

Herb was a devoted family man in his own quiet way a skilled carpenter and gardener who liked animals, the outdoors and listening to music. He was a member of the Oddfellows Lodge for 63 years and more recently the Monterey Centre.. In March 2007 Herb moved to Vancouver where he enjoyed visiting, playing crib, going for drives and enjoying his daily walk. He had a long full and healthy life. He will be missed. Herb was predeceased by Betty in 1994. He leaves one daughter Heather (John Stubbs) and two grandchildren (Jake and Jaclynn) in Vancouver and one son Bill in Nanaimo.

FYI

The Hon. John Baird, Minister of the Environment, recently announced that Mary Ellen Smith, first woman cabinet minister in B.C., Canada, and the Commonwealth; and Margaret “Madge” Robertson Watt of the Women’s Institute and Associated Country Women of the World; have been designated persons of national historic

significance and will be recognized in due course with official plaques.

Mrs Watt is responsible for expanding the Women’s Institutes to the U.K. and subsequently became a founder and president of the Associated Country Women of the World.

In B.C. she was appointed secretary to the first BC-WI Advisory Board in 1911 by the BC Deputy Minister of Agriculture. The BC-WI had offices in the Parliament Buildings for several years.

THE MUSEUM AT CAMPBELL RIVER

Explore the Discovery Islands Aboard the Historic Columbia III

The Museum at Campbell River is offering a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to experience in detail the historic islands and waters of the Discovery Islands. For three days, from October 7 to 9, the historic vessel the 'Columbia III' will visit a myriad of islands and inlets infused with dramatic scenery and a storied past. Led by noted historian Jeanette Taylor, this three-day heritage site tour is being offered through collaboration between the Museum and Mothership Adventures.

“Much of this part of the coast is not accessible by road,” says tour guide Jeanette Taylor, “so it’s cut off from the mainstream.” But that wasn’t always the case, according to Taylor. From the 1890s to the 1950s there were logging camps, fishing villages and First Nations sites scattered throughout the region.

Jeanette Taylor has written several books on coastal history, including *River City, a History of Campbell River and the Discovery Islands*. She’s currently at work on a detailed history of the Discovery Islands for Harbour Publishing.

The Museum’s Discovery Islands cruise starts in Campbell River, to wend its way along a circular route that starts off in beautiful Desolation Sound Marine Park and continues to the Redondas, then north through Hole in the Wall and Okisollo channels. There will be daily shore excursions to visit ancient First Nations village sites and old-time stores and post offices. For Taylor, personal highlights are the many pictographs on this route. “We’ll see dozens of these paintings on stone, created by First Nations people hundreds of years ago.”

Another highlight, says Taylor, is the touching gravestone of two children buried in 1892 in what is now a deserted stretch of coast.

Taylor will spice up participants' interest in the many sites with tales of the distinctive characters who once lived among the islands. "With people like Moses Cross Ireland, who was a legend in his own time, you never run short of colourful stories." And then there's M. Wylie Blanchet, says Taylor, who brought her large family to the coast by boat in summer through the 1940s. The tour will make several stops at places made famous by Blanchet in her book, *The Curve of Time*.

The crew of the *Columbia III* also have a wealth of experience to share about the natural history and contemporary life on the islands, where they've made their home for several decades.

The 50-year-old *Columbia III* was a key part of the story of these islands. The 68-foot vessel was one of the last to serve in the Columbia Coast Mission's fleet, bringing medical services and the gospel to islanders. She has berth space on board for 10 people, along with a luxurious lounge as a central gathering place.

The Discovery Islands three day cruise costs \$730.00 per person, which includes accommodation and gourmet meals. If you have a passion for history and adventure, this trip is not to be missed.

Call 250 287-3103 for more info or to register for this unique and fascinating voyage of discovery!

VICTORIA'S WILD WEST CONNECTION

The name John Henry Tunstall is a distant memory in Victoria today. However in New Mexico and for fans of western legend, his name is indelibly linked with the Lincoln County cattle wars and William Bonney, otherwise known as Billy the Kid.

Tunstall was born in Dalston, London, England in 1854. In 1872, he arrived in Victoria to work at Turner, Beeton & Tunstall, a company founded in 1869 by John Herbert Turner and in which Tunstall's father was a partner. Turner had been in Victoria since the gold rush days and had been in the carpet business. The new business was located on Wharf Street at the foot of Yates.

Beeton appears to have been the London partner as he does not appear in any Victoria records of the time but was B. C. Agent General in London. Their 1869 B.C. Directory advertisement states they were importers of dry goods, millinery & fancy goods. Later, they became liquor and cigar agents, commission and insurance agents and representatives of several canneries. They also had

stores in Nelson, Vancouver and London England. Turner's residence at this time was on Pleasant Street.

In 1876, Tunstall left Victoria for California, with the intention of starting a sheep ranch. After spending six months in California, he moved to New Mexico where land was cheap and plentiful.

He invested family money in ranching and mercantile businesses in and around Lincoln. It was here that he got into disputes with the Santa Fe Ring who were powerful cattle owners, corrupt public officials and politicians who sought to protect their interests from outside competition.

Both sides drew around them gunslingers and other unsavoury characters to protect their interests. Among them was a 19 year old drifter named Henry McCarty, also known as Henry Antrim, William Bonney, El Chivato and latterly Billy the Kid. The Kid was employed by Tunstall for a short period until February 1878, when Tunstall was ambushed near his ranch, shot and killed. This event initiated the Lincoln County cattle wars, during which time many people died and legends were created. But that is another story. Billy the Kid was shot and killed in Fort Sumner, New Mexico in 1881 and is buried in the fort cemetery there.

J.H. Turner was Mayor of Victoria from 1879 to 1881. By 1884, the company was trading as Turner, Beeton and Company at the same Wharf Street address. In 1889, Turner is an MPP, Justice of the Peace and also provincial Minister of Finance. He became Premier of the Province in 1898 and later Agent General in London where he retired.

By 1910, the company had additional premises at 506 Bastion Square, the former John Wilkie and Company building and were manufacturers of Big Horn Brand shirts and overalls. In 1939 the Bastion Square factory was occupied by Hall and Company, Wholesale Dry Goods and the Wharf Street premises were occupied by others.

The Victoria Regent Hotel now occupies the former Turner Beeton site at 1232 Wharf Street but the Yates block which they occupied for 40 years remains a Victoria landmark. The former factory at the corner of Wharf Street and Bastion Square still stands, although much modified. It is occupied today by Government Offices, restaurants and retail stores.

Cliff Chandler

