



# Victoria Historical Society Publication

NUMBER 18. SPRING 2009

## ~ SPEAKERS FOR THE 2008 ~ 2009 SEASON ~

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

\*Please note the change of speaker for the 28 May, 2009 meeting.

### 26 February 2009

*Here Before Christ: The Hudson's Bay Company in BC.* Richard Mackie has done extensive research on the company that in many ways founded and developed the early British colonies.

### 26 March 2009

*The Trail of 1858.* Greg Dickson will give a visual talk on the events of 1858 around the goldfields — the subject of a recent book by Greg and Mark Forsythe.

### 23 April 2009

*Victoria's Industrial Harbour.* Bob Spearing, local historian of our maritime history, will describe the evolution of the harbour.

### 28 May 2009

*Bamberton, Then and Now and Beyond.* We will be given a historical overview of Bamberton, BC, once a thriving quarry and cement manufacturing plant, by Dr. Bob Griffin of the Royal BC Museum and Maureen Alexander, historic research consultant and curator of the Bamberton site as a museum.



## ~ INFORMATION REQUIRED ~

Are there any members out there who have images or photographs of Fort Street in the early 1900's? (Other than those available from B.C. Archives.) I would be interested in viewing these to assist with a current research project. If you can help, kindly contact Cliff Chandler at 250-383-1150 or by email at [lfmainpage@live.ca](mailto:lfmainpage@live.ca)



## ~ BOOK REVIEWS ~

*The Man Who Gave Back;*

*The Life and Legacy of H.R. Macmillan*

At our January meeting we were privileged to hear Rev. Robert MacRae speaking about H.R. MacMillan, the forestry entrepreneur, who lived 1885-1976. We were apprised of his life as a forester laying out plans for the BC Forest Service (1918) and its enlightened system of forest practices (way beyond his time) in order to provide an orderly system of forest management based on principles of stewardship. MacMillan went on to be an agent for BC, to develop markets for BC timber around the world, and subsequently formed his own company which morphed into MacMillan-Bloedel a vast network of sawmills and pulp mills along the coast of BC and Vancouver Island.

However, the other story Robert MacRae tells in this book is that of H.R. MacMillan as philanthropist. He gave generously to many individuals and institutions such as the University of British Columbia, Union College of the United Church, and the Anglican College (he was a man with a strong Christian faith). He gave to the Vancouver Planetarium, the Vancouver Foundation, and made



many individual donations. A lifelong passion for books and reading gave him a breadth of mind and spirit, and this was reflected in his generosity.

The book, published in 2007, is well-written and illustrated throughout with photographs. It is easy to read and inspiring about a person who made a difference for good.

It can be purchased for \$20 at Ivy's Books (Oak Bay) and Munro's in Victoria. I have suggested it as a purchase at the Greater Victoria Public Library.

*Arnold Raneris*

***Don't Shoot from the Saddle - Chronicles of a Frontier Surgeon, D.A. Holley.*** Heritage House Publishing Co., Surrey, BC. 2000. pp. 192. ISBN 1-894384-08-3. Softcover. \$16.95

It is rare that one reads a book that is both informative and genuinely humorous. This autobiography of a unique person, Doc Holley, who became a legend in the Cariboo, is an inspiration and a relief to those of us entrapped in the web of modern urban life. Most important is the fact that the humour is primarily self-effacing. Alex Holley provides the reader with an insight into how a young person growing up on a farm in Saskatchewan during the drought and depression of the 1930's managed to survive and, eventually, become a skilled doctor and surgeon. His family was forced to abandon their farm and move to the Cariboo where his uncle lived. The kindness of the people there left an indelible mark on him and he resolved to give back to this area his heartfelt thanks and appreciation.

He attended the University of Alberta where he did his undergraduate degree and then studied medicine. He did his junior internship in Victoria at the Royal Jubilee Hospital and his senior in surgery at the Queen Mary Veterans Hospital in Montreal. He gained further surgical experience at the Bellevue Hospital Medical Centre while attached to Columbia University. Instead of deciding to live in a large urban area where his surgical skills would have provided him with a large income and comfortable but, probably, bland lifestyle, he chose to return to the Cariboo and provide its inhabitants with outstanding medical care. He earned the love and respect of all its inhabitants and in so doing became a legend because of his unique character. Alex Holley had a capacity to live on very little sleep and to be able to out drink most if not all of his friends and acquaintances. He loved horses and to hunt and fish so spent a great deal of time exploring the wilderness areas of the Cariboo on horseback. He

tried to attend every rodeo held in the area ensure that a doctor was in attendance. The arrival of his party on horseback at a rodeo in a remote area always evoked great admiration from those in attendance.

He was not only a skilled surgeon but pioneered the use of intensive care in his clinic that provided many aspects of the medical care that took years to become standard practice. The Holley Clinic was a trend setter in the provision of medical care. He took many refresher courses to ensure that he was able to provide his patients with state of the art medical treatment. He also found time to be the president of the BC Surgical Society in 1981.

He was a talented person who contributed a great deal to enrich the community in which he lived. Sadly, Doc Holley suffered a debilitating stroke when he was in his early seventies. We, his readers, are fortunate that he chose to write this autobiography while he was incapacitated for, otherwise, only those who knew him in the Cariboo would know about his extraordinary life. Sadly, he died far too young at the age of 76 in 2000.

*Harvey Buckmaster*

*The reviewer, Harvey Buckmaster, was fortunate to know Alex Holley when they were both students at the University of Alberta and lived in St. Stephens College in the late 1940's.*



## ~ IMMIGRANTS TO CANADA ~

*The Rev. Edward White*

***Extract From Diary of Edward White (1822-1872)  
One of a Group of Four Wesleyan Missionaries Sent  
to British Columbia 1859***

Edward White tells us about his trip from New York and over the Isthmus of Panama to British Columbia. To make the account a little easier to read bolding has been used for the dates. The following is courtesy of his gggranddaughter, Janet White of Burnaby.

**Saturday, 1st January, 1859.** - this is a day of vast importance to myself and family. We left Canada yesterday, perhaps never to return. O Father in Heaven let Thy will be done! We have solemnly made up our minds to spend and be spent beyond the Rocky Mountains. We are now on our way to New York, and expect to sail from thence to British Columbia next Wednesday. Arrived in New York at 4 1/2.p.m., tired and hungry. Dr. Evans met us at

the station and conducted us to the Merchants' Hotel. The Lord is very good to us.

**Sunday, 2nd January, 1859.** - Had good night's rest. The weather is most delightful and all look cheerful without. Went at 10 1/2 in company with Dr. Green and others to hear the celebrated H.W. Beecher. A great congregation and an extraordinary discourse. At 3 p.m. went to hear Dr. King(?). A splendid and very good sermon. We went to the old John Street Church this evening. Felt much refreshed by the sermon and the prayer meeting at the close.

**Monday, 3rd January, 1859.** - Took a peep this morning at steamer *Illinois* in which we are to start on our way to Columbia next Wednesday. All is stir and push and crowd. Many are going they know not whither.

**Tuesday, 4th January, 1859.** - We had a heavy snow storm last night and sleighs are running in every direction. This evening we had a valedictory missionary meeting at St. Paul's Church now under the care of the Rev. Dr. McClintock. A goodly number of ministers and laymen were present and we had a delightful time. Bishop Janes made an excellent speech.

**Wednesday, 5th January, 1859.** - We expected to sail today at 2 p.m. but the great storm yesterday prevented the mails from getting in at their usual time from the east, and will not leave till tomorrow. It is all wisely arranged. Spent the day in rambling through the city and attending to a few business items which had been neglected before. The sky is clear and the snow is disappearing.

**Thursday, 6th January, 1859.** - A very fine day. The city is all alive, the sleigh bells are jingling in every direction. At one o'clock we all went aboard the steamer, *Illinois*, and the harbor about an hour after. The evening was pleasant and the sea quite calm. We all felt thankful to have such a delightful beginning to our voyage.

**Friday, 7th January, 1859.** - Some time in the night brisk wind started up, and about 2 woke and heard passengers in almost every part of our cabin offering oblations to Neptune. Indeed before the day had passed there were only a few who did not take some part in this exercise and those complained of feeling very uncomfortable. My family were very sick, excepting James Henry who was quite well. I was thankful it was not worse with myself.

**Saturday, 8th January, 1859.** - The wind changed her course in the night and we now have a fair wind and are making rapid progress. The ocean however still rough and the sickness still prevails.

**Sunday, 9th January, 1859.** - Beautiful weather and the sea not rough. At 11 O.C. Dr. Evans preached on quarter deck from the "Glorious Gospel of the Blessed God." The most of the passengers listened attentively. It was good to wait upon the Lord. In the afternoon I tried to say a few words to the strange passengers. Some devoured the words with eagerness, others mocked and tried to disturb the service.

**Monday, 10th January, 1859.** - Very fine day. Seasickness almost disappeared.

**Tuesday, 11th January, 1859.** - Showery and very warm. Passed the island of Caquaga and Uquaga. (?)

**Wednesday, 12th January, 1859.** - The weather is truly delightful. Passed between Cuba and St. Domingo.

**Thursday, 13th January, 1859.** - Nothing remarkable. All well and happy. Very fine weather still.

**Friday, 14th January, 1859.** - About 10 a.m. we saw the coast of South America. Beautiful beyond description. Land at Aspinwall at 1 1/2 p.m. Started on rail at 3 and got to Panama at 6. Waited two or three hours for tide and got on the *John. L. Stephens* 9 p.m. A beautiful day. Enjoyed the ride across the Isthmus. Much of the scenery magnificent.

**Saturday, 15th January, 1859.** - Lay at anchor till 5 p.m. for freight and mails. The weather very warm but the scenery delightful.

**Sunday, 16th January, 1859.** - Fairly at float in the great Pacific. A slight breeze ahead. Rather warm. At noon we are in 7 latitude. Dr. Evans preached to a large attentive congregation at 6:30 p.m.

**Monday, 17th January, 1859.** - A slight head wind. Weather fine. The most beautiful sunset I have ever seen.

**Tuesday, 18 January, 1859.** - A very heavy side wind. Ship rolled considerably. A great many sick.

**Wednesday, 19th January.** - Very fine but warm. Felt the heat more than any day since we left.

**Thursday, 20th January, 1859.** - Nothing remarkable. All well. My mind is at peace.

**Friday, 21st January, 1859.** - Saw the Mexican coast. The scenery most beautiful. Some of the mountains far above the clouds. Arrived at Acapulco at 7 p.m. Several of the passengers went ashore. The weather was most delightful.

**Saturday, 22nd January.** - Left Acapulco at 5 p.m. Still coasting. Weather warm.

**Sunday, 23rd January, 1859.** - A very beautiful day. Called at a small Mexican post named Pensihello (?). Stopped only a few minutes. Divine services at 6 ½. E. Robson preached from "Wilt thou be made Whole."

**Monday, 24th January, 1859.** - Crossing the Californian Gulf. Many thought it would be rough but it was very calm. Saw no land today. A little rain. The first since we left the Gulf of Mexico.

**Tuesday, 25th January, 1859.** - Land in view again this morning. A most lovely morning. Quite cool and bracing. We are now out of the tropics and shall not be troubled with the heat during the remainder of our journey. All well.

**Wednesday, 26th January, 1859.** - Pleasant weather.

**Thursday, 27th January, 1859.** - Quite cool. We the undersigned do agree we will not drink intoxicating liquors nor provide them for persons in our employment. (Sunday, 12 June, 1859)

**Friday, 28th January, 1859.** - Brisk wind. Quite chilly. Great many seasick.

**Saturday, 29th January, 1859.** - Beautiful day and delightful scenery. Arrived at San Francisco at 6 p.m. We have had a very fine passage. Thanks be unto Him that ruleth the waves and the winds. After a great bustle off the boat and comfortably lodged at Mrs. Hillman's Temperance house. All well and happy.

**Sunday, 30th January, 1850.** - We have had a comfortable night's rest. Went to hear Dr. Peck (Powell St.) in the morning and Bro. Thomas, Fulsom St., in the evening, and both times the lot fell on Jonah. Preached from Num. 14 and 24, and II John 5:14. The Lord gave me some liberty and great comfort in dispersing His Truth. San Francisco is a wonderfully large city for its age, 90,000 inhabitants. A large proportion of the shops kept open on the Sabbath.

**Monday, 31st January, 1859.** - It has rained copiously nearly all day so we kept pretty close to the hotel. This the rainy season for California and dry season for the torrid zone. The agriculturist in this port is now sowing the seed. Vegetation is now springing forth with great beauty and luxuriance.

**Tuesday, 1st February, 1859.** - The sky is clear and the atmosphere most delightful. Missed my overcoat this morning that I carelessly left hanging in the hall. A warning for the future. I find that picking pockets, stealing coats, etc. is not a rare occurrence in this city. Dined with Bro. Thomas, editor California C. Advocate, and took a walk to the top of the highest hill in the city and had a fine view of the bay and surrounding country. Well may it be said, "Beautiful for situation. Most enchanting is this Promised land."

**Wednesday, 2nd February, 1859.** - The weather is still very fine. A very slight frost this morning. Took a ramble through the Chinese workers this forenoon. They are giving a fine display of fireworks, dressed in their best, making galls and bows in real Oriental style. The ladies are perfect curiosities. It is their New Year's and every Chinese who does not settle his account for the past year will be disgraced. We were just preparing to leave the hotel for the steamer [ *Pacific* ] when we learned that she postponed sailing till tomorrow at 4 p.m.

**Thursday, 3rd February, 1859.** - Weather still fine but quite warm. Took a ride yesterday afternoon to the old Spanish Mission 2 miles from San Francisco. Spent this forenoon in writing letters to Mr. Spenser, editor of the Canada Christian Guardian. At 2 p.m. we took our baggage to the steamer and shortly after went and took possession of our staterooms and found them very comfortable. At 6:30 we left the wharf and were out of the Golden Gate by dark. The captain seems to be a real Christian gentleman.

**Friday, 4th February, 1859.** - A few of our company were a little seasick this morning. Among others Mrs. White. My own health is excellent for which I thank the great Giver. The weather is still delightful. We saw this a.m. a great many sea-otter and an immense school of porpoises. Sailing near the coast we could not but admire it which is quite mountainous and in some places the highest hills are covered with snow. The Lord is good; blessed be His name.

**Saturday, 5th February, 1859.** - It rained all day. The wind blows briskly. The Pacific has lost all her serenity and has become quite tempestuous round

about. But our little steamer conducts herself nobly, and we are getting on finely.

**Sunday, 6th February, 1859.** - Cleared up some time in the night and we have a fine morning. We entered the Columbia River about 10 a.m. and have had a delightful sail to Portland where we landed at 9 p.m. It has been a pleasant day but I felt lost, having no opportunity to attend Divine Service. We expect to remain here till Tuesday at 4 p.m.

**Monday, 7th February, 1859.** - A very pleasant day. The afternoon really delightful. Took a ramble through the city this a.m. and was introduced to Bro. Plorue (?) editor of Pacific Christian Advocate. Mrs. White and I took tea at his house and were much pleased with him and his wife. Went in evening to the Methodist Church where revival services have been going on for several weeks. The church was crowded and all was life and animation. Bro. Browning preached, and the pastor, Mr. Lewis, led the prayer meeting at the close.

**Tuesday, 8th February, 1859.** - Still at Portland. It has been snowing and raining nearly all day, but there is no frost. Took a ramble this morning in the bush and felt much at home. Is there any place more suitable for meditation? Our steamer was to leave at 4 p.m. but did not get off till near eleven so we had an opportunity to attend the revival service again and it fell to my lot to preach. The Lord a measure of liberty. Mr. Browning and Dr. Evans also spoke.

**Wednesday, 9th February, 1859.** - Left Portland last evening at 11 o'clock. A fine night. Crossed the bar at the mouth of the Columbia river this morning at 9. We have been favoured with very fine weather today as well as last night so that the motion of the boat is very little more than it was while we were on the river. Quite well and cheered with prospect of getting to Victoria tomorrow.

**Thursday, 10th February, 1859.** - "Ebenezer Hitherto the Lord hath helped us." We arrived today in Victoria all well about 11 a.m. It is just six weeks since we left Smithville circuit; just five since we left New York, and just one since we left San Francisco. The weather is fine and quite mild for the season. No snow or any frost. Victoria is larger than I expected to find it, and will probably become a large city in a few years.

**Friday, 11th February, 1859.** - Froze considerably last night but is very fine today. Had a comfortable rest last night at Mr. Pidwell's where we are commodiously lodged for the present and shall get distributed as soon as possible. Took a ramble this p.m. and am much delighted with the locality of the

town. The Lord has no doubt directed us to this colony and will, I believe, provide plenty of work and abundant success. Amen.

Notes on the voyage:

Ebenezer Robson, Dr. Evans, and Mr. Browning were the other Wesleyan Missionaries who accompanied Rev. Edward White.

James Henry was his son, my grandfather. John Kirk was another passenger on the *John L. Stephens*.

The *Pacific* was the name of the ship they took from San Francisco to Victoria.

Edward White's parents left from Rolvenden, Kent County, England in 1815. Edward was born in Philadelphia in 1822 and in 1825 the family moved to Upper Canada to Raleigh Township in Kent County. He came to "Queenborough" (New Westminster), BC on April 1, 1859 and held the first Methodist church service outside his tent. He and his son James Henry White continued to minister to the people of BC for over 50 years.

*Janet White*



## FORTHCOMING MEETINGS OF THE OCS

Unless otherwise stated, all tours commence at 1:45pm, in front of Starbucks Coffee, Fairfield Plaza. \$5 - no reservations needed. Phone 250-598-8870 or [www.oldcem.bc.ca](http://www.oldcem.bc.ca)

March 1. Davy Jones' Locker. This is an expression for the bottom of the sea, the resting place for drowned sailors. Ron Armstrong will visit graves of people connected to the sea, including victims of shipwrecks.

March 8. Taking Care of Business. Mark Anderson will visit the graves of some of Victoria's prominent pioneer businessmen who left their colourful imprint on the city.

March 15. Irish Columbia. It's close enough to St. Patrick's Day to celebrate with a tour to graves of people born on Erin's shores, led by Michael Halleran.

March 22. Star Gazers. Astronomy has long been a hobby and profession in Victoria. This first-time tour by Joyce Mackie marks the International Year

of Astronomy by tracing the lives of those buried at Ross Bay Cemetery connected to this far out topic.

March 29. Italian Pioneers-II. During and after the 1858 gold rush many Italians settled in Victoria. Anna Maria Bamji discusses the artists, hoteliers, grocers, ferry operators, and many others whose family stories she has compiled.

April 5. Chinese Cemetery. In honour of Ching Ming (grave sweeping day), Victoria City Councillor Charlayne Thornton-Joe leads a tour of this National Historic Site, including her grandfather's grave. **Meet at the cemetery at 1:45pm, foot of Crescent Road, off King George Terrace.**

April 12. Pet Parade. The Research Committee has had some fun with this first-time topic about pets (or their owners) buried in Ross Bay Cemetery. They promise to pull a rabbit (perhaps chocolate?) out of a hat for this one. Don't miss it!

April 19. Holy Trinity Pioneers. Diana Chown has found some fascinating stories about the pioneer

families of North Saanich buried in this picturesque country churchyard. **Meet at the lych gate, 1319 Mills Rd at West Saanich Rd. at 1:45pm.**

April 26. Female Artists. Victoria has been home to many talented women who painted, sculpted, carved, wove and potted. Emily Carr is the most famous, but there are many others who will be featured on today's tour coordinated by Jennifer Iredale.

May 3. "Voices From the Sound" is the title of Margaret Horsfield's new book about Clayoquot Sound and Tofino, the topic of her tour today. She is also the author of the award-winning book Cougar Annie's Garden.



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The Victoria Historical Society holds its meetings on the fourth Thursday of each month from September to May, at the James Bay New Horizons Centre, 234 Menzies Street, Victoria.

Meetings begin at 7:30 and comprise a short business meeting and a refreshment break followed by a talk or presentation by a guest speaker.

Visitors are always welcome and encouraged to become members of our Society.

This newsletter is published four times a year and distributed to members electronically or by mail. It is also available on our web site and at our regular meetings at the door

