



**THE NEWSLETTER OF THE OLD CEMETERIES SOCIETY  
OF VICTORIA, PUBLISHED SIX TIMES PER YEAR**

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**March – April 2010**

### **Board Members for 2010**

At the AGM on February 3, 2010 John Adams presented the proposed slate of officers for 2010 which was prepared by Gerry Buydens, Nomination Committee Chair.

Nominations were: President: Wilf Bruch; Vice-president: Don Reksten; Past President: Gerry Buydens; Treasurer: Jac Slik; Secretary: Doug Miller.

Members at large: Bill Magee, Linda Richards, John Halliwell, Stewart Dashwood and Sharon Welsh.

There being no further nominations from the floor, the slate was acclaimed.

We welcome new Board member Sharon Welsh. Sharon has been a very active contributor to OCS activities as a cashier at walking tours, and putting in many hours on the cleaning bees. We look forward to her being on the Board. Many thanks to Ellen Richards who remains an OCS member and volunteer but has had to retire from the Board.

### **AGM Minutes and Reports**

Members on email have received the Minutes and Reports for the 2009 AGM. If you wish to obtain a hard copy please leave a message at the office, 250.598.8870. Please note that the correct spelling of our treasurer's name is Jac SLIK.

### **2010 Tour Schedule**

The new tour schedule started on February 21 and this year features some old favourites as well as some brand new tours. "First-time" Sunday walking tours for March and April are:

**March 14. Travels in the Interior** A look at the fascinating methods of transportation in BC's Interior during the gold-rush and colonial eras; stories about such transportation pioneers as the Barnard family, famous for stages to the Cariboo.

**April 11. Family Connections.** The Parker family of Rocky Point Farm in Metchosin was a large and well-known one in early Victoria. In this new tour Dr. Sylvia Van Kirk will weave the tales of the various branches of the family who are buried at Ross Bay cemetery into a captivating story.

### **Summer Student Applications**

We are applying to the Canada Summer Jobs Program for funding for a summer student to work on our gravesite recording project at Ross Bay Cemetery. If you know of any student who is in a post-secondary program related to History, or History in Art, and is skilled at sketching please have them leave a message for Don Reksten at 250-598-8870.

### **Mailout Volunteer needed**

We desperately need a volunteer to take care of mailing out the bimonthly Stone Cuttings newsletter and the Stories in Stone journal in May and November. The job requires picking up the publications at Fotoprint, printing and applying address labels on envelopes at the OCS office and delivering them to a post office. The volunteer will need transportation and computer skills. If you are interested in the job, please leave a message at the office at 250.598.8870, or email and details will be provided.

### **April 17 Bus Excursion**

Chocolate Easter Lily Tea at St. Peter's Quamichan Church. Spend an enjoyable day on this coach excursion to one of BC's most picturesque country churchyards. Chocolate will be one of the main attractions for the church's first annual Chocolate Lily Festival. Join us for the day during which we will also explore a few Cowichan Valley back roads to visit other heritage cemeteries. Lunch included. \$75 per person. Full payment due with registration. Deadline March 15th.

### **City of Victoria 2010 Fairfield Road Project**

OCS attended a presentation by the Engineering Department to the Fairfield-Gonzales Community Association on Feb. 15 regarding a proposed Capital Works project for Fairfield Road between Memorial Crescent and Earle Street. The project includes improvements to bus stops, intersection improvements at Thurlow Rd. and road reconstruction and paving. But the part that concerned us most was the proposal to install a new sidewalk along the south side of Fairfield Rd between Memorial Crescent and St. Charles Street (Ross Bay Cemetery frontage). The sidewalk width would be from the existing curb into the existing road width, not taken out of Ross Bay Cemetery.

We sent a letter to the City Engineering Department outlining our concerns which are summarized as follows:

1. We feel that the proposed sidewalk will increase the opportunity for access to the cemetery rather than providing "eyes on the cemetery" at night. We see no need for the proposed sidewalk and it would be an unnecessary expenditure.
2. If Ross Bay Villa is to be the RBC Interpretive Centre there is a great need to have a crosswalk near Ross Bay Villa over to RBC somewhere in the block between Arnold and Thurlow.
3. The proposed crosswalk at Stannard would provide good access to RBC if combined with a short sidewalk to the cemetery entrance.
4. A crosswalk at the east entrance to RBC (near St. Charles Lane) would improve pedestrian access without the need for the proposed sidewalk.

If you would like more information, contact Barry Norman, Sr. Technician, Streets Engineering, 250.361.0569, or Richard Adam, 250.361.0327.

### **CRD Project at Ross Bay Cemetery**

We have been notified that the Capital Regional District intends to install a new flow monitoring manhole and flume chamber in an existing pathway in the southeast area of RBC with requisite trenched conduit running from the chamber to an electrical kiosk located just outside the SE corner of the cemetery. This is related to the East Coast Interceptor pipeline that runs through the cemetery.

It does not appear that the proposed work would compromise any graves but an archaeologist has been retained by the CRD to carry out an archaeological assessment in the southeast corner of RBC. She will keep us informed as work progresses.

### **Victoria Genealogical Society Resource Centre**

The Victoria Genealogical Society Library at 947 Alston Street (now called the Resource Centre) offers a series of workshops for VGS members and non-members. The Resource Centre is open on the following schedule for 2010: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday (12 noon – 3pm); Thursday (10 am – 3 pm); Saturday (12 – 4 pm). If you wish to receive the monthly email newsletter *Resourcefully Yours* check the website [www.victoriags.org/](http://www.victoriags.org/).

### **Green Burials**

Sven Jensen introduced this subject a few years ago, describing a procedure whereby the remains are flash frozen and crystallized and the crystals used to fertilize a transplanted tree. Now Mike Bieling has provided a new twist. The City of Calgary has a strategy for the city's soon-to-be-full cemeteries: green burials. Embalming fluids will not be used, and the remains will be placed in a biodegradable casket. There will be no grave markers; instead visitors will be given a hand-held global positioning unit to find loved ones.

### **Church Closures   Mike Bieling**

Two Cowichan Valley Anglican churches with historic cemeteries are to be affected by closures. The report on proposed church closures and amalgamations released on January 26 by the Anglican Diocese of British Columbia included the recommended closure of All Saints Anglican Church, which has used a chapel in Crofton since its original 1880 church in Westholme burned in 1978, and St. Andrew's in Cowichan Station, built in 1906 and the centre of its own parish since 1909. No decision has been made about what would become of church properties that include historic cemeteries.

### **Victoria Historical Society Meetings**

James Bay New Horizons, 234 Menzies St., 7.30 p.m. All welcome, admission free.  
Information: 250 480 1061

**March 25th, 2010:** Mike Vouri: *San Juan Island and its history and B.C. connection*. Mr. Vouri is the Chief of Interpretation for the San Juan Islands National Historic Park. He was host of the VHS trip to the islands last spring.

**April 22nd, 2010:** Dave Parker: *The Victoria Fire Department*. Dave Parker is the author of the book "First Water Tigers", and former curator of history at the Royal BC Museum. He has done extensive research and knows the history of the VFD intimately.