



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

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### **May – June 2010**

#### **Forthcoming Events**

##### **Spring Meeting**

**Wednesday May 12, 7:30 p.m.**, James Bay New Horizons 234 Menzies Street. Join your fellow members and bring a friend for a coffee, and an interesting talk. We will have a very short meeting and then relax as Sherri Robinson, Historian, Archivist, Writer and Tour Guide will entertain us with a talk entitled: “What a difference a date makes/ Who’s home at the inn?”

##### **Ross Bay Cemetery Open House**

**Sunday May 16, 2p.m.** This is the third year we have held an open house to kick off the year’s cleaning and recording programs. This is our chance to show off the things we do to protect and preserve Ross Bay Cemetery. We will display the work we do and have volunteers to demonstrate our activities. Some of our volunteers will be on hand with computers to help with enquires and grave locations. So, if there is a grave you would like to find, you need to attend our open house! Please mark it on your calendar and plan to attend.

##### **Victoria Historical Society Annual General Meeting**

James Bay New Horizons Centre, 234 Menzies Street, **May 27<sup>th</sup> at 7: p.m.** The meetings will consist of a short business agenda followed by guest speaker, Ken Johnson, speaking about Victoria’s Royal Theatre. Mr Johnson has a long connection with the Royal Theatre received a citation from the Hallmark Society for his work in restoration of the facade.

**The South Vancouver Island Regional Heritage Fair** will be held on **Friday, May 7** at the Royal BC Museum, Clifford Carl Hall. The Heritage Fairs are an celebration of Canada's heritage as reflected in student history projects. Students from grades four to nine use the medium of their choice to create a project on a heritage topic, using information and imagination to bring history to life. The fair provides an opportunity for the whole school to be involved in an educational and exciting event. The focus is not just learning history but on understanding it. It is quite interesting to see what a youngster considers "heritage." Come support the preservationists of tomorrow - open to the public from 10am - 2 pm. If you can help with organization, judging, sponsorship, or as a chaperone, please let Hallmark Society know.

##### **Row Marker Project Update** Wilf Bruch

To date we have installed 14 markers in the first belt, which is at plot # 75 and runs across the cemetery from west to east. The best way to find the first belt is to walk into the cemetery from

Fairfield road near the caretakers shed. At present, the closest to the shed is in row 10. The caretakers shed is on row 6. We have just ordered another 21 markers and hope to have them ready for installation in July if not sooner. Please join me in thanking the following members for their generous donations to the project: Maureen Applewaite, Claudette Doxtader, Eileen Edgar, Nancy Kenyon, Ruth Mannix, Russ and Lucy Stewart, Leila Muldrew, Doug and Kathy Miller and Judy Wasylenko.

### **Office coordinator**

For many years now **Leona Taylor** has faithfully and diligently managed, organized, and maintained our office, library and countless files as a volunteer. As most of you know, Leona is also involved with other aspects of the OCS including research, tour organization and development, organizing volunteer events, meeting raffles, and excursion bus driver to name a few. These many activities have taken their toll on her and regrettably, Leona has decided to step aside and pass the torch. We will miss her very much and only time will tell the real scope of her contribution to the Old Cemeteries Society. Thank you Leona. Enjoy a bit free time for a change.

### **Welcome Roberta Law**

Roberta is our new office coordinator. She started in late April to fill the empty shoes of Leona Taylor. They are big shoes and the board not only wish her much success but also pledge their unending support. She will need everyone's support during the first months.

### **Thanks to Sheila Daly**

For many years now Sheila has faithfully come weekly to the OCS office to pick up cash and cheques and made the deposits at our bank at Fairfield Plaza. Sheila and Bob (another stalwart cemetery cleaning and restoration volunteer) have moved to Sidney so she won't be able to do this task. This is just one of the many volunteer jobs that she has done that makes the Society run as smoothly and efficiently as it does. We are grateful that she will continue to monitor the incoming voicemail messages. Thanks Sheila.

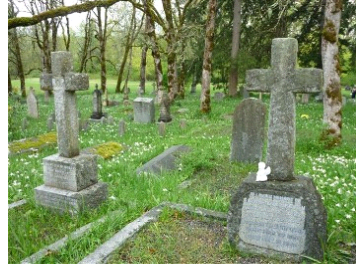
### **Chocolates and Cemeteries**

Peggy Magee

While the Icelandic volcano kept millions of travellers stuck in airports, we felt lucky to board a bus for the Chocolate Lily Festival at St. Peter's Quamichan. On Apr. 17, the Old Cemeteries Society made another of many trips to the Cowichan area. For an appetizer, we could read about a chocolate cake that was baked in 1863 (a notable date for Victoria) in Slovenia, and given to a 13-year-old girl who took it with her to Minnesota and finally to Saskatchewan, where a descendant had it framed in 1994.

Tom Patterson, always an interesting speaker, kept us away from the real chocolate for a brief tour of Mountain View Cemetery. The plan was to eat lunch outdoors, but the drizzle made us grateful to Priscilla and David Lowe for letting us inside the church hall where the chocolate festival was in progress. With enthusiasm, we joined that activity until we were forced-marched away from the chocolate for a tour of the cemetery beside the church. Easter lilies far outnumbered chocolate lilies.

It was a pleasant excursion, thanks to our favourite drivers, Leona Taylor and Don Reksten.



And thanks to our favourite photographer, Bente Svendsen, for these photos of a memorable day.

### **Mail out Volunteer**

You won't notice anything different at your end, but this newsletter has been mailed out by Elizabeth Metcalfe who responded to our appeal for a volunteer to mail out the "Stone Cuttings" newsletters and "Stories in Stone" journals. This takes a big load off the Office Coordinator - many thanks to Elizabeth for doing this crucial job.

### **Tom Paterson's New Book**

We look forward to Tom's latest book - '**Historic Walks, Sites & Sights of the Cowichan Valley: Tales the Tombstones Tell,**' due out in June. Tom observes "I've been compiling these stories since I moved to the Valley in '74 and every time I think I've about covered them, I come up with great new stories. Whoever coined the expression, 'If only they could speak...' obviously didn't check out headstones!" Check out Tom's other books at <http://cowichanchronicles.com/>

### **The Oldest Person Buried in Ross Bay Cemetery**

The October 3, 1873 edition of the British Colonist newspaper included the following item: "*Old Jackson, a colored man, aged 111 years, died near the Royal Oak yesterday. He was born in Virginia in 1762.*" The RBC database has him listed as Pompey Jackson, aged 108, born in Virginia and interred in plot G42 W18. His year of birth was either 1762 or 1765 making him the oldest person buried in RBC and probably one of the oldest non-native persons buried in BC.

### **The Ten Most Common Surnames in Ross Bay Cemetery**

**Smith** (399), **Brown** (214), **Wilson** (209), **M(a)cDonald** (189), **Jones** (173), **Williams** (150), **Harris** (134), **White** (127), **Anderson** (118), **Campbell** (114)

Thanks to Doug Miller for these two bits of trivia.

