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May – June 2013

OCS Spring Meeting **Wednesday May 15 at 7:30 p.m.** at James Bay New Horizons, 234 Menzies Street. Join your fellow members and guests for an interesting talk by author Eve Lazarus, who will entertain us with a talk about her book, *Sensational Victoria*. For additional information check Eve's website at www.evelazarus.com Everyone is welcome and there is no charge for guests. You will be able to purchase a copy of Eve's books at the meeting.

May Tours May is Asian Heritage Month and three tours are planned on this theme.

May 5 Chinese Cemetery The first tour of Asian Heritage Month will be conducted by Victoria City Councillor Charlayne Thornton-Joe, who will lead a tour at the Chinese Cemetery, a National Historic Site, including her grandfather's grave. **Meet at the cemetery, foot of Crescent Road off King George Terrace.**

May 12 Japanese at Ross Bay This tour will be conducted by Gordon and Ann-Lee Switzer, authors of *Gateway to Paradise: Canada's First Japanese Community*, a history of Japanese in Victoria. RBC includes graves of about 150 Japanese people.

May 19 Chinese at Ross Bay Chinese were buried at RBC before the Chinese Cemetery was created. Many were exhumed and sent back to China; some were moved to the cemetery at Harling Point; others were washed out to sea in a violent storm in 1909. Historian John Adams will talk about this amazing part of RBC's history.

Cleaning & Restoration Sharon Welsh & Wilf Bruch

Our work area for 2013 is twofold; Block Q and the Old Burying Ground. Block Q runs along Memorial Crescent from Dallas Road to May Street and has been neglected for many years. It is time we did some work in this area. As in past years, we will be removing moss from grave tops, washing headstones and raising sunken stones. Our first work party will be on Saturday June 1st at 10 am and continue on most Saturdays over the summer. Mark this date on your calendar and please join us for a couple of hours as we "make a difference" at Ross Bay Cemetery. Notices and updates about this years cleaning project will be sent out by email each week during the summer. One of the problems we are having in this area is water. All the underground water pipes in Block Q, O, N and P are cast iron and are broken. The City does not want to repair them because as soon as a leak is fixed the pipe just breaks somewhere down the line. We

are hoping they will bring a new line into the cemetery from Memorial Crescent during May to give us a reliable source of water in this section. Let's hope it happens! The Old Burying Ground will be the second part of our cleaning and restoration efforts for this summer. This work will be done in conjunction with the City's effort to restore this historic landmark. Dates and times for cleaning bees will be sent out as soon as possible.

St. Luke's Churchyard and Cemetery Tour



A gratifyingly large and enthusiastic crowd joined the St. Luke's Church and Cemetery tour on March 3. Thanks to Diana Pedersen and Susan Henderson for the photos.

Synagogue Tours Shoshana Litman

Explore Canada's oldest synagogue (1863) in continuous use, Congregation Emanu-El (1461 Blanshard Street), the last standing brick building designed by the prolific Scottish architect, John Wright, in Romanesque Revival style. This sanctuary overflows with the vibrant history of its congregants, including the first Jewish Judge in Canada (Samuel Davies Schultz), the first Jewish mayor of any city in British North America (Lumley Franklin), and the first Jew to sit in the Canadian House of Commons (Henry Nathan Jr). Most tours will be led by Canada's first ordained Maggidah (female Jewish storyteller), Shoshana Litman www.maggidah.com, who skillfully weaves local history and Jewish customs with tales both ancient and modern, highlighting the arrival of Victoria's first Jews and the development of a dynamic congregation over 150 years to the present. Synagogue tours run on the hour, Wednesdays 12 to 3 p.m. and Thursdays 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., June through August, 2013. There will also be tours offered on Sundays at 8 p.m. in July and August. Cost is \$10 per person and children under 12 are free. Reservations are not required. Gentlemen please wear a cap or hat. Please contact stories@maggidah.com or call 250-382-0615 to book a tour at another time or visit <http://www.congregationemanu-el.ca/community/synagogue-tours/> for more information.

Victoria Historical Society's June Bus Tour

You might still find a seat or two open on the Victoria Historical Society's June bus tour to Hedley and Tulameen. This three day trip involves a scenic tour through Manning Park to Hope, visits to the villages of Coalmont, Tulameen, Hedley, and Princeton and to the

mine sites associated with these visits. Dates are June 24, 25 and 26. Interested people call John Whittaker, 250-598-3982 jswitt@shaw.ca

Errant Memorial Returns!

Mike Bieling

As reported in the Times-Colonist, a wooden carving dedicated to Rod Anderson, who died in 2002, has been returned to Anderson's family. After his death, as a memorial to him, the carving of a man wearing a sou'wester, pea coat and gumboots was installed on Arbutus Island overlooking the ferry lanes. In time it disappeared. In 2011 it was found by Mike McGregor (pictured) floating off Pender Island. Through a chain of circumstances, initiative and chance the carving has been returned to Anderson's family.



In Memory of Jean Phillips

Jean M. Phillips who for years laboured to preserve the memories of Cowichan Valley veterans passed away April 8th, aged 92.

For years the retired school teacher promoted the replacement of weathered markers with permanent headstones and the placement of Memorial Crosses on veterans' graves for the week of Remembrance Day. She and her husband Len Phillips, who passed away in 2004, carried on a program initially begun in the late '50s by Alice Kennett and later continued by Ruth Chaster. Over the years, almost 200 veterans' graves have been identified in Valley cemeteries and thus qualify for a Memorial Cross in November. She also was an active and longstanding member of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 53.

Extension's Mini-Memorial Park is a Gem

Tom Paterson



Should you stroll through the Ladysmith Cemetery, you're sure to notice a sorrowful repetition amongst the headstones—inscription after inscription to the effect of, "In loving memory of.....killed in the Extension Mine explosion of Oct. 5, 1909."

Thirty-two good men died in that single disaster alone although this wasn't the only tragedy in this colliery's 40-year history. Extension, the source of the coal that prompted Ladysmith's founding as a sea port, has dedicated a mini-park to the memory of its coal miners, particularly those men killed in the devastating explosion of October 1909. It's

situated at the very entrance to the No. 1, 2 and 3 Mines, now an archway of concrete with a stream pouring forth that more resembles a large road culvert (which indeed it has become). This couldn't be more appropriate.

A handsome sign, a black marble marker and historic photos tell some of the Extension story but the most eye-catching feature is a bench in the form of half-an-ore-car. Complete with authentic wheels, it was donated by the Mayovsky family in memory of Michael Mayovsky "and all the miners that lost their lives from working inside and outside the mine". Another bench invites you to "Sit, rest and remember the lives lost and families shattered by the mine disaster of October 5, 1909".

Another bench invites you to, "Sit, rest and remember the lives lost and families shattered by the mine disaster of October 5, 1909". A third bench honours Alfred and Lydia Corsini (nee Arman), life long Extension residents and Extension General Store owners. Visitors should check out the photo gallery in the kiosk. Look closely at these men of the deep, just some of the unsung thousands who, for 90 years, risked their lives to fuel Vancouver Island's economy, to produce an estimated 15 million tons of the so-called black gold that propelled ships, powered factories and heated buildings and homes before petroleum took its place. These anonymous miners of many nations raised their families and built their—our—communities—at the cost of hundreds of lives lost to explosions, cave-ins, floods, lethal gases and other perils. For some, death came later, from Black Lung and the like. I would suggest that the Extension memorial name the lost miners individually rather than mentioning them collectively in a single sentence as is the case at present.

Excerpted from Tom Paterson's book "Tales the Tombstones Tell". A list of Tom's books is available at his web site, <http://www.twpaterson.com/>

Monumental Detail

Susan Henderson

