



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

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July – August 2015

Member's Potluck Dinner at Ross Bay Villa on Wednesday, July 8, starting at 6 pm. We'll start setting up at about 5 p.m. Help will be appreciated.

Cleaning & Restoration

Sharon Welsh

We have had one cleaning bee in Ross Bay Cemetery this year. Our first cleaning bee took place on Saturday May 2nd from 9:00am until 3:30pm with seven volunteers. We swept, scraped, washed and edged in Section A (starting just south of the MacKenzie mausoleum). Judging by the amount of work we accomplished, we should be complete Section A by July. Here are some photos taken by Linda Boon at the first session:



A discussion amongst the volunteers revealed they would be interested in having a cleaning bee on a SUNDAY to coincide with a Sunday Tour. Also suggested was that we show some of the cleaning and restoration work that has been done by the volunteers. Therefore, a cleaning bee is scheduled for **Sunday, June 14th** to coincide with the Community Leaders tour with Oak Bay Mayor Nils Jensen, and will include two or three short stops at sites to show off our cleaning and restoration skills. We will begin at 9:00am and finish early to take part in the tour. We will include photos of the cleaning bee AND our new smocks for our next newsletter.

Our anticipated Cleaning Bees for 2015: Sunday, June 14th, Saturday, July 11th, Saturday, August 15th, Saturday, September 19th and Saturday, October 17th.

An email will be forwarded to the membership and notification will be posted on Facebook with details prior to each cleaning bee.

Update on The Old Burying GroundWilf Bruch

The Old Cemeteries Society has once again been asked to participate in the planning stage of improvements to this historic Cemetery. The second phase of improvements scheduled for this fall or early spring, will deal with the proposed "Plaza" at the Quadra street entrance to the cemetery. Early drafts show a very low wall with seating on the Quadra side which opens into a semi-circle plaza and back to another low wall. The main focus of the plaza will be to establish a link to the past history of the cemetery and will hopefully incorporate some of the headstones we have in storage. There is also a possibility that some of the curbing removed from the rear of the cemetery in phase one will be incorporated in the new Quadra street improvement. The plaza is quite shallow but deep enough to provide a place for interpretive signage which is badly needed. We will keep you informed as the process evolves.

School TourWilf Bruch

On a sunny Friday in May, the students of Margaret Jenkins School walked a few short blocks from the normal classroom to the outdoor classroom we call Ross Bay Cemetery. Their teacher wanted them to hear the stories of people who lived, worked and played in early Victoria. They were not disappointed! These young students of history learned about the lives of The Pooley Family, Nellie Cashman, Sierra Nevada Madden, Charlotte Brown and Emily Carr.

For them, the most important person on this tour was Margaret Jenkins. Her story was told and the students laid flowers in her memory. It was a touching moment for these young students and their guide.

Margaret's grave, plot 47/48 east of row 14, block G, is one of our restoration projects for this summer. We will be re-painting the lettering on the monument and pouring a new concrete cover over the old one to give it a new fresh look. If you would like to get involved in restoration work at Ross Bay Cemetery, e-mail the office or wbruch@shaw.ca

**2015 BC Historical Federation Conference**Bente Svendsen

This year's conference was held at Quesnel on May 21, 22 & 23 and was hosted by the Quesnel and District Museum and Archives. The conference opened with a welcoming reception and beer tasting at the museum sponsored by the Barkerville Brewery. I was very impressed with the museum. Apparently it has been voted one of the top ten community museums in the province. They had thousands of artefacts, and each room had a theme (First Nations, Chinese, industry, gold rush, etc). There were interactive activities for all ages. Friday May 22 featured a day trip to Cottonwood House, Barkerville, Blessing's grave, and Wells. Cottonwood House is the only original gold rush-era road house still standing. Barkerville is the largest outdoor museum in western

North America. The day ended with movie night at the museum. Two documentaries relating to the gold rush were shown. The BC Historical Federation annual general meeting was held on Saturday, May 23 followed by lunch with keynote speaker Richard Wright. Two fellow participants and I went back to Barkerville and also to the ghost town of Stanley to have a look at the cemeteries there. In Stanley, we could see the indentations of graves where Chinese people once were before being exhumed and shipped back to China. The annual banquet for the Lieutenant Governor's awards for historical writing was held that evening, though unfortunately Her Honour could not attend. Afterwards there was a wonderful presentation given by one of the Barkerville interpreters about one of the gold rush women.



The Roscoes' Celebrate Confederation Day

The Grand Garden Party

150 years ago this summer, Victoria merchant Frances Roscoe and his wife, Anna Letitia Roscoe moved into their new home across from Isabella Ross's Fowl Bay Farm in Fairfield.

144 years ago this summer Frances Roscoe organised a festive community celebration to mark the official transition of British Columbia from Crown Colony to Canadian Province. Since arriving in Victoria in 1862, F.J. Roscoe had recognised the advantage of linking B.C. to the young country of Canada and tirelessly promoted the Union. July 20th 1871 represented the culmination of these efforts. 3 years later he was also elected as Member of Parliament for Victoria.

In Celebration of the 150th Anniversary of Ross Bay Villa and in recognition of the significant connection between the Roscoe Family and British Columbia's Union with Canada the Ross Bay Villa Society is holding a Confederation Day Grand Garden Party on Sunday July 19th 2015.

As in previous years there will be tours of the house and tea and scones will be served in the garden. This year the dining room will be set for a formal Victorian dinner party of the sort the Roscoe's would have hosted in the 1860's and 70's. The Garden Party runs from 1-5pm. Tickets for the Tea and House Tour are \$12. Tickets for Tea only are \$7. The Gift shop featuring new cards and items of jewellery will be open during the afternoon. For more information please email info@rossbayvilla.org

Two Stones for John RaeWilf Bruch

Last fall my wife and I took a wonderful trip to the Orkney Islands in search of her family roots. We found what we were looking for but that's another story.

The Orkneys have a strong connection to Victoria and as I roamed through the old cemeteries, names like Finlayson, Work, Reid, Irving, Flett and Goudie popped up everywhere. I only wish I had more time to investigate each of them and their contribution to early Victoria.

In touring the magnificent old Cathedral in Kirkwall called St Magnus, I discovered a very large monument to the memory of John Rae (1813-1843). I had known that this famous arctic explorer was from the Orkneys and that he had worked for the HBC, however I didn't anticipate the size and prominence of his monument. The beautiful carving shows him asleep on the ground with a gun and a book at his side. The monument is to the right and slightly behind the altar inside the church. It looked a bit like a sarcophagus so I assumed that his body was there. Some time later as I roamed the kirkyard of St. Magnus Cathedral, I came upon another monument to John Rae. This one is a large marble cross on a three tiered marble base. The three tiers are all inscribed with the details of his life and death. As I stood admiring this second monument I felt a bit foolish in not recognizing the first monument for what it was. But then it's not often that one will see two monuments to a person in such close proximity.



Canadian Society of Mayflower Descendants Commemorates its 35th Anniversary in 2015

Are you a descendant of a Mayflower passenger? Consider joining the Canadian Society of Mayflower Descendants (CSMD). This year, the CSMD marks its 35th anniversary.

The CSMD is the only recognized society of the General Society of Mayflower Descendants outside the United States. Of the more than one hundred passengers on the Mayflower, almost half died during the harsh first winter of 1620/21 after reaching New England in 1620. Today, millions of North Americans are descended from at least one of the 51 Mayflower passengers known to have had descendants. Many early Mayflower descendants made their way to Nova Scotia individually or as part of the New England Planters migration before the War of Independence, and afterwards, many more followed as Loyalists to Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Upper and Lower Canada.

Membership in the Canadian Society of Mayflower Descendants is open to any person over the age of 18 who can document their direct bloodline descent back to a Mayflower passenger. The CSMD welcomes membership inquiries. Take the first step today: obtain

a worksheet from our co-historian at cohistorian@csmd.org

Facebook: Canadian Society of Mayflower Descendants

Twitter: @CanMayflower

Contact: Margaret Dougherty deputygovernor@csmd.org

Tombstone Oddities



Grenadier Thomas Thetcher died at age 26 on May 12, 1764, allegedly from drinking cold “small” (i.e., low alcohol) beer “when hot”. His epitaph at Winchester Cathedral reads:

*Here sleeps in peace a Hampshire
Grenadier
Who caught his death by drinking cold
small Beer
Soldiers be wise from his untimely fall
And if ye're hot drink Strong or none at
all*

Grenadier Thetcher’s untimely demise became widely known when it was cited in the Alcoholic Anonymous Handbook as a warning against consumption of alcoholic beverages. However, the advice to “drink strong” was not noted.

Last Words



Tennessee whiskey distiller Jack Daniel 1850-1911
“One last drink, please.”

Economist John Maynard Keynes 1883-1946
“I should have drunk more champagne.”



Actor Humphrey Bogart 1899-1957
“I should never have switched from scotch to martinis.”