

## **Member Society reports to British Columbia Historical Federation 2007 Annual General Meeting**

### **Alberni District Historical Society** (Judy Carlson, President)

The Alberni District Historical Society holds general meetings 6 times a year, featuring a speaker on a subject of local historic interest. This year our topics included the diaries of an early missionary, the heroic efforts of Minnie Patterson after a shipwreck a hundred years ago, the location of some plane wrecks, local memories of the Army Camp in town, and the raising of the "Swan", a launch that was sunk 50 years ago.

We also operate the Archives, which preserves our written history. Being an all-volunteer organization, we are only open two days a week, but we are able to respond to a surprising number of requests for information. We do our own conservation and several of our members attended the workshop held on Thursday. We have found that there is a need for these skills in our community, and we are able to do a little fundraising by doing some work on commission.

We assisted with the Historica Fair last week, sponsored by our Museum, and were very impressed with the work and creativity that the students put into their presentations. I imagine every area feels the same, and is wishing their representative good luck in the national competition.

We appreciate the chance to share ideas at these meetings, and look forward to carrying on with our work for another year.

### **Arrow Lakes Historical Society**

Last year we published a small book called *Caulkboot Riverdance* on the unique river drive on the Arrow Lakes from above Revelstoke to Castlegar from 1958 to 1968. It came out in time for Christmas sales and we sold over 300 of them.

Assistance continues from the BC Gaming Commission, which helps us to pay office expenses at our building that we lease at a very reasonable rate from BC Hydro. Last year we obtained extra money to replace our 1993 photocopier. Without help with our day-today costs we would not be able to publish and reprint our books. The Village of Nakusp also helps considerably by exempting our taxes.

This year we hope to reprint our book *Port of Nakusp* - with increasing costs we must go for many grants. We have been able to improve the photographs with the help of computer technology, which was not available in 1992.

We purchased a third computer for the office to do accessioning, cross-referencing and finding aids - which is being set up at the moment.

We seem to get more requests every year for help in locating pioneers in our area. We proofread the chapter on the Arrow Lakes on how our area, residents, land, wildlife was affected because the lakes were changed forever into a reservoir for the Hugh Keenleyside dam. We have been assisting Joy Parr, professor at Western University at London Ontario for the past few years with this project. She is including two other areas in this book, one of which is the St. Lawrence Seaway and changes made there and the affects on the area and natives who were moved off their land. Sounds like it will be an interesting book when completed.

We waited too long to visit the old mining town of Camborne and a very large cedar tree near there because a landslide has blocked the area. Unless the forestry or a logging company decides it needs to put in a road, we cannot proceed with this trip. However, a couple visiting the archives will accompany us in June with a trip to the Whatshan area and the old Mennonite settlement and graveyard there. They are gathering information to write a book on the Mennonites and know the area well.

At our AGM this year, we featured Terry Turner with his story of the IBEX mine. We had set up a mining display of our own plus some items that Terry brought along.

Milton and Rosemarie Parent received the Life Achievement Citizen of the Year award this year!

### **Boundary Historical Society** (Ron Roylance, President)

In June 2006, Lorraine Barg hosted our annual field day at her home in Fife. Fife was a stop on the railway about one mile from Christina Lake. Lorraine's grandfather, O. Mazzochi, came to Fife

in 1906. We toured the store and post office that Lorraine's grandfather, Mr. Mazzochi operated. Larry Cecconi spoke of the old lime quarries that operated in the area. Many took the opportunity to walk up the old railway bed to see the quarry that had sent limestone to the smelter at Trail.

In August the Society was happy to announce the publication of *Boundary History #15*. The book sells for \$11.

In September at our annual meeting, Wanda Mizner, museum curator, spoke on the inadequacies of the Museum building. Since that time the city has announced that the Museum and the Art Gallery will move into the heritage courthouse building that the city now owns. Court will be held in a recently purchased building across the street.

In April 2007, the Boundary Historical Society and the Grand Forks Gazette hosted a two-day Antiques Road Show. Peter Blundell of Vernon was the independent appraiser.

### **British Columbia Genealogical Society**

The British Columbia Genealogical Society is a new member of BCHF. It was incorporated in 1971 and has a library in Surrey BC of over 10,000 publications relating to genealogy. This is free to our members and open to others for a small fee. We also have groups affiliated with us; their members visit the library for free. We run educational sessions and classes year round, in various locations, as well as regular monthly meetings in Burnaby.

Our members are interested in genealogical research round the world, so our special interest groups and our library reflect this. In turn, we respond to queries from around the world relating to British Columbia and we have always actively researched and published on BC topics, especially BC cemeteries.

Please see our website (<http://www.bcgs.ca>)

We will be participating in next year's conference and many members already are looking forward to that.

### **British Columbia History of Nursing Group (Beth Fitzpatrick)**

In May of 2006, BCNHG sponsored the opera *Florence; the Lady with the Lamp* with the UBC School of Music and the UBC School of Nursing. Two performances to near sell-out crowds were held in the old auditorium at UBC.

In June 2006, we planned and hosted the 19th Annual conference of the Canadian Association for the History of Nursing held at St. Paul's Hospital with 77 attendees from across Canada.

We actively explore the development of Virtual Exhibits for our web site.

We continue to mount historical nursing displays in multiple venues and represent the group at numerous professional meetings, often attired in historical nursing costumes.

### **Cowichan Historical Society**

The Cowichan Valley Museum & Archives, owned and operated by the Cowichan Historical Society, completed its 18<sup>th</sup> year of operation in the Duncan Train Station.

This year, the Society successfully negotiated space in Duncan City Hall for our Archives. After extensive renovations undertaken by volunteers, the new space now houses the collection. The well-attended official opening took place on April 3, 2007. In recognition of her many years devoted to preserving the history of the Cowichan Valley, the Archives photo gallery was dedicated to long-time volunteer Myrtle Haslam, and is now known as "The Myrtle Haslam Gallery".

In July, the Museum opened the exhibit *Kinsol in Crisis: Past-Present-Future?* In addition to presenting the history of the trestle, the exhibit also explored the question of saving this architectural and historically significant railway bridge. Events complementing this exhibit included *Kinsol: An Inspiration*, featuring the work of local artists; Elwood White delivered a talk and slide show on the Kinsol Trestle and the E&N Railway; T.W. Paterson delivered a paper discussing why the Trestle should be saved. In September, *Emily Carr Paints the Kinsol Trestle* with Molly Rahe Newman, was an event designed to bring attention to saving the trestle. A children's trestle-building Competition in October helped to promote the importance of preserving heritage in the Cowichan Valley.

We were delighted that our application to the Heritage Legacy Fund of British Columbia was

successful - the Fund will pay up to 50% of the cost of painting and repairing the exterior of the Train Station. These long-needed preservation measures will enhance the architectural beauty of this important historical building. With assistance from the City of Duncan, the Cowichan Heritage Society and individual donations, the Cowichan Historical Society will be undertaking this approximately \$12,000 project early in the summer.

The Cowichan Historical Society strives to collect the material history of the Cowichan Valley, present relevant exhibits and promote the love of history through school and public programming.

#### **East Kootenay Historical Association (Irene Kaun, President)**

It has been a privilege to serve as President for seven years. Our Treasurer, Sheila Vinge has served also, for seven years. Our Secretary, Marilynne Ferguson has served for eight years. Joel Vinge, Nomination Chairman will explore nominations for Executive, once again.

Summer of 2006 was an eventful time for a few of our members when Naomi Miller & Betty Nakahara co-chaired the Federation Conference. Marilynne Ferguson, Eva Schieffert & Irene Kaun were privileged to greet & register attendees. Angus Davis was the M.C. at the banquet. Jesse Jensen had a Display. Skip Fennesy was the photographer. It was great to meet the members of the B.C. Federation Executive & others whose mandate is to preserve heritage & to respect, document & advocate history!

We continue to host a dinner meeting twice a year, have a Speaker & a display table. The fall meeting, 2006, featured Anne Edwards' slides & presentation of Cranbrook, (shortened from what was presented at the Conference.) Laurie Reed of Fort Steele accompanied Anne with information of Ft. Steele.

The spring meeting was held April 1, 2007; (at the Eagles Hall). There were 25 members with guests. Karen Crawford was our guest speaker on "photography". Senior member; Mr. Doug Fink was presented with special recognition. Doug was dressed in yesteryear attire!

One of our Executive Board meetings was held at Ft. Steele.

We have 43 members; however, we average 20-30 members to a meeting! Members are from Cranbrook, Creston, Canal Flats, Fort Steele, Fernie, Kimberley, Moyie, Skookumchuk and Wasa.

Deceased members: Art Taplin, Catherine Langin and Dorothy Haley. There are four members registered for Conference, Victoria, 2007

#### **Gray Creek Historical Society (Tom Lymbery, President)**

We are continuing with our project of setting up historic site information signs. The next is to be at "Burden's Cut" where a crew of local men spent many months, using basic tools such as hand driven drill steel, to make a 20 foot cut through massive granite that barred the way for the first highway across B.C. Oscar Burden was the local foreman of this 1930 - 1931 challenge. We are fortunate to have excellent pictures of this, showing the hand propelled rail cart that was used to move the granite slabs, as they were dynamited. Soon after this was finished traffic used the new road to access the SS Nasookin, the large sternwheeler that became the Kootenay Lake ferry, and the only place in the world where a sternwheeler balanced a daily Greyhound across her bow.

#### **Gulf Islands Branch, British Columbia Historical Federation (Andrew Loveridge, President)**

The Gulf Islands Branch has had a good year with many different activities. The membership stands at about 60 from Mayne, Galiano, Pender and Saturna Islands.

Much of this year's focus was on Saturna Island. Saturna is the only Gulf Island that does not have a museum or museum society, so the Gulf Islands Branch has lent its support to Saturna Islanders who wish to see the old community hall at Lyall Harbour turned into a historical or interpretive centre, now that a new community centre has been built. Senator Carney has been one of the main forces behind this campaign, and we wish her luck.

In keeping with this, we have held several meetings on Saturna Island, something rather difficult on account of the ferry schedules. The history of Saturna was discussed in detail, especially the Community Hall (which was founded circa 1935). One of the more picturesque customs is the Canada Day Saturna Lamb Barbecue, which is actually of Argentine origin. It

was started by Mr. Cruikshank, a Scotsman who had spent many years in Argentina before retiring to Saturna, and it is similar to the *asado* typical of an Argentine *estancia*.

On Pender Island, Peter Campbell treated us to the fruits of his researches into HMS Trincomalee, for which Trincomalee Channel is named. The Trincomalee explored these waters in 1856; the interesting thing is that the ship is still afloat at Hartlepool, England where it forms the centre of a naval museum. This is due to the fact that it was built of teak (in Bombay), and that it spent most of its career in storage or at anchor (as the school ship Foudroyant). Since it was built in 1817, it is one of the oldest ships afloat.

Kiyoko Harrison is a resident of Galiano Island, but she spent her childhood in Hiroshima, Japan, where her family went as "pioneers" a few years after the atomic bombing. She shared her memories of growing up there. Hiroshima in the early 1950's was green and overgrown, and strangely peaceful. Most people now would be afraid of lingering radiation, but it seems that smaller bombs of WW2 were not as long lasting in their effects as the ones we have now.

On Mayne Island, we held a meeting devoted to the Japanese pioneers, who once operated a sophisticated network of tomato greenhouses. The Branch lent its support to an initiative to have a body of water to be named Kadonaga Bay, in honour of one of the main families.

### **Hallmark Society** (Nick Russell, President)

It's been a busy and exciting year for the Hallmark Society and for heritage in Greater Victoria.

We're very proud of our newly redesigned and re-named periodical, now called PRESERVE, with Helen Edwards at the helm. And we have been pleased with our popular website, particularly its monitoring of "Buildings at Risk.". (You can read both online at [www.hallmark.society.ca](http://www.hallmark.society.ca) )

A major venture this year has been the launch of the "You-Don't-Know-What-You've-Got-Till-It's-Gone Project." This is endeavouring to identify, research, and spotlight significant buildings that are not on the radar - buildings at risk, but with no protection - such as a 1920s apartment building that's been empty on Cook St for several years -- and seek ways of protecting them.

There are always fires to put out - an 1880s house in Esquimalt that the owner wants to demolish ...a 1906 house on Burdett St that a developer feels is in the way ...a 1910 house on Moss Rocks that a developer wants to surround with townhouses.... But there is also good news. The Bay seems to be a "good news" story -although huge towers will be built behind it, the developer plans to turn the famous old store into condos that should be highly desirable and will breathe new life into the north-east corner of Downtown. New owners of the early Bossi House in Johnson at Cook plan to renovate that as strata-title-homes. The City's Downtown Revitalization Plan is making progress, with innovative adaptive reuses, such as the hotel-cum-store and condo development known as the Mac & Mac Building.

This building was one of many to win awards at the famous Hallmark Heritage Awards, now in their 34<sup>th</sup> year. Both residential and commercial awards were presented, with the "best-in-show" prize -The Louis Award going to Royal Roads University and Vintage Woodworks for their huge restoration of the famous Dunsmuir Greenhouses. And one other notable, and unusual, award went for a lifetime of restoration work to bricklayer Willy Tobler, who has restored hundreds of heritage chimneys around Victoria over the last 40 years.

We've also launched a mobile Powerpoint show, called *The Past is Present -Victoria's History Told Through Its Buildings*. This picture-show is available for any interested groups.

We're pleased to have a representative on the Victoria Heritage Advisory Committee

A major thrust this year will include starting to digitize our 6000 slides to broaden our significant heritage resource library. And we will continue to be active in spreading the word in the important role heritage plays in making Victoria one of the most liveable places in the world!

### **Lantzville Historical Society**

This has been an eventful year for Lantzville Historical Society.

Our history book, *Lantzville -The First Hundred Years*, has finally been completed. During the year, many decisions had to be made: what type of cover? how many copies to print?; how much should the book sell for?; where to sell it?. Many hands made the job of selecting the

right photos for inclusion in the book, a fairly easy task. Our president, Lynn Reeve, resolutely succeeded in completing the writing and layout. Members of the society had several intensive proofreading sessions. Just before Christmas, it was finished and sent off to Friesen's for printing. Pre-publication sales went very well and we had enough for the final installment of the printing bill almost before the book came back from the printers in early March. The book launch, held at our March meeting, was very well attended. Since then, sales have been brisk.

If the society were not so busy with all things book, we would be putting a lot more effort into the fact our society is 25 years old this year.

Besides the excitement of the book, the more usual events for the Society have taken place. Several members took part in Minetown Day in July - with displays of photos, and some very popular old laundry equipment (a big hit with some young people who enjoyed the scrub board and the wooden, hand turned washing machine), and we also sold candy floss again. We had a Christmas lunch with members and spouses. We had a flea market in October to help raise funds. In April, the Society made Benny Negrin, one of our long time members, a life member of the society and presented him with the appropriate certificate

Numbers at our meetings are diminishing and we are working on ideas to increase community awareness. One proposal is to develop an inventory of local houses by asking local residents to provide the history of their own home. The form need for this project is being developed. Also planned is a plaque to mark the location of the coalmine in Lantzville.

### **Lions Bay Historical Society (Tony Cox, Treasurer)**

The Lions Bay Historical Society is composed of a small group of Community volunteers who meet once per month to discuss progress on our projects.

Current projects are:

- photographing Lions Bay residences.
- interviewing long time residents and transferring the interviews to DVD.
- refinishing on an annual basis our memorial bench to a deceased member - Noel Day.
- publishing a Historical article in the Lions Bay paper the Seagull.
- attending Lions Bay functions to display archival photographs { the oldest being an early resident of Brunswick Beach taken in 1909 land to fundraise by selling our Howe Sound book { written by the Society } and Flag Stickers.
- only group in Lions Bay to retain historical photographs, documents and accession newspaper articles.

In addition the LBHS set up guidelines for a design contest for a Lions Bay flag, ran the contest and selected the winning design. Sales of these flags enable us to complete our projects and objectives.

### **London Heritage Farm Society**

London Heritage Farm Society had a very successful 2006 with increased traffic to the site, tea room and gift shop. We were fortunate in receiving a HRDC Summer Youth Grant for two students that enabled the site to be open seven days a week for the months of July and August.

One of the City Councilors was appointed to liaise between the City and the Society and this relationship has produced an improved operation between the two parties. The City is assisting with the heritage permanent farm equipment display, pond restoration and handicapped and staff parking on site.

In addition to London Heritage Farm's annual events, such as the Antique and Collectibles Fair, Family Farm Fair, Plant sale, etc. , our site hosts the annual MS Walk and the Fraser River Arts Festival. This helps introduce new visitors to the site as well as generating customers for the tea room and gift shop.

The Society continues to offer special tours and teas to school groups and seniors groups, which are becoming very popular. We also work with the Richmond Museum Society with some of their school group programs.

The Farm is now operating on a business model with targeted advertising and promotion in the local media. As an active member of Tourism Richmond, exposure to the local and tourism market has been excellent. The increased volume to London Heritage Farm has generated additional revenue, and assists the Society to undertake special exhibits such as the Vintage Clothing display, which extended through seven rooms of the farmhouse.

The Society has partnered with the Richmond Weavers and Spinners and has given them one of the

bedrooms for their looms, wool carders, etc., where one or two from this group work on their projects on the weekends giving us live demonstrations for visitors to the farm house.

We are participating in Asian Heritage Month by hosting a special Japanese weekend, this May 26 & 27 with displays of ikebana, origami, Japanese dolls and bonsai trees. The highlight of the tea is the performance of a formal Japanese Tea ceremony at two sittings on both Saturday and Sunday with our MP, MLA and Mayor as special guests of honor.

London Heritage Farm is developing a special green tea blend to offer our customers and add to our very popular London Lady Tea. We anticipate another busy and interesting year.

#### **Maple Ridge Historical Society** (Brenda L. Smith and Sheila Nickols)

I am happy to report another busy and productive year for the Maple Ridge Historical Society. We supply heritage services to the District of Maple Ridge on a fee for service basis, operating Haney House, the Maple Ridge Museum, and taking care of three other historic buildings in Port Haney.

We continue to prepare for the future construction of a new museum when the Municipal government is ready to move forward. We have been streamlining our organizational structure, with effective committee work on Finance, Communications, Program, Buildings, and Family History. A long overdue revision of our Bylaws and Constitution is under way.

One of our most public events is the annual Heritage Tea, which yearly attracts from 250 to 400 people for an afternoon of visiting with friends. People enjoy looking at the photo panels on a variety of topics produced by the Museum staff. We always benefit from more photos and information that our visitors bring in to share with the Archives.

The Society celebrated our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at the first of four Music on the Wharf concerts, held during the summer. People in costume and 1950 era vintage cars added to the atmosphere with big band music. These four concerts bring from 300 to 400 people each evening to one of the most historic and beautiful parts of Maple Ridge, Port Haney Wharf.

Work is continuing on getting a Maple Ridge Museum website up and running in the near future. Email contact with family researchers led to two important visits last summer. Members of the Hammond family got in touch when they learned about the Hammond district of Maple Ridge. They came to visit, to find out our limited knowledge of John and William Hammond, and to contribute more photos and information for our files.

Then in August sixty members of the Morikawa family gathered from all over North America for a family reunion. This included a visit to family graves at the Maple Ridge Cemetery, a tour of the home that many of them had lived in, and a picnic lunch on the museum grounds. Old friends, Board members, our Mayor and some Councillors came to visit with them.

Haney House continues to exhibit household artifacts, manage our costume collection and host school visits. Their Mother's Day Tea and Plant sale and Canada Day celebrations are highlights of the program. For the past two summers, they have guided volunteers in a cemetery cleaning project, concentrating on the historic markers in the Maple Ridge Cemetery. A new adult program this year will be an archaeological visit to a Katzie dig in progress.

We continue to attract and find work for skilled volunteers. They help with tours and with staff on in-house and outreach projects.

If you are in Maple Ridge this summer, come for a visit to enjoy afternoon tea on the veranda of Haney House.

#### **Nanaimo Historical Society** (G. Miller, Secretary)

Once again the Nanaimo Historical Society has had a busy year. The Society continued with its traditional role as a champion for historical and heritage issues within Nanaimo. Unfortunately, our efforts on behalf of the Nanaimo Foundry were fruitless, when City Council sidestepped the public hearings and the Heritage Commission and transferred the property to the Snuneymuxw First Nation and issued it a demolition permit. The Executive also has kept a watching brief on the proposed reconstruction of the Pioneer Cemetery. The Executive supported a submission to the National Historic Sites and Monuments Board to have the Pacific Biological Station site declared a place of national historic significance and an application by a local retired teachers organization for funds to preserve and display a collection of educational

memorabilia. The Executive continues to keep in touch with local MP's and MLA's, urging them to keep the Society in mind, when issues involving local history and heritage are concerned.

The President, Brian Pettit, challenged the Society's members to become active in the community. He assembled a list of possible projects that members might undertake. Following his lead, the Society nominated Ted Barsby for a British Columbia Community Achievement Award. Other projects that occupied the Executive this past year included a revision of the Society's flyer, a review of our membership and mailing lists and a consideration of recognition awards.

Peggy Nicholls was awarded the British Columbia Historical Federation certificate of merit at the 2006 BCHF annual general meeting. The presentation of the award was made at the Society's September general meeting by Gordon Miller, BCHF Recording Secretary.

The Society continued with its commitment to the recognition of the arrival in Nanaimo of the Princess Royal settlers. This celebration is held annually on November 27. For the first time in memory, the weather prevented a public celebration. Pamela Mar and as many of the descendants as could be contacted by telephone, conducted a private celebration, in its place, reading the names of their Princess Royal ancestors who arrived in Nanaimo in late 1854.

The Society depends upon a great many of its members for its success. The 2006/2007 Executive was Brian Pettit, Barbara Simpson, Treasurer, Gord Miller, Secretary, Pamela Mar, Daphne Paterson & Terry Simpson, past-presidents, Shirley Bateman, program coordinator and 5 members-at-large, Anne Graves, Frank Graves, Olive Guedes, Robert Little, Bev Sherry. In addition, other members of the society coordinated refreshments for the meetings, did publicity for the Society's activities, phoned members, managed the Society's publications and volunteered on other community organizations including the Nanaimo Museum, Elder College, Vancouver Island Military Museum and the Nanaimo Community Archives. The Ethel Barraclough award is awarded annually to a Malaspina University College student. The 2006 recipient is Megan Jones.

The Society heard a number of interesting presentations during the past year. At the 2006 AGM, Pamela Mar spoke about research she had conducted in the HBC Archives on the *Colinda*, which sailed from England in August 1853, filled with 43 Scottish miners and their families destined for the Hudson Bay Company mines in Nanaimo. Unfortunately, troubles during the voyage caused the group to abandon ship in Valparaiso. In April, Ted Barsby discussed the history of the Nanaimo and District Fish and Game Protective Association. Ruth Matson came to our May meeting with stories about her family's connections with Shack Island. In September, Lynne Bowen started out the new season with a slideshow and commentary about Italian immigrants in Nanaimo. Gerry Berry described the history of the Nanaimo Yacht Club at the October meeting. Jan Peterson made a return presentation in November, reading from her new book, *Harbour City, Nanaimo in transition, 1920-1967*. The January meeting was cancelled by bad weather. The year finished in February, with a Black History month presentation by Shalema Gantt, president of the Nanaimo African Heritage Society

### **Nelson and District Museum, Archives, Art Gallery and Historical Society (MAAG)** (Frances Welwood, Director MAAG)

In over 50 years as a Society, 2006/7 was undoubtedly the most significant for MAAG. The year was dominated by the 'triumphal' opening of Touchstones Nelson: Museum of Art and History. The new facility (Nelson's 1902 Post Office, then City Hall) was entirely transformed into a modern, all-inclusive, highly graded Museum, Art Gallery and Archives.

October 12-15, 2006 weekend the whole town turned out to officially welcome Touchstones. The Lieutenant Governor was to have attended but her plane was cancelled due to fog in Vancouver (not Castlegar). We partied on without her. Visitors were given free access to the building.

Because the Touchstones project has been highly presented as a cultural, community facility, an admission fee structure, which offers significant benefits to Members of the Society, was implemented. For as little as \$20 per year, for a Senior membership, a member receives free access to the regular exhibitions, voting privileges, 3 Newsletters and invitations to Receptions preceding the Opening of each new exhibit. Membership levels continue to the Gold Patron level of \$250 per annum.

Is it any wonder that there are nearly 1000 individual members of the Society? (The population of Nelson is just under 10,000.). At the recent AGM there was actually an election (rather than an acclamation) for the privilege of serving on the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors works in concert with a professional staff of five: Executive Director, Archivist, Curator/Program Coordinator, Gift Shop and Administrative Assistant. An invaluable group of Volunteers support nearly every aspect of the operation from catering receptions, to docents, moving furniture, offering archival assistance and phoning other volunteers.

Fund-raising, in order to maintain the high level of programming and operation, will be a continuing challenge. The entire Project had a price tag of \$3.5 million. And there is no mortgage.

Since Opening in October, there have been a variety of shows in the two main floor galleries.

The Kootenay School of Arts has shown faculty, alumni and graduate exhibitions. The Alcuin Society of BC displayed its award winners and several local artisans and photographers have been featured. But the greatest number of visitors descended on Touchstones for 3 hours on January 12. Nearly 500 children and their wide-eyed parents gazed in awe (and even Touched) one of Canada's sports icon and its most thrilling objet d'art --The Stanley Cup. Nelson was designated by "Hockey Day in Canada " as Canada's Hockey town for 2007, and a host of hockey heroes and CBC media filled the town. Funds were provided to create an historical look at Hockey in Nelson called *Birth of the Blue Line*. The Exhibition was extremely popular with the locals. After all, the Patrick Brothers did live in Nelson (and along with one Patrick sister) played organized hockey at the local rink.

#### **North Shuswap Historical Society** (Loretta Greenough, President)

Our small group of dedicated individuals has been very active since our last report. In June 2006 we published a 2007 Calendar of Historic Buildings in the North Shuswap. The proceeds were shared with the Community Association to help preserve the old hall.

The Historical Society, succeeded in having a bay on Shuswap Lake named McKay Bay after Alex and Isabelle McKay who homesteaded there in 1907, and Bill & Helen McKay who homesteaded there in 1915.

During the summer of 2006 a photographic presentation of the history of the North Shuswap was presented to the public during four evenings at Shuswap Lake Park. In September another presentation was made to the Naturalist Club of Salt Spring Island when they were on a retreat to Anglemont.

We managed to complete Volume #8 of *The Shuswap Chronicles* and have it ready for publication by November, just in time for Christmas. In February, another photographic presentation was made to the local community with goodies and a social. This is helping to increase our membership as well as increasing our profile.

We have enjoyed potluck picnics and dinners as well as field trips to local areas. The collection of old photographs continue with several photographs displayed on a wall in the North Shuswap Community Hall as well as interviews with pioneers. Work has already begun on collected information for Chronicle #9.

#### **Old Cemeteries Society of Victoria** (Gerry F. Buydens, President)

Meetings and Events. Members' meetings were held in November and March. At the November meeting, Yvonne Van Ruskenveld presented an illustrated talk entitled "*Sleep on, dear son, in a soldier's grave*" dealing with Victoria Veterans of the Great War commemorated in Ross Bay Cemetery. Ross Bay Cemetery contains the graves of many who served during WW 1 and died here, but it also has many memorials on family markers to sons who died overseas. Yvonne talked about the different types of memorials and the stories relating to some of the individuals. In March, Dr. Sylvia Van Kirk gave a talk entitled *The Cridge Connection: The Early Social History of Church of Our Lord*. Two bus excursions for members took place. In September a day tour to the Cowichan Valley occurred and in March a day trip around Esquimalt visiting various historical sites occurred. The Annual General Meeting was held on February 7, 2007. Father Koska of the Greek Orthodox Church spoke about the history of the Greek Orthodox Faith and gave a tour of their new church. The annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner to honour active volunteers was held during volunteer week on April 15. Although 90 people were invited, 60

people attended.

Projects and activities. The society's tour program included Sunday afternoon tours at Ross Bay Cemetery as well as other Greater Victoria historic cemeteries; tours for Women's History Month in October; the Annual Halloween Ghost Walk at Ross Bay Cemetery; and 10 Ghost bustours at the end of October attended by about 354 people. Society tour guides also delivered 85 tours to 2800 persons, mainly school groups. These tours were on various themes, such as Ghost Walks, Remembrance Day, and BC history.

The bimonthly newsletter *Stone Cuttings* is now sent out electronically to members with Internet access and is posted on the society's website, ([www.oldcem.bc.ca](http://www.oldcem.bc.ca)). We have altered the format so that it can be downloaded onto 8.5 by 11-inch paper. Winter 2006 and Spring 2006 issues of the Journal *Stories in Stone* were published.

The Research Committee continued its work on the Ross Bay Cemetery burial database and gathered material used for the Sunday tour program. Researchers attended a number of family history fairs and responded to many requests from descendants for information on gravesites and family history.

A summer student funded by the federal government and volunteer recorders inventoried over 700 Ross Bay Cemetery monuments while 105 monuments received cleaning during the year. The Society assisted the City of Victoria in identifying over 200 empty plots in Ross Bay Cemetery, which over the next few years will be made available for purchase. This year the city offered 65 plots for sale with another 85 plots to be available in six months. The funds raised will go into a long-term program for enhancing the security of the cemetery in combination with the installation of Columbia of innovative design.

Office volunteers organized the photograph collection, biography files and obituaries.

Membership is now at about 200.

#### **Parksville and District Historical Society** (Ted Scott, President)

We had a very successful and productive year at the Craig Heritage Park museum operated by the Parksville and District Historical Society

- In an attempt to attract children, our summer staff came up with picnics and summer games
- Local quilters, spinners and weavers held a demonstration of their crafts
- We were successful in receiving a community fisheries grant that supplied us with up to five fishermen learning new skills. Starting in September and finishing in April, they completed major repairs, renovations, construction of storage shed, painting, and reglazed all the windows on all our buildings. Our museum consists of one building which serves as a museum and 6 heritage buildings, each furnished in the era that they were in use. These buildings were all in need of major repair, which this grant helped us accomplish.
- Our grounds are cared for beautifully by a group of lady gardeners, the Parksville Garden and Parklands Society
- One of our buildings is the original fire hall, in which we store the Parksville VFD #2 fire engine. The VFD made an appeal for assistance in restoring the fire truck on Shaw cable.
- We have just received a gift of marine artifacts valued at \$45,000 from Spinnakers Restaurant. This helps us greatly, because it fulfills part of our contract with the fishermen, which stated that we had to build a marine display.
- We rent our Heritage church (Knox United) frequently for weddings, etc.
- Like most museums, we suffer from a chronic shortage of volunteers and funds and we succeed through the efforts of a very dedicated group. We feel we are unique.... Come and see us, sometime

#### **Richmond Museum Society** (Peter Wagenblast, chair)

Generally, it has been a good year for the Richmond Museum. We continue to work hard with our other historical sites, London Heritage Farm, Britannia Shipyards, and the nationally registered Gulf of Georgia Cannery. Pooling resources is important in the time of tight budgets.

There was a new museum strategy worked on, over which there was a lot of discussion. Criteria being on the main contentions – one favours the Steveston location because of its existing sites, as well as the opportunity to use and redo an old building. Others prefer a more centralized location since it would make for a more livable downtown, be in proximity to transportation and a

future convention centre.

We have a very good school program, which keeps expanding. We participate in national Historica program. Our staff handles a lot of requests. Through grants, we offer summer students an opportunity to learn about collections.

There was outreach and involvement with the community at large with our participation in National Heritage week. This is a fairly big February event, held in one of our malls.

Exhibits during the past twelve months have included: history of industry, done in conjunction with local companies that have received international attention; postcards from home, featuring the writing of children who are newcomers and their reactions to living in a new country; our local heroes, which highlighted the work of our emergency team responders (fire, ambulance, police) and increased public awareness and appreciation.

#### **Surrey Historical Society** (Wayne Desrochers)

Hi-lites of the Surrey Historical Society started off with the presentation of the Lieutenant Governor's medal to Derek Hayes in Cloverdale, B.C. on the 18th of November 2006 on behalf of the B.C.H.F.

The society continues to have guest speakers on the second Saturday of the month. The meeting start at 10:15 AM at the Surrey Museum and Archives in Cloverdale, B.C. Meetings are from January to May and September to November. On April 28th a 2½-hour bus tour of south Surrey took place guided by Jim Foulkes and Jack Brown. Enjoyed by all!

Our new President is Elva Reid and Kathleen Moore is the Secretary. Any inquires or to become a member, you can contact the society at our mailing address Surrey Historical Society PO Box 34003 17790 #10 Hwy. Surrey, B.C. V3S 8C4

#### **Vancouver Historical Society** (Larry Wong, President)

We had a very eventful and exciting year. One of our highlights was the opening of the Spencer's time capsule at a well-publicized ceremony held at the Vancouver Archives. We have identified sites in Stanley Park for historical markers, for which we have applied for funding. Our website has recently been improved, receiving 2000 visitors a month

Another highlight is the Harbeck project, which is in its final stage. Our intention is to produce a DVD showing on a split-screen, frame by frame the original 1907 film and the 2007 version. Arrangements have been made to complete filming of the modern city of Vancouver.

Our regular speaker series this year ranged from the history of universities to the history of striptease, which drew an overflowing crowd. An finally we have sponsored two book launches: *Story of Dunbar* and *Women lead the way*, the story of the University Women's Club at Hycroft mansion.

#### **Victoria Historical Society** (Michael Layland, President)

This, by our reckoning, has been our 84<sup>th</sup> year of existence - and it has proved another successful one. We continue to recruit new members, attract excellent participation at our meetings and we remain in sound financial health. The year is being crowned by the society proudly co-hosting the annual conference of the BC Historical Federation, here in Victoria.

I am also proud to note that one of our members, Dr. Pat Roy, has assumed the presidency of the BCHF. Another member, Ron Greene, serves on the federation's board.

We enjoyed a series of monthly lectures on a diverse range of history-related topics. Arranged and introduced by Arnold Ranneris, our speakers and their titles have been:

- Terri Hunter - Oak Bay over the past 100 years. Jan Ross - The Women of Carr House.
- Geoffrey Castle - A Saanich Scenario.
- Rev. Sel Caradus - The History of Christ Church Cathedral. Daryl Ashby - John Muir, West Coast Pioneer.
- Susan Wood & Ken Rouche - Exploring Fairfield's Past. Dr. Jean Barman - Stanley Park's Secret.
- Helen and John Edwards - Preserving Victoria's Heritage.
- Arnold Ranneris, - Victoria's YMCA and YWCA.

At our Christmas dinner meeting, four stalwart members were recognized with certificates of appreciation for their long and invaluable contribution to the society. They were Pam Odgers,

Shirley Cuthbertson, Liesel Jakeman and Pendril Brown.

In addition to the preparatory work needed for the upcoming BCHF Conference, we are organizing an associated event: a one-day symposium focused on the topic of Tourism & Heritage: Compatibility or Conflict? This, an innovation for the conference, is to be a series of thematic presentations by high-profile panelists with questions and discussions from the floor. The audience is to be drawn from conference participants and members of the general public.

For the conference itself, with our co-hosts, the Old Cemeteries Society, we have prepared an exciting and varied program of lectures and outside tours, showcasing the provincial capital and its history. The cherry on the cake is to be the reception by the Lieutenant Governor at Government House. At the time of preparing this report, registration numbers significantly exceed expectation.

I step down after three years in the presidency, handing over to a most-capable Russ Fuller.

**Women's History Network of British Columbia** (Diane Rogers, Secretary)

The Women's History Network of British Columbia held another successful conference last year in Victoria at Emily Carr House and St. Ann's Academy. This year, our theme is "Women and Healing" and our conference is October 12-13, beginning at Roedde House in Vancouver. We're looking for presentations on a wide variety of topics. See our website (<http://www.members.shaw.ca/whnbc/>) for more information.

Our members continue to interest new people in women's history with new books and articles, walking tours and educational sessions and activities. Two of our members recently launched the Herstory Café in Vancouver – an informal monthly meeting with good speakers and great discussions. So far, it's been literally 'standing room only'.

WHNBC is very interested in promoting any publication, exhibit, site or activity relating to women's history in BC. Please contact us to have your group's information added to our newsletter, e-mail list and website.

We are also happy to support other initiatives relating to women's history, for example, nominations for designation of women or events relating women as national historic persons.