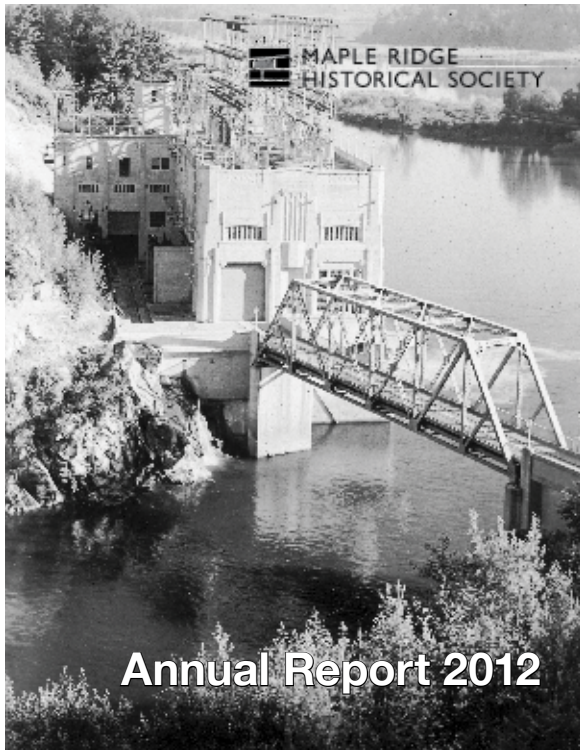


# MAPLE RIDGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## Newsletter March 2013



### JOINING OUR BOARD

---

We encourage any member to consider serving on our board of directors. Learn about the inner workings of the society and all of its operations. Find where your passion lies and use it to pursue objectives on behalf of all of us. To join the board at the AGM, you need to have been a member for 30 days, but that is not the only opportunity. If you find yourself with some time you are willing to share at any time of year, contact us at 604-463-5311.



### OUR AGM

---

Join us on March 21, 2013 at 6:30 pm at St. Andrew's Heritage Church Hall for our AGM and pot-luck supper. In addition to a good meal with friends, you get a show of historic pictures and a trivia contest to challenge your knowledge of the area. Copies of our annual report will be available at the meeting.

We ask those attending to bring one dish of sweet or savoury for the pot-luck. Please call Wendy Cook at 604-290-1140 or email to [wmcook1@gmail.com](mailto:wmcook1@gmail.com) and let her know what you're planning to bring. We've never yet ended up with all desserts but it could happen! Finally, remember to bring your own plate and cutlery and any serving utensils needed for your food contribution. We hope to see you there!

### HERITAGE TEA

---

The 21st annual Heritage Tea will take place on Saturday, April 6th from 1 – 4 pm at the Seniors Centre. Tickets are \$7 and can be purchased at the door.



The committee is still looking for a few volunteers to donate baked goods for the day. This helps offset food

costs, and as we all know homemade treats are better than store bought! If you'd like to donate baking, or help out on the day of the tea please contact us at 604-463-5311 or e-mail our Research Assistant, Alison Pocock at [mrmeventplanner@gmail.com](mailto:mrmeventplanner@gmail.com)



### UPCOMING EXHIBITS

*All About Footwear* is currently being exhibited at the Maple Ridge Museum and will run until the end of spring. The exhibit was extended into another display case this month, after a generous loan from Gwen Brown, who organizes costumes for the Seniors Centre productions. Gwen brought in over 30 pairs of very colourful shoes, and we sorted through and picked out a wonderful variety: from her own Go-Go Boots from the 1960s, to platform shoes and pink polka dot Mary Janes.

During April and May, we will have a small *quilt display* showcasing some of our historic quilts and their stories in anticipation of the Ridge-Meadows Quilters Guild show at the Burnett Fellowship Church at 20639 123rd Ave. on May 3 and 4, 2013. Quilting is an ages-old craft that incorporates thrift and beauty in durable form. The show is called "Quilt Stories" and it is true that every quilt has one.

Starting in July, our temporary gallery will showcase various *musical instruments and recordings* from local artists, including a well-loved mandolin donated to the museum from Keith Rajala. The instrument belonged to his mother, June Rajala.

This year also marks the 16th annual *Music on the Wharf* summer concert series. The series started with a local band offering to play a one-time concert and has become one of the Maple Ridge Historical Society's most popular events.

### CONSERVATION NOTE: TEMPERATURE

Extreme fluctuations in temperature can be very detrimental to your heritage artifacts. There are a few key concepts to remember when considering the best temperature at which to store them. The most beneficial environment is a cool, dry place with a stable temperature of 18-22°C. Avoid rapid changes in temperature as this is very stressful for objects, especially those made of organic material. Temperature is related to moisture in the air, and as temperature changes moisture content in the air changes. Most organic material, for example wood, textiles and paper artifacts, readily take on and release moisture from the air and will shrink and expand with changing temperature. This can result in cracks, tears, and general weakness.

When the air is hot it can encourage objects to dry out. Keeping special objects away from heat vents and radiators as well as out of direct light, which is also a heat source, will reduce drying out in those organic objects that are sensitive to temperature changes. Heat also encourages chemical reactions to occur at a faster pace. Therefore, keeping an object at a cool, stable temperature will reduce chemical degradation such as corrosion on metals and deterioration of plastics. If objects become too cold they can freeze which causes them to become extremely brittle and sensitive to even the lightest touch. Being mindful of the temperature at which you store your heritage artifacts can prolong their life and your enjoyment of them. *mo*



### ST. ANDREW'S RENTAL

The St. Andrew's Heritage Church (1888) now functions as a community hall and is available to rent for weddings, social events, and meetings.

The hall accommodates up to 75 people.

Call Tom Little at Haney House: 604-463-1377.



## NEIGHBOURHOOD PROFILE: WHONNOCK

In 1860, after serving the Hudson's Bay Company as a labourer up north for seven years, Robert Robertson, a Shetlander, settled next to the village of the "Honoks" with his wife from Nicomen Island and started a family. He was the first permanent white settler in what we call Whonnock today.

Like Port Hammond downriver, Whonnock owed its start as a community to the coming of the transcontinental railway in the early 1880s. The contract for the building of the railway called for stations to be built every ten miles, and Whonnock happened to be ten miles from Port Hammond.

Expecting a strong growth in population once trains started stopping at the station the railroad called "Wharnock," an intrepid Irish farmer from Perth, Ontario, built a store on land he acquired from Robert Robertson. The shopkeeper was nominated postmaster in 1885, and the first Whonnock post office was in his store. That same year saw the construction and opening of the first school in Whonnock on land donated by Robert Robertson on the shore of the Fraser River. For many years this one-room school also served as a church for visiting ministers and as a community hall. With these amenities in place – the store, the post office, the station, and the school – Whonnock quickly became the centre for the settlers from the Stave River area and across the Fraser.

New pioneers kept coming – most of British origin, but Norwegian families were also an important element of the community of Whonnock. Farming was in its infancy—a number of settlers cleared a few acres while others did not do any farming on their land. Many made a living cutting down the giant trees, producing railroad ties and firewood for the paddle wheelers and the locomotives. In the summer all were engaged in salmon fishing. Money was scarce, but there was no evidence of real need or suffering among the settlers.



The first Whonnock post office opened in the general store in 1885. The place where the store once stood is now under Lougheed Highway. The building burned down in March 1916. The part to the right is the home of the shopkeeper and his family. Photo taken ca. 1914.

After the opening of a school at Glen Valley in 1892 the majority of the students remaining at the Whonnock school lived far from the river. Therefore the Norwegian parents and a few other settlers living in "North Whonnock" insisted that the school be moved closer to where they lived. In 1894 a vote to move the school to Whonnock Road (272<sup>nd</sup> Street) and 104<sup>th</sup> Avenue easily passed when the Norwegian men did not go out fishing that day in order to vote. Victoria ignored the vote and the Norwegians solved their problem by moving closer to the river.

The winter of 1896–1897 witnessed a short-lived gold rush in the North Shore Mountains. Most of "mines" staked in the Whonnock area produced more agitation than profit, but the little gold rush whetted the appetite of the local prospectors, and in the following year many—foremost the Norwegian boys—left the community to find their fortunes in Alaska and the Yukon.

The exciting hunt for gold on our local mountains is revealed in a journal written at Whonnock at that time, but curiously there is no mention in the diary of the establishment in 1896 of a lumber and shake mill at the confluence of Stave River and Fraser River by the Canadian Co-operative Society. A school was opened at "Ruskin Mills" to accommodate mainly the children of families in the commune. The opening of the Ruskin post office in 1898 signalled the

&gt;&gt;&gt;





The Ladies Hall in 1912.

beginning of Ruskin as a distinct community. Whonnock Creek became the natural boundary between the two communities.

Once a small Roman Catholic Church stood on the Whonnock Reserve between Whonnock and Ruskin, serving the Catholics on the reserve and beyond. It was probably built later than St. Paul's Anglican Church, erected on 272nd Street near 104th Avenue around 1891. For some years the Norwegian settlers shared St. Paul's for their Lutheran services—in Norwegian. In 1905 they built their own church on their cemetery off 96<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Before the Presbyterians build their church in 1914, they used for their services first the old one-room school on the river bench and after 1908 a new school at 272<sup>nd</sup> Street and 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

No other building shows the coming of age of the community better than the famous "Ladies Hall." The building came to Whonnock thanks to the women of the "The Ladies' Club of Whonnock" formed in 1911. The hall, later renamed Whonnock Memorial Hall in honour of the soldiers of Whonnock who fell in the First World War, started to be used without fanfare some time in the summer of 1912 and remained a vital part of community life for more than half a century. *fb*

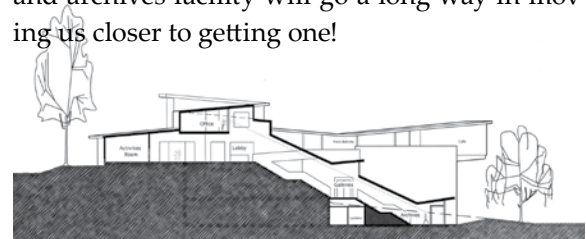


## STRATEGIC PLAN FOR HERITAGE

The Maple Ridge Community Heritage Commission (CHC) is undertaking a Heritage Plan in order to provide the CHC with an effective, sustainable, and realistic plan to encourage the conservation and long-term viability of heritage resources. Through the development of a shared community vision for heritage conservation and a planning framework for the District's heritage program, the Heritage Plan is the opportunity to bring together those aspects of the program that are most successful, to determine what needs to be re-focused for maximum effectiveness and identify how to best utilize scarce resources. The Plan will incorporate community values and a new direction for the Heritage Program.

As part of the preparation for the Heritage Plan, the CHC would appreciate your participation in this questionnaire. If you are an email recipient of this newsletter, you can find the survey at: <http://fluidsurveys.com/surveys/dmr/maple-ridge-heritage-plan-questionnaire/>

If you receive the newsletter by mail, we have included a paper copy of the survey. Please fill it out! This is a way to have your voice heard on what you value most in your community and your particular neighbourhood. The municipality needs to see a strong level of interest and expressing your enthusiasm for a new museum and archives facility will go a long way in moving us closer to getting one!



### DEWDNEY-ALOUETTE



#### Visit the Dewdney-Alouette Railway Society's diorama in the museum.

On the last Sunday of every month, members of the Dewdney-Alouette Railway Society are present to "talk trains" and operate the Diorama. Model Railroaders are welcome on the Tuesday and Thursday evenings before the last Sunday of the month.

Info: Dick Sutcliffe at 604-467-4301 or E-Mail: [ras1@uniserve.com](mailto:ras1@uniserve.com)

