

Newsletter May & June 2015

We are gearing up for summer at both the Maple Ridge Museum & Community Archives, Haney House Museum, and throughout the community.

Here are some events to look for! For more details on all these events please visit mapleridgemuseum.org or contact 604-463-5311.

HISTORY GOES TO MARKET MAY 30TH 10:30AM – 2:30PM

This year's theme for our annual outings to the Farmer's Market will be the Heritage Canada theme – "Celebrating Main Street".

For our first outing to the Bandstand in Memorial Peace Park on May 30th, we will focus on the history of Haney's main street – 224th Street between Lougheed Highway and Dewdney Trunk and Lougheed Highway from 223rd to 225th Streets. From the later 1920s to today, 224th Street has been the centre of our town core and primary shopping district.

We will walk down memory lane and look at all the businesses and services that have come and gone in those few short blocks.

As an added treat, our President Erica Williams will be doing her popular walking tour of these town core streets that highlights not only the history of the streetscape but also the efforts that have been made to acknowledge its heritage. For the tour, meet at the Bandstand on May 30th at 11am.

Our second outing on September 12 will look at our other "Main Streets" in Port Haney, Port Hammond, and Whonnock.



Fraseropolis

CANADA DAY IN MEMORIAL PEACE PARK

This year the museum will be joining the free celebration in Memorial Peace Park for July 1st. There will be a chance to dress up in costumes, play with games, giant inflatable toys, heritage crafts and an artifact touch-display. This event will run in the morning.

MUSIC ON THE WHARF

Over-looking the beautiful Fraser River, the "Music on the Wharf" concert series has something for everyone in the family. It 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 annual events. This year's concert schedule is below. Please bring your own lawn chair. All concerts are at the Port Haney Wharf and began at 7:30pm (with exception of August 25th which starts at 7pm).

July 13: John Pippus

July 27: Mozayic

August 10: 5 on a String

August 24: Reid Jamieson



MUSEUMS AND THE WEB 2015: CHICAGO

This year's Museum and the Web conference was held in Chicago, from April 6 to April 11th, providing a wide array of museum and cultural heritage professionals who wrote and presented papers on advanced research and applications of digital practice for cultural, natural and scientific heritage institutions.

Getting the chance to attend this conference was a very big deal for a small museum, not only to have access to behind the scenes tours at larger art museums and galleries in Chicago, but also to talk one on one with other professionals. I was able to attend; as for the last two years money allocated for professional development had not been used, mainly as no one conference stood out for staff in its usefulness. Museums and the Web spoke directly to issues and topics we were dealing with daily, so it felt like a great learning opportunity.

The week started off with a walking and architectural tour of the city, hosted by the Chicago

Architecture Foundation. The tour investigated how data is transforming how we plan, design and build public cities.

The walking tour launched the weeklong workshop and lecture series, and the two standout sessions for me were on "Digital Storytelling" and "How small-town museums and historical sites go digital". The misconception that all small museums "lack all of the new technology platforms" was debunked throughout these two lectures, and we looked at digital initiatives from across North America that highlighted ways in which museums were using technology to reach new and larger audiences.

One key project that stuck out to me was the Smithsonian's Main on Main Street exhibit, which engages small town audiences and brings attention to underserved rural communities. Through partnering with smaller museums, giving them access and providing a space (physical and online) for the underserved stories to have a voice, brings a very strong sense of ownership within the communities to the respective museums.

I spoke with the Director of the Main on Main Street exhibit, explained what we do at the Maple Ridge Museum & Community Archive, with our full-time staff of two, and various p/t employees and she was impressed with how much of our collection and archival information we had digitized. For a museum our scale having these resources available to do outreach and process research is not very common.

I walked away from our talk, and the lecture, with one word in my mind: partnerships. How can (larger) institutions partner together to support smaller ones?

This question is still on my mind a month later, along with a few other topics and ideas that we will hopefully be implementing over the next few months as we re-launch our website: mapleridgemuseum.org and take on a more active roll in digital storytelling, in hopes to reach a larger audience. *aw*

MAIN STREET PORT HANEY

The first streetscape in Maple Ridge that qualified as a “Main Street” was at River Road and 224th Street in Port Haney. Commercial development in Port Haney coincided with the arrival of the CPR and the creation by Thomas Haney of the Port Haney town site.

Today it may seem to be somewhat of a “vanity” move to take a chunk of agricultural/industrial land, lay it out as a town and name it after yourself but that was not uncommon. Prior to the arrival of the railway, all traffic was by water and wharves or “landings” were named after the owners of the land. When Thomas Haney purchased his land it was known as “Wickwire’s Landing” and that soon became “Haney’s Landing” and later Port Haney.

Much of what we see now as city responsibility fell to individuals who were able to make community-building decisions. Thomas Haney’s town site was both forward-thinking and ambitious and necessary to draw to Port Haney the elements that would make a small and vulnerable settlement into a thriving town. The small lots of the town site allowed farmers who had larger parcels of land some distance away to purchase a small piece of “main street” for a commercial development. This was how the first stores and rental accommodations in the form of hotels were started.

While town site lot sizes were registered and controlled, everything else was open to the entrepreneurial spirit. There was no zoning or business licensing with the only strict control being on the sale of alcohol. However, it is clear from personal records of pioneers that strong drink was readily available to be shipped on trains by the gallon so it was no impediment.

When Port Haney was first developed in the days following Thomas Haney’s arrival, there was little level ground next to the river west of 224th. However, the activity of brickmakers like the Becketts carved out the bank north of the railway tracks through the 1870s and 1880s and those spaces were then used for commercial development. The scar can still be seen as the land under and behind the current Billy Miner Pub.

By the early 1920s, a real Main Street had developed in Port Haney with a department store [Fuller Watson], a bank, a hotel, the CPR station, post office, real estate office and all the other elements of commercial activity essential to a thriving community. For a wonderful display of what Port Haney looked like in the mid-1920’s, visit the Dewdney Alouette Railway Society diorama on the lower level of the museum building. *vp*

Port Haney in 1910.





Port Haney in 1910.

The Bank of Montreal building is under construction in Mrs. Charlton's front yard. It was owned by her but leased to the bank.

RL Carter's general store supplied not only hardware and dry goods but there were rooms to rent above – essential for people relocating to Maple Ridge. The low roofed building to the left was the large livery stable also operated by the store owner.

The Haney station and its gardens provided a welcoming sight for visitors and for those travelling through. The large sign at left was installed in 1909 by the first version of our Chamber of Commerce – the Port Haney Progressive Association and it advertised the land for sale along with the number of boats (3) and trains (6) that served the community daily.

In the background, between the train station and the bank was the first recreation facility – Leggatt's Pool Hall.

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

