

Shawnigan Focus

Volume Three - Issue Eleven

NOVEMBER 2013

A Non-Profit Community Publication

UNVEILING OF LONSDALE STATUE



Sarah Doyle
*Communications &
Media Relations
Shawnigan Lake School*

Unveiling of Lonsdale Statue Kicks Off Centennial Era

On October 26th, 2013, an eight-foot tall, "larger-than-life" sculpture of Shawnigan Lake School's Founder and first Headmaster, Christopher Windley (C.W.) Lonsdale, was unveiled during the School's Founder's Day celebrations.

"As I look at this magnificent statue - all eight feet of it - I

feel more than ever that our Founder was something of a giant in the world of education, and I remain very proud to be upholding his legacy," said Shawnigan's current Headmaster, David Robertson.

Shawnigan will celebrate its one hundredth birthday in 2016. As part of the build up to the Centennial year, a statue of the Founder was commissioned and partly funded by a group of alumni, led by Stuart Milbrad '48, John Burr '49 and Francois Elmaleh

'53, all students during Mr. Lonsdale's tenure at Shawnigan (1916-1952). It wasn't hard to convince the School that a statue of the Founder was a natural tribute to the man whose vision and determination continues to play a profound role in Shawnigan's near-century of success.

Excerpt from remarks made by Phil Jarvis, Director of the Shawnigan Centennial, at the statue's unveiling:

"As Director of the Shawnigan Centennial, I am pleased to

welcome you all today to honour our Founder. It is just 26 months before the Centennial year of this school he built out of a rain forest. The motto of the Shawnigan Centennial is Building on Strength. Mr. Lonsdale's life and work embodied this phrase."

"The playwright Lanford Wilson once wrote, 'Whatever you do in your career make it matter, make it count.'

Looking around us today, we can see that Charles Windley Lonsdale certainly achieved that. And we are gathered at an appro-

priate location for the Statue close to the new Learning Commons and the Founders Study, then flanked by the Alumni garden, which was so graciously created a few years ago by John and Katharine Burr."

Guests at the unveiling included: statue donors; alumni; Board Members and faculty (both present and past), and many members of the Founder's extended family, including his granddaughter, Susan Birch, who traveled from the south of England to be in attendance.

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ABOUT THE FOCUS

The Shawnigan Focus is an independent, local, non-profit publication, produced by the volunteer Focus team. Shawnigan Focus endeavours to inform; promote harmony and involvement in the community; and interest a broad cross-section of the residents of Shawnigan Lake.

Shawnigan Focus is delivered, free of charge, to postal addresses in Shawnigan Lake (Area B). Out-of-town subscriptions are available for a fee. Contact: editor@shawniganfocus.ca

Views expressed in articles are not the opinions of The Shawnigan Focus, but of the authors.

Additional copies are available in The Village.

MAILING ADDRESS

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	Oct Norm	Cigarmaker's Bay		Discovery School		Museum		Elford Road	
		2013	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012
Average High	14.0	14.4	13.7	14.3	13.4	15.4	14.2	14.3	13.7
Average Low	5.7	5.4	6.6	4.6	5.8	5.7	6.3	5.1	5.7
Extreme High	28.3	18.0	23.5	17.4	23.5	21.0	25.4	18.5	23.0
Extreme Low	-5.7	-0.1	2.8	-0.5	2.3	1.6	2.2	1.0	2.0
Precipitation	104.8	24.8	228.7	26.3	166.4	23.4	195.0	19.4	200.2
Days w precip	14	9	16	11	16	10	16	8	19
Lake Temperature: Oct 6 th : 15° Oct 13 th : 15° Oct 20 th : 13° Oct 27 th : 12°									

Shawnigan Weather ~ October
UVIC Weather Network ~ by Grant Treloar

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO SEND US LETTERS...

The Focus will publish your thoughts on Shawnigan issues: bouquets you would like to offer to special people; things that strike you as funny; challenges you want our civic leaders to consider; and/or ideas that would better our community. Letters to the Editor must be accompanied by the author's full name, address and phone number, but the contact information, other than the name, will not be published. Letters should be limited to 300 words and we reserve the right to edit for brevity or to refuse inappropriate or abusive language. Letters should attack issues - not individuals or groups. Send letters to editor@shawniganfocus.ca

Response to Restell's Letter

Editor, the Focus:

In his recent letter, Mr. Restell expressed concern that I used too broad a brush in my September letter on who may have gained, besides the obvious benefactors, by the SIA permit being approved to dump five million tonnes of contaminated soil into the watershed of Shawnigan Lake. He implied that I have unfairly accused unnamed individuals and/or organizations of nefarious activities. Such was not my intention. My intention was to alert Focus readers that some indi-

viduals and/or organizations may well have or will profit from the SIA permit being issued by the Government.

The reality is that tens of millions of dollars are actively employed on Vancouver Island in the securing of permits from the Ministry of Environment, movement, storage, remediation, and cleanup of contaminated soil. Given the amount of money involved rest assured a few will gain, but most of us will pay.

Mr. Restell is concerned too with my focus on the Liberal Party of BC, which he obviously supports. If Mr. Restell knew me he would

know that I have steadfastly supported the Liberal Party of BC for decades and continue to despite its current lack of environmental integrity.

I contend that some individuals and/or organizations, besides those directly involved with the SIA permit, will gain or have gained by the Government issuing the SIA permit to dump five million tonnes of contaminated soil into the watershed of Shawnigan Lake. I stand by my contention and for those concerned with it then perhaps this old idiom applies, "If the shoe fits wear it".

Joseph Gollner, Oak Bay

Focus Furry Photos

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WHERE'S THE PADDLE?

(Photo by Janet Nielsen)

New power poles on the East side

According to the project supervisor, Steve Smith, BC Hydro is installing new power poles along East Shawnigan Lake Road. The crew will be at this for the next two months. This project is of interest for many reasons, including the notion that some of these poles were replaced not that long ago. I was assured that testing was done and many were in very poor shape.

Interestingly, the poles are being replaced with much taller ones. The taller poles will result in a more efficient electrical system because with taller poles, BC Hydro can use higher voltages. Higher voltages in turn mean less loss from electrical resistance along the lines. The result is a more efficient system.

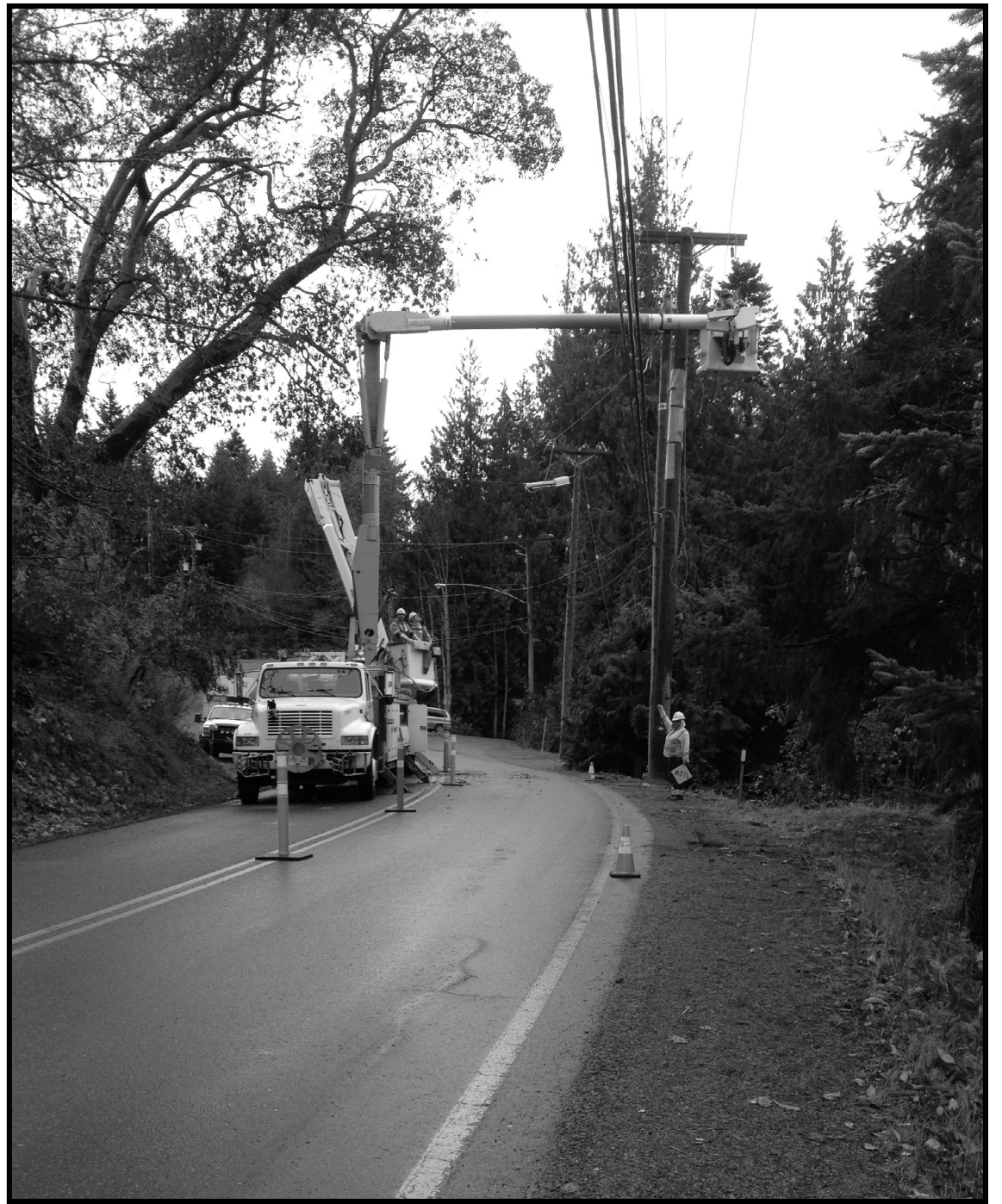
After passing by the workers several times, I also realized that the pole diggers were doing it the old-fashioned way: shovels, picks and hard labour. No powered augers like one would expect in this day and age. I was told that this is common practice as the auger bits break easily when they hit rock.

If you have driven along the East Shawnigan Lake Road lately, you would have passed what seems to be an endless supply of orange signs, flags, flag people and flashing signs. You can't miss them! And yet...according to Steve, the biggest challenge with this

project is that Shawnigan motorists apparently do not want to slow down...even when warned in advance, and asked politely.

In fact, there has already been an incident during this project. The driver of a grey Ford 350 clipped one of the flag people with his mirror after refusing to slow down. He also chose to keep driving. Hard to imagine this attitude after the unfortunate, and very recent, event in Duncan where a flag person, a woman in her 20s, was pinned under a 25-tonne truck after it backed over her. She died later from her injuries. Then again, on November 5th, an erratic motorist, this time in Victoria, also refused to stop for flaggers. In this incident, a traffic flagger was injured when the dark grey SUV rammed into her shoulder. The car then struck a road painter and spun him around. The driver then sped up Bear Mountain Parkway on the wrong side of the road, into oncoming traffic, and hopped the median to avoid a head-on collision.

We all have places to go... we are all in a hurry and we all make choices. The delays on the Shawnigan Road aren't long and failing to stop for a flag person carries a \$196 fine. Why would anyone choose to put others in danger and/or risk criminal charges to save five minutes?



The Dayliner

By Joan Wachtin

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Than to ride on our performer
In the morning.

Nothing could be better
Than to sit and write a letter
(with a Dayliner pen; not a feather)
In the morning.

Nothing could be dumber
Than to take away our train – a bummer
In the morning.



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Engagement of communities in watershed management

Dr. Bruce Fraser,
*Area Director
Shawnigan Lake,
Cowichan Valley
Regional District*

The Achilles heel watershed management is an ongoing inability to deal effectively with assessing and managing the cumulative effects of the ever-growing human footprint on the land. This is especially true of community watersheds such as the Shawnigan basin. The new **Water Sustainability Act** needs to establish clear responsibility for management at the watershed scale. In the absence of a single responsible agency, this will have to be provided by a collection of agencies and community organizations. The Act must create that collective mechanism.

One of the most important parts of the current Water Sustainability Act draft legislation is also the weakest. The section on engagement of communities in watershed management needs significant strengthening.

There are five major reasons why communities need to become materially engaged in watershed management:

1. Both the federal and provincial governments are finding it necessary to reduce the staff and budgets of environmental agencies that would normally provide for on-the-ground monitoring of watershed conditions and for taking remedial action where environmental problems are taking place. As the commitments of central agencies are reduced there are greater demands for citizen and local government based agencies to step into the breach.

2. As the human footprint on the landscape inevitably grows, community watersheds are experiencing cumulative effects which include: interface fire vulnerability, transportation density, resource development, increasing recreation uses, and increasing pollution. In most cases there is no integrating mechanism or responsible agency that is capable of managing all these

elements. Local governments are being challenged with addressing cumulative impacts out of sheer necessity.

3. What land use planning is occurring, even at the local government level, tends to be confined to the assessment of individual development applications, accompanied by nominal multi-agency referrals. There are few instances where proposals are subjected to watershed scale scrutiny. Watershed scale thinking is beginning to take hold in hundreds of British Columbia communities, but it is arising from citizens not from government agencies.

4. Climate change is now appreciated as a major influence on future water supply and volatility of community watersheds. Changes in the annual hydrologic cycle, particularly changes in frequency and intensity of wet and dry extremes, will require adjustments at the community level. These adjustments are likely to be necessary on a continuing basis and are only

likely to be perceived by local people as they experience the changes directly. We will have to engage citizen and local government organizations to conduct the necessary watershed stewardship.

5. Collaboration is required. No sector has enough people, time or financial resources to make progress on its own. Successful management of community watersheds over the long term will depend on our ability to pool resources, integrate effort, and make watershed stewardship a willingly embraced collective endeavour of "everyman".

The revised water act needs to be actively innovative in bringing about a new order of community engagement. It is wildly insufficient to speak in terms of a few "advisory committees" as though there was a solidly established government agency to advise. What is needed is legislation that seriously enables collaboration at the watershed scale and provides local govern-

ment with the letters patent and resource allocations to bring it about.

In the Cowichan Valley Regional District, we are committed to working with the province to articulate a suitable partnership arrangement for community watershed stewardship and to test it in a practical application. We feel confident that the recent experience of the Cowichan Watershed Board, the developing ecological governance model of the Shawnigan Basin Authority, and the intention of the Regional District to create a regional scale watershed authority can provide a testing ground that will produce practical and useful results. Local government leadership, with extensive engagement with First Nations, local watershed stewardship groups and private industry, is needed to provide both the necessary degree of accountability to the provincial leadership and the grass roots inclusion that gives strength and durability to watershed management.

Water quality testing

Every 5 years, the Ministry of Environment Water Quality division does testing of the water in Shawnigan Lake, around the lake, along Shawnigan Creek down to the ocean, and at several locations on the ocean near Mill Bay.

Testing is done in two parts. The first part, done in August this year, collects water samples at the driest time of the year. The reasoning is that this is as bad as it will get, before the next rainy season.

The second part is done once the rains begin to fall. We had a lot of rain in September this year. That was much earlier than the testing has been done before, so the testing was delayed until after the rains started in October. But - we had no rain in October. The rain finally started again in early November, so sampling is on.

These rains wash any pollutants off the land into the lake. By getting water from

streams around the lake, we get it before it is diluted by mixing with other lake water.


There are 4 groups of volunteers who collect water samples. Each group goes to 6 or 7 sites. Water is collected in small sterile plastic bottles. The water samples are stored in a cooler along

with an icepack.

The 4 coolers are taken to a testing facility as soon as possible. This ensures that the sample is fresh when tested. Testing is to discover levels of both organic (plant and animal originated) based and inorganic (result of industrial activity) based pollutants.

Samples will be collected for 5 weeks starting November 5. The results will be available in the new year.

This same collection method was used during the last series of tests, in 2007. We will know how the lake has changed since then once these results are in.



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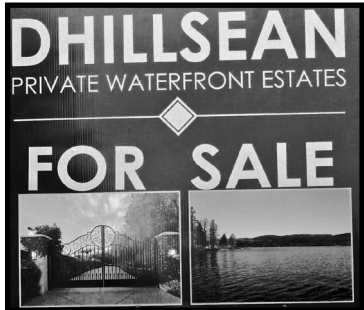
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Worthington subdivision update: Lots are now for sale



Dave Hutchinson
Shawnigan Focus

Editor’s Note: This is an update following previous Focus articles on this controversial, waterfront subdivision. Please go to www.shawniganfocus.ca and search for “Worthington” for background information.

Signs appeared in late August announcing that “Dhillsean

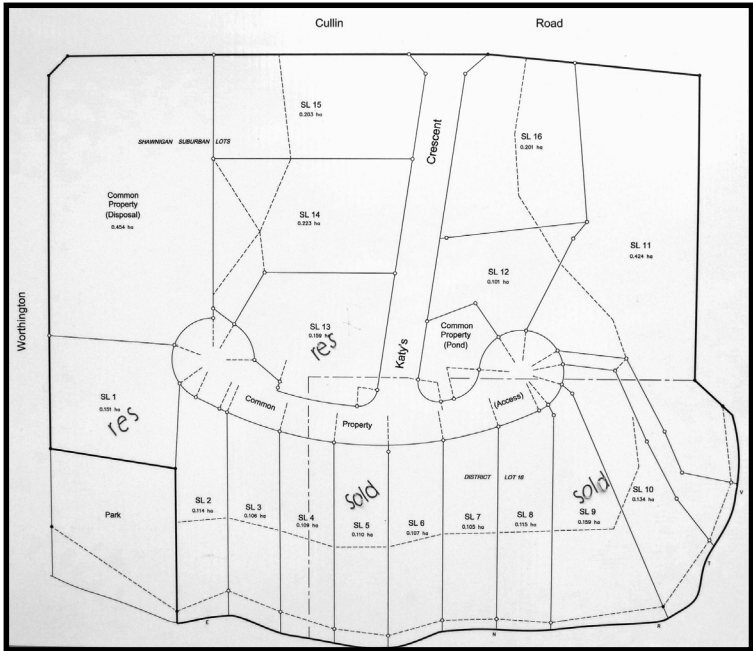
– Private Waterfront Estates” were “Coming Soon”. The signs have now been modified to say that the 16 lots are actually “For Sale”. There is a photo depicting an imposing gated entrance. There is also a lot-diagram showing that two lots are already “sold” and another two are “re-seved”. It is interesting that Lot 13 is reserved. A creek used to run through it during the winter and it still has drainage problems. There are saturated areas adjacent to strata septic field which might be of interest to the health authorities. Internet searches do not reveal pricing information but anecdotal reports are \$800,000 and

up for the narrow slivers of waterfront. This definitely raises a few eyebrows!

The “Eagle Tree” which caused a complete reconfiguration of the original plan, is still standing. This magnificent old-growth fir is a solitary reminder of what was an extraordinary stand of ancient trees until the property was clear-cut. It still cradles the massive nest which was utilized again this season.

On August 29th, one of the 23,000 lb. concrete docks broke free from its pilings and wandered around the lake before being towed back and secured by helpful boaters. The associated problems with the

array of massive docks have been previously documented. The failing brackets have recently been replaced with a new design and will hopefully prevent further mishaps.



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SRA report

Jason Walker Director
Shawnigan Residence Association

The SRA’s Annual General Meeting will be held at 7 pm on Thursday November 28th, 2013 in the Shawnigan Lake School Hugh Wilkinson Auditorium. Everyone is welcome. Memberships will be sold and renewed at the door for \$10. Our guest speaker will be Mr. Sean Hern of Farris LLP, SRA’s counsel, who will speak to the Environmental Appeal Board (EAB) process and action before the court. Then there will be time for a Q&A period.

On Friday, October 25th, 2013, the Environmental Appeal Board (EAB) rejected a request by South Island Aggregates (SIA) also known as Cobble Hill Holdings (CHH) that information submitted by CHH in the EAB hearings be subject to confidentiality and

not released to the public.

CHH had argued that it would be “inappropriate for the material filed herewith to make its way onto those websites,” in reference to the websites maintained by SRA and CVRD, but EAB chair [Alan Anderson](#) responded that “... the appeal process is public in nature. Hearings are open to the public, and information provided to the Board by one party must also be provided to all other parties to the appeal. Moreover, once a document is filed with the Board it is a prima facie – must be disclosed to the public.”

The SRA supports the EAB’s decision on this matter and will continue to keep our members and the public informed during the appeal process. “Everything about this is a public matter. It’s our water source that is at stake

and any attempt to silence the SRA or any other body or person through the appeal board process is completely and wholeheartedly unacceptable” stated Calvin Cook, SRA Director.

The SRA continues to work closely with the [CVRD](#) in this matter. Both organizations are committed to preventing CHH from operating a contaminated soil landfill in the Shawnigan Lake watershed, which would place the environment and drinking water at risk.

Please visit the SRA website for more information, the EAB letter and CHH’s response to the SRA and CVRD’s request for a stay of the permit.

To make a contribution to the SRA legal action fund or to become a member visit www.thesra.ca

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One local businessman’s opinion

Rick Restell

Where are the boundaries?

We’ve discussed how things work and what we need to do - even what our local government might look like. Who, and what area, should we include?

Even if you are of the opinion that Shawnigan should “go it alone” you have to ask what area that encompasses. Is it CVRD electoral area B? How far down towards Mill Bay or toward Cobble Hill? Is Cougar Ridge in or out? What about the Malahat - both the moun-

tain and the Nation?

Many neighbourhoods vote in area B and get their mail in Cobble Hill.

Is there a strategy involved in picking and choosing neighbourhoods that might bring lots of tax revenue? Do we try to avoid neighbourhoods with crumbling infrastructure?

And what about the watershed? If we just want to control the water, then all the residents along Shawnigan Lake Rd from Renfrew would be outside, excluding all of Silvermine Estates, Burnham Park and Highland Ridge.

These questions need to be addressed if we are to ever move forward with an incorporation strategy. The success of our case to the Provincial Government to incorporate is dependant upon us having good answers to these issues and more.

Feedback at this stage is vital and I encourage all interested parties to write the Focus. We need all the input we can get. Hopefully the next article will be a summary of the feedback from all the articles written on this subject.

What’s happening at the museum now?

Lori Treloar
Curator, Shawnigan Lake Museum

Through fundraising with the Thrifty’s Smile Card Program, the Shawnigan Lake Historical Society has mounted three

archival photos on the side of the museum, as part of our ‘Outdoor Art Gallery’ project. As more funds become available, more photos will be mounted. To make this ‘gallery’ more accessible to

the public, a flat space for viewing was envisioned.

Ron Cuthbert, of Cuthbert Construction, made this happen by generously donating his time and his machines to ‘dig out’ the gal-

lery space for us. Thank you, Ron. We appreciate your support!

As time and funding permits, a retaining wall, gravel and possibly paving stones will be added to complete the proj-

ect. If you would like to help, please consider using a museum dedicated Thrifty’s Smile Card. Drop by the museum Friday through Sunday 11:30-4 or email shawniganlakemuseum@shaw.ca for more details.



Adventure cookies steal the show

Cowichan Family Care-givers Support Society

There was much to love about the 2013 Shawnigan Lake Adventure: the walking, biking, kayaking, geocaching, massages and live music all had their fans. But the universal favourite had to be the lavender chocolate chip cookies. Now we are counting on you to come back for the 10th

anniversary of this event on June 1, but if you can’t wait, here’s the recipe:

Chewy Lavender Chocolate Chip Cookies:

1 ¾ cups unbleached flour
½ teaspoon baking soda
¼ teaspoon salt
¾ cup Earth Balance Vegan Buttery Margarine, melted
1 ½ cups sugar

1 teaspoon molasses
½ teaspoon agave nectar
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
1 ½ tablespoon EnerG Egg Replacer + 3 tablespoons water, mixed together
1 heaping cup of chocolate or carob chips
2 tablespoons dried lavender flowers

1. Sift together flour, baking soda and salt.

2. In a separate bowl, combine melted margarine with sugar, molasses, and agave ... beat well by hand or with a mixer.

3. Add vanilla and EnerG mixture and beat well.

4. Add the dry ingredients to the wet and mix gently until blended (don’t overmix). Stir in lavender and chocolate chips.

5. With a large spoon drop batter onto parchment-lined cookie sheet and bake in a preheated oven at 325 for 12 to 14 minutes, until golden. Do not overcook. Cool on wire rack ... they should be crisp on the outside and chewy on the inside.

Note: Ingredients can be found at the Duncan Garage.

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CVRD transit needs transforming!

Lois Morrow
SRA Representative

I attended the second of two public meetings on the CVRD Paratransit Study on Tuesday, October 29th, at Kerry Park. The meeting was presented as an opportunity for public input; however I would characterize it as more of a public information session with limited input from the public. Fully three quarters of the people there were either CVRD directors or staff, and staff members from the BC Transportation ministry. With a few exceptions, the public who did attend were there as I was, representing larger groups such as the Arbutus Ridge and Satellite Park Residents Associations, or seniors and school associations. This article is a brief summary of the meeting.

For transit purposes, South Cowichan includes Cowichan Bay and Glenora, and vir-

tually all of the proposed improvements are focused on the northern portions of the South Cowichan map. In fact, Director Bruce Fraser pointed out that the maps that BC Transit were using did not include the southern portion of Area B, and the transit consultants admitted that these areas are not even being considered for service. Shawnigan residents who live in the three housing developments around the south end of the lake, and a good portion of those living around the mid-portion and southern part of the lake are paying taxes for a service they have no hope of ever receiving.

There were four service alternatives on the agenda, options developed by transit consultants after the first public meeting:

Conventional fixed schedule/fixed route, leaving the three routes now serving

South Cowichan unchanged.

Flex routing, a fixed schedule but a certain number of deviations from the route allowed as requested.

Dial-a-bus, a fixed schedule from a hub, but a variable route based on user calls.

Taxi script, which means that on request, the system will provide a taxi for transportation to a transit hub to meet a scheduled bus, and the rider will pay only a one or two dollar premium over the regular bus fare.

Of these, only taxi script is being considered for East Shore and West Shore Shawnigan, and as mentioned above, none of these alternatives would extend to all areas of Area B.

The numbers were somewhat shocking to me. The average fare per passenger per ride is \$1.50 to \$2.00, yet the existing cost to the transit system per ride is \$12.20, divided equally between regional district and provincial taxes. This cost per ride will increase considerably depending on the alternatives implemented,

rising to \$14.00 to \$18.00 per ride if the proposed taxi script option is implemented in East and West Shore Shawnigan Lake. To use an old quote: "They're not going to make it on the volume."

In any local discussions about transit services, many people question the use of large buses for routes without significant ridership. Currently there are only large (35 foot, 31 seat) buses assigned to all three South Cowichan routes. At the meeting, BC Transportation staff indicated that buses are provided from their provincial fleet, and that swaps to smaller 20 seat buses could be made through their department. This is a service alternative improvement that would, in my opinion, be welcomed by Shawnigan residents.

Another service improvement considered at the October 29 meeting was a later bus leaving from Duncan - the last one to South Cowichan now leaves at 6PM. This may work for certain purposes, however I cannot

see any woman getting off a bus in rural Shawnigan at 9PM, and walking through a wooded area (as I would have to) to reach home. It's not a priority improvement from my perspective, though the suggestion came from public input at the first paratransit study meeting.

The Cowichan Valley to Victoria routes were not part of this study, only service within the region, although there was some discussion at the meeting about how local buses connect to the commuter locations. Ridership to and from Victoria is steadily increasing, and there have been requests to expand the service hours.

The Shawnigan Residents Association board welcomes input from any resident of Area B on this issue.

The website for more information about the Paratransit Study is: http://www.bctransit.com/transitfuture/cowichan_future.cfm

The website to contact the Residents Association is:

<http://www.thesra.ca/>



1st Shawnigan Lake Scouts

Christmas Tree Sale

Saturday, December 14, 2013
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What will your tree say about you?

Elijah Fraser
Shawnigan Focus

It's that time of year again. Families will soon be setting out in search of the centre piece for the season. For some it is a ritual. Warmed by hot drinks, with bells and carols in their ears, mothers and fathers will scan the rows of trees discussing the merits of this one or that until, to the chorus of "can we go yet," they will settle on the perfectly trimmed tree.

Growing up in Southern Alberta, our family's tradition was to go Christmas tree "hunting" on Crown Land. My parents would buy a permit and, along with extended family and friends, we would proceed to our designated area. We made a day of it. I have fond memories of my first snowmobile ride, toboggans, bonfires and hot chocolate. With fewer options than a u-pick farm, I don't know if it was more or less of a challenge to make the final decision. The trees would then be dragged back to a volunteer's trailer or lashed to the roof.

I am disappointed that I can not share this tradition with my own children as Christmas

tree permits are not available on Southern Vancouver Island. And if you decide to "poach" a tree, the fines can be quite steep. Local Woodstock Evergreen Christmas Tree Farm made news last year as they became the victim of one Grinch, who stole evergreen boughs from their trees. This resulted in thousands of dollars in damage.

Then of course there is the real vs. artificial debate. The artificial tree has come a long way from the original which was created by a toilet bowl brush company in the 1930s. They seem to have come full circle in the assessment of their environmental impact, as the ability of real trees to capture carbon and be composted are considered. I guess it depends how many tanks of gas you burn in your SUV searching for and disposing of the perfect tree. Still, for those not wishing to purchase a tree annually, with storage space, allergies, and or strata rules, artificial may be the way to go.

I used to enjoy telling people I had bought a live tree. "We did too, we got ours at Walmart," they would re-

spond. I would then explain rather that my tree was still alive. For those with room in their garden, this may be the ultimate environmentally friendly tree. After the holidays you plant it. Offered for sale by many local nurseries and farm supply stores these trees are slightly more expensive. If you wanted a tree anyway this may be the thing for you. Just be sure to pick a variety that suits the location you intend to plant - no Douglas Firs next to septic fields. Although they can't be kept inside quite as long, they also have the added benefit of not increasing the fire risk of your home during the holidays. In recent years, as I have run out of garden space, I have taken to buying locally grown "Scouts" trees, sold in the Shawnigan Village.

This year, which traditions will you pass on to your children? Will your tree support a charity or community group? Will it be locally grown? How will you dispose of your tree? Will the experience of bringing home the tree be as important as that tree itself? Be it a Noble Fir, Scotch Pine, or Blue Spruce what will your tree say about you?

Koksilah Sandstone

Brent Beach
Shawnigan Focus

Baron, Sandstone, Bridge, Castle

While surveying the outflow creek at the railway bridge, I decided to measure the bridge and its supports in order to build a computer scale model of the bridge and creek bed.

I have been on this bridge 50 times in the last year to get water levels at one of our gauges, but did not look closely at the bridge supports themselves. In order to get the measurement of the supports I had to get pretty close. I finally noticed that the blocks appeared to be sandstone and wondered about their history.

Thanks to google, the resulting websites and the Victoria Library, I was able to piece together the history of this bridge.

To set the stage, relying largely on "The Esquimalt

& Nanaimo Railway" by Donald MacLachlan, the deal that brought British Columbia into Confederation in 1871 included the assurance that within 10 years a railway would be completed "to connect the seaboard of British Columbia with the railway system of Canada." At the time, half of the people in BC lived on Vancouver Island so the seaboard was Esquimalt.

The federal government of the day fell before construction could begin. The incoming PM - J.A. MacDonald - lost his seat in Ontario. He then ran in a by-election in Victoria and won! The train deal was on again, with the terminus in Victoria.

Coal Baron Dunsmuir was given approximately 20% of Vancouver Island and \$750 000 in return for building the line. Yes, Canada agreed to build the line, but BC paid for it by giving up Crown land. Construction began in Na-

naimo and Victoria, the two contracts eventually meeting a Cliffside in Shawnigan Lake.

As the northern section passed by the Bright Angle Park area north of Cowichan Station they discovered a sandstone deposit - "heavy sandstone beds that show a fairly uniform blue-grey colour." The Koksilah Stone Quarry Company was started. I have walked the rail line north of Cowichan Station looking for any sign of this quarry and found none. I have also driven the roads in the area and found no trace. Do you know where this quarry was located?

Stone from the quarry was immediately used in the bridge at Cowichan Station, just 1 mile to the south. It was then used along the rest of the northern section of the railway: at the railway bridge over the Shawnigan outflow creek, in the railway bridge near Recreation Road as well

as in foundations for trestles. This section of the railway was completed in time for the official Last Spike ceremony on August 13, 1886.

Sandstone from the Koksilah Stone Quarry was used for several large building in Victoria over the years, including: Craigdarroch Castle, The Metropolitan United Church, a brewery and several others.

Dunsmuir bid on supplying the stone for the Legislature buildings. These buildings were built starting in 1893. Dunsmuir was initially awarded the contract for the south side of the building (the back side). Perhaps it was felt that a cheaper stone could be used for the less visible parts of the building. In the end, the Koksilah sandstone was not used. Dunsmuir sued the provincial government and

was awarded \$12,412 for breach of contract.

The Koksilah Sandstone has stood the test of time. The blocks in the outflow creek bridge show little weathering - but considerable discolouration after over 125 years. You can see and feel the Koksilah sandstone most easily at the railway bridge at Recreation Road. It is a blind corner, so watch out!

In defence of Francis Rattenbury, the architect of the Legislative buildings, the discolouration apparent in the outflow creek bridge may have made this stone less desirable than the harder rock finally used - a rock quarried from Haddington Island, a volcanic mountain top just north of Port Hardy.

Links to source documents at BrentattheFocus.blogspot.com.



Take a Hike!

Robin Massey
Shawnigan Focus

Parksville! When I think of Parksville, I think of beautiful beaches, romantic getaways and spa retreats. Over the summer I had a wonderful birthday gift, from my mommy, to lounge about at the well known Tigh Na Mara Resort. However, those that know me understand that although I do like quiet moments, it can be difficult for me to be still for too long. Naturally I googled for the nearest trail to explore and, lo and behold, wouldn't you know that just down the street is the trailhead for Top Bridge Regional Trail. We immediately added hiking to our itinerary in between tapas and hot stone massages, and boy are we glad we did!

The trail itself actually starts from Rathrevor Beach, but can also be accessed from Tuan Road for those staying on Re-

sort Way. From Rathrevor, it's approximately 5 kilometres one way, or about 3 from Resort Way, to reach to Englishman River Regional Park. On the trail, you will experience sweet scents of the rainforest, extensive rooting systems, old growth trees, pretty wildflowers, an abundance of birds and many alcoves to pop into the river for a refreshing plunge.

Like some of the other trails I've hiked on this beautiful, amazing island of ours, when I see the large moss covered boulders haphazardly stacked and balancing on the sides of the trail that parallels the river path, it reminds me of a different time period, where ruins were plentiful. The fantastically maintained trail will take you under a train trestle and all the way to the Top Bridge Crossing which features an 81 meter pedestrian/cyclist suspension bridge that crosses the English-

man River toward Errington, and beyond.

The sights at the bridge crossing are absolutely stunning as well, with deep splash pockets and multitudes of rock formations that provide a nice relaxing sundeck to sprawl out and enjoy the natural sounds of the river rushing past. I have read that Top Bridge offers petroglyphs as well, and although I did not personally see them - perhaps you will!

For maps and more information check out <http://www.rdn.bc.ca/cms.asp?wpID=2614>.

If you have any questions about this hike or any hike that I've written about, please feel free to contact me at robin@theomtree.com. Be safe and have a happy adventure.

Robin frolics in Cowichan Valley's viewpoints with The Iron Butts (www.theomtree.com)

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Young Seniors Action Group Society

Helen Lainchbury
Y.S.A.G.S.

Tai Chi

Would you like to try Tai Chi? Y.S.A.G.S. has several physical activities and Tai Chi is one of them. This is carried out on Friday mornings from 9:00 to 11:00 AM - beginners at 9:00 and intermediates at 10:00. This is an ancient form of exercise that you see in parks in China and in other countries. It was developed as a martial art for self defence and now has become a highly effective exercise for all ages, especially for seniors. There are many types of Tai Chi. At YSAGS, we have what is called "Serenity Tai Chi" consisting of 108 movements. It takes up to 8 or 9 months to learn the basics but practice, we learn to improve each year. If you approach the Tai Chi with an open heart and open

mind, it will serve you well.

Tai Chi improves balance, is a safe way to build muscle strength, circulation and co-ordination and releases stress by teaching you to relax. It is an exercise in which you learn slow, smooth movements directing your mind to focus on the moves of the 108 steps of Tai Chi. A good exercise and a friendly, social class. All are welcome to come and watch and if you find it interesting, we have a new class starting each September. You would need to become a member of YSAGS (55+) and then there is no charge for the class. Join in the fun, improve your body and meet new friends to socialize with.

Information about Y.S.A.G.S.

We are a non-profit registered seniors society. Our membership comes mainly from the Shawnigan Lake, Mill Bay and Cobble Hill area. We



meet monthly from September to June with presentations from our members or guest speakers. We have special activities such as Dinners, Bus trips, Barbeques and Picnics. We have sub groups that

meet weekly and are led by group leaders. Examples are Walking, Woodcarving, Line Dancing, Photography, Computers, Quilting, Crafts, Chess, Zumba, Canasta and others. Other than our \$20 annual

membership fee, most activities are free.

Check out our blog: <http://blogysag.ca/> . Contact us by email: ysagssl@gmail.com or Phone: 250 743 8344.



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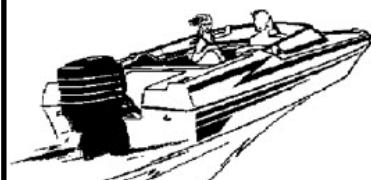
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Department Members Attended 9 Calls in October.
Department Officers attended 1 burning complaints.

- | | |
|---|---|
| ★ Thursday, Oct 3 – 1st Responder in the Village | Arbutus Mtn Estates |
| ★ Thursday, Oct 10 – 1st Responder in Burnum Mobile Home Park | ★ Monday, Oct 21 – Mutual Aid Vehicle Fire on the Malahat |
| ★ Monday, Oct 14 – 1st Responder off Cameron-Taggart Rd | ★ Friday, Oct 25 – MVI on Shawnigan Lake Rd |
| ★ Tuesday, Oct 15 – Lift Assist off Renfrew Rd | ★ Saturday, Oct 26 – 1st Responder off Heald Rd |
| ★ Tuesday, Oct 15 – 1st Responder in | ★ Saturday, Oct 26 – 1st Responder in the Village |

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SHAWNIGAN FOCUS

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- ★ **Area B Director's meetings**
1st Monday of each month – 7 pm at SL Community Centre
- ★ **Shawnigan Advisory Planning Commission (APC)**
1st Thursday of each month. 7 pm at Inspire Gathering Place
- ★ **Shawnigan Parks and Recreation Commission**
3rd Thursday of each month 6:30 pm at SLCC
- ★ **Shawnigan Improvement District**
2nd Monday of each month 7 pm at #1 Fire Hall
- ★ **Shawnigan Residents Association (SRA) Board meeting**
3rd Tuesday of each month 7pm - www.thesra.ca
- ★ **Shawnigan Lake Business Association (SLBA)**
1st Tuesday of each month 7 pm at the Village Chipperry. SLBA Christmas in the Village - Sunday, December 1 from 5-7
- ★ **Shawnigan Lake Community Association**
4th Monday of each month 7pm. Contact bburr@shaw.ca
- ★ **Shawnigan Village Development Council**
Meeting times TBA. Everyone welcome!
- ★ **Shawnigan Watershed Roundtable**
See website for details: www.shawniganwater.org
- ★ **Inspire! Arts, Culture and Heritage**
Inspire! Visioning meeting, November 20th 7-9 pm. Info: woodruffmusic@gmail.ca Gathering Space hours: M/W/F 11-4: www.inspireshawnigan.com
- ★ **Young Seniors Action Group (YSAG)**
Info at: www.ysag.ca email: ysagssl@gmail.com
- ★ **Shawnigan Lake Museum**
Hours: Friday, Saturday, Sunday 11:30-4.
www.shawniganlakemuseum.com email: shawniganlakemuseum@shaw.ca
- ★ **Shawnigan Scouts**
Cubs (8-10 Years): Each Wednesday, 6:30-8:00pm SLCC
Scouts (11-14 Years): Each Wednesday, 7:00-9:00pm Discovery School
Venturers (14-17 Years): Mondays after school
Register: William Thow: thow@pacificcoast.net
- ★ **Ecovillage Event**
OUR Zero-Mile Meal Eatery at OUR Advent Feast - Sat. Dec. 7. A skill share starts at 1pm, followed by a tour, appies, and dinner at 5 with casual holiday carolling after the local foods feast. www.ourecovillage.org or info@ourecovillage.org
- ★ **www.exploringshawniganlake.com**
- ★ **Shawnigan Lake Facebook**
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/129586433786330/>

What is it? Where is it? Why is it?

CONGRATULATIONS: OCTOBER!!!

The winner for October was Ros Cuthbert. The photo showed one of the "PRIVATE PROPERTY - Video Surveillance - No Trespassing" signs attached to the docks associated with the controversial subdivision on Worthington Point.



first correct answer sent to editor@shawniganfocus.ca wins two Specialty Coffees at Shawnigan House!



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SIA permit status

Where do we stand on the SIA Permit to dump contaminated fill?

The situation:

Four words you need to know:

1 **Permit** - the Ministry of Environment (MoE) has given SIA a permit to accept contaminated soil, subject to many conditions.

2 **Appeal** - there are currently 5 appeals to the Environmental Appeal Board (EAB), asking that the permit be set aside.

3 **Stay** - there are currently 2 requests to the EAB to prevent SIA from accepting any contaminated soil until the Appeal has been decided.

4 **Suit** - the CVRD asked the Supreme Court of BC for an injunction to overturn the permit.

The Dates:

- ★ August 21: the MoE awarded the permit.
- ★ August 26: the Shawnigan Residents Association (SRA) appealed the permit to the Environmental Appeal Board (EAB).
- ★ September 11: the SRA asked the EAB for a stay until the appeal is decided (Lowen Affidavit).
- ★ September 12: CVRD notified SIA that a contaminated soil facility is not a permitted use of their land.
- ★ September 13: CVRD appealed the permit to the EAB.

- ★ October 4: CVRD applied to the EAB for a stay of the permit pending the appeal.
- ★ October 11: CVRD applied to the Supreme Court of BC to overturn the permit.
- ★ October 21: MoE noted EAB appeals; said material in appeals does not change its view of the permit (within the limits of its jurisdiction).
- ★ October 24: South Island Aggregates (SIA) asked that the appeal and stay submissions be confidential.
- ★ October 21 - 24: SIA responded to request for a stay with several affidavits including one from the Malahat band in support of the SIA position.
- ★ October 25: EAB replied that all submissions are public.

Many of these documents can be found on the SRA web site. Links to all documents also at BrentattheFocus.blogspot.com

My picks:

If you only read one or two of these documents, the most readable and the one that gives you the best overview of the stay and appeal is the CVRD filing to the EAB (September 13). Many of the other documents are more complicated. The CVRD petition to the Supreme Court (October 11) is the only document that includes reasons for a permanent injunction based on zoning.

All are worth reading for a complete understanding of the case.

Timeline:

The EAB has a web page listing dates for oral and written arguments for the various cases it is considering. Neither contains any mention of this case. Scheduled cases are listed into April 2014. The EAB appeal could take months. There is currently no time line for the Supreme Court case.

Tactics:

The SIA submission to the EAB includes the fact that it has signed contracts to accept contaminated soil. Those contracts require it to accept that material before the end of this year. SIA argues that these contracts force the EAB to deny the stay.

The original SIA Mines Permit allowed it to accept fill for remediation only as actually required for remediation. SIA stockpiled a mountain of fill on an adjacent property long before it could be used in remediation.

My reading of the SIA Contaminated Soil Permit is that many facilities on the site must be in place and inspected before any contaminated material is allowed on the site.

By signing these contracts for deposit of contaminated material before the permit inspections are complete, and before the EAB appeal process has been completed, appear to me to be putting the MoE and the EAB in untenable positions.

Out of town subscriptions available!! info: editor@shawniganfocus.ca



The Malahat Nation would like to extend a special thank you to the following sponsors, supporters, friends, artists and volunteers for their generous contributions towards our First Annual Gala Fundraiser held at the Brentwood College School on November 2, 2013 to support our Kwunew Kwasun Cultural Resource Centre. The night was a huge success and we raised more than \$100,000!

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A special thanks to all the artisans who generously gave so much to support Malahat Nation.

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