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March – April 2014

OCS Annual General Meeting

Gerry Buydens

The Annual General Meeting of the Old Cemeteries Society of Victoria was held on Wednesday, February 5. There were 47 people in attendance. The meeting was chaired by Gerry Buydens, President of OCS. Gerry summarized the highlights of the president's report, and due to the passing of Jac Slik in August also presented the treasurer's report.

Gerry gave a report on the Thrifty's Smile Cards and their importance as a fund raiser for OCS. Smile Cards may be obtained from the OCS office. We have raised \$1500 from the Smile Cards which was our goal for this year. Unfortunately Thrifty's will not increase our maximum, so the program lapses until May 4, 2014, at which time we will apply for a new program.

The Executive for 2014 are Gerry Buydens - President; Wilf Bruch – Past President; Vice President – vacant; to be confirmed - Treasurer; Michael Halleran - Secretary; and Members at large are: Bente Svendsen, Drew Waveryn, Linda Richards, Stewart Dashwood, Fern Perkins, and Sharon Welsh.

Fern Perkins and Sylvia van Kirk spoke on *Bringing the Cemeteries of Central and North Saanich Alive*.

Here are answers to a couple of questions that were asked at the conclusion of the presentation:

- 1) When was the name of Kuper Island change to Penelakut Island? It was in 2010 when the Island was renamed after the native people who have traditionally lived there.
- 2) Who is the little boy in the picture on the gravestone at St Stephens Church? He represents the little boy the Harrisons adopted when they lived in New Zealand in 1966. His name is Charles Harrison (named after Ted's father) and he lives in Toronto.

A copy of the Treasurer's Report and all other Committee Reports are available upon request from the office.

Norah Reksten, our Office Co coordinator, is leaving to take on a full time teaching position. We wish Norah well in her new job. Norah was presented with a thank you card and a small gift.

Sunday Tour Brochures will be delivered by volunteers to the various public libraries and the local archives, namely Esquimalt, Victoria and Oak Bay. They are also available at the Sunday tours or from the office.

Volunteer Opportunity

Sharon Welsh

We are looking to recruit a few volunteer Cashiers/Ticket Sellers so we have a pool in case unexpected circumstances arise. If you are able to help, please phone Sharon @ 250-995-1322 or email afterprior@telus.net

Spring Tour Schedule

March 2. *Unbuilt Victoria.* This is the title of Dorothy Mindenhalls' book that examines architectural schemes that were proposed, but rejected. The author will visit the graves of some of the people involved in both amazingly bad and stunningly good buildings that never were built.

March 9. *Odd Fellows 150th Anniversary.* The Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF) had its first meeting in Victoria on March 10, 1864. John Adams will visit the graves of many who were there and recount the fascinating history, symbolism and work of this secret society dedicated to Friendship, Love and Truth.

March 16. *Pioneer Square. Fort Victoria.* In mid-March 1843 James Douglas and a group of Hudson's Bay Company workers (mostly French Canadians) began construction of Fort Victoria. Pioneer Square (the Old Burying Ground) is the final resting place of many who were involved. **Meet at the corner of Quadra St. and Rockland Ave. beside Christ Church Cathedral.**

March 23. *Prominent Presbyterians.* Join Jim Kempling, archivist of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church and Barbara Forsyth, heritage interpreter, as they visit the graves of many notable Presbyterian families who shaped Victoria and early BC, such as Dunsmuir, Robson, McMicking, and McBride.

March 30. *Emily Carr Tour.* Visit Emily's grave and those of many people she knew and wrote about and hear excerpts from Emily's books. Emily's grave is one of the most visited at RBC. This annual tour, led by a team of OCS members, is always a favourite and this year includes new stories.

April 6. "*The Key to Mythic Victoria*" is the title of local author Linda Foubister's book about mythic tales of Victoria and Victorians.

RBC's siting, underground streams, trees, memorials and occupants recall mythic traditions from the ancient world. The author will discuss some of them and other mythic tales of the city in this first-ever tour.

April 13. *St. Ann's Academy. Sisters of St. Ann Graves.* The grounds of St. Ann's Academy National Historic Site once contained two cemeteries dedicated to the sisters. Archivist Carey Pallister and site manager Shelley Myhres will visit the locations and discuss the sisters' death and burial rituals.

April 20. *Symbolism.* Victorian era cemeteries are filled with symbols that reflect the lives, beliefs, occupations and aspirations of those who lie buried beneath. Yvonne Van Ruskenveld's tour will include some of the most interesting and unusual.

April 27. *Mapping Victoria.* Surveyor and map historian Michael Layland's recent book *The Land of Heart's Delight* will be the basis for his tour to the graves of map-makers, surveyors and others connected with putting Victoria on the map from the days of Fort Victoria to the present.

May 4. *Chinese Cemetery.* The first tour of Asian Heritage Month will be conducted by Victoria City Councillor Charlayne Thornton-Joe who will lead a tour at the Chinese Cemetery, a National Historic Site, including her grandfather's grave. **Meet at the cemetery, foot of Crescent Road, off King George Terrace.**
May is Asian Heritage Month and OCS will present two more tours on this theme.

Rockland Avenue Closure Gerry Buydens



The City of Victoria held an Information Session on Tuesday, January 21 from 3 to 7 p.m. to discuss their plans for Pioneer Square. The first phase has been completed and there are two more phases which will be implemented over the next couple of years. They wanted public input into the next phases & comments on the work completed. The

meeting was solely to advise the public and to answer questions about the closure of Rockland Ave at Quadra Street next to Christ Church Cathedral. It is a one year trial period starting fairly soon. The city will monitor the traffic on alternate streets to try & determine the effects of this closure. The hope is that it will extend the green space between the Cathedral and Pioneer Square. The City is trying to encourage more use by ordinary people of Pioneer Square. This closure will reduce the vehicular noise in the park. The City will hold a public meeting at the end of this test period and listen to public opinion about the project and based on the results may decide to permanently close Rockland at Quadra. There will be no access to Quadra Street directly off Rockland Ave. The road will be open for bicycles and pedestrians but not cars.



Western Front Association John Azar

The 2014 Seminar Program will convene with registration and a social evening on Friday, March 7th, at 6 p.m. at the Officer's Mess, Canadian Scottish Regiment, Bay Street Armoury. The program continues through Saturday, with a mess dinner in the evening and winds up on Sunday morning. For more information, go to

www.wfapacificcoast.org or contact John Azar at: jazar@islandnet.com or by telephone at 250.595.3407.

Obituaries of the 58ers

Compiled by Leona Taylor

Died at Victoria, BC, Apr 11, 1873, William H. Miller, 58, native of Maryland. A pioneer colored man, who came here in the first rush of 1858 and for several years was in the employ of Wells-Fargo as porter. Died of consumption. He was at one time quite a prominent man among his race and very trustworthy.

First Nations Funeral 1912

Mike Bieling



This photograph, attributed to Duncan pioneer Alfred Colliard, 1858-1936, is of a First Nations' funeral at St. Anne's Roman Catholic Church, Tzouhalem, in 1912.

Alfred Colliard was a Swiss native who came to Duncan in 1911. He was a professional photographer and used large glass negatives. It is reasonable to assume that this is one of his photos as it has been in the family for generations.

Alfred and his wife Josephine are buried at Ste. Anne's Cemetery, as are their son Louis, their daughter Theresa and her husband Jules Weicker.

This photograph is published by kind permission of Duncan natives Jim & Lucille La Bossiere. Lucille is a great-granddaughter of Alfred & Josephine Colliard.

Last Words

Crowfoot, Chief of the Siksika Tribe in Alberta 1830-1890

“What is life? It is the flash of a firefly in the night. It is the breath of a buffalo in the wintertime. It is the little shadow which runs across the grass and loses itself in the sunset.”