

HISTORIANA

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THE BOWEN ISLAND HISTORIANS

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CENOTAPH PROJECT

The Bowen Island Historians began a research project about three years ago to learn as much as possible about the five men whose names are listed on the cenotaph. Bowen Island, with a population of perhaps 90 people, made an incredibly heavy contribution to the Great War (1914-1918) with 13 serving (15%) and five killed (40% of those who enlisted).

The history of the cenotaph and the men who were honoured was lost when the files of the Canadian Legion went missing some 30 years ago. Most of what we know now has been compiled through the skill and hard work of Cathy Bayly.

Director Bob Cathro will be visiting the Great War graves in France and Belgium during June and hopes to bring back photos of the final resting places of Myles Green, Charles Redmond, Cameron Smith, Lewen Tugwell and Norman Vickery. Green and Smith were raised on the island and Redmond worked here as a real estate developer, but the connection of the other two to Bowen is not as well known. In addition, the graves of two brothers with a Bowen connection, who were also killed in the Great War, will be located if possible.



Charles and Reginald Underhill owned mineral claims between Snug Cove and the Bowena Mine along with their father, pioneer Vancouver doctor Frederick Underhill, at the beginning of the war. More than ten years after the war, some of the Underhill family acquired land at Hood Point and later became prominent members of the community. These photos will form part of the annual

PPP 2001

**Saturday, July 21st and
Sunday, July 22nd**

Visitors this year will wander into Queen Charlotte Heights, explore Scarborough heights by shuttle car, traverse the Valley and enjoy waterfront sites at Hood Point. There'll be renovated cottages, gardens with creeks and ponds, manicured gardens and natural settings. One group of homes nestles close to the water and has magnificent waterfront settings while other houses and gardens make creative use of their steep hillsides and impressive mountain views. The lovely seven acre property shared by two generations of the Mitts family will again be the site of the Picnic Garden. The Bowen Island Horse Owners and Riders Association (BIHORA), caterers for this year's lunch, have developed a delicious menu - croissants with ham or vegetarian filling, potato salad, fruit kebobs, cookies and iced tea. A definite yum-yum!

PPP ticket sales begin on-island at the Old General Store on June 9th, 2001 between 1pm-3pm and telephone orders commence June 11th. Call 604-813-4933 to

-REED FAMILY STORY-

In 1952, A. Heurtley Reed, president of the Bowen Island Property Owners Association, wrote to his member of parliament about improved postal service for Bowen Island: "The Union Steamship Company has acquired all the strategic aspects of the Island, so much so, that even well informed business executives are under the impression that the Union Company OWNS Bowen Island... I intend to fight all down the line for better conditions..." He and the newly formed Bowen Island Improvement Association dedicated a good deal of time to obtain telephone service, upgraded roads, equalized school taxes, improved health services and safer and better ferry service. On December 7, 1956 when the ferry Bainbridge made its inaugural run, Reed was asked to cut the ribbon.

Commander Reed, born in England's County Durham in 1873, was educated at the Bluecoat School, London and went to sea at 15 on a wool clipper. In 1902, he joined the C.P.R. and served on each of the original three Empress clipper ships, becoming relief captain of the Empress of China. In 1911, he was appointed harbourmaster for Vancouver and held that post for more than 30 years.

As a member of the Royal Naval Reserve, he was called for service in the First World War, on the Duncan, then was given

command of the Underwing, a Q-boat or decoy for submarines. In the Second World War, he came out of retirement to become naval officer in charge at Prince Rupert. His talents were diverse: he'd been an amateur jockey and boxer - yet, was also an artist of some ability. He and his wife, Lillian, had purchased 7 acres from the Collins family in 1921. At first, the Reeds and their two sons, Richard and Robert - camped in a little tent. After a bit, Reed built the little cottage which was called Olicana. For the boys, he created a big tent with a wooden floor. The Reed boys were a great help to their dad as the family solved various problems - like water. Their first supply was a spring running out of the rocky bank but it dried up in summer and they had to find a permanent supply. Eventually, a bunkhouse and two little cottages were added, for visitors' use. The two outhouses were christened Ottawa and Victoria because of Reed's noted antipathy for politicians.

Richard F.H. Reed, one of the two sons, noted some of his childhood memories in 1997. He recalled coming to the Anglican church camp as a toddler and then as a five year old, coming over on the Baramba, a sternwheeler operated by Captain Jack Cates and his Terminal Steamship Company. Richard remembers seeing logging done by horses pulling big sleds over skid roads greased by fish oil. The Britannia

was a major Cates Steamship which the Commander felt was not very sea-worthy and when the Reed boys traveled on their own to Bowen, they were forbidden to travel on it. Young Richard often stayed with the Albert Carter family whose farm produced eggs for Woodward's store and strawberries for the locals. The Carter farm employed 4 to 5 people. Mr. Carter taught Richard to hunt and how to use powder to blow up a stump.

After the war, the Reeds built a new house. Lillian Reed died in 1949 but the Commander remained on the island until the 1950's. Commander Reed's grand-daughter, Shirley Roberts, is planning a visit to Bowen where she hopes to visit the old Reed property, which is now owned by Historian Anne Angus, visit the

In Memoriam:

The Executive and Members were sad to hear of the death of **Hugh Hender** on February 7th. Hugh and his wife, Betty, have been long-time residents of Hood Point and Betty has been an active participant in the Historians since they were founded. **John Jose** passed away on March 31st: he had been ill for some time. John and Pat Jose joined the Historians more recently and Pat is on the current Executive. We are sorry to have lost these friends.

We also mourn the deaths of:

Sam Dumaresq - May
Nora Goodall - February
Peggy Hoover - May
Alan Jessup - January
Donna Magee - May
George Milligan - March
Wilmer Paulik - January
Donalda Sass - March

OUT AND ABOUT

The Vancouver Historical Society had a full house at their Centennial Museum meeting on March 29th when Bowen archival volunteer Lois Meyers-Carter presented a talk "Bowen Island: The Place Where Mavericks Flourish"

A large group of municipal mayors and councilors explored fellow communities around Howe Sound on April 15th and one of their first stops was at the restored Union Steamship Company store where they were welcomed by municipal councilors and staff. Cultural aspects of Bowen history were on display and Councilor Ross Carter gave a short talk about Lieben and the role that Einar and Muriel Neilson played in the cultural life of Bowen in the 1940's. Island activist Graeme Dinsdale spoke of the Arts

BOWEN REDISCOVERED BY BOWEN

On May 22, Leighton and Pamela Bowen from Wales visited the Museum as a part of their 40th wedding anniversary trip to Canada. Like the original crew of Captain Vancouver they had some difficulty with the navigation. On Monday, the ferry, suffering from mechanical difficulties, could not land for a good part of the day, forcing the visitors to wait until Tuesday. Leighton had been here on a business trip several years ago and returned to England promising to bring his wife here because it was so beautiful. They were suitably impressed with the Museum and loved Soosi

DO YOU HAVE A FONDS AT THE ARCHIVES?

Huh? I hear you say. What's a fonds anyway? Well, that's an archival term (originally French and always plural) for a collection of material that has come from one family, person, business, club or organization. It may be pictures, records, letters, diaries, maps - just about anything that has been made, collected and used by the donor. That's what history is made from - records of past events, times, places and people which should not be lost.

At the Bowen Island Archives we have fonds. Among our very special ones is the one for the Royal Canadian Legion Ladies Auxiliary. They gave us the records of their activities and minutes when they disbanded. Another is the Freshwater Collection of some 200 photographs and negatives dating from the early 1900's. These were given to us by the son of the photographer. Our Union Steamship's fonds even contains cottage rental records and electrical bills.

And of course there are family fonds. The Davies fonds contain the first postal contracts on the Island. The Neilson fonds has documents, (Muriel's teaching certificates and a copy of her will), photographs, books and artifacts. The Adams fonds contains a handwritten property

survey measuring in paces from identifying trees or rocks. One of our latest will be formed of materials given to us over the years by Rosa Helenius and which has been added to just recently.

These have come to us because they are precious to their owners or are recognized by others as being possibly of use in providing a unique picture of our Island at a given time.

How about you? Have you thought of a family fonds? Do you keep old letters, cards, diaries, family photographs and such? Don't just do a clearing up and throw them in the fire. Give them to your Community

Ongoing Research: Hutt Island

The Anna Sophie mineral claim was staked in February, 1897 on Hutt Island by Captain Olaf Westerlund, M.J. Blanchfield and Lewis Griffiths. Hutt is the small, uninhabited island that is near Galbraith and Grafton Bays. The claims did not receive any development and the island was probably only used as a shelter for log booms until it made the Vancouver newspapers in the 1960's. A real estate development proposal and a plan to quarry 130,000 yards of rock for use as fill for an extension of Centennial Pier in Vancouver were thwarted by

RECENT ACQUISITIONS:

◆Thelma Clark has given us a large photograph of the Royal Canadian Legion Ladies Auxiliary made on the occasion of their 50th Anniversary. This will be a welcome addition to our Legion Auxiliary fonds.

◆A piece of weaving from Robinson Weavers, purchased in 1940 by Mrs. John Oliver has come to us from Joyce Roots.

◆Rosa Helenius has donated the material relating to the Silver and Gold Postmark Awards she received in 1991, along with some photographs and two boxes of fossil shells found on the Island that have been authenticated by the UBC anthropology department. These will now form a part of the Helenius fonds.

◆Our Remembrance Day display will be enriched by the gift from Helen Holt of Captain Alick McLennan's Canadian Merchant Service Guild Honourary Member Award Certificate.

◆Mr. Gordon Semple of Victoria has given us lasers of some wonderful photographs taken in the 1930's and 1940's. Among them are some very clear pictures of Major Kane and Constable George Ward. There is also a Union Steamships promotional booklet written by Gerald Rushton when he worked for the company.

◆Bob Cathro has given us several of his "bush" souvenirs that will add much interest to the logger's

SOME NOTES ON BOWEN ISLAND'S PIONEERS...

Like many parts of B.C., most of the pioneers who came to Bowen Island were from the United Kingdom. However, our early community also contained some residents who had interesting and diverse cultural backgrounds that have not been studied or traced. The first census enumeration of Bowen occurred in 1901, two years after a list of island residents was prepared by the postmistress, Lucia Becker, for inclusion in the 1899 B.C. Directory. The census showed a population of 58, including 21 children, while the directory gave the population as 85, with 46 adults. The two lists are so different they could have been prepared on different islands, with only six names appearing on both. Although the discrepancy can be blamed on turnover during the interval, most was probably due to different survey techniques. The list prepared by Lucia Becker was probably a compilation of those who received their mail here, while the census was probably prepared by a person who traveled by boat and listed all those who could be easily reached from the shore. Neither the postmistress or pioneer Joseph Mannion were included in the census.

The census disclosed that a small Filipino community resided on Bowen, probably engaged in both fishing and farming. It included Fernando Torenya, a fisherman who came to Canada from the Philippines in 1886 with his wife Mary. They lived at 'Bowen Island Bay' (probably Deep Bay or Snug Cove) and had three other Filipino boarders living with them, William Matilde, Antoni Bentorre and Castro Ricardo. Others included fisherman William (Benson) Flores, who lived on a barge in Snug Cove; Bastino Pasento, who called his home Pasento Ranch and died in February 1904, John Delmond(?), and Jose Garcia.

Three other residents gave their country of origin as Portugal, four fishermen provided no country of origin, one person of Asian descent, Maida Ehat, who was a domestic servant, and Karl Ringo of Germany was

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