



The Trail Creek News

Newsletter of the Trail Historical Society

Fall Happenings

There is plenty on the agenda for the next few months as we approach winter. An application was submitted to the BC Arts Council which we hope will be approved, as we hope to update one of our work stations in the Archives. A newer, more current computer is required to replaced a system nearly ten years old.

We have recently switched to a new web hosting company who will be managing our website for us. We also have asked them to set up a new site strictly dedicated to our vintage Smoke Eater merchandise. We hope to get

this site live for around the Christmas season.

This past summer, the Society undertook the reorganization of its storage areas in City Hall. This endeavour saw us switching storage areas to make room for our growing Archives and Sports collections. As of now, the current museum collection has been shifted to the former Archives room, which has opened up plenty of space for our expanding archival collection.

New shelving was purchased with a grant from the BC Arts Council that we received about 3 years ago. We pur-

chased steel shelving for durability and for preservation reasons. The new system works well and we now have room to take in larger donations to the archives.

And finally, we intend to dismantle a few displays in the Sports Hall of Memories. Two cases affected are the Babe Ruth cases, which currently display a series of championship plaques. We intend to remove these plaques and replace them with one that lists all winners over the years. This will provide a case for our large lacrosse collection, some of which is currently on display.

2008 Museum Season

This year, the Society suffered again from a lack of federal funding to hire a student through the Canada Summer Jobs Program. We were among many, many heritage organizations affected by these cut backs.

Nevertheless, we hired summer student Andrea Page to look after the museum for us this year. We saw a total of 171 visitors to the museum and did fairly well in book sales and Smoke Eater merchandise while open. Many

of the sales were through the guide book that was released in May.

We look forward to working hard in the coming months to relay our vision for a new museum to the citizens of Trail.

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DID YOU KNOW?

The Trail Curling Club is celebrating its 100th year this year. Back in the 1908-09 season, there were 13 rinks, totaling 52 members. Notable names among charter members are J.H. Schofield, Noble Binns, Thomas Bingay, and Dr. Thom.

Trail City Archives Digitization Project

Back in June 2008, the Society applied to the Columbia Basin Trust's Community Initiatives Program to undertake a massive digitization project of all three Society collections: Museum, Sports Hall of Memories and Photograph.

The application was approved for \$14,000 and Joyce Austin was once again hired to look after yet another project for us. Joyce and the Rossland Museum recently completed the same task with successful results.

The digitization process will include the photographing of every artifact currently on display and a select few of those in storage. Each artifact in storage must meet a certain criteria based on quality, potential for use and suitability. The photograph collection will see the



An example of a case in the Sports Hall of Memories. All items in these cases will be photographed and better identified for our records and ease of research.

remaining non-digitized images scanned. Images, too, must meet similar criteria for digitization.

Once all artifacts and images are available in digital form, they will first be linked to their corresponding database records in our com-

puter systems which list all necessary information about the image or artifact. Linking the image to our database records allows researchers and staff to see exactly what is in the collection on a computer screen, avoiding the need to retrieve it from storage and expose it to environmental contaminants. It will also significantly speed up the research process.

Secondly, all digital images will be saved to archival quality CDs and stored off-site. This will ensure that in the event of a natural disaster or fire, our photograph collection, at the very least, can be replicated.

We anticipate the project to carry on well into the new year. We welcome Joyce back and look forward to her progress.

Provincial Heritage Strategy Workshop & Presentation

The Provincial Government has begun the process to create a long awaited Heritage Strategy for the Province. The Strategy is scheduled to be completed for presentation to the Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts in April, 2009. The Heritage Branch of that Ministry held a workshop in Nelson on August 19th to solicit comment and opinions from heritage groups in the West Kootenay for considera-

tion when the Strategy is developed. The President and Museum/Archives Director attended on behalf of our Society. Our message to the Branch representatives in attendance was that we need more support from the Provincial Government, principally financial assistance, for

"...we need more support from the Provincial Government...for small community museums and archives to be successful..."

small community museums and archives to be successful, or even survive. We presented a written brief to the Branch at the workshop as well. We hope our views will be listened to. A copy of our brief can be obtained from the Director by calling 364-0829.

Federal & Provincial Lobbying

As noted elsewhere in this newsletter, our Society has submitted a brief to the Heritage Branch as part of the public consultation for the new Provincial Heritage Strategy. As a follow up to the Nelson workshop, the President wrote the Minister responsible for the Branch, the Honourable Bill Bennett, reinforcing our message and forwarding the brief to him personally. We also

requested that stakeholders be afforded an opportunity to review the draft Strategy for further comment. He has assured us this will happen. This will give us a chance to see if we were listened to and provide further input if need be. We have also expressed our concerns to our MP, Alex Atamanenko, regarding the lack of Federal support for heritage. In a lengthy letter to Alex, we

informed him of how the Federal Government can assist small heritage organizations such as ours. He has assured us he will raise our issues with the appropriate officials in Ottawa. We hope these two initiatives will result in some action on the part of both levels of government to provide assistance to small heritage organizations in the Province.

Virtual Museum of Canada's Community Memories Project

For the past 18 months, the Trail Historical Society has been conducting a variety of filmed interviews with some Trail residents attempting to determine the reasons that people flocked to our city and remained here. After nearly 25 interviews and an analysis of the many family stories published in Trail of Memories, a series of 5 storylines were created for the establishment of a Community Memories online exhibit, with the Virtual Museum of Canada.

The exhibit, supplemented with visuals from our own artifact, archival and photographic collections, as well as pieces from the private collections of our interviewees, tells the story of how Trail evolved from a small supply post to a bustling

and culturally diverse city, thanks to the abundance of work, the relative ease of modern mobility and communications, and indeed the ambition and determination of the people who called Trail home.

The exhibit is now completed and has been submitted to the Canadian Heritage Information Network for uploading onto the web. An announcement will be made once the site has gone live.

The Society extends a big thank



Passport of Leda Creegan (nee Marroni), with her mother as her guarantor.

you to Rose Calderon and Greg Nesteroff for their countless hours interviewing and managing the technical aspects of the project and Lisa Vanness for handling data input.

We also wish to thank those who took the time to contribute their stories not only to this project, but to the archives, as well. These stories are

important to understanding the cultural fibre

of our city and they are an invaluable resource for our community.

Guide Book Sales & Trail Journal of Local History, Issue 4

The Society's latest publication A Guide to Buildings and Places in Trail, BC has been very well received in the community and sales of this book have been very impressive. The guide was priced at \$7.00 in order to encourage sales, but also to be able to generate enough to reprint it.

Our initial print run gave us 500 copies. We have sold nearly 400 copies of this first run and we're

looking into stocking up for Christmas by ordering a reprint.

A big thank you to those businesses that supported this project by flogging our books for us around town. We greatly appreciate it.

We are also gearing up for our fourth journal, which we hope to see completed by fall 2009.

Greg Nesteroff is back on board to coordinate the layout of the book

and provide many interesting articles. Jamie Forbes will also be contributing to this issue with articles.

Anyone else interesting in contributing manuscripts or essays for publication in the journal is encouraged to contact the Society with a submission.

Membership Meetings—Update

As you are aware, members of the Trail Historical Society meet on the 2nd Tuesday of each month in City Hall to conduct Society business.

Regretfully, the meetings in September and October we poorly attended. We barely had a quorum at both. This issue was discussed by those present at the October meet-

ing and there was consensus that attendance may improve if we opt for bi-monthly meetings.

The November meeting is therefore **cancelled** and our next meeting will be on December 9th.

If any member has a comment on this action or wishes to express a concern, please call Trail Historical

Society President, Jamie Forbes, at 368-9932.

Trail Museum, Sports Hall of Memories
and Trail City Archives operated by the
Trail Historical Society

Phone: 250-364-0829

Fax: 250-364-0830

Email: history@trail.ca

www.trailhistory.com

The Trail City Archives is located on the
2nd floor of City Hall
1394 Pine Avenue, Trail.

The Trail Historical Society meets on
the 2nd Tuesday of every month in
Committee Room 2, upstairs in City
Hall, at 1:30 PM.

We welcome anyone interested in our City's history or in supporting the Society's work to become a member. A membership form is available on the website and can be forwarded to the Society at the above address. Membership fees are as follows:

- **Regular: \$12.00**
- **Family: \$20.00**
- **Corporate: \$30.00**

For an additional **\$15.00** you may obtain a one year's subscription to the *British Columbia History*, journal of the **BC Historical Federation**, at a savings of \$2.00 off the regular price. This high quality journal contains a variety of articles on BC's history and is a must have for students of our Province's history. It is published quarterly.

BC150 Library Event: Fort Shepherd Presentation

In August, the Trail & District Public Library requested we make a public presentation on a history topic of our choice as part of their participation in the BC150 Celebrations. We chose the topic of the history of Fort Shepherd. The presentation took place at the Library on September 19th.

The presentation was delivered by our President assisted by the Museum/Archives Director and consisted of a historical narrative on the history of exploration in northwestern North America from 1790 to 1810 and the history of Fort, accompanied by a power point presentation consisting of photos and maps.

Events that took place in the first half of the 19th Century in the vast region west of the Missouri River and the Rocky

Mountains played an important role in the eventual agreement between the US and Great Britain over the location of the boundary between Washington Territory and what is now our Province. The designation of the 49th parallel as the international boundary led to the decision

by the Hudson's Bay Company to construct a post in British territory to replace their primary post on the Columbia River in our region at Fort Colville. A site across from the mouth of the Pend d'Oreille River was chosen and construction of Fort Shepherd commenced in 1857.

The story is an interesting one and not well known. The presentation attracted close to 70 people and was very well received by those present. The Library and ourselves were extremely happy with the turnout. We both feel this event raised our profile in the community and we may do it again next year.



A sampling of the books purchased with the BC150 Grant funding received by the Friends of the Library.