



The Trail Creek News

Newsletter of the Trail Historical Society

From the Desk of the President

The past four months have been busy ones at the THS offices as we geared up to undertake the projects we have planned for this year, the opening of the Museum for the summer, and continued to provide services to the public. Here are the highlights.

The monthly Trail Times articles that were started in March have been very well received. We again thank Guy Bertrand at the Times for his support of presenting our community's history to the public. The October issue will feature an article on the history of the Trail Cenotaph to commemorate Remembrance Day.

The sales of our 4th issue of the Trail Journal of Local History are doing very well. With the publication of this Journal, interest has increased in issues one to three. No word yet on issue number five. If anyone has any ideas for an article, let me know.

Our offices have again been impacted this year by renovations the City is undertaking to City Hall. The area below our office has been turned into a break area for City Hall staff. Minor disruptions occurred as the space was constructed and a new ventilation system installed. Included in the renovation are the installation of new

energy efficient windows in the office and back storage area and some new electrical outlets for our equipment.

The Museum also experienced disruptions due to a major thunder storm in July that resulted in a leak in the roof above the office area. This necessitated closing the Museum for a week so it could be cleaned up. Repairs to the piping have now been completed. As well, the City painted the entire building which created difficulties for visitors to access our doors. The new look of the building should help bring more attention to the Museum in the future.

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2012 Museum Summer Season

As mentioned by Jamie in his report of summer events, the museum was under considerable pressure this year, due to water issues and building improvements. Despite this, summer student Eva Gifford

hosted 198 in the museum. This included two school groups in June. In addition, visits were made again to Poplar Ridge and Columbia View Lodge for brief artifact viewings.

Our summer student looked after indexing old and new Cominco/Teck publications, which kept her extremely busy. We thank Eva for her help this summer and wish her a successful year.

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DID YOU KNOW?

Trail recently launched a series of Downtown Markets along the Esplanade. The photo above features the Fruit Fair Building, formerly located at Bay Avenue and Portland Street. In September 1912, the Trail Fruit Fair building hosted the second annual (but first indoor) market. Just over 100 years later, the tradition has been renewed! Be sure to visit. Trail's last market for the season is Friday, October 19th, 10:00am-2:00pm.

From the Desk of the President, cont.

One of my favourite parts of our collection is the large panoramic photos we have, mostly taken by local photographers Hughes Bros in the late 1920's and 1930's. We were successful in obtaining funding from UBC Library and Teck to digitize these photos and others taken by Hughes Bros that depict our industrial heritage. Shortly these photos will be available for viewing on our website and I know you will be impressed.

I attended the 7th annual meeting of the Heritage Federation of South-east BC on September 29th in Creston. Fifteen of our forty

members from the West and East Kootenays attended and it was a very productive meeting. Of special interest, the BC Museums Association is seeking stakeholder input on how the BCMA can better represent and serve its members, particularly the smaller museums such as ours. I and the Museum and Archives Director plan to make a submission. If you have anything you would like to pass on to the Association please let me know. The Federation will be developing a plan to better engage our local politicians in the needs of the heritage organizations in the Columbia River Basin. We will be

developing a “model” of how we see local heritage organizations in our region functioning and how the heritage sector can contribute to the economy of the Basin and why we need financial support to operate.

The Society will set up a display highlighting our hockey history at the banquet being held for the Canadian National Sledge Hockey Team on October 27th in the Colombo Hall.

Remember our annual Christmas luncheon will be held before Christmas at the Colander. We will give you the date near the end of November.

THS Publications—New Retail Location

The Trail Historical Society currently sells its publications online through our webstore, in City Hall and at Crockett Book Co. in Waneta Plaza.

Over the summer, Ferraro Foods generously agreed to feature our historical publications in their magazine rack near the front

entrances. Within the first two weeks, nearly half of the books provided had sold and sales continue to do well in this location.

Crockett Book Co. is still in business in the mall and have proven a fantastic location for our books.

*“Within the first two weeks,
nearly half of the books provided
had sold...”*

We thank both Ferraro Foods and Crockett Book Co. for assisting us in promoting our City's heritage and supporting our efforts to reach the members of our community.

Museum Website Changes

By the end of the next month, the THS will see all three of its websites under one hosting company. At present two of our three sites are hosted by a Calgary based company, while our most recent site is hosted locally.

With funding from Columbia Power Corporation and the

Columbia Kootenay Cultural Alliance, the THS raised enough funds to have our two Calgary-hosted sites completely rebuilt and a new web store function created.

We hope to see the transfer of duties take place very soon.

The process, although costly, will

see significant savings for the THS in the future, as hosting fees are considerably less and allow for more access by staff to the administrative end of the sites.

The work was undertaken by Kale Stanchuk and his company, Ten Twenty-Three Media.

Old Bridge Exhibit at VISAC

On September 14th, VISAC, located in the basement of the Greater Trail Community Centre, opened its first show featuring a collaboration of its members and the Trail Historical Society.

Featured is a historical and contemporary look at the Old Bridge, which was closed permanently in October 2010, just shy of its 100th anniversary.

The exhibit recounts the story of how the bridge came into existence and the community figures who lobbied the Provincial



Opening of the first bridge over the Columbia River at Trail, BC on May 24th, 1912.

Government to fund the project, as a benefit to local residents and to

the Province as a whole. It chronicles the construction of the bridge and its gala opening day on May 24, 1912. With anecdotes from family histories, the show is topped off with 15 pieces of contemporary artwork.

With nearly 40 enlarged prints, patrons will enjoy a closer look at what is probably the most recognizable structure in Trail, aside from the smelter.

All enlarged prints are for sale once the show is completed. Be sure to visit! The show ends on October 14th.

After Ours Indexing Project

In July, the committee for Teck's *After Ours* publication, their in-house employee-based newsletter, approached the Trail Historical Society to handle the indexing of the newsletter. At the time, twenty-five issues had been published and while all photographs had been indexed in the Trail City Archives database, the articles had not yet been indexed.

The Society took on the project,

creating a hard copy index of each article according to subject matter, as well as an individual textbase within our archival database. As more newsletters are published, the THS will index the articles and photographs both in hard copy and digitally.

Staff writers regularly access the

archives for research purposes and nearly each issue features

photographs or information from the archives.

We thank Teck for the opportunity to look after this project and their continual support of our work in the community.



Trail Times Negative Collection Project

Thanks to a generous grant from the Columbia Kootenay Cultural Alliance, the Trail Historical Society will have the opportunity this fall to tackle one of its largest collections in the archives.

Roughly ten years ago, the Trail Daily Times was looking to empty their storage areas and, among the stored items, was a massive collection of negatives dating from

the 1960s to the early 2000s. The THS accepted the collection and since then, it has sat untouched due to its magnitude and work involved to handle it.

Once again, we will be employing Joyce Austin of the Rossland Museum to begin the first phase of this project, which will see the scaling back of the collection and

re-housing of these valuable, important negatives.

As always, we thank the CKCA for their financial contribution towards this project and look forward to having Joyce with us again.

The Trail City Archives is located on the
2nd floor of City Hall

1394 Pine Avenue, Trail BC

The Trail Museum & Sports Hall of
Memories are located in the Trail
Memorial Centre

1051 Victoria Street, Trail BC

CONTACT US!

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We're on the web!

www.HistoricSmokeEaters.ca



www.TrailHistory.com



www.TrailSportsHistory.ca



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: \$15.00**
- **Family: \$25.00**
- **Corporate: \$35.00**

For an additional **\$20.00** 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. In addition, members now received 10% of all Trail Historical Society merchandise, including our vintage Trail Smoke Eater collection!

The Bravest Canadian—Fritz Peters, VC: The Making of a Hero of Two World Wars

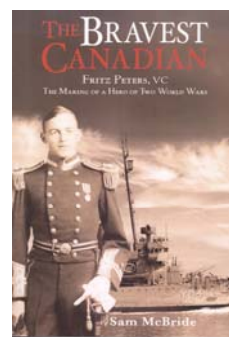
Born in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island in 1889, Peters moved with his family in 1898 to Victoria, B.C., where he lived until joining the Royal Navy in 1905, aside from time in England at naval prep school.

He was determined to live up to his family's tradition of military leadership and courage in battle, going back to United Empire Loyalist leaders in the Revolutionary War, a heroic general of the Crimean War, and his maternal grandfather Col. John Hamilton Gray, who was a career officer in the British Army before taking on a central role in the founding of Canada as a P.E.I. Father of Confederation and chairman of the Charlottetown Conference of 1864. Peters' father, P.E.I. Premier Frederick Peters, was a close grandson of shipping magnate Sir Samuel Cunard, one of the reasons why his son Fritz chose a career in the navy.

At age 53 in 1942, Fritz Peters was the oldest Victoria Cross (VC) recipient in the Second World War. Twenty-seven years earlier, in January 1915, he received the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) medal, second only to the VC as an award for valor in battle. He

was also mentioned in Dispatches, earned a British Distinguished Service Cross (DSC) in 1918, and then a bar to his DSC in 1940. His Oran gallantry was recognized with the Victoria Cross and the U.S. Distinguished Service Cross, the highest medal for valor awarded by the U.S. to non-Americans.

In the inter-war years he developed technology for miniature submarines, and was an early user of plastic explosives and time-delay fuses in his work with secret intelligence. In 1940 he commanded a school for spies and industrial sabotage for expatriates who later returned to their native countries in Occupied Europe to fight the Germans from within. His staff at the school included the Soviet spies Kim Philby and Guy Burgess, who liked and admired their commander despite their personal political differences. Philby's memoirs are a major source on Peters as a planner, colleague and leader.



Peters' admirers also included Prime Minister Winston Churchill, Allied commander-in-chief U.S. General Dwight Eisenhower, and British naval commander Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham. However, several of Eisenhower's American underlings were bitter opponents of Peters in the planning and carrying out of the Oran harbor attack, and blamed him for heavy casualties suffered by U.S. troops.

Tragically, Peters died before he had a chance to tell his side of the story. Later, British authorities chose to downplay the Oran action to avoid antagonizing the French when they resumed as allies against the Nazis. Some government documents were destroyed, and others were kept secret for 30 years. As a result, the personal story of Fritz Peters – recipient of six medals for valor in two world wars – remained a mystery until the author's discovery of the Peters Family Papers.

For more information, please contact author, Executive member and Peters' great-nephew **Sam McBride**. Congratulations, Sam, on this wonderful project!