

District of North Vancouver Reaches a Milestone

Nancy Kirkpatrick, Director

Coast Salish peoples have lived here for thousands of years. Settler history, in comparison, dates back to the 1860s when a community grew up alongside the saw-mill at Moodyville. In 1891, a separate municipality was established to provide services and local government for people living elsewhere on the North Shore.

Where Mountains Meet the Sea, an illustrated history of the District, will be published in July 2016.

This year, the District of North Vancouver will mark its 125th anniversary. Incorporated on August 10, 1891, the District originally extended from Howe Sound to Indian Arm. In 1907 and 1912 respectively, the City of North Vancouver and the District of West Vancouver separated and formed their own municipalities.

To mark this year's milestone anniversary, the District of North

Vancouver is planning a series of celebratory events. The Museum and Archives will participate and will provide research materials and historic photographs that bring our community's past to life.

NVMA has also created two significant legacy projects. *A Voices and Views* online exhibit (linked to nvma.ca) introduces a group of wonderful North Vancouverites who shared their personal photographs, memories and experiences with NVMA staff. Their stories paint a rich and nuanced picture of our community. Another enduring legacy of this anniversary year is *Where Mountains Meet the Sea*, an illustrated history of the District of North Vancouver. Scheduled for publication in July 2016, it was written by local author Daniel Francis and published by Harbour Publishing. The book is illustrated in full colour with biographies, eyewitness memories, artifacts from the collection of the NVMA, historic photographs, maps and charts. Combining hundreds of illustrations with the personal accounts of residents and a lively text, the book creates a vivid portrait of the development of a thriving community.



Lynn Valley streetcar in front of Municipal Hall at Lynn Valley Rd. and Fromme Rd., D.L. [District Lot] 2025, ca. 1910. NVMA 8984.

Message from the NVMA Commission

The Commission is deeply disappointed by the decision of North Vancouver City Council on January 25, 2016 to cancel the Museum in the Pipe Shop. We extend sincere gratitude to the hundreds of donors and volunteers who supported the project in an inspiring display of civic spirit. We will continue to work to keep the community's dream of a 21st century museum alive and are working with City staff to identify alternative sites.

Mark Your Calendars!

Join us for a special **Members Only** reception for Friends of the NVMA Society
Wednesday, April 6, 2016, 6 to 8 pm

Celebrate a new exhibition
"WATER'S EDGE: THE CHANGING SHORE"
at the **Museum** in Presentation House,
209 West 4th Street
Refreshments will be served

Bring a guest for \$20
(price includes a gift membership in the Friends Society)

RSVP by March 31st to: nvmac@dnv.org
or call 604.990.3700, ext. 8016

Chesterfield School

by Sharon Proctor

In the early 1900s it became “fashionable” to locate in North Lonsdale. Some 800 feet above the Inlet, it was a healthy locale with clean air. And the Lonsdale Streetcar came up to Windsor. So, around 1911, the Chesterfield School for Boys moved here (3371 Chesterfield Avenue) from its original location at 14th and Lonsdale (it was founded in 1908). The grounds and buildings covered seven lots — from Chesterfield west along Osborne Road. Classes started in 1913.

There were two buildings initially. The “Main House” faced Chesterfield. It contained dormitories, a dining room, and offices opening onto corridors. Some distance behind was the “School House,” which housed classrooms and science laboratories. Plus, there were two large playgrounds. The school became a highly successful operation under owner-headmaster John Newton Sykes. Then, in 1927, Mr. Sykes moved to England.

Fred Bates came to the rescue. He purchased the school and became its headmaster. He added a 50-by-40-foot gymnasium, with a large indoor swimming tank and heated showers, as well as a stable for six horses, and a “sanatorium” (infirmary) equipped with electrical appliances.

Chesterfield operated in the British tradition — male teachers and ties with the Anglican Church. Its goal was to prepare boys “for entrance to Universities, Royal Naval and Military Colleges, and business.” The curriculum was tough. For Junior Matriculation in the upper school, boys studied English literature and composition, world history, French, Greek,



The Main House building in 2016. It's still in its original location by Chesterfield Avenue, though two modern homes now sit in front of it. Sharon Proctor photo.

Latin, mathematics, physics, chemistry, general science, drawing, scripture, and physiology. Those in the lower school were taught scripture, English grammar, literature, composition, reading, writing, dictation, English and Canadian history, geography, French, Latin, drawing, arithmetic, algebra, and physiology. The sports programs (swimming and games) were equally “robust.”

“In 1914 the school had one troop of 20 boys. Besides the usual things Scouts did, this troop fought forest fires! It's true!”

What's interesting in our era of “protecting” children from all risks is Chesterfield's early Boy Scout program. In 1914 the school had one troop of 20 boys. Besides the usual things Scouts did, this troop

fought forest fires! It's true! Soon after the move to North Lonsdale, the troop connected up with the North Lonsdale Fire Brigade. The Scouts helped fight local brush and tree fires for many years.



The south end of Chesterfield School's Main House in the 1930s. In the background is the School House and gymnasium. From the “Calendar of Chesterfield School.”



The rear and south end of the Main House today. Sharon Proctor photo.



Donald Hings, famous inventor of the “Walkie Talkie,” was a middle-school student at Chesterfield for a few years (until around 1919). Photo courtesy of family members.

When World War II arrived, certain Chesterfield teachers were drawn into the military. Other local schools hired women teachers to replace the departing men. But Bates refused to do this. He just shut down the school in 1942. Two years later the Main House was turned into apartments. It's the only part of the school left today — and it's *still* apartments!

Sources: “Calendar of Chesterfield School (1930s); 1930 Fire Insurance Map; Dick Lazenby newspaper notes; *North Shore Press*, December 23, 1913 & December 22, 1914; Roy Pallant, District of NV history project; Fred Bates, handwritten “Story of My Life in North Vancouver, BC,” 1971.

Henry Blackadder

by Sharon Proctor

He designed the Community History Centre building, the Victoria Park Cenotaph, and numerous homes and other buildings. Born in 1882 in Dundee, Scotland, Henry Blackadder came to architecture naturally, for his father, cousin, and great-uncle were architects or civil engineers. In 1908 he married Alice Maude Godfrey. In 1911 they moved to North Vancouver.

“The couple returned to their Carisbrooke home in mid-1919, and for years afterward Henry was a busy architect.”

At first he worked for a Vancouver firm and the couple lived in Lower Lonsdale. Soon, however, he partnered with Alexander MacKay, and the two set up “Blackadder & MacKay” in Lower Lonsdale. This was an active business centre in those days. So Blackadder got to know the key North Vancouver land-developers and businessmen. One was Jack Loutet, a realtor, insurance agent, and political figure. Not only was Jack also

from Scotland, but his brother William had apprenticed with Henry’s father in Dundee. Henry and Jack became close friends, and before long they were building their family homes across from each other in North Lonsdale, on Carisbrooke Road.

Henry got a lot of work from his Lower Lonsdale connections. One job, in fact, led him to World War I. Local businessmen Alexander Philip and Percy Ward had helped convince the federal government to establish the 6th Field Company of Canadian Engineers in North Vancouver. Thanks to them, in 1915 Henry oversaw construction of the permanent Drill Hall in Mahon Park (now “Lt. Col. J.P. Fell Armoury”). Afterwards, he joined the 6th Field Company!



When World War I ended in 1918, Lieutenant Henry Blackadder ended up in Germany where this picture was taken. NVMA 10010.



Henry took this photo of retreating German soldiers crossing the Rhine River from France into Germany. He likely used a Kodak Vest Pocket Autographic Camera (1 x 2½ x 4¾ inches in size), popular with WWI soldiers. Photo courtesy of Lt. Col. J.P. Fell Armoury.



The rear of today’s Community History Centre, 2007. Facing Mountain Highway, this was the original front side of the 4th Lynn Valley Elementary School, designed by Henry Blackadder and built in 1921. NVMA 1082264.

It was the field engineers who built the bridges and other structures needed by advancing allied troops. They also helped troops enter and/or destroy enemy structures. Blackadder’s architectural background was a perfect fit.

From June 1917 to June 1919, he served in Canada, England, and Europe. Alice, meanwhile, moved to London, England, so Henry could join her when on leave. He arrived in France shortly before the War’s end in 1918, and later served with the occupying forces in Germany. Like many WWI soldiers, he took a small camera with him and photographed scenes he witnessed.

The couple returned to their Carisbrooke home in mid-1919, and for years afterward Henry was a busy architect. North Lonsdale was the “in” neighbourhood at the time. And he and Alice were active socially, their names often appearing in newspaper society-columns. Alice loved hosting and attending society teas, parties, and other events. So did Henry. He also loved tending the fruit trees, vegetable and flower gardens in their large yard. He died in 1968.



Henry and Alice’s “board and batten” house (172 Carisbrooke Road) once sat on three lots. Here it is in 1993. The house is now gone. Photo from District of North Vancouver Heritage Inventory, 1993.

Thank you to Bob Irvine and Vince Larocque for helping research this story and providing access to Blackadder materials in the Lt. Col. J.P. Fell Armoury’s archives.

Other sources: WWI military records & Blackadder’s personal photo album (in Lt. Col. J.P. Fell Armoury); Dick Lazenby newspaper notes; City Directories; North Shore Press; Ancestry.ca; Dictionary of Scottish Architects; Roy Pallant notes; National Media Museum blog (UK).

North Vancouver's Museum & Archives exists to engage, strengthen and inspire our community and its visitors by exploring history, connecting people and sharing ideas.

Our website:
nvma.ca

Walter Draycott's Great War Chronicle
GreatWarChronicle.ca

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Olympic Champs Who Might Have Been...

Janet Turner, Archivist

Gertrude Marion Wepsala (1908-2007) was a member of the Tyee Ski Club in the 1930's. Records of her life in a skiing family, and her career as a skier and as a ski writer, have recently been donated to the Archives.



Gertie skiing in Jasper, 1940.

In 1939, Gertie was on top of the world as three-time Dominion Ladies combined and downhill ski champion. Meanwhile, the man who would be Gertie's husband, Al Beaton, was enjoying a basketball tour of Japan with the Dominion championship Vancouver Westerns team. He looked forward to gaining a spot on the Canadian Olympic basketball team. Gertie and Al were both training hard for greater achievements at the Olympics. Their dreams, and those of many of their friends, were put on hold by World War II and the resulting cancellation of the Fifth Winter and Twelfth Summer Olympics.

Gertie continued to ski but became a poster girl for women working in wartime industries; she was a shop clerk at the Boeing Aircraft factory. Al enlisted with the Royal Canadian Signals Corps. The couple found time to marry in 1942.

The Beaton family's photographs, telegrams, Tyee Ski Club newsletters, and newspaper clippings attest to their triumphs and achievements, but evidence of the War – letters, photos of men in uniform, a postcard from a Tyee chum in a German POW camp - runs like a fine thread through the texture of the material. Life returned to normal after the War, but the Olympic opportunity was a once-in-a-lifetime thing that did not come the Beaton's way again.

Connections

Nancy Kirkpatrick, Director



NVMA is pleased to welcome curator Karen Dearlove to the staff team. In addition to being responsible for the museum collections, Karen will develop and curate exhibits, undertake research projects, and share her knowledge through lectures, programs and contributions to NVMA publications and social media.



Karen Dearlove, the NVMA's new curator. Photo courtesy of Heritage BC.

Karen earned a PhD in History from McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario and has several years of experience teaching, researching, writing, and presenting public history. Previously, Karen worked as Capacity Planner with Heritage BC in Vancouver, and was Curator and Director of Chiefswood National Historic Site (home of the Mohawk poet and performer E. Pauline Johnson) located on the Six Nations of the Grand River Reserve in Ontario.