

The burden of history

By Rosalind Duane, North Shore News May 20, 2012



Twelve-year-old Kristen Schulz recently completed an impressive project outlining the history of her Grand Boulevard area home. Her interest was initially piqued by an old, glass milk bottle and other artifacts she found in the basement, including a clothing iron. Design details throughout the house highlight its heritage.

Photograph by: NEWS photos , Paul McGrath

TWELVE-YEAR-OLD Kristen Schulz has a lot of mysteries to solve.

For starters, why was John Bull buried in an unmarked grave in West Vancouver when he had seven kids? And why did he build such a large family home in North Vancouver at the age of 76?

Since 1922, Kristen's home in the Grand Boulevard neighbourhood has had four different owners: John Bull, Martin E. Sowden and Jacob Schindell. Kristen's parents bought the house in 1995.

It's a sunny afternoon in April as Kristen stands in the dining room of her home tracing the history of all three former owners. Their stories are impressively showcased in a project she put together called The Heritage of My Home for the recent Sea to Sky Regional Heritage Fair. A white poster board, positioned centre stage on the dining room table, is covered with photos, written histories and maps. Kristen confidently recites the information, pointing to interesting facts and photos, as she occasionally pushes aside her nosy kitten.

Tidbits of information come together in an ordered timeline, but some mysteries still remain: Both Bull and Sowden disappeared from all records for a few years. Where did they go?