

Heritage Display Centre
2571 Mary Hill Road
Port Coquitlam, BC V3C 4X3
604-927-2388
Open: Weds: 9 - 3, Thurs. 1 - 5, Sun. 1 - 3

email: pocoheritage@portcoquitlam.ca

Community Archives
2100 - 2253 Leigh Square
Port Coquitlam, BC V3C 3B8
604-927-7611
Open: Weds. 9.30 - 1, Thurs. 4 - 8

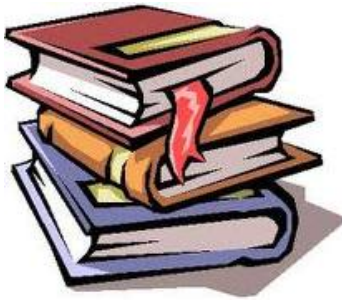


Merry Christmas

PoCo Heritage has been busy this year. Here are just some of the things we have achieved or are ongoing:

- Purchased a computer and scanner with CIBC grant money
- Installed two computer work stations donated by Electronics Recycling Association
- Begun digitizing our archival photographs
- Launched our new logo
- Held two successful wine tasting events
- Conducted heritage walks
- Presented heritage evenings
- Established a PoCo Heritage Geocache
- Represented PoCo Heritage on the City's Social Inclusion Committee
- Made a presentation of our activities to City Council for Heritage Week
- Provided input to the City's draft Heritage Strategic Plan
- Five heritage markers unveiled
- Technical Strategy developed
- We took part in: May Day, Canada Day at Castle Park, Terry Fox Run, Rivers & Trails Festival, Harvest Festival, Hyde Creek Salmon Festival

Thank you to all our wonderful volunteers!



We've got books!

Looking for something good to read? PoCo Heritage has a great collection of local history books as well as DVD's - all available on loan to our members. Stop by and browse at the Archives (Open Wednesdays from 9.30 am to 1.30 pm and Thursdays from 4 pm to 8 pm).

Here are a few of the items recently donated for the Display Centre:

- Port Moody Heritage Society - 2 Blueprints drawings of Port Coquitlam City Hall circa 1988
- Port Moody Heritage Society - 1 coloured print drawing of Port Coquitlam City Hall circa 1988
- Port Moody Heritage Society - CPR Westminster Junction (Port Coquitlam Station) woodstove
- Coquitlam Heritage Society - Receipt from Patterson Funeral Home for MG Walton Mar 3, 1937
- Coquitlam Heritage Society - Marriage certificate and service of William Walton and Merle Eagles Oct 4, 1933
- Maureen Boguzki - The Leader Christmas 1968 - Riverview Hospital
- Maureen Boguzki - The Leader Centennial 1866 - 1966 - Riverview Hospital
- Various photographs either originals or donated scanned copies
- Don Burton - Port Coquitlam 1913 Medal
- Eileen Marshall - Heritage dresses and hats for display

Here's what they're saying about our Geocache...

"Awesome tour and cache"

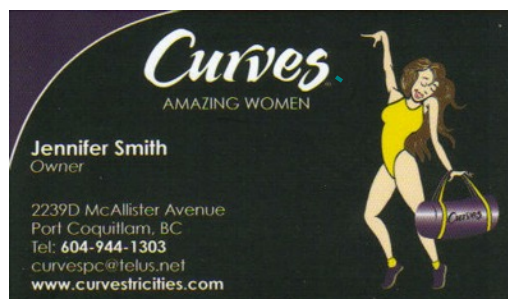
"Lots of interesting information"

"Awesome multicache! What a super fun and interesting way to learn about my city's history. I really enjoyed walking down by the River and reading all the plaques along the way..... Met some very nice members of the Port Coquitlam Heritage & Cultural Society during my hunt..."

"....Interesting cache. Very informative."

Trackables: Our Canadian Geocoin has travelled 416 km and is currently in a cache in Summerland, BC.





When did the Pioneer McLean Family arrive in Port Coquitlam?

by Jeff Rudd

Introduction

The McLean family - Jane and Alexander, and their two sons Alexander and Donald - are widely believed to have been the first white settlers in what is now Port Coquitlam. They were important and influential in early days in this area and their story figures prominently in histories of Port Coquitlam. Alexander, the father, led a particularly exciting life. One of his many adventures, according to his obituary in 1889, occurred while sailing in the South Seas when the ship he was on "was boarded by a party of cannibals, who murdered and ate the entire crew with the exception of Mr. McLean and another boy, who were kept prisoners"! After more such adventures, Alexander sailed to California for the 1849 gold rush, then moved to Whatcom in Washington Territory (now Bellingham), then to Point Roberts, and finally to what is now Port Coquitlam.

When I moved to Coquitlam about a year ago, I began reading local histories about this area and became intrigued by the McLean family story, especially by the various conflicting dates given for their arrival in PoCo. Two books, some short notes and several websites all stated that the McLeans arrived in PoCo in 1853. One book stated that the McLeans arrived in 1849, and yet another that they arrived about the time of the 1858 gold rush. With three dates to choose from, the majority of references favoured 1853 as the McLean's date of arrival. All of these references, with quotes, are listed in Appendix 1 at the end of this article.

I was puzzled by the 1853 date because, in my reading of British Columbia history, I understood that the only non-natives that settled on the mainland of BC before the 1858 gold rush were members of the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC). The HBC held an exclusive right to trade in what is now mainland BC and never encouraged settlement in areas in which the fur trade was active. A settler who was not affiliated with the HBC would have had difficulty securing domestic supplies and selling their produce. Further, there was no government on the mainland before 1858 so therefore no one could legally acquire land. For all these reasons, I questioned why anyone arriving before the gold rush would choose to go anywhere except Victoria, which was the major settlement in 1853, and the only place with 'white folks' other than members of the HBC.

So, when did the McLeans arrive?

Finding the 1853 date odd, I looked for and found several original sources that mentioned the McLeans, including Alexander McLean's obituary from 1889 (quoted in the first paragraph above), newspaper articles and advertisements from as far back as 1859, biographical notes, reminiscences and other items. The result of this search is that the 1853 arrival date is completely wrong. That date is based on a single source - a 1912 Coquitlam newspaper - which is rife with errors. The McLeans actually arrived in PoCo in 1859, sometime between April and October.

As I discovered more sources, and as one source led to another, the claimed arrival dates increased from three to five: 1849, 1853, 1858, 1859 and 1860. It was easy to cite evidence to discount the 1849, 1853 and 1860 dates, but I had no information to help me choose between 1858 and 1859. Then I found an interview with Alexander McLean, the son, in which he stated that the family had lived in Point Roberts for a time. That information led me to look for a history of Point Roberts. Richard Clark's book "Point Roberts U.S.A., the History of a Canadian Enclave" [12] contained quotes from the Victoria newspaper The British Colonist that established without a doubt that the McLeans did not arrive in PoCo until 1859.

These sources (see Appendix 2 at the end of this article), when combined, provide a reasonably complete chronology of the McLean family's movements. It is likely that more sources exist that, once discovered, will help flesh out their story even further.

While the main purpose of this article is to establish the McLean family's date of arrival, events in their lives prior to 1859 are also of interest. Very briefly these were as follows.

1849 Alexander McLean arrived in California from New Zealand (see reference [1] in Appendix 2, the obituary of Alexander McLean)

1849 - 1852 Alexander and Jane married sometime between these dates [1]

1852 birth of eldest son, Alexander [8]

1853 birth of second son, possibly named Duncan, place of birth unknown [13]

1853 the family moved to Whatcom, Washington Territory [10] [11]

1856 birth of third son, Donald, in Whatcom [4] [5]

1856 - 1859 the family moved to Point Roberts sometime between these dates, where they operated a hotel [8] [15]

Having reached Point Roberts by 1859, the family was still living there in April as evidenced by the following quote from the Victoria newspaper The British Colonist for April 30, 1859 [13].

"At Point Roberts, on Thursday 17th April, the second son of Mr. Alexander McLane [sic], aged six years, was burnt so as to cause death within three days."

This quote enables us to conclude that the McLeans did not arrive in PoCo before April 1859.

The McLeans had left Point Roberts by July 1859 as evidenced by the following quote from The British Colonist for July 22, 1859 [14].

"A fire at Point Roberts on the night of the 18th inst., burned the store of Wm. Fitzpatrick, and also the building formerly occupied by Capt. McLean."

We know that the McLeans had arrived in PoCo by October 1859 because there is a record of Alexander McLean purchasing land here on October 5, 1859 [9].

"[Alexander McLean] bought two parcels of surveyed land on October 5, 1859 at 10 shillings/acre"

Hints as to the McLean's movements between April and October 1859 are given in the longer article in the Coquitlam Star [2] and J.S. Matthews' interview of son Alexander [8], and there may be additional sources of information, not yet discovered, that will allow pinpointing the date more closely. However, based on the sources quoted above there can be no doubt that the McLeans arrived in what is now PoCo sometime between April and October 1859.

Where did all those other claimed dates come from?

Since 1853 has been so widely accepted as the date of the McLean's arrival, it is worthwhile to examine the origin of that date, and also the origin of the other incorrect dates, 1849, 1858 and 1860.

1849 - this date appears only in the longer article in the Coquitlam Star of May 8, 1912 [2], which actually gives two dates of arrival, 1849 and 1853. 1849 is clearly a slip by the writer because the article first states that the McLeans arrived in British Columbia in 1849 and then, in the next paragraph, contradicts that statement by claiming that Alexander McLean sailed from California to Puget Sound in 1849. Norma Campbell used the date 1849 in her book 'Mountain Memories' (see Appendix 1). She undoubtedly based her date on the Star article.

1853 - the sole source for this date is the two articles in the Coquitlam Star of May 8, 1912 [2] [3]. The longer article, in particular, is rife with errors. For example, in addition to giving 1849 as the arrival date in PoCo (see above) the article claims that the McLeans left California in 1849 when, according to the references quoted in the timeline above, Alexander arrived in California in 1849. The McLeans arrived in Whatcom in 1853 and Donald McLean was born there in 1856. According to the Star's mistaken chronology, Donald arrived in PoCo in 1853 at the age of three, which, in actual fact, was three years before he was born! The Star's dates of Alexander's death, Jane's death, Donald's marriage and also Alexander's age are completely wrong by several years.

1858 - Alexander McLean, son, claimed in an interview 14 days before his death [8], that the family arrived in PoCo in April 1858. C.W. Johnston, a child or grandchild of Alexander McLean, son, states in the same reference that Donald made a mistake when claiming the 1859 arrival date [4], which suggests that Alexander stressed, incorrectly, to his offspring that 1858 was the correct date. The first ship carrying hopeful prospectors from California to the gold diggings on the Fraser River arrived in Victoria on April 25, 1858. Could Alexander have confused the family arrival date with the start of the gold rush?

1860 - John Gibbard is the sole source for this date, from his unpublished notes [6] and his thesis [7]. Gibbard interviewed Donald McLean in 1930, the year of Donald's death at age 74. Since 1860 is incorrect, either Donald made a mistake during the interview or John Gibbard misinterpreted what Donald said.

Conclusion

Researching the many sources for the McLean story has been fascinating. Equally interesting is how a small piece of history can be misinterpreted by relying on a single, incorrect, source. The McLeans were remarkable people and more of their story should be made known. Personally, I find an immediacy in reading original materials that were written so long ago, an immediacy that cannot be found in a summary or reworking of that material. Consequently, I think it would be worthwhile to reprint, in this newsletter, some of the documents mentioned above. The longer article in the Coquitlam Star of 1912 [2] is the primary, though not the sole, source of information about the McLeans for all four books about PoCo's local history. That article makes very good reading but the dates are incorrect and many of the claims made about the McLeans must be viewed with skepticism. The obituary of Alexander, father [1], and his son's reminiscences from "Early Vancouver" [8], are of equal interest (and somewhat more reliable). The stories told in these documents are interesting, as are the social attitudes of the time that are revealed by what they tell and how it is told.

.... and, in case you were wondering about the rest of the South Seas cannibal story, the next line in Alexander's obituary reads "The boy died but McLean lived and was a slave to the natives for seven years, when he managed to escape." Stay tuned for more tales of the McLean clan in future issues of this newsletter!

Appendix 1

Recent works which discuss the McLean family, with quotations of relevant material.

All recent recountings of PoCo's history which I have come across that mention the McLean's date of arrival are listed below, with short quotes from each. These quotes aren't especially interesting when standing alone, but I wish to include them here to demonstrate how widespread the 1853 date has become. Although these references are not all independent (the articles and websites are likely based on recently published books rather than on original research) the sheer number is impressive. The date 1853 has become so entrenched that it even appears in "The Encyclopedia of British Columbia"!

Local histories are listed first, followed by articles and short notes, all in chronological order by publication date, with web sites at the end.

Local histories of Port Coquitlam:

Chambers, Edith D. "History of Port Coquitlam" Web Press, Burnaby, 1973, page 7

"Part 3 The First Settlers

August 2, 1858 - British Columbia became a Crown Colony,

It was at this time that Coquitlam's first settler arrived. "

"Port Coquitlam City of Rivers and Mountains, Celebrating 75 Years" The Corporation of the City of Port Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, 1988, page 9

"The Beginnings of European Settlement (1853-1879)

In 1853, Alexander McLean and his family headed up the Fraser from Ladner's Landing where they had been flooded out."

Campbell, Norma K. "Mountain Memories, A History of Burke" Metaphoric Media Inc., Vancouver, 1991, page 34

"A world traveller, Alexander McLean, had sailed in his 4-masted schooner in 1849 the McLean family arrived in British Columbia"

Davis, Chuck "Port Coquitlam Where Rails meet Rivers" Harbour Publishing, Madeira Park, 2000, page 24

"In 1853 the first white people settled in what is now Port Coquitlam when the Alexander McLean family arrived aboard the two-masted schooner Rob Roy."

Articles and short notes in books:

Pattison, Eric J. "Port Coquitlam Heritage Resource Inventory", City Planning Dept., Port Coquitlam, 1985, page 16

"1853 - Captain Alexander McLean, with his wife and sons Alec [sic] and Donald, establishes a homestead on Pitt Meadows Flats, now part of the city"

Davis, Chuck "The Greater Vancouver Book" Linkman Press, Surrey, 1997, page 128, article on Port Coquitlam by Hazel Postma

"The first settlers arrived in 1853, among them Alexander McLean, who moved his family to a clearing along the Pitt River after being flooded out of Ladner."

Francis, Daniel [ed] "Encyclopedia of British Columbia" Harbour Publishing, Madeira Park, 2000, page 565, article on Port Coquitlam

"The first European settlers were Alexander McLean and his family, who began farming beside the Pitt R in 1853."

Websites:

The History of Metropolitan Vancouver - Chronology (Chuck Davis)

www.vancouverhistory.ca/chronology.html

"1851 Captain Alexander McLean settled at Pitt Meadows

"1853 The first dairy farm in Greater Vancouver was operated in Ladner by Alexander McLean. After being flooded out in 1853 McLean moved his family and their 50 cows to the west bank of the Pitt River in what is now Port Coquitlam."

Historical Continuum of Port Coquitlam 1800-1860

www.pocomuseum.org/ss4.html

"1853 A schooner, the Rob Roy, drops off the Alexander McLean family. The McLeans start a dairy farm on Pitt Meadows flats"

"1853 - The First Settlers

The Rob Roy (a schooner) drops the McLean family off, the first European settlers. Donald McLean, was only two years old when he arrived with his Mother, Father (Captain Alexander McLean), his brother and a hired hand. They erected a cabin on the lush meadows, which also provided a welcome source of food for his cattle. McLean begins a dairy farm."

Appendix 2 Selected list of source material for the McLean family.

Only those sources relevant to determining the McLean's date of arrival in PoCo are listed here. I have listed the location of sources other than books.

- [1] obituary for Alexander McLean in The Daily British Columbian, April 6, 1889 (microfilm of newspaper available in the New Westminster Public Library). This obituary is quoted in this article's introductory paragraph.
- [2] a lengthy article in the Coquitlam Star, Progress Edition, May 8, 1912, about Coquitlam pioneers Donald McLean, Ned Atkins and James Fox. The Port Coquitlam Heritage and Cultural Society is privileged to own a copy of this edition.
- [3] a much shorter article about Donald McLean in the same issue of the Coquitlam Star, May 8, 1912
- [4] brief biography of Donald McLean in Howay and Scholefield "British Columbia from the Earliest Times to the Present" S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., Vancouver, 1914, Volume 3 pages 848-851
- [5] obituary for Donald McLean in the BC Weekly, November 18, 1930 (available in the New Westminster Public Library)
- [6] unpublished notes by John Edgar Gibbard from an interview with Donald McLean in 1930 (University of British Columbia Archives)

- [7] John Edgar Gibbard "Early History of the Fraser Valley 1808-1885" Masters thesis UBC, 1937, Appendix C page xvii
- [8] notes made by J.S. Matthews, City of Vancouver archivist, from an interview with Alexander McLean (son) and his wife in 1932, with notes from others about the McLeans, in "Early Vancouver" Brock Webber Printing Co., 1959, Volume 2 pages 59-65
- [9] F.W. Laing "Colonial Farm Settlers on the Mainland of British Columbia, 1859-1871" page 81 (UBC Special Collections)
- [10] Bancroft, Hubert H. "History of Washington, Idaho and Montana, 1845-1889" The History Company, Publishers, San Francisco, 1890, page 32
- [11] Edmond Meany "History of the State of Washington" Macmillan, New York, 1909, page 231
- [12] Richard Clark "Point Roberts U.S.A., the History of a Canadian Enclave" Textype Publishing, Bellingham WA, 1980
- [13] The British Colonist, April 30, 1859 (available at www.britishcolonist.ca)
- [14] The British Colonist, July 22, 1859 (available at www.britishcolonist.ca)
- [15] Blaine Journal, December 19, 1889 (available on CD-ROM, Bellingham Public Library)

A Heritage Success Story

In early November 2010, Colin Campbell of Kirkland House Foundation talked to an enthusiastic group who gathered at the Masonic Hall to hear Colin describe how the Kirkland House in Ladner was rescued from a ruin to the beautiful Edwardian house shown here.

With the dedication and hard work of volunteers, some good luck, and the help of the City of Delta which ultimately purchased the property, this pioneer farmhouse is now financially self-sustaining. The ongoing restoration work is done by a growing group of volunteers and the proceeds from wedding receptions and film set bookings are used to purchase the necessary materials and to pay for some expertise.



Kirkland House

Look for more information at www.kirklandhouse.ca and stop by for a visit next time you're in the area.

Thank you, CIBC!

PoCo Heritage recently received a \$1,000 donation from CIBC, courtesy of Dave Allen, Director, who is employed with the bank. All donations are very gratefully received and will be put to good use.



Your Board of Directors has also recently made grant applications to the City of Port Coquitlam and the Port Coquitlam Business Improvement Association. Stay tuned...

And now a word from our sponsor

You may notice the addition of advertisements in this newsletter. Your Board of Directors recently agreed to seek advertisers in the hope that we may cover our postage costs. If you know of any local businesses that might like to place an ad with us in return for a modest donation to the Society, please put them in touch with Pippa.

A little help from our friend....

Since September 2010, Justin Beck has been working with Brian in the Archives, learning the process of scanning our archival photographs so that they may be ultimately put on our website for public access. Justin is a Grade 10 student at Terry Fox Secondary School and is spending some time with us as part of his high school graduation volunteer requirement. Brian says he enjoys working with Justin and finds him quick to learn and interested in what we are trying to achieve.



Justin Beck



Out of Africa!

Welcome home to our Webmaster Extraordinaire Steve Smith and his wife Judy who have recently returned from an exciting trip to Africa where they volunteered on a conservation project in Namibia. When they have come down to earth we hope Steve will put a slide show together for us to enjoy.

Something Old, Something New

Our photo contest has closed and the winners were presented with their prizes by Councillor Brad West at the November 22 Council Meeting. Congratulations to first place winner Roberto Paz for his winning picture, *Looking Back to the Future* (shown right).

Congratulations also to second place runner-up Mary Ness for her photo *Swinging to the Golden Ears Bridge* and to Brian Hubbard for his third place entry, *Wheels*.

Special thanks to Eunice Hodge, Richard Dalmonte and Sherry Carroll for their difficult task of judging the winners. The winning submissions may be viewed on our website, and all entries will remain on display at the Archives until the end of the year. Thanks to everyone who participated.



Photo: Roberto Paz

Obituary

Vancouver writer Chuck Davis, the man who brought the history of the Lower Mainland to life, died on November 20, 2010 at the age of 75. Mr. Davis is probably best known locally as the author of our



Photo: Vancouver Sun

own history book *Port Coquitlam: Where Rails Meet Rivers*. He will be missed by all who shared his passion for the history of Vancouver and surrounding communities.

Copies of *Where Rails Meet Rivers*, first published in 2000, are still available for purchase. Enquire at the Archives.

Charlie Perkins' Tree

By Todd Delaurier

My brother Robert and I put up a 4' x 6' Canadian flag on the Charlie Perkins' tree. We cleaned up some of the overgrown ivy covering the cross, Canadian flags and crests. That Douglas Fir once stood 210 ft high and Charlie and his four friends used to splash in a small swimming hole near the tree. Charlie and his friends went off to the First World War. Charlie was a flight instructor with the Royal Flying Corps and the only one to return home. As a remembrance to his friends he planted ivy around the base of tree and dedicated it to their memory.

The tree is located between 176 and 200th. There is a real big ugly sign directly in front of the tree. Look for the tree next time you drive out. Our freedom today is from those men that fought for it



Photo: Todd Delaurier



Is the Giggle Dam Haunted? – Historical Facts & Evidence Found...

Hello everyone, it's Kati of Vancouver Spooks Paranormal Investigations, checking in with you again. Thought I would provide an update to a most interesting investigation of the building at 2616 Shaunessy Street, formally known as the Port Theatre, and now known as The Giggle Dam Dinner Theatre.

I had an interesting interview with Bernie Pregler not long ago. Pippa of the Port Coquitlam Heritage & Cultural Society passed on a message from a member, who suggested we speak with Bernie about the Theatre, believing his father played a part in its history. She was right. So here is an update on the history of the Theatre:

1947 – Three men: **Joe Pregler** (born in 1905, from Port Arthur, Ont), **Dave Kincaid** (an investor from Lakehead, Ont) and **Bob Miller** (a furniture & woodworker – believed to have owned Paragon Woodworks), decided to go into a venture together and build a theatre in Port Coquitlam on a lot that was sitting empty on Shaunessy Street near McAllister. Across the street was the Pacific Stage Line Bus Depot (a website with information on this bus service: http://members.shaw.ca/jack_brown/pacificstage.html), which had a café and a U-shaped drive. At the corner of McAllister and Shaunessy was Hammond's Garage.

1948 - Fraser Valley Investments Ltd (believed to be Joe Pregler, Dave Kincaid and Bob Miller) built Port Theatre, with Joe Pregler supervising the construction. Wood from 3-4 boxcars built to carry ammunitions to the allied effort in the Soviet Union during World War 2, was used in the building of the theatre by the contractor. This wood was purchased from Crown Assets Disposal Corporation. The building was opened in late 1948, called the Port Theatre, and was used as a movie house.

1949 – Joe Pregler moved his family to Port Coquitlam and purchased a home on Elgin Street. Bernie Pregler, son of Joe, remembers the day they moved into Port Coquitlam and stopped across from the Theatre. The movie playing was "Under the Tonto Rim" (a 1947 western) and as Bernie (coming from the big city) had a crew cut, young men standing outside of the theatre jeered at him making fun of his hair cut.

1949 – Joe, Dave and Bob hired Cam Bastito as Manager of the theatre. In the late 1950's, Cam stepped down for an unknown reason, and Mr& Mrs Walter Lilly then took over the position as Manager. Both Mr & Mrs Lilly were of vaudeville background. They were quite a bit older than Joe Pregler, Bernie remembers, and information found via vital statistics show that Walter Lilly was born in 1880. Walter was known for haggling for movies over a drink or two, believed to have been an alcoholic and not in good health. Therefore, Walter would get only one good movie with a batch of bad movies. Maida McCallum Smyth (her father owned & ran a grocery store at the corner of Wilson & Shaunessy) sold tickets for the shows, while Elmer Canning with the projectionist. Bernie remembers his mother, Mrs Pregler, was the bookkeeper for the theatre. There were 3 changes of movie shows a week and 2 shows a day @ 7pm & 9pm. Movie tickets sold at approximately \$0.25-\$0.35 a show. Once inside the two front entrances was the lobby. A room to the left of the lobby was where women could take their babies and watch the show through a window. The theatre only had one staircase (now it has 2 in the main area, and 1 off the lobby), with 2 flights up to the projectionist booth, and a business office upstairs in the front of the building. Behind the movie screen was a huge empty space. The Port Theatre lost its lustre in mid-1950 due to the arrival of television, and ticket sales began to dwindle.

1956– It is not known who "Roberts Estates" is, as they are listed as purchasing the property from Fraser Valley Investments Ltd –in a November 23rd news article. (Is this the sale of Joe & Dave to Bob, or a later piece of information? – see Early 1960's)

1958 – Bernie Pregler, son of Joe, moves out of Port Coquitlam but comes back in 1969. Bernie stated he had earned extra money after school by drawing the curtains open for the shows. In those days the curtains were handled manually.

Early 1960's – Joe Pregler and Dave Kincaid decided to sell their interests to Bob Miller. This is believed to be in 1963 – as told by Bernie Pregler. The building sat empty for a time.

Mid-to late 1960's – Bob Miller then sells the theatre to someone (*unknown at this time*) who re-opened the building as a soft core porn movie house. This ran into early 1970's, at which time it closed its doors. Once again, the building sits empty, this time for more than a decade.

1965 – November 30th, Walter Percival Lilly passes away at the age of 80, in Vancouver. Not known is Mrs Lilly's first name, therefore her date of death is undetermined at this time.

1966 – Joseph Harold Pregler passes away at the age of 60 in Port Coquitlam.

1978 – Archaeological dig at mouth of the Pitt River unearths thousands of native artefacts

1981 -1988 – Unknown date, the property undergoes renovation and one wall is knocked down with the boxcar wood going to a Maple Ridge theatre.

Early 1990's – Unknown date as to when the Port Coquitlam Cabaret Ltd (*David Lowe & Justin Roberts*) purchased the property. They converted the movie theatre into a night club, which then gained poor reputation over the following years.

February 22, 1994 – (*on or about*) David Anthony Lowe hit William Ronald Rudy (*a partner in ownership of the club, due to assisting PoCo Cabaret Ltd in purchasing the property*) in the back of the head with a sledgehammer inside the Rumours Club. David wore protective clothing, used an area in the club that had floor drains, organized the loan of a van, and then dumped the body in the forest of Harrison Mills area (*Agassiz*), where he claimed to have buried Rudy. Rudy had been living in an Aldergrove Motel at the time, and was reported missing around that time.

Since 1994 – the club went under numerous name changes: RPM, Confetti's, Poco Cabaret, The Club, Rumours, and Rumours II.

December 9, 1995 – a 23 year old man was shot in the leg @ midnight in Confetti's, believed to be a dispute between 2 men.

September 27, 1996 – William Rudy's skeleton was found off Morris Valley Road @ Harrison Mills.

November 1996 – The city council revokes Confetti's licence.

July 23, 1998 – Cory Hatter was beaten into a coma in the parking lot near Rumours II. Two weeks later his lungs filled with fluid and his heart stopped. He passed away. 2nd degree murder charges were laid on 4 men.

October 23, 1998 – The city council pulls the licence of Rumours II. The property is believed to remain vacant.

2001 – The property is purchased by a new owner. Sheila Sharma and her troupe lease the building to create the Giggle Dam Dinner Theatre. Sheila tells us that after they moved in, David Lowe stopped by to let them know as he understood the entire building, if they needed any assistance they could call on him.

End of 2001 – David Lowe is arrested. The Giggle Dam is investigated by the police, checking the downstairs basement area as well as other areas in the theatre for evidence of the murder.

Week of April 30, 2002 – David Lowe confesses to the murder of Rudy, to an undercover officer.

April 2002 – David Lowe is charged with murder. **February 2004** – Murder trial resumes. It proves to be a 10 month trial.

August 7, 2004 – David Lowe's defence files an appeal.



August 31, 2004 – David Lowe is found guilty of murder and is not eligible for parole for 25 years.

Now, to the evidence gathered during VSPI's paranormal investigation of the Theatre. Sheila Sharma and Jon Lundquist, of the Giggle Dam Dinner Theatre, welcomed us and joined Mark and I during our afternoon of gathering evidence. After long review of all our audio and video tapes, and discussions over what we may have caught, we found two voices on our digital recorders of people who simply were not present with us. Their voices unexplained. What VSPI performs is known as EVP (*electronic voice phenomena*) sessions. That is, we sit down with our digital recorders and speak to and ask questions of, spirits that may inhabit the building. We then listen back to the recordings. The theory is that spirit voices can be picked up by audio recording devices, when we normally can't hear them with our own ears. We have placed the two recordings in question in our website under the heading ``Findings`` and you are most welcome to go listen to them. (*You'll find our website information below.*) We believe a man spoke to us, while we were discussing visiting the Essondale Cemetery in search of a woman spirit we encountered, and he remarked on this intention of ours, claiming he was going to be there. We also heard a woman's laughter with Jon and I remarking how we just heard a laugh, yet the others in the area heard nothing. Both voices are quite shocking when you think of it. They were clearly standing next to us. Ok, that always puts shivers down my spine!

As for the female spirit I just mentioned to you all... How did we encounter her? VSPI sometimes uses unconventional methods of connecting with the afterlife. In this case, we used ``divining rods`` (*otherwise known as ``dowsing rods`` - the theory that spiritual energy can interact with the energy of the rods*), and simply asked the spirit(s) to cross the rods for a positive answer and leave them as is for a negative response. We use a meter which measures Electromagnetic Fields (*the theory being the meter can pick up on spirit energy*) to confirm any fluctuations at the time the rods are being used. We had several hits during our session. After several hours of talking out loud to the spirits, Jon, Sheila, Mark and I discovered we were speaking with a woman identifying herself as Maria. She described herself of Italian background, yet born in Canada. Her parents came from the old country. She claims to have been committed to Essondale (*now known as Riverview*) by her parents due to mental illness after 1930. Maria went on to tell us she was raped by an orderly or doctor, bore a girl child in 1933, and then was murdered by this orderly-doctor in 1934 after the child was taken from her and sold. She told us she was 17 at the time of her death, and came to the Port Theatre looking for someone to help her. Maria said she has family still living, but she has no siblings. She believes her child is still living, but does not know where. Maria also stated her body was buried on the Essondale grounds. VSPI performed an extensive search of Essondale records as well as Woodlands records and found no grave markings for a Maria who died in 1934; however, it is thought her family may have claimed her body and buried her elsewhere.

Maria also advised us of the spirits who reside at the Giggle Dam. A dark man, known as possibly William or Bill, and that he was murdered. He appears to be angry and may be one to make noises, throws objects at staff, push people, and appear as a shadow man. She also says a woman of the vaudeville days, who is looking for her red shoe, protects the staff from Bill but doesn't like to talk to many people. Now are these spirits truly there? That is the true question. Without further evidence we had to decide on what comes next.

VSPI sat down with the Giggle Dam staff to provide our recommendation and course of action to take:

- The Giggle Dam is believed to have unexplained activity but it's not enough to support a "haunting"
- A follow up investigation is recommended

So what does this mean? At this time we cannot say the theatre is haunted, but we are convinced something is going on in the building. The Giggle Dam has agreed to have VSPI back for an overnight investigation, at a date yet to be determined. We are excited to be going back! The theatre certainly has history, and is such a large building. The people working there are warm, welcoming, and happy that we found some sort of proof that they are not crazy.

For the full story and more information, you can check a few places online:

http://bewitchinghour.podomatic.com/entry/2010-10-25T12_29_27-07_00 - an interview with Kimmie Jae of Reign Radio. Jon and I talk about what the investigation was like and the evidence gathered. (*The link can be found on the VSPI website under "Findings"*)

And our website @ <http://www.vancouverpooks.com> – the two Electronic Voice Phenomena's has been placed on our "Findings" page.

I wish to thank **the Port Coquitlam Heritage & Cultural Society** for their incredible help with the research, and for inviting me out to the meeting in October. That was fun! Thank you Pippa and members, you've been amazing! We'll definitely keep in touch with our progress on this case.

I also put out a huge thank you to **Kimmie Jae** for introducing us to **Jon of the Giggle Dam**, and to **Sheila** for allowing us to enter and perform an investigation. We look forward to coming back!

So members, VSPI will be back in the new year to update you as to what our follow up investigation has presented to us. Hopefully we'll contact the spirit known to frequent the stage, and gather more evidence of William who seems to be angry, and the woman seeking her red shoe. I wonder where that shoe disappeared to.



If anyone has information to help us fill in the time line gaps, don't hesitate, contact me immediately @ katighosthunter@gmail.com or simply go to the VSPI website and use the contact form.

If you have any stories you wish to share, or would like VSPI to come out and investigate your home, check out our website and contact us. We'd love to hear from you.

Till next time, I wish you a happy haunting!

Sincerely, your friend,

Kati Ackermann

www.vancouverpooks.com

Information: "*Historical Atlas of Vancouver & Lower Fraser Valley*"- Derek Hayes; The Port Coquitlam Heritage and Cultural Society (*Poco Heritage*), the Vancouver Public Library; a book: "*Port Coquitlam, Where Rails Meet Rivers*" – Chuck Davis; & an interview with Bernie Pregler.

▪ www.vancouverpooks.com ▪

HELP WANTED



Heritage Display Centre

It's sad but true that fewer than 20 percent of our membership actively volunteers for PoCo Heritage. Currently there is an **urgent** need for members to spend some time in the Display Centre so that it can be kept open for the public. Volunteers are needed especially on Thursdays. Presently, the hours are from 1 to 5 pm but this could be adjusted if necessary. Please consider lending a hand. The task is not onerous and may be shared among several members. It would be nice to see some new faces helping out in 2011!

What Was It?

At our displays at Harvest Festival and Rivers and Trails, we asked people to see if they could identify three kitchen gadgets.

Congratulations to Christine Yaremy and Ann Pratt who correctly identified:

1. An apple peeler
2. An apple corer, and
3. A bean slicer

The winners received a one year membership to the Port Coquitlam Heritage & Cultural Society.



GOT EVERYTHING YOU WANT?

**Wonder what you will do with more nice soap, hand cream or ties?
Ever think those chocolates sure look good but you don't want to
keep looking at them on your hips for the next ten years?**

PROBLEM SOLVED!

**Instead of buying you things you don't need or want for your
birthday, anniversary, Fathers Day, Mothers Day and Christmas,
suggest to your children and grandchildren that they make a
donation in your name to the PoCo Heritage Museum Fund.**

**Cheques should be made payable to the Port Coquitlam Heritage
and Cultural Society – Museum Fund. Tax receipts will be given
for donations of \$25 and up.**

It's that time again, folks....

2011 membership fees are due on January 1st. Clip the coupon on the back page and return with your cheque or cash.

- Regular \$20
- Corporate \$25
- Family \$25
- Seniors \$10
- Students \$5

Don't forget you can also pay securely on our website using PayPal .

Heritage about Town



Kids enjoy our display at the 2010 Harvest Festival



Mayor Moore (with halo) and his wife Erin enjoy a glass of wine at our Wine Tasting Event, Thunder from Down Under



Marjorie takes a break from playing the piano at Thunder from Down Under



Brian, Carol, Bryan and Pippa help out at the 2010 Rivers & Trails Festival



Pippa models vintage dress and hat donated by Eileen



Ron Talbot receives lifetime membership award

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Meetings are held in the Community Room in the Leigh Square Arts Village on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 1 p.m.

January 20 - Show and Tell

February 17 - Speaker TBA

March 17 - Speaker TBA

Heritage Evenings—PoCo Remembers When:

January 27, February 24, March 24, 7—8 p.m. at the Archives, Leigh Square

Visitors are welcome!

COMING EVENTS

Spirit Week - February

Heritage Week February 21 - 27 *A Century of Conservation - Parks and Cultural Landscapes*

Park Walk – Date and time to be announced

2010 Board of Directors

President	Pippa Van Velzen	604-941-8465
Vice President	Julie Schmidt	604-941-5430
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Editor: Carol Hubbard 604-942-4480

Tear off and return with your 2011 membership fee:



The Port Coquitlam Heritage and Cultural Society
2571 Mary Hill Road
Port Coquitlam, BC V3C 4X3
604-927-7611 or 604-927-2388

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
POSTAL CODE _____
TELEPHONE _____
EMAIL _____

Type of Membership

Regular	\$20.00	_____
Senior	\$10.00	_____
Student	\$ 5.00	_____
Family	\$25.00	_____
Corporate	\$25.00	_____