

Notes from the 2018 Heritage Summit

Hosted by the City of Nanaimo
and held February 21, 2018 @ 7:00 pm at the Nanaimo Museum

Guests

Norm Abbey, Nanaimo International Jazz Festival Association
Shannon Maliteare, Nanaimo Conservatory of Music
Gerda Hofman, Nanaimo Art Walk
Mike Larocque, Friends of Morden Mine Society
Dalys Barney, VIU Library & Nanaimo Historical Society
Ben Hyman, VIU Library
Aimee Greenaway, Nanaimo Museum
Shiloh, DeTours (Freelance Tour Guide)
Stephen Davies, Canadian Letters & Images Project
Matt Hawkins, St. Andrew's Church
Andrew Homzy, Nanaimo International Jazz Festival Association
Greg Sakaki, Nanaimo News Bulletin
Scott Manning, Public
Ted Lord, Nanaimo Historical Society
Jeff Loney, Public
Ian Thorpe, Councillor, City of Nanaimo
John Hofman, Public
Diane Brennan, Councillor, City of Nanaimo
Bill McKay, Mayor, City of Nanaimo
Chris Sholberg, Heritage Planner, City of Nanaimo
Rebecca Buckler, Recording Secretary, City of Nanaimo

Welcome & Overview

Chris Sholberg, Heritage Planner, welcomed those in attendance and provided an overview of the evening's agenda.

Blessing (William Good, Elder, Snuneymuxw First Nation)

Presentations

Time Travel: The Story of Big Frank (Christine Meutzner, Nanaimo Archives)

A little known story of Nanaimo's past featuring the city's biggest clock: Big Frank.

Extension BC: Divided in Solidarity (Aimee Greenaway, Nanaimo Museum)

The community of Extension grew up around a coal mine started in the late 1890s by infamous BC coal family the Dunsmuirs. Extension was diverse and included residents with Italian, British, Finnish, eastern European, American and Chinese backgrounds. Churches, stores, hotels, a school, cultural halls and a Chinatown were part of the community. Surprising stories include the Extension connection to acclaimed Canadian artist, EJ Hughes, African American coal mining families and a group of Communists. The exhibit features artifacts, photos and maps from museums, archives, art galleries and public collections.

For details, visit nanaimomuseum.ca/featured-exhibit/extension-bc-divided-solidarity.

Break

Roundtable Discussion

Nanaimo International Jazz Festival (Andrew Homzy & Norm Abbey)

The Society will be hosting the second annual Jazz Festival in September, and an eight-concert series to begin in March. The eight concert series will host professional jazz artists at the Shaw Auditorium (Vancouver Island Conference Centre) beginning March 16.

For a list of events (free and ticketed), visit their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/NanaimoJazzFestival.

Nanaimo Conservatory of Music (Shannon Maliteare)

The Conservatory offers individual and group lessons, ensembles, youth choirs, workshops and Master classes for all ages and skill levels, from beginner to professional. Recent accomplishments include streamlined administration, a strategic planning session, creation of a vision and mission statement, and working with Parks & Rec to provide classes through the Activity Guide. The annual Vancouver Island Chamber Music festival brings professional classical musicians to the city in June each year. In March, there will be a musical theatre workshop offered for Spring Break.

For details, visit www.ncmusic.ca or their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/nanaimoconservatoryofmusic.

Nanaimo City Council (Diane Brennan)

Past longstanding member of the City's Heritage Commission and general interest in heritage matters.

Nanaimo Historical Society (Ted Lord & Dalys Barney)

Dalys recently took over the society's social media functions. The society meets monthly on the second Thursday of the month at Bowen Park (7:30 pm). Meetings are open to everyone and accompanied by a public lecture. The next meeting is scheduled for March 8, and will feature a presentation on Ladysmith's 1st Avenue (by Rob Johnson), recently recognized by the Canadian Institute of Planners as a "Great Street".

For details, visit their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/Nanaimo-Historical-Society-466384560135141/>.

Friends of Morden Mine Society (Michael Larocque)

Friends of Morden Mine is a non-profit Society dedicated to the preservation of the most complete above-ground remains of an historic coal mine on Vancouver Island and the earliest of two such reinforced concrete structures in North America. The mine recently received some funding from Heritage BC and Parks. "Heritage Works" was hired to clean up some timbers on and around the site and will be creating a report on what is required to keep the mine from falling apart, and develop an incorporated workplan for rehabilitation of the Mine head frame and tippie structures.

The Morden Mine is an important part of coal mining history, so the Society is always trying to raise awareness. They have started a GoFundMe page (www.gofundme.com/help-nanaimos-historic-morden-mine) to assist with fundraising. Each year, they facilitate school tours and they will be looking at providing tours to cruise ship passengers in the summer. For details, visit their website at www.mordenmine.com.

Nanaimo Art Walk (Gerda Hofman)

Gerda is a local artist who organizes the annual Nanaimo Art Walk. The 2018 Art Walk will take place on December 1 & 2 at various locations throughout downtown Nanaimo. Their mandate is to showcase and

promote the visual arts and artists in downtown Nanaimo and Old City Quarter areas, in partnership with local businesses. The event features paintings, sculptures, drawings, jewellery and more.

For more information, visit nanaimoartwalk.jimdo.com or their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/NanaimoArtwalk/>.

As well, Gerda assisted with the organization of the public artwork and historic photos on the fence surrounding the demolished Jean Burns building. Currently working to make some repairs and replacements to the photos that were damaged or stolen, reinstall as the weather improves.

DeTours (Shiloh Durkee)

Shiloh has opened freelance tour company “DeTours” and would like to begin focusing on historical walking tours throughout Nanaimo. In the summer, she provides tours of Morden Mine to cruise ship passengers.

Vancouver Island University Library (Ben Hyman)

In June, the VIU Library held an open house for libraries, archives and museums to come together. They received a grant to assist with the digitization of news records dating back to the 1800s, and have many more initiatives in the works. For details, visit <https://library.viu.ca/>.

VIU History Department / Canadian Letters & Images Project (Stephen Davies)

The Canadian Letters & Images Project has been in progress for 18 years to digitize letters and images and post them online. Nearly 30 thousand letters from private collections have been posted to-date. The project has eight students employed. Letters are gathered from private collections and returned to the family once they have been digitized. It is amazing what people have in their attics. Always looking for new Nanaimo based content.

The Canadian Letters and Images Project is an online archive of the Canadian war experience, from any war, as told through the letters and images of Canadians themselves. Begun in August 2000, the Project is located in the Department of History at Vancouver Island University. Through the digitization of contemporary letters, diaries, photographs, and other related materials, the Project permits Canadians to tell their story, and Canada’s story, through their own words and images. It is history without a lens of interpretation by the present. For more information, visit www.canadianletters.ca.

City of Nanaimo Mayor (Bill McKay)

Mentioned that a VIU graduate from a few years ago is now the director of the Simon Fraser University(?) Library. He is pleased that the Daily News information will be preserved. He is looking for a historical photo of a little ferry (12 passenger) named the Vida II that used to go between Nanaimo and “Happy Land” on Protection Island (Christine offered to check the Archives for him). He mentioned that the Woodgrove Centre court clock was put in storage and wouldn’t it be cool to see it reused in a new development somewhere in town.

Nanaimo Community Archives (Christine Meutzner)

The Archives collects records, processes them, and makes them available to the public. Of recent interest, they received thousands of photos from the Free Press, and several boxes of land commissioner records from Nanaimo and beyond. Christine will be participating in “Festival Nanaimo” in March, where she will “set up shop” in a local restaurant, put up a sign, and be the “pop up archivist” where citizens can sit down with her and ask their heritage and archive related questions. For more information, visit www.nanaimoarchives.ca.

St. Andrew’s United Church (Matt Hawkins)

The church is a registered heritage building located at 315 Fitzwilliam Street. This year, they celebrated their 125th anniversary with performances and fundraisers, and a special commemorative church service. They are always making efforts to involve the community, and everyone is welcome. On Wednesdays from 10:00 am

to 11:30 am they offer a “coffee break” event for neighbours to gather. On March 17, they have organized an Irish Music Festival. For more information, visit www.standrewsunitednanaimo.com.

City of Nanaimo Culture & Heritage (Chris Sholberg)

In the past year, a couple of significant registered heritage buildings have been lost. The Jean Burns building (6 Commercial Street) was destroyed by fire, and old Nanaimo Hospital Building (388 Macleary) was demolished by the property owner and is up for redevelopment.

Two Heritage Façade Grant projects were completed, including the Ashlar Masonic Temple (101 Commercial Street), and the Nanaimo Firehall #2 (34 Nicol Street). As well, the City of Nanaimo has hired a consultant to complete an Archaeological Overview Assessment of the city.

For more information, visit www.nanaimo.ca, Facebook page at www.facebook.com/cityofnanaimo, or subscribe to Culture & Heritage eNews at www.nanaimo.ca/culture-environment/culture/culture-and-heritage-newsletter. Contact Chris Sholberg directly at 250-755-4472 or chris.sholberg@nanaimo.ca.

Closing & Thank You

Chris Sholberg, City of Nanaimo Heritage Planner, thanked everyone in attendance for participating in the event and sharing information on their group's activities.