



# H e r i t a g e H e r e

FALL 2014

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## HERITAGE WEEK: FEBRUARY 16 –22, 2015

Let's celebrate Main Street: At the Heart of the Community.

The heritage of our main streets and traditional downtowns is worth celebrating! As venues for commerce, entertainment, worship, shopping and more, they speak volumes about a community's social and economic history.

Heritage Canada The National Trust has chosen the main streets theme to celebrate Heritage Week in February 2015. "Downtowns have long been places where families and friends gather for parades and fireworks, and where the community commemorates milestones and tearful homecomings. Providing a rich and textured backdrop are the historic buildings that line our main streets: landmark post offices and places of worship, commercial architecture with enticing display windows, and homegrown shops and cafés that together create a vibrant mix of services and uses."

Heritage BC points out that "we recognize heritage as a vital asset to attract tourists, stimulate investment and provide a rich and lively setting for a vibrant mix of social and commercial exchange." The economic value of heritage recognition is well established. Heritage appreciation, the understanding of our story, promotes a healthy community.

Communities are invited to celebrate the theme all year. In Maple Ridge the Community Heritage Commission and the Maple Ridge Historical Society are already planning events for the third week in February. You can join us as groups and organizations, and as individuals. Keep us posted on your plans and we will help you promote your activity.

Some ideas for business and organizations to develop appreciation of our cultural heritage and stimulate participation in your events:

- Offer tours of historic areas and landmarks.
- Create displays on the history of your business or organization.
- Sponsor media reports on aspects of the history of our area, especially during Heritage Week.
- Organize a photographic or artistic contest focused on heritage in our community.
- Write a letter to the editor.

## Heritage Contributors

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- Organize or sponsor a lecture/workshop/demonstration on maintaining and repairing traditional building materials.
- Hold a heritage trivia contest.
- Use social media to spread the word about your Heritage Week activities.

You and your family can be participants in larger events or organize your own:

- Look around you and appreciate the heritage in our community.
- Visit a heritage site or museum. Take a tour.
- Join the Maple Ridge Historical Society.
- Nominate someone or something for a Heritage Award.
- Learn about preservation issues in our community.
- Share your experience on social media.

## FROM THE CHAIR

What a summer! What exciting events to celebrate the Maple Ridge story!

In June Fuller Watson Home Furnishings hosted a grand party to commemorate 90 years in business. In August Maple Ridge Historical Society gave us a picnic in James Hadgkiss Park as the organization cheered two milestones: 40 years of collecting and sharing Maple Ridge history, and 30 years since moving the museum into the Brickyard Office and Manager's House.

In September, the next stunning occasion combined the 140th anniversary of Maple Ridge's incorporation as a district municipality with its promotion to city status. Maple Ridge Funeral Chapel and Crematorium rounded out the birthdays with its 50 year birthday bash. I love a good party and the Maple Ridge Historical Society gave us two "History Goes to Market" events in partnership with the Haney Farmers Market.

All these events and more were wonderful opportunities to stimulate our memories and learn more about this richly storied place we share. They happen through the dedicated efforts of many people who understand the community building value of our history. Congratulations and thanks to all.

Now to business: The Maple Ridge Community Heritage Commission is a body appointed to advise Council on heritage matters. We welcome applications from community members who are interested in learning our history while they exercise their skills in finance, communications and education. Find application details in this newsletter and online at mapleridge.ca We look forward to meeting you.

Our Commission meetings are open to the public on the first Tuesday evening of each month from September to June. We hope you will come to tell us about your heritage interests and initiatives.

Yours in telling the Maple Ridge story

Brenda L. Smith, Chair

## CELEBRATIONS!

The Maple Ridge Museum recently celebrated their 40th anniversary. It welcomed over 275 people through its doors for tours of its new exhibits and the temporary gallery that focused on the first donations it collected in 1974. Tours of the diorama and the 1944 caboose were provided outside the museum, there were historical displays, music and the launch of Shelia Nickol's book *Looking Back: Volume One 1987 - 1991*. The day ended with a birthday cake and it was an enjoyable experience. Thanks to the staff and volunteers it was a very successful event.

On September 14, the Maple Ridge Funeral Home celebrated its 50th anniversary. They invited the community to enter its doors for a celebration with the whole family. Tours of the Home and cemetery were provided and the daughters of the founders, Mr. and Mrs. Osborn had old gazette newspapers from 1964 that held the original ads for the opening of the funeral home. The Historical Society was there to provide a history of the community. Gift bags were handed out to all who came and there were random draws throughout the day for prizes. Everyone enjoyed the day. Congratulations for the years of service to our community Maple Ridge Funeral Home!

*Faye Isaac*



## HERITAGE LANDSCAPES

The CHC's Awards Program has many facets one of which is the category of Heritage Landscapes. This category is sometimes hard to define so I took a walk so I could organize my thoughts.

I live on 124th off of 232nd. It's a dead end road that is slated to be extended through to 240th at sometime in the future and will become the main route to Golden Ears Park. As I stood near the end of the road admiring the view across the fields of Westacre Farm with the Golden Ears mountains in the background I reflected on the hundreds of times I have stood in the same place admiring the same view. In the spring the blossoms on the fruit trees lining the winding driveway have taken my breath away with their beauty sending me running back home to get my camera. Summer brings a green beauty that further frames our mountains and provides a playground for this year's crop of gamboling lambs watched over by Duke their guardian Lama as the snow pack on the mountain slowly shrinks to nothing. The fall colours always inspire more photos as the deciduous trees slowly shed their leaves to reveal their skeletons. Winter brings dustings of snow and the Ears stand out in stark contrast.

As I stood there I thought of those who would pass by in the future when this dead-end road gets extended and this view becomes available to thousands more. What would it mean to them? Would this view become a touchstone for them as it has for me as they head home or to the park? Is it worth recognising? More important, is it worth protecting? Some of these questions have no answer today; the last two have a ready answer in my mind, Yes and Yes. We have lost too many landscapes to (as Tim Tyler puts it) the "vinyl monster".

My intention is to nominate this particular landscape for recognition before it is threatened. Doing so in the heat of a development planning process is too late for careful clear minded consideration. Fortunately I know the owner of this particular property and she is committed to the history, health and beauty of this property and its landscape. Many other landscapes are owned by people who view our landscape as a commodity instead of as part of a community.

The first step to fixing a problem is to recognise that there is a problem. Unfortunately there are many other landscapes that could be erased without being considered as a community asset. Too many roads, like Abernethy, have as their context a 6' fence and the back of a vinyl clad house. If we recognise a landscape as important to the community then it can be considered as part of a development and celebrated instead of obliterated.

Join me in celebrating these amazing views and the landscapes that give them context. If the community insists they be recognised then our politicians have to take notice and help preserve and protect them.

Where is your favourite landscape?

*Craig Speirs*



## MEET COMMISSIONER STEVE RANTA



**S**TEVE RANTA has been a resident of Maple Ridge for most of his 57 years. His earliest childhood memories include getting to know the chickens, cows, and various tiny creatures at his grandparent's small farm in Webster's Corner, across from the Sampo Hall. He also remembers hearing heated political discussions in Finnish, which he never mastered. Steve went to Mount Crescent Elementary, and then Maple Ridge Secondary. He attended UBC and SFU, studying Economics, Philosophy, History, and Secondary Education. After teaching in high school for three decades, mostly Band, English, and Social Studies, he retired two years ago. His current hobbies include playing piano and organ, enjoying the outdoors, travelling, reading about history and current events, and meeting people for coffee.



### E v e n t s + P r o j e c t s

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