

THE SQUAMISH HISTORIAN

The Newsletter of the Squamish Historical Society

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NEWS & NOTES

The premiere of "The Legend of John Drenka" and the associated John Drenka tribute will be held in April at the Sea to Sky Hotel in Squamish when John returns from his winter vacation in Arizona. Information about the exact date will be forthcoming on our website as we get closer to the event.

According to our Treasurer, Mike Jenson, the SHS finances are in good shape. Recent fund raising activities have generated \$438 from two meat draws held at the Royal Canadian Legion in October and November 2010. Thanks to Betty Adamson for organizing the draws. They continue to be a successful fund raising strategy for us. Our next Legion meat draw will be held on Friday, January 28th starting at 6 pm. If you have not attended yet, please do so and ask a friend to join you. The atmosphere is casual with the goal of winning great cuts of meat and raising funds for the SHS. We also have secured funding totaling \$4,200 for our Wilkie Building project at the Westcoast Railway Heritage Park from grants from the Squamish Community Foundation and a private donor. The Wilkie Building will be our first physical permanent location to display Squamish history. In memory of one of our past directors, Don Behrner, we will be awarding a bursary of \$250 to a Howe Sound Secondary School grad in June 2011.

HISTORICAL PROJECTS IN THE NEWS

The Britannia Mine Museum, which is both a national historic site and a BC historic landmark,



was recently upgraded in a \$14.7-million three-phase re-development project. Among the new or restored buildings is a central gathering place called the Event Plaza designed to host special events and demonstrations.

This past summer the CN Roundhouse & Conference Centre grand opening ceremony was held at the West Coast Railway Heritage Park. Don Evans, President and CEO of the WCRHP, provided a tour of the new multi-usage building. Don brought greetings from various dignitaries including West Coast Railway Association Patron, His Honour Stephen Point, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia.



Mayor Greg Gardner, Don Evans & H.Y Louie at the Alberta railcar dedication held @ the WCRHP (photo courtesy Ben Lypka)

The WCRHP also recently added a restored Alberta railcar to its collection. Built in 1929, the car was one of a fleet of 10 superintendent cars used by the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) across the country until the late 1960s before being retired from active service. Vancouver

businessman H.Y. Louie, the Tong and Geraldine Louie Family Foundation CEO, donated the funds to pay for the restoration. At the dedication on Tuesday, January 11, Louie announced that his paternal grandfather was a passenger agent for the CPR. The Louie Family Foundation decided to fund the project and dedicated it to his memory. The railcar will become part of the park's excursion train during select trips. It will also be on display for public viewing inside the park's CN Roundhouse and Conference Centre.

THE SQUAMISH NATION LANGUAGE PROJECT

Members of the Squamish Nation are keeping their culture and language alive via a very successful education program. Out of a population of 4,000 Squamish Nation members only 15 people speak the language fluently. Charlene Williams, who is conversant in her native language, is working on a degree in linguistics at the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, part of a new program to bring



Alice Guss (photo courtesy Gagandeep Ghuman)

Squamish Nation, is also passing her language on to young people in the community.

One challenge for new learners is simply the way words are spoken in the Squamish language. "It's more guttural and with lisps," she notes, and adds that "We tell them all the time why it's important to learn it. It's the language of our fathers and our grandfathers."

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The next SHS membership meeting will be on Thursday, February 10th at the Squamish Arts Council Building on Cleveland Ave. at 7 pm. Our guest speaker from the Squamish Monetary Fund will discuss a proposal to introduce the Squamish Dollar as a local currency, a strategy that has been used in other communities in B.C.

On a final note, the *Squamish Historian* will be published twice annually instead of a quarterly format. More timely announcements about SHS events and activities will be forthcoming on our website.



Charlene Williams (photo courtesy Gagandeep Ghuman)

aboriginal education and culture into the classrooms. Once a week she teaches the Squamish language to local Squamish Nation children. "For us, this is the most important thing...if we lose our language, we lose our culture," she points out. Alice Guss, SHS executive member and language educator for the

THE SQUAMISH HISTORIAN is published by the Squamish Historical Society.

Our purpose is to collect, preserve, document and showcase the history and artefacts of the community of Squamish and surrounding areas. Our email address is: info@squamishhistory.ca

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