

Preserve

Your voice for heritage in the Capital Region and the Islands since 1973

A Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 48, Number 4, Winter 2020

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Why Be a Member of the Hallmark Heritage Society?

In our ever-changing world, we need some consistency. For those of us in the heritage world, this includes membership in the Hallmark Heritage Society. Belonging to a group that shares your passion goes a long way to improving your quality of life. It is also good for your mental health to be part of a supportive group. This is particularly true during the COVID-19 pandemic when we cannot meet in person. To address the lack of physical meetings, we send out regular digital news messages to all our members for whom we have email addresses. This keeps people informed on current issues and gives updates on matters that cannot wait for a quarterly newsletter.

From its humble beginnings in 1973, the Society has grown to become a source of information on preservation and is recognized as a valuable link in the heritage chain. To maintain the strength of the organization, we need a strong committed membership. If you have not renewed, please do so and if you have been thinking about becoming a member, now is the time. We offer many ways to pay for membership including PayPal, Interac transfer, cheques, and cash.

For those who ask why they should be members, consider the following: Your membership helps shape the advocacy efforts of the Hallmark Heritage Society at all levels of government. As a group, we have a greater impact on local government decisions regarding neighbourhood development. Members receive educational benefits – access to members-only webinars from the Heritage Society of British Columbia. If you want to do some research, we offer access to our online historic building files providing the information collected on over 6,000 structures. You will receive special invitations to lectures presented by the Hallmark Heritage Society at the Craigflower Schoolhouse when they resume, and notifications of events that pertain to the history of Victoria and of British Columbia presented by sister organizations. Finally, you receive the Society's award-winning quarterly newsletter "Preserve" detailing the business of the organization. 🏠



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Mandate

The Hallmark Heritage Society was registered on April 18, 1973. We encourage the preservation of structural, natural, cultural, and horticultural heritage within the Capital Regional District. We accomplish these goals through education, public speaking, advocacy, tours, exhibitions, and the annual Awards Night. We are a non-profit society, financed principally by membership dues and members' contributions. 🏠

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Deadline for articles and advertising for the Spring 2021 newsletter is February 15, 2021.

P*reserve* welcomes submissions, both written and photographic, on topics related to the preservation, conservation, and restoration of heritage from a local, provincial, national, or international perspective. The Editor reserves the right to edit material for consistency and length, and to reject articles.

Please submit manuscripts to the Editor, *Preserve*, 15-1594 Fairfield Road, PO Box 50013 Fairfield Plaza PO, Victoria, BC, V8S 5L8 or send to office@hallmarkheritagesociety.ca. 🏠

President's Report

by Ken Johnson

What's Going on In Oak Bay?

In those parts of Greater Victoria which are currently experiencing new developments, with new homes sprouting up in every direction, the usual pattern is for a developer to remove as many trees as possible; sending them to local mills for the production of lumber, and then to subdivide the larger property into salable lots.

In Oak Bay they follow a different pattern. Here, the developer finds a large property with an old house upon it; demolishes the house, sending the old-growth lumber to fill

the Hartland Landfill; and then subdivides the property.

Recently, we saw this occur at 785 Island Road where an inability to agree between the developer and Oak Bay Council and staff may, at the time of writing, result in the demolition of the 1912 home designed by Architect K.B. Spurgin. The property was fairly large, reflecting the early development of Oak Bay as a community of wealthy residents who built homes on properties that reflected their wealth and position.

The property was of high value, reflecting the continued desirability of Oak Bay as a residential community.



We are about to see a repeat of this development by demolition phenomenon on the property at 2072 Hampshire Road, the current site of what is reputed to be the second oldest house remaining in Oak Bay. The house is believed to have been constructed in the early 1880s and is described on the Oak Bay Heritage Register as "This site is a rare example of an early rural farmhouse built in the early 1880s. At the core of the present building, is a farmhouse, built in the 1880s, that is one of two homes surviving from the early years of European settlement."

The property is currently listed for sale but no mention is made of the historic house; it is described as "A magical orchard of nature and privacy awaits in this special and rare opportunity to acquire a large RS-5 zoned estate that seems prime for subdivision of up to 4 lots." You can get it for \$3,200,000. It seems the house will "magically" disappear.

B.C Assessment states that the property comprises 32,300 square feet with a 2,300 square foot house upon it; all that is left of what was once a prosperous farm. It is currently zoned RS5 – One Family Residential Use and so would require a rezoning to a suitable Multiple Dwelling Use; not something the adjacent residents along Dalhousie Street, also zoned RS5, may agree to.

The property is large enough to accommodate additional development



785 Island Road. top, file photo; bottom, December 2020.



without demolishing the historic house.

We are not sure that a townhouse strata development would be in conformance with the Official Community Plan objective: BP2. “Consider infill development as a tool for allowing more density to fit within neighbourhoods while respecting and conserving neighbourhood character.” Nor does a new development fit the community vision as expressed in the Official Community Plan.

“Oak Bay is a vibrant and safe community located in a spectacular natural setting. Residents are passionate and proud of the many qualities that make Oak Bay one-of-a-kind. These include its sense of community, streetscapes, village charm, residential character, natural coastal environment, parks, recreation facilities and opportunities, enviable quality of life, vibrant arts and culture scene, high quality education opportunities, heritage values, mixed architectural styles, and well conserved historic architecture.”

There are many large properties in Oak Bay. Upon some exist the very homes that made Oak Bay a special place. The Oak Bay Council and Planning staff have identified many, but others are “under the radar” until a development plan, all too frequently requiring demolition, comes forward.

Oak Bay needs to update its Heritage Register. There have been frequent calls for this, but no plan put forward. Oak Bay needs to protect the heritage buildings that remain; either through designation or by a refusal to rezone. No owner has a right to rezone a property when such action is not in conformance with the heritage protection vision expressed in the Official Community Plan.

Oak Bay needs to be more proactive in preserving the community character valued by its residents. At this time, the Council and Staff are reacting to demolition permit applications. This is not the path to the vision of Oak Bay expressed by the citizens. 🏡

2072 Hampshire Road. Top: file photo; middle: December 2020; bottom: the local residents.

Annual General Meeting Report

This year, the meeting was held via ZOOM on October 19, 2020. President Ken Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:34 pm. There were 22 members in attendance.

Approval of the Agenda. Don Hutton/ Margaret Palmer. Carried.

Approval of the Minutes of the last AGM. Don Hutton/Tina. Carried.

Reports

President's Report

Ken reported on an interesting year. We are in good shape financially and are working online as much as we can. We have changed our web hosting company to get more features and are very pleased with it. There is greater security for our material, and we are now able to upload larger files. We have two students working on creating webpages through the winter. Everything has been scanned and will be able to be shared once the work is done.

The Japanese preschool continues to be our major tenant, and this is working well. Their rental fees help us to maintain the building and cover our expenses. We also offer rentals to community groups for a reasonable rate.

We now send out a bi-weekly electronic newsletter to our members and others interested in heritage. This enables us to provide quick updates on current issues. If anyone thinks of an item should be included, they should let us know.

Hallmark is surviving COVID-19 as we have adapted our workflow to a new reality. We do need more board members.

Treasurer's Report

Helen Edwards presented the financial statements for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2020. She answered questions from members.

Acceptance of report: Don Hutton/ Joan Peggs. Carried.

Helen then moved the acceptance of the budget for fiscal year 2020-2021, seconded by Don Hutton. Carried.

Election of officers

The following were elected as officers of the society, joining those whose terms expire in 2021:

President – Ken Johnson

Treasurer – Helen Edwards

Directors – Garth Mayhew

John Dam

Eric Tomlinson

Secretary – vacant

Discussion

There was an extensive discussion on Bank Street School. Ken will write to Victoria City Council to support the retention of the building. He asked members to write as well to the School Board. In a recent survey conducted by the South Jubilee Neighbourhood Association, the majority of respondents wanted to save the existing building.

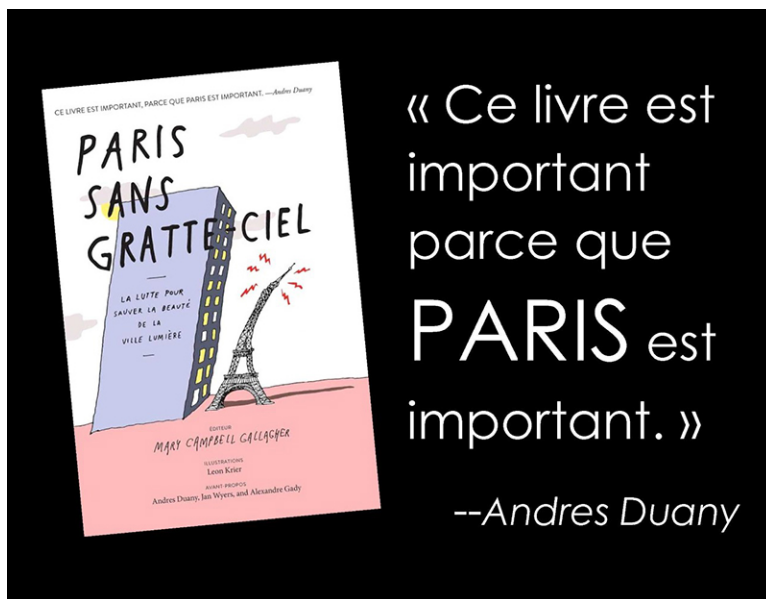
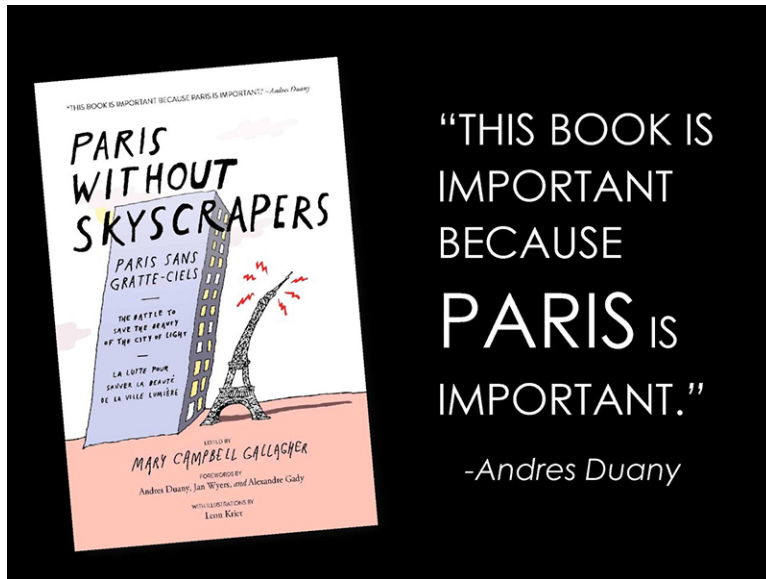
Pam Madoff advised of a webinar by the Heritage Society of BC on advocacy by politicians. Ken will send out a link to the webinar.

The meeting adjourned at 8:14 pm. 🏠

Secretary needed

You will note from the AGM report that we still need members to fill positions on the board. In particular, we need to find a secretary. The duties are minor and include taking minutes of meetings. With meetings cancelled for the most part due to the pandemic, the job has just become much easier. If you can help with any position, please let us know at office@hallmarkheritagesociety.ca. We thank you. 🏠

Saving the Beauty of Paris



Believing that heritage preservation in other areas is relevant to us, we present the efforts to prevent the skyline of Paris, France from being destroyed by skyscrapers. After all, preservation by another name is still preservation. In today’s world, crises tend to move around the globe, with the same issues surfacing in different locations. The fight to save Paris could be the forerunner of a fight to save Victoria (perhaps we are already there on a smaller scale).

In a forthcoming book, 40 experts promote the traditional urbanism and architecture of Paris and urge Paris to cancel skyscrapers.

The International Coalition for the Preservation of Paris, ICPP, is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization working to promote and protect the traditional urbanism and architecture of Paris. ICPP works with its French counterparts in the established French preservationist association SOS Paris. Now ICPP is garnering donations to publish a pathbreaking book in English and French, *Paris Without Skyscrapers* in English and *Paris sans gratte-ciel* in French. The aim is to promote the traditional beauty not only of Paris but of cities worldwide. The motto is *Beauty is worth fighting for*.

In Spring 2021, ICPP’s book, *Paris Without Skyscrapers: The Battle to Save the Beauty of the City of Light* will also be published in French as *Paris sans gratte-ciel: la bataille pour sauver la beauté de la Ville Lumière*. It features articles by 49 experts in fields from architecture to economics and by leading international lovers of Paris, architects, urbanists, lawyers, and thinkers. The book makes a powerful

argument against building skyscrapers in Paris. But time is of the essence.

We urge you to visit the website, [SaveParis.org](https://www.saveparis.org), and read the impressive list of media coverage that this issue has produced. Then, when the book is released, consider purchasing a copy to help in the preservation fight. 🏡

When you seek out Experts – Listen to Them

by Ken Johnson

For many years the City of Victoria has had a Heritage Advisory Panel (HAP) mandated to advise City Council on matters pertaining the heritage. The Panel considers general heritage policies and individual land use applications that involve heritage buildings. The Panel also makes recommendations regarding the heritage designation of houses and buildings.

At the HAP meeting of September 10, 2019, the Panel considered the application for the four-storey addition proposed to be placed over the one-storey Gold Rush Warehouses at 1314 – 1318 Wharf Street (Northern Junk). The Panel was unanimous is recommending that City Council decline the Heritage Alteration Permit requested and stated the reasons:

- does not comply with the design guidelines for rooftop additions
- lack of distinguishability
- too high for this location
- massing is not subordinate to the existing heritage buildings.

Somehow these recommendations seem to have escaped the attention of the City Planning Department for, at the September 17, 2020 Committee of the Whole Meeting, they came up with a recommendation that City Council approve the Heritage Alteration Permit and allow the development.

Hidden deep within the 247 pages of Attachment E: Staff Reports Staff is the line: "The application challenges many aspects of City policy pertaining to heritage conservation, which is reflected in the Heritage Advisory Panel's recommendation that City Council decline the application." That's it. Short shrift to hours of discussion at the HAP meeting. A meeting that offered the considered advice of educated and articulate experts on architecture, planning and heritage. Experts with PhDs and master's degrees in architecture and planning, educated the world over, who give up their valuable time and volunteer to counsel the City.

The report to Council does note that "the proposed rooftop addition is inconsistent with sections of the Old Town Design Guidelines for New Buildings and Additions to Existing Buildings (2019) and The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada since the additions subordinate the heritage buildings within a much larger new development." But, again, this is hidden deep within the 330 pages City Councillors must read before deciding.

It is little wonder that heritage preservation is low on the list of City Council priorities when staff reports fail to emphasize the Official Community Plan provisions: "Victoria is vibrant and attractive with high quality architecture and urban design that enhances its unique character and sense of place" and "Victoria's cultural and natural heritage resources are protected and celebrated." 🏠



Graffiti on existing building a year ago. Demolition by neglect? Ken Johnson photo.

What's New at Craigflower Schoolhouse

The Craigflower Schoolhouse is getting plenty of educational uses these days.

We still have the Victoria Japanese Preschool operating out of the main classroom and using one small office upstairs. We also have two teenage homeschoolers studying most mornings in an upstairs office.

A recent addition is the use of the remaining small office on an as-needed basis by the Victoria Native Friendship Centre for their programme with First Nations Children and the Aboriginal Speech Language Pathologists.

It is nice to see the oldest remaining schoolhouse in Western Canada being used for its original purpose. 

Awards Night 2021 – May 4, 2021

We were all disappointed when we had to cancel our Awards Night, but we have some good news. Next May, we will present a double Awards Night, honouring last year's winners and those who will win this year. The event will be held virtually, and all presentations will be recorded and uploaded to our YouTube channel for viewing at any time.

Please note that this is the time of year to be looking around your neighbourhood for potential award winners. We need you, our members, to be our eyes and ears in the community. Is there a project near you that deserves recognition? How about in the broader community? Who has taken the time and care to restore and/or rehabilitate a heritage asset rather than the easy solution of demolition? Which volunteer should be recognized, and which authors have written books on heritage? We have categories for all these, and welcome nominations at any time during the year.

The process is quite easy. All you need is a summary of the work and some photos that illustrate the story of the restoration. If you need some help, let us know at office@hallmarkheritagesociety.ca long before the deadline of January 31, and we will assist you in preparing a successful nomination. We can also send you examples of submissions that resulted in awards. By working together, we can ensure that all worthy projects and people are recognized. There is nothing worse than realizing five years down the road that we missed something.

See page 10 for a nomination form and help us recognize deserving individuals and projects.



Did you notice?

After a few messages from readers, we have increased the size of the font we use to produce this newsletter. It should now be easier to read for those of us who have difficulty with smaller text. We have also made hyperlinks easier to identify. They are now in red and bolded. Readers of the digital version can merely click on a link and be taken to an internal or external location.

South Vancouver Island Regional Heritage Fair

by Helen Edwards

In order to continue the momentum that an annual fair produces, we have decided to go virtual for this year. It was unfortunate that the event was cancelled last May but we are determined to make it a success this year. Students will choose their projects, prepare digital reports, and upload them to a special YouTube channel for the fair. There is a decided advantage in having a digital fair in that we are not restricted to a specific number of projects due to space constraints at the Royal BC Museum. Any student who wishes to participate can submit a project and all will be judged. Details have yet to be worked out, but I think this will be a good experience for the students and visitors alike.

Heritage Fairs are an exciting celebration of Canada's heritage seen through the eyes of student history projects. Students from grades four to nine use the medium of their choice to create a project on a heritage topic, using information and imagination to bring history to life. When students create a Heritage Fair project, they are not just telling us what happened in the past, they are explaining why and when it happened and why it is important to us today. The focus is not just learning history but on understanding it. The positive benefit of cross-curricular activities and the sense of accomplishment students experience will make each Fair positive and unique.

We work with the Royal BC Museum and teacher-librarians from throughout three school districts, representing both public and independent schools to make the fairs more exciting. With more projects, we will need more judges. With all presentations online, it means that judges can visit every project as time is not an issue. If you would like to volunteer as a judge, please let me know at heritagelady@gmail.com. We provide instructions on how to adjudicate the projects and what to look for from a research perspective. What is not easy is selecting the winners of different awards. The quality of the research projects will astound you. For me, it is the highlight of the heritage year. 🏠



Vintage Christmas card from the collection of Helen Edwards

Award Nomination Form

Category of nomination (tick one)

- Award of Merit
- Communication Award
- Mark Madoff Award
- Michael Williams Award
- President's Award

Nominee:

Name: _____

Mailing address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Project address: _____

Project details (attach up to one page)

Nominator:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Attach supporting documents including press clippings, letters of support, photographs, or electronic media to substantiate the nomination. Deadline is January 31, 2021. Late nominations may not be accepted.

Mail to:

Hallmark Heritage Society Awards Jury
15-1594 Fairfield Road, PO Box 50013 Fairfield Plaza PO Victoria, BC
V8S 5L8

Hand deliver to 810 Linden Avenue

Or send via email to: office@hallmarkheritagesociety.ca

RIP Don Reksten

We were saddened to hear of the passing of one of our original members, Don Reksten. His quiet demeanour will be greatly missed by all of us. His obituary is reproduced below.

On July 23, 2020, Don Reksten (PEng) passed away at home surrounded by his beloved family. Born in Vancouver, BC on July 5, 1941, Don shared a loving and laughter-filled 77 years with his soul mate, Leona Taylor. He was predeceased by his wife, Teresa (Terry) Reksten in 2001. He will be deeply missed by his daughters, Jane (Steve) and Norah and his grandsons, Jack (Nim) and Tom Longo, his sisters, Judy (Dave) Burton and Sue LaPierre, Leona's children Tami, Mike and Murray and other members of the Taylor/Jones family of whom he was so fond. Don worked his entire career as a hydrologic engineer with the federal and provincial governments (he was a life member of the Engineers and Geoscientists of BC) followed by several years of consulting.

During his working years, and even more so after his retirement, Don always made time to follow his many passions and interests. These include his love of classic cars, (as a member of the Old English Car Club and especially as the owner of a blue ribbon winning 1950 MG TD); his passion for music and playing the saxophone (with The Commodores Big Band, The Edelweiss Club, and The Belmont Avenue Beat), and his enthusiasm for local history (working with the Royal BC and Oak Bay Archives, BC Historical Association and BC Historical Federation, the Captain Cook Society, Old Cemeteries Society and Hallmark Society). Many fond memories are held of camping and sailing (Don was a member Royal Victoria Yacht Club and of the Maritime Museum) and later on he enjoyed line-dancing with Leona, and road trips in their Boler. Don tirelessly volunteered his time and talents to so many different organizations. Everyone who met him knew him to be such a lovely man and the family appreciates all the thoughtful words shared that speak to this: Don was kind, generous, humble, quiet, wise, inspirational and fair-minded. A memorial will be planned when circumstances allow. 🏠

We Appreciate Your Donations

The Hallmark Heritage Society maintains an account with Canada Helps, a registered charity with a goal to making life simple. Donations are processed by Canada Helps and then the funds, minus a small administration charge, are electronically transferred directly to our bank account.

Donors receive a tax receipt instantly – no waiting for a volunteer to process a payment and hand write a receipt. You can make a single donation online or sign up for a monthly donation. We have put a link on our web page but the direct link to our page on the Canada Helps site is <https://www.canadahelps.org/CharityProfilePage.aspx?charityID=s5418>

As you know, we rely on the generosity of our members to keep our society alive. Now it is just a few clicks to donate – less work at both ends. Please consider making a donation today. While you can make a single donation at any time, please consider a regular monthly gift. 🏠

Sincere thanks to all members who have made donations over the past year. We do not publish names as we respect your privacy.



Membership Application

- Student \$15.00
- Individual..... \$25.00
- Family \$35.00
- Group/corporate \$50.00
- Individual Life..... \$200.00
- Corporate Life (20 yrs) \$400.00

New Renewal

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Province _____ Postal Code _____

Tel: _____

E-mail: _____

I am interested in volunteering _____

Enclosed is a donation of \$ _____

I prefer the electronic newsletter. _____

Please send your cheque to:

Hallmark Heritage Society
 15-1594 Fairfield Road,
 PO Box 50013 Fairfield Plaza PO,
 Victoria, BC V8S 5L8.

All members are entitled to voting privileges at Annual and General Meetings, receive four Newsletters a year and access to the Society library and archives which contain information on over 10,000 buildings in the Capital Regional District. Memberships are due September 30th and are tax-deductible. The Society also offers special events and tours for members. New memberships are prorated quarterly. The Hallmark Heritage Society collects personal information about you only when you voluntarily provide it, and only for the purpose for which it was intended, and in handling such information we comply with the provisions of the British Columbia *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. We do not sell, rent, or trade our membership/donor information to or with others. The Society makes all reasonable efforts to ensure that personal information collected from you is protected against loss and unauthorized access. If you wish to change information on file, please contact us.

In the interest of timely communication, we may occasionally send you electronic messages regarding current issues or reminders of meetings. If you do not wish to receive such messages, please let us know and we will remove your name from our email list. We would appreciate being advised of changes to your address, telephone number, email address, etc. so that we can continue to serve you efficiently. 🏠

All events are virtual until further notice.

Watch our website and weekly mailings for details