

Preserve

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

A Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 35, Number 4, Winter 2008

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Canadian Lighthouses to be protected

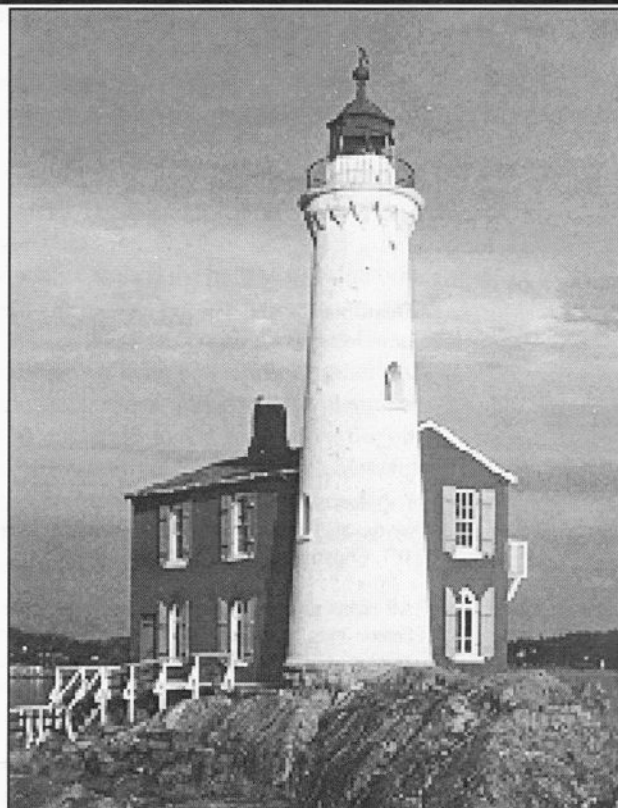
By John Edwards

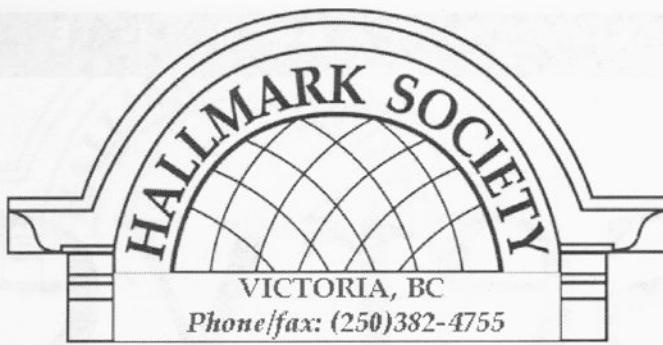
As one who has lived in two Naval Dockyards – in Halifax and Esquimalt – I jumped at the chance to go the Lighthouse Protection Roundtable while at the Annual conference of the Heritage Canada Foundation in Quebec City (September 25-27, 2008).

As you know, after ten years, Senator Pat Carney got Bill 215 passed into the Statutes of Canada, as "An Act to Protect Lighthouses."

These beacons have been guarding mariners for centuries and well past the age of sail. Many have architectural significance and there are many variations in design. Since modern navigation, radar, depth recording, and GPS, many have received minimum significance and some are falling down.


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Mandate

The Hallmark 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. 

Board of Directors

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Nick Etheridge
Russell Fuller
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John Perry
Susan Ross
Bjorn Simonsen
Patrick Skillings
Janet Stevens

Notice of Meeting


The December General Meeting will take place on Monday, December 8, 2008 at the James Bay New Horizons Centre. The guest speaker will be Dave Obee who will outline the history of the Times Colonist newspaper and its predecessors. 

Deadline for articles and advertising for the Spring 2009 newsletter is February 28, 2009.

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Preserve 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 reserve the right to edit material for consistency and length, and to reject articles.

Please submit manuscripts to the Editor, *Preserve*, 810 Linden Avenue, Victoria, BC, V8V 4G9, deliver to #18 Centennial Square, or send via electronic mail to newsletter@hallmarksociety.ca. 

Nick's Notes

by Nick Russell

Victoria unveils some really good news for heritage!

Astonishing news from Victoria City Hall: A sudden windfall of money was voted to Heritage Planning this Fall, to update the Heritage Register and review the City's Heritage philosophy. This is truly wonderful news. The only bug in the jam is that it's almost all got to be done by financial year's end --31 December 2008.

With commendable speed, the city invited bids, then appointed Don Luxton & Associates to do the job. It's a tough assignment, calling for a draft report before you even read this, with several public meetings, widespread consultation and interviews, and a public Open House. It's not for the entire city, but for the communities that encircle Downtown and whose heritage inventories are most out of date: Fairfield, James Bay, Fernwood, VicWest and Burnside.

The plan is to add 50 more buildings to the Heritage Register immediately. But that's the easy part: The consultants also have to develop some highly abstract statements, including a City-wide "historic context statement" and heritage "themes." And then they've got to figure out how to make it all work in reality.

We're pleased to report that the Hallmark Society is central in this consultative process, participating in all phases and submitting a brief. Just wish we had more time to do it, but we can't look a gift heritage plan in the mouth!

If you have any ideas or suggestions, please pass them on.

Wonderful new Board!

We are so lucky! At the Annual General Meeting in September, six members let their names stand, to be elected to the Hallmark Board. This doubles the size of the Board and adds a huge injection of innovation, creativity, wisdom and enthusiasm. We are very fortunate to have these folks volunteer. Alphabetically,

- ! Nick Etheridge,
- ! Ruth Laird,
- ! John Perry,
- ! Susan Ross,
- ! Bjorn Simonsen,
- ! Patrick Skillings,

Please congratulate them when you attend the Christmas meeting!

Keeping in touch:

As those of you who have given us their e-mail addresses know, we are now e-sending heritage news to members. Inveterate web-surfer Ken Johnson came up with the idea and has been forwarding many of these. His idea is to send news stories that may be of interest for you to scan and save or e-shred, as you wish. He suggests this direct approach is more accessible than simply forwarding you a URL, forcing you to go to the Web for the story. Please tell us what you think: Too often? Too little?

Art Deco light restored

Board member Ken Johnson recommends a bouquet to the Provincial Capital Commission and the Visitors Info Centre, for turning the light back on! The Sperry light beacon atop the Tourist Centre has been out for a couple of years, pending restoration work on the building. We talked to Chief Financial Officer Rick Crosby, urging PCC to repair the badly-corroded light, and lo! The light on the 1931 Imperial Oil Garage was designed to be visible for 60 miles, to guide late-night harbour flights.

And, we have a winner:

In our last issue, we asked readers to identify some pictures for us. Ann-Lee Switzer made an extraordinary match, recognizing a curious building that --it turns out-- is actually visible from my own front door on Toronto St! It's the social room and guest quarters for Roberts House (about to be built in the foreground).

Ann-Lee reports that Peter Cotton designed the structure as a duplex in about 1964. The balconies seem to have disappeared. Good find! See page 4 for a modern view compared with the historic view. (We still have no ID for the charming house with the monkey-puzzle tree.)

Old hardware available

Have I previously extolled the hardware collection at Vintage Woodworks?

For some time they've been collecting original old parts when they encounter them, and now offer them for sale --such things as casement locks, sash pulls, finger-plates...you-name-it. In addition, they also stock a useful variety of reproduction hardware, including brassware made in India and locally-made cast-iron. Your tips for other useful sources are always welcome.

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Young Building: Prematurely aged?

What on earth is happening with the Young Building, at Camosun College? Seems like no time since it was hugely restored...and won a heritage award. Now it's all surrounded with storm fencing and "DANGER" signs, with bits threatening to fall off? Questions should be asked. And should heads roll?

Is it Fair?

Interesting phone-call recently from a citizen in North Saanich. Said he'd been working on a house restoration for 18 years (all legal, with a 1990 building permit), but Council had suddenly ruled that permits now all expire after two years. His 18 years of work, periodically inspected and approved to the Building Code of the time, now has to meet 2008 code rules – requiring a huge upgrade of almost everything he's done. Is that fair? Is it even legal? 🏠



Photo courtesy Ann Lee Switzer



Annual General Meeting Report

There were 36 members and guests in attendance. President Nick Russell called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm.

President's Report

Following approval of the agenda and the minutes of the prior AGM, Nick Russell gave the President's Report in which he touched on the heritage issues of the past year and our responses to them. Among the issues were Rogers Chocolates - we blew the whistle on their proposed changed to the historic interior, Angela College that has received a "stay of execution" due to the poor market conditions, news on Ms Kramer's buildings - we hope the Janion can be saved, Morley's Soda Works has been purchased by Chris LeFevre, and no news on the buildings on Wharf Street, the Maclure house on Richardson will be demolished, the ongoing saga of the Cridge Park and Bowling Green and the Crystal Court redevelopment, and the empty lot at the former Oak Bay Beach Hotel.

It has been a very busy year, but Hallmark keeps going. Our office remains open at lunchtime. We received donations of slides, prints and negatives over the past year. Our summer student scanned all donated material and added images to our computer database. We have a good newsletter and a successful Awards Night. We partnered with the University of Victoria to put the 1907 video online on Victoria's Victoria. We attended Council meetings trying to convince them to do the right thing. Ken Johnson is our representative on Victoria's Heritage Advisory Committee. When we asked for input, we got responses from our members. We have agreed to cooperate with other groups who share our position on heritage issues. We need members' Email so we can send messages in a timely fashion.

The new board will prepare a 5-year plan with a list of priorities. We hope to work with people before problems arise - in a pro-active manner. We are looking to sponsor block parties to educate small groups about heritage. There are many events coming up. Members were given a list of questions for Mayor and Council candidates in Victoria (can be adapted to other municipalities) and a notice of the launch of Victoria Underfoot (16 essays about Victoria's secrets). The President thanked members for keeping an eye on things for us, Helen Edwards for running the office, John Edwards for his accountancy skills, and the board for their work. He extended special thanks to Tim Looms who is retiring from the board after many years of service.

Financial Report

Treasurer Ken Johnson presented the Financial

Statements for the year ended June 30, 2008. This year we updated much of our office equipment and last year we added the archival filling cabinet unit. Some of the money shown at the year end is already committed for expenditures in the current year.

Heritage Updates and Issues

The redevelopment of the Crystal Court Motel property comes up at Committee of the Whole next Thursday. The proposal is now reduced to 12 and 10 storeys.

The Victoria Historical Society meets on the 4th Thursday of each month. On September 25, the speaker will be John Adams speaking on the Ker family and on October 23, the authors of South Park School will discuss their book.

The City of Victoria is looking for consultants to develop an overall heritage plan for the City.

On October 5, Ann Lee Switzer and Joyce Mackie will lead a tour of Ross Bay Cemetery focussing on Emily Carr - 2 pm.

A member asked what is happening on the roundhouse. It appears there will be no heritage exhibits. All areas will be refurbished as commercial space. The site needs remediation and there will be underground parking. The buildings will be kept in their existing locations and in their original fabrics. Hotel tower height has been reduced and puts density on site. The boutique has been eliminated from the center of the heritage precinct. It will be possibility 10 years before the ground breaking.

Election of officers

Six candidates for election as Directors of the Society were elected by acclamation:

Nick Etheridge
Ruth Laird
John Perry
Bjorn Simonsen
Patrick Skillings
Susan Ross

They will join the 5 returning board members:

Nick Russell, President
Janet Stevens, Secretary
Ken Johnson, Treasurer
Russell Fuller, Director
John Edwards, Past president

Board members were advised of the next board meeting on October 20, 2008.

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The timetable for the legislation is as follows:

2008 – Bill gets royal assent

2010-2012 – Nominations of heritage lighthouses by the Minister of Environment. List of surplus lighthouses posted by Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

2012-2015 – Minister of the Environment must publish list of designated lighthouses and those denied designation.

In Canada, there are some 750 structures, but only 250 are considered “postcard material.” Canada has only 22 lighthouses with a level of protection under the Federal Heritage Buildings Review office. Yet, in the United States, 70% of the lighthouses older than 50 years, have protection under the National Register of Historic Places.

Some interesting facts from the Roundtable:

Along the St Lawrence River, there are numerous lighthouses – some abandoned, some sold and operated as Bed-and-Breakfasts, some owned by towns, regional district and the Government of Canada. Prince Edward Island has 20 lighthouses, and in British Columbia, 27 are still manned. Hudson Bay has 18 lighthouses.

This Act provides for community involvement. Any 25 people, resident in Canada over the age of 18 years, can sign a “petition” to designate a lighthouse. This can be in any area. Should Hallmark “petition” for a lighthouse??? At long last it appears we are getting protection similar to heritage railway station. Senator Pat Carney has said she will address Hallmark some time in 2009.

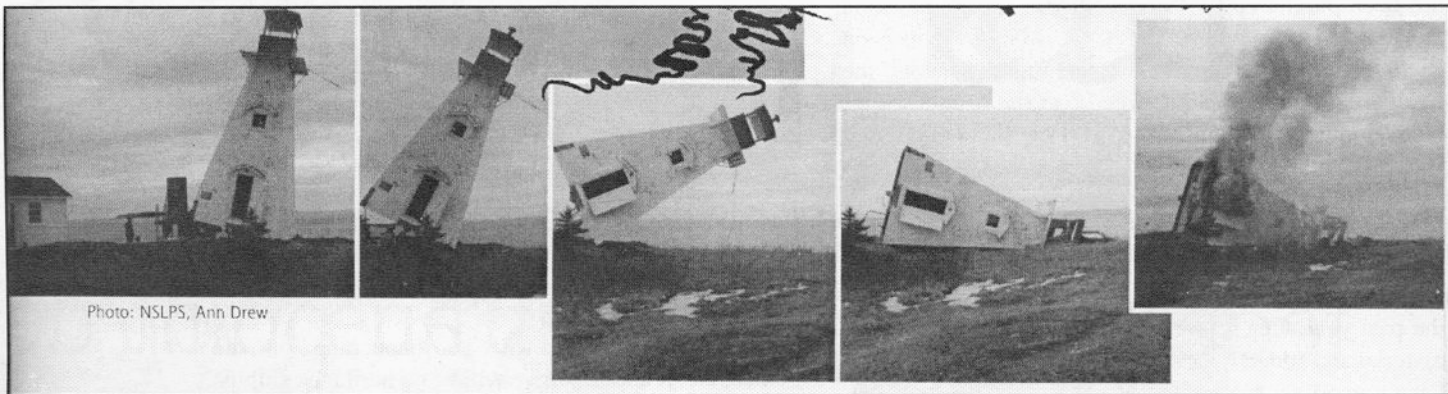


Photo: NSLPS, Ann Drew

The “disposal” of the historic wooden lighthouse on Mosher Island, Nova Scotia. The original of this article appeared in Capital News Online, March 16, 2007, a publication of the students of journalism at Carleton University, reprinted in Heritage, Vol. X, No. 3, 2007. This Act is designed to prevent wanton destruction of heritage lighthouses.

Colonial Despatches

The colonial despatches of Vancouver Island and British Columbia 1846-1871

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Welcome!

This digital archive contains the original correspondence between the British Colonial Office and the colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia. This project aims to digitize and publish online a complete archive of the correspondence covering the period from 1846 leading to the founding of Vancouver Island in 1849, the founding of British Columbia in 1858, the annexation of Vancouver Island by British Columbia in 1866, and up to the incorporation of B.C. into the Canadian Federation in 1871.

All the material on this site originates in the work of Dr. James Hendrickson and his team of collaborators at the University of Victoria, which resulted in the publication of 28 print volumes of correspondence several years ago.



Random snippet

Govr Douglas knows the value of Police, knows he can get them at the spot... But that he must pay for them. He doesn't want to pay for them, he wants us to do that. Not so green We! If this Colony is to be a Colony of Men it must protect itself & pay for that protection by a local Tax. Once give way & you will make a Jamaica of British Columbia. I will not help in this.

[Take me to this record](#)

New website launched

by Helen Edwards with notes from the website

On Monday, November 3, 2008, visitors filled the Begbie Courtroom of the Maritime Museum of BC for the launch of the ambitious website “Colonial Despatches 1858 online.”

The lifeline of empire, the Colonial Despatches between London and Victoria included governor’s reports, instructions from Whitehall, maps, legislation, clippings, and other miscellaneous documents. British Columbia’s Colonial Despatches are the most important and authoritative documentary source for the province’s gold rush, aboriginal relations, and the colonial period.

With this new website developed to coincide with the province’s 150th anniversary, these documents are online and searchable for the first time. Visit bcgenesis.uvic.ca

Butterworth Cottage Rehabilitation Celebrated

The rehabilitation of Butterworth Cottage, one of the oldest buildings in Victoria, was celebrated in a ceremony on September 18, 2008. Visitors heard speeches by distinguished guests including His Honour Steven Point, Lieutenant Governor of BC, and the Honourable William Bennett, Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts. Brian Rogers, President of the Friends of Government House presented His Honour with a framed picture of the original Cary Castle.

Located on the Government House grounds, Butterworth Cottage was rehabilitated as part of a master plan for the original service buildings on the Estate. The Cottage will serve the Estate of the Lieutenant Governor and its visitors as an interpretive centre and a potential tea room.

Butterworth Cottage is part of the Cary Castle Mews, the collection of wooden service buildings located on the southeast side of the Government House grounds. This unique set of buildings dates back to the early 1870s and includes stables, carriage house, wash house, root cellar, coal shed and Butterworth Cottage.

Government House worked closely with the Heritage Branch of the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts to develop this Government House Foundation project. In addition to the heritage stewardship advisory role to Government House, the Heritage Branch awarded \$25,000 towards the rehabilitation of Butterworth Cottage.

The Cottage was originally built as a poultry barn and in the 1920s was partially adapted as a residence for the head gardener. The Cary Castle Mews underwent exterior and structural stabilization in 1992 and in 2003 the Government House Foundation supported the installation of electrical and water services to the buildings. 🏠



Democracy in action

In order to better serve our membership, we decided to become pro-active during the municipal election campaign. We prepared a survey for candidates for the City of Victoria, amended it slightly for Oak Bay, Esquimalt, and Saanich and sent the questions out to the flood of candidates.

All answers were analyzed by Ken Johnson. Candidates were ranked on their knowledge of heritage matters – based strictly on their responses to the questions. The results were posted to our website and all members with working email addresses advised.

In the end, we heard from 49 candidates and, even in cases where the knowledge of heritage issues was rated as “slight,” at least the candidates were aware that Hallmark Society existed and that we cared about preserving heritage.

Some of the answers showed considerable understanding of the issues. This is encouraging. In at least one case, the candidate entered into an exchange of email messages in an attempt to improve her understanding of heritage concerns.

Although this was a time-consuming project, it was educational. We hope that you were able to make use of our findings. We plan to expand to the entire CRD next election. 🏠

Guest speakers:

Jonathan Sheldon and Gary Green from the Victoria Police Department outlined the history of the Department. In 1986 the Victoria Police Historical Society was formed and began to research the history for presentation to members of the force and the general public. Gary has prepared an extensive DVD of the history .

In July 1858 the First Commissioner of Police was appointed in the City. Our history is important. We have to know where we're going and where we've been. Photographs have faces that show emotion. They also show architecture, and are visual statements in context. There is 150 years of police in photographic records. It is important to remember that police are members of the community and work in the community. Five officers have died while on duty.

The first police actually were the Voltigeurs of the Hudson Bay Company in 1851. They took police action as needed. By 1858, they had to form a proper force. A small group of African Americans worked in the spring and Sir James Douglas put in place the first constabularies in a two-month experiment.

Hannah Maynard served as the police photographer for 5 years. Many of her photos are still around.

The Police Museum is now staffed by volunteers and is open Monday to Friday afternoons.


The meeting adjourned at 9:45 pm. 

Office update

At a recent meeting, the Board decided to apply for grants to allow us to digitize our photo collection. Many of these photos were taken by UVic students during projects in the 1960s and 1970s, some were donated by members, and others were taken during research projects. In many cases, they are the only record of buildings before unsympathetic intervention. We have been handling increased requests for our photographs and have been digitizing them on an as-needed basis. Having the entire collection digitized and the information on each building compiled in a searchable form will be a valuable resource for both researchers and homeowners alike. If all goes well, we will begin the project this summer.

We continue to work on our video project with the new website to be launched in the Spring. Funding for this work was provided by the HBC Foundation. Watch the Beaver Magazine for coverage of this and other worthwhile projects from across Canada.

Thanks to all members who have paid their current dues. We had a very good response to the reminder in the last newsletter and, since we sent out a second notice, have a steady stream of mail. If you are looking for a Christmas gift for someone who appreciates heritage architecture, please consider a gift membership in the Hallmark Society.

It's not too late to make an "end of the year" donation. Cheques received before December 31, 2008 qualify for tax-deductible receipts for the 2008 tax year. Your generosity helps us to continue the provision of good service and allows us to add new features. 


St Ann's Academy Christmas

Join us in December for a month of celebration in honour of the 150th anniversary of the building of the chapel at St. Ann's Academy.

- "Tidings of Comfort and Joy: Sounds of the Season" is a series of four Sunday one hour long afternoon concerts in St. Ann's Historic Chapel. Admission is \$12 per concert, \$10.00 for seniors or students, or \$36.00 adult, \$30.00 seniors/students for the series. Tickets are available at the St. Ann's Academy office.

- On December 20, join St. Ann's staff for free guided tours of the beautifully restored 1858 Chapel at 1pm and 3pm. Tours will focus on the artwork and religious symbolism as well as the unique construction methods and the chapel's journey to its present location. Includes behind the scenes tours of areas normally off-limits to the public. Reservations are recommended as space on the tours is limited.

- Starting November 30, the Chapel will be decorated with the traditional Nativity painting created in 1900 by St. Ann's Academy Art Teacher, Sister Mary Osithe. The Nativity scene also features a wax baby Jesus dating from the late 19th century and cascading poinsettias to further set the scene. St. Ann's Academy will also be decked out for the holidays indoors and out!

- "The Giving Tree" will be on display in the Sisters' Parlour. Drop by with non-perishable food items, unwrapped toys or new and used clothing to place under the tree for distribution to local charities until Dec. 20. The Chapel and Interpretive Centre is open winter hours 1-4pm Thursday to Sunday. Admission by donation. For further information, please contact the St. Ann's Academy National Historic Site at (250) 953-8829 or email: stanns.academy@gov.bc.ca 

Award Nomination Form

Category of nomination (tick one)

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

Nominee _____

Mailing
Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Project
address _____

Project details (attach up to one page)

Nominator _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Attach supporting documents including press clippings, letter of support, photographs, slides, or electronic media to substantiate the nomination. Deadline is January 31, 2009. Late nominations may not be accepted.

*Submit electronically to: office@hallmarksociety.ca
or mail to:*

*Hallmark Society Awards Jury
#18 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6*

We want to communicate with you

Electronic communication is the best way to get news and information out to our members. As noted in Nick's Notes, we often find news stories that might be of interest to heritage advocates and would like to send them out.

Our last email to members had several returned to us with incorrect addresses. If you have changed your email address or now have one, please send us a message to office@hallmarksociety.ca so that we can keep you up to date.

If you wish to opt out of regular updates, please let us know and we will remove you from this list.

Calendar

- December 8, 2008** Hallmark Society general meeting. James Bay New Horizons Centre, 234 Menzies Street, 7:30 pm. Guest speaker: Dave Obee of the Times Colonist who will speak on the 150th anniversary of the newspaper and its predecessors. A copy of the book will be raffled.
- January 31, 2009** Deadline for awards nominations.
- February 16-21, 2009** Heritage Week. Watch for news of a special event for members celebrating the theme of Heritage in Education.
- May 1, 2009** South Vancouver Island Regional Heritage Fair, sponsored by Historica. Royal BC Museum, Clifford Carl Hall, 10:00 am - 2:00 pm.
- May 5, 2009** Hallmark Society Awards Night, St. Ann's Academy Auditorium, 7:30 pm.

Historic building burns, but will be restored



In the evening of June 23, 2008, the roof of the Rockland mansion at 1015 Moss Street was engulfed with flames. Thanks to the efficient work by the Victoria Fire Department, the major structural damage was confined to the roof area although suites on lower floors sustained smoke and water damage. Ironically, the re-roofing job was almost finished. Onlookers were curious about the history of the house, so the Heritage Detective decided to investigate. I knew a bit about the house as I had interviewed Mary Helmcken at the time of the Sir James Douglas School reunion and she had told me her parents had the house built.

The home was designed by Percy Leonard James and his brother Douglas for Dr. James Douglas Helmcken. Built in the Tudor Revival style with American shingle style elements in 1912 during the height of Victoria's building boom, it has remained a landmark since its construction. Despite being divided into suites in 1937, it has retained its extensive Edwardian landscaping and provides a welcome green space on a busy residential street.

James Douglas Helmcken was the son of John Sebastian Helmcken, pioneer doctor and legislator, and the grandson of Sir James Douglas. Born in 1858, he received his medical training in Edinburgh and had a practice on Langley Street. He was also the physician for the provincial jail and the official Indian doctor. He married Mary Jane Halliday in 1886 but she unfortunately died a few months later. The next year, he married Ethel Mouat. They had five children, the youngest of which was Ainslie James Helmcken who was responsible for the establishment of the City of Victoria Archives. In 1919, James died and was buried in the family plot in Ross Bay Cemetery.

With the family grown and gone from the family home, Ethel Helmcken decided to build a smaller house on property she owned at 1538 Beach Drive on which the family had a small verandah-fronted cottage named *Bide-a-wee* for use as a summer residence. In 1923, she commissioned Samuel Maclure to build a new bungalow overlooking Oak Bay and the boat house. The name of the original summer cottage was retained for the permanent home.

The details of subsequent owners/occupants of 1015 Moss Street are historically interesting as well. From 1921-27, it was occupied by Lieutenant-Colonel Fraser Homer-Dixon who had earned a DSO in World War I. He had married Evelyn A. Cameron, the daughter of Sir Douglas Cameron, Lieutenant-governor of Manitoba 1911-1916. The Homer-Dixons retired to Victoria after the war. The next owner was a retired Major C R Hay who lived there between 1928-30. In 1931, George Augustus Bucklin moved in with his wife Mary Ann. He served as the American Consul during his ownership of 1015 Moss Street. A series of short-term owners followed including John Macdonald (retired) and Paul W. Rookes (President of International Importing and Exporting). John Archibald Moxam, a local building contractor and his wife Blanche lived here from 1937 and it was they who converted it to apartments. They owned several other apartment blocks in the City. After John's death in 1942, Blanche continued to live here until her death in 1965.

The current owner of 1015 Moss Street has assured us that the building will be restored as much as possible to the original state. At this point it is in the "hands of the insurance company." We hope that sane heads in that industry prevail and that this building's superstructure rises from the ashes to once again provide useful rental accommodation. Its connection with the history of Victoria cannot be denied. 🏠



Upper left: July 1968, Hallmark Society archives; lower right: November 2008, Helen Edwards photo.