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March – April 2009

Report on 2008 AGM

At the AGM on February 4, 2009 John Adams presented the proposed slate of officers for 2008 which was prepared by Gerry Buydens, Nomination Committee Chair.

Nominations were:

President: Wilf Bruch; Vice-president: Don Reksten; Past President: Gerry Buydens;

Treasurer: Jac Slik; Secretary: Doug Miller.

Members at large: Bill Magee, Linda Richards, Ellen Richards, John Halliwell and Stewart Dashwood.

There being no further nominations from the floor, the slate was acclaimed.

We welcome new Board member Jac Slik who replaces Leona Taylor as Treasurer. Jac comes with a wealth of experience after being in the Treasurer's position for the Howe Sound Performing Arts and Between The Sheets Theatre Co. Many thanks to Leona for being Treasurer in 2008 in addition to her other duties as Office Coordinator and Research Committee Coordinator. Stewart Dashwood is an enthusiastic new Member at Large and we welcome this "new blood" to the Board.

Summer Student Applications

We are applying to the Canada Summer Jobs Program for funding for a summer student to work on our gravesite recording project at Ross Bay Cemetery. If you know of any student who is in a post-secondary program related to History, or History in Art, and is skilled at sketching please have them leave a message for Don Reksten at 598-8870. It's a wonderful, rewarding May to August summer job.

2009 Tour Schedule

The new tour schedule started on February 15 and this year features some old favourites as well as some brand new tours. "First-time" Sunday walking tours for March and April are:
March 22. **Star Gazers.** Astronomy has long been a hobby and profession in Victoria. This first-time tour by Joyce Mackie marks the International Year of Astronomy by tracing the lives of those buried at Ross Bay Cemetery connected to this far out topic.

April 12. **Pet Parade.** The Research Committee has had some fun with this first-time topic about pets (or their owners) buried in Ross Bay Cemetery. They promise to pull a rabbit (perhaps chocolate?) out of a hat for this one. Don't miss it!

Parlez vous Francais?

We occasionally have requests for tours in French. So far we've had to decline because none of our guides speak our second language. Is there someone out there who could do French tours?? Call Wilf at 250 383 7514.

Pioneer Square Project

OCS applied for funding to the BC150-Heritage Legacy Fund for a project to bring together all the information available for the Old Quadra Street Burying Ground (Pioneer Square). We were successful and a committee has been working on this project since January. A database of burials, a photo gallery, reports and a walking tour map will be on our website by March 31, 2009.

The following press release was sent out on February 20.

*"Old Cemeteries Society 'Shares the Knowledge' with BC150-Heritage Legacy Fund Project
Wilf Bruch, President of the Old Cemeteries Society, is pleased to announce the Society's latest project. With the help of a grant from the BC150-Heritage Legacy Fund, the Old Cemeteries Society has undertaken the creation of a new web-based resource for Victoria's historic Pioneer Square (The Old Burying Ground). This project will consolidate the existing historical information about Pioneer Square and it's approximately 1,300 burials prior to 1872.*

This historic site is the final resting place of many of our early pioneers including Dr. J. S. Helmcken, James Murray Yale, John Work, Chief Justice David Cameron, Charles Ross and many others. A self-guided walking tour map and brochure produced for general distribution will

provide locations and biographical highlights. Watch for more information and updates on our website www.oldcem.bc.ca or call our office for more information 250 598 8870. For an immediate reply, call Wilf Bruch at 250 383 7514”.

Active Living Celebration 2009 Gerry Buydens

An event sponsored by **Senior Living Magazine**. Approximately 50 exhibitors will offer a variety of activities relating to 50+ people. Pearkes Recreation Centre, Friday, March 13 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Everyone welcome, come and enjoy the celebration.

OCS has an information table at this event and I am looking for volunteers to sit at our table and give out our walk tour brochures and answer questions. You'll act as an ambassador promoting OCS. It's interesting and you'll meet some great people.

Contact Gerry Buydens at 383-4873 or gbuydens@pacificcoast.net

I am suggesting two hour shifts, starting at 10 AM, 12 & 2 PM.

Victoria Historical Society March Meeting Anne Moon

What: The trail of 1858: an illustrated talk on the events of 1858 around the goldfields.

Who: Author Greg Dickson on his recent book, co-written with Mark Forsythe.

Where: James Bay New Horizons, 234 Menzies St.

When: Thursday, March 26, 7.30 p.m. All welcome, admission free.

Information: 250 480 1061

Cleaning and Restoration Wilf Bruch

One of the cornerstones of the Old Cemeteries Society is the “The preservation of Victoria’s heritage cemeteries”. One way we work toward that goal is by ongoing efforts to minimize the eroding effects of salts and lichens on the monuments at Ross Bay Cemetery. We can add years and years to the life of to these historic grave markers by simply removing the dirt and salts from their surfaces with a bit of soap and water. We need your help, so **plan to be a volunteer this year.**

May 17th will be our kick-off day for this year’s cleaning program. This date coincides with our “Open House” Sunday tour. We will have displays about the work we do and hopefully lots of volunteers to demonstrate and help clean and record. This will be a very important day that will set the tone for our 2009 cleaning season. Please mark it on your calendar and plan to attend. Watch for more information and cleaning dates in the next issue of *Stone Cuttings*.

It’s now time to repaint all the ironwork at Ross Bay Cemetery. Most of the fences and railings are in fairly good shape, so if we start now we will not have to wire brush and clean them before painting. Is there someone out there who would like to adopt a fence or two? Just call Wilf at 250-383-7514 or email wbruch@shaw.ca and he will set you up with the paint, brushes and tarps.

Jane Bruch, our recording coordinator, will also be looking for volunteers to work on our ongoing recording project. Jane won’t be starting until May, but now is the time to think about committing some time to this project. Put your name on Jane’s list of volunteers by calling her at 250 383 7514 or email her at wbruch@shaw.ca

Solar Cemetery Mike Bieling

Santa Coloma de Gramanet, near Barcelona, has placed 462 solar panels over its multi-storey mausoleums. (Right)

Officials say the scheme was initially greeted with derision, but families who use the cemetery eventually supported the idea following a public campaign.

The cemetery was chosen because it is one of only a few open, sunny places in the crowded city, which has a population of 124,000 crammed into 4 sq km



Obituaries of the '58ers Leona Taylor

Died at Victoria, Vancouver Island, Jul 4, 1869, Capt John Seymond Titcomb, one of the BC pilots. Capt Titcomb was a most efficient pilot, and well known all over the coast. Titcomb was native of the Eastern Provinces, born of Irish parents. He came to California in 1849, and ran as pilot on steamer *Comanche*, first boat to ascend Sacramento R from San Francisco to Marysville, for J J Southgate Esq, now of this city. He subsequently piloted other steamers running the same river, until 1858, when he came to Victoria and remained here ever since. IOOF funeral, Jul 8, 3.