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September-October 2017

Passings

Gerry Buydens

A couple of our old time members have passed away recently. The executive has expressed our condolences to their families.

Ken Austin and **Ted Dew-Jones** were among the original members of OCS. Ken served on the executive during OCS's initial years and Ted served later as the treasurer.

Ken was born in the London, England, area and immigrated to Canada in 1955. He was employed as a Chemist by the Federal Government at their research station in Nanaimo. He later joined the Forest Service and then the Pollution Control Branch of the Provincial Government. A complete obituary was published in the July 11 edition of the Times-Colonist. Ken was 84.

Ted Dew-Jones was also born in the UK. He emigrated to Canada twice. He first came in 1950 and then returned to the United Kingdom. He emigrated again in 1968 and joined the Pollution Control Branch of the provincial government and was involved with many of the major municipal sewage treatment facilities in B.C. Ted was 91 years of age when he died in late July. A complete obituary was published in the Times-Colonist on August 12 and 13 and a more extensive obituary on August 25. Both gentlemen made valuable contributions to the Old Cemeteries Society and they will be missed.



Images by Kate Cino

Sunday, October 29th Ghost Walk in Ross Bay Cemetery

John Adams is organizing the story tellers and the tour route. This is his proposal: The plan is to have 10 speakers in costume, each at a grave. There will be one route only. Starting time will be 2:00 p.m. As groups of 15 gather they will be taken by a pilot to one of the locations, but won't actually begin until 2:00 p.m. It will be a shotgun start, with everyone starting at the same time at all 10 locations. The pilots will walk the group to the next speaker, as they have done in the past. Gerry Buydens will walk the pilots around the route at 1:30 p.m.

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We'll start at Stannard Avenue and finish at the caretaker's shed. Gerry Buydens will organize the pilots and refreshment people. We need volunteers to act as pilots to direct patrons on the tour. If you can help, please contact gbuydens@shaw.ca or 383-4873. Meet before 1:30 p.m. in Fairfield Plaza.

Hallowe'en Patrols

Friday, October 27 and Saturday, October 28 & possibly October 31

The patrols are a unique opportunity to experience Ross Bay Cemetery at night and at the same time help to deter vandalism. The patrol dates have not been finalized and an email will be sent out to all members as soon as permission to be in the cemetery at night is granted by the Parks Department.

We do our patrols in two shifts, 8pm to 10pm and 10pm to 12 midnight.

If you are able to help out with this events please phone Gudrun Leys at 250-590-5850 or e-mail gmleys@gmail.com

Sale of Shirts, Caps and Pins

The Society has a limited number of t-shirts and sweatshirts, limited sizes and colors which we want to clear out. Cost is \$15 for a sweatshirt and \$8 for a t-shirt. There also are baseball-type caps at \$5 each. Pins - \$5 each. If interested, let Gudrun Leys know at gmleys@gmail.com or 250 590-5850 and she will send you a copy of our inventory. These will be on display at the ghost walk tour on October 29.

Victoria/BC Afghanistan Memorial: John Azar

The image below is an invitation/reminder for OCS members to attend the unveiling and dedication of the Victoria/BC Afghanistan Memorial on Saturday 30 September 2017. (OCS member John Azar is a director on the memorial society board.)

Additional copies of the reminder, which you are encouraged to share as widely as possible, are available on the memorial website: vicaafghanistanmemorial.ca

Afghanistan Memorial Unveiling and Dedication Ceremony

Saturday, September 30, 2017

Victoria, BC

vicafgghanistanmemorial.ca

Public Invitation

Please join Her Honour, the Honourable Judith Guichon, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, directors of the Greater Victoria Afghanistan Memorial Project Society, Memorial Cross families, and dignitaries for the unveiling and dedication of the Victoria/BC Afghanistan Memorial.



Order of Events

12:15 to 1:15

☞ The bells of Christ Church Cathedral

1:15 to 1:45

- ☞ Band of the 5th (BC) Field Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery
- ☞ Cathedral School Choir
- ☞ Memorial Cross families and dignitaries arrive

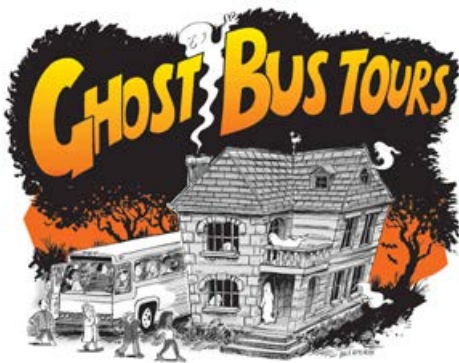
1:45

- ☞ Military parade arrives
- ☞ Special guests arrive

2:00

- ☞ Arrival of The Honourable Judith Guichon
- ☞ Commemoration and unveiling program begins

Ghost Bus Tours



Our 24th annual bus excursion pass some of Victoria's most haunted sites. New route and many new stories. Reserve your seat early. Check the web site www.discoverthepast.com

Dates will be: Oct. 21, 26, 27, 28 and 29

Starting time: 7:00 pm from Oak Bay Marina

Cost \$38 per person. Reservations a must. We have changed our ticket provider this year to Victoria Ticket. Go to victoriaticket.ca
Any questions for OCS members can be directed to John Adams at 250.384.6698.



Cleaning

Sharon Welsh

We had two cleaning bees in August, in Section M with the focus to expose family names on curbing so photos can be taken for our database.

We hope to have two cleaning bees in September, on the 9th and the 23rd. Of course, emails will be sent to the membership prior to the cleaning bee.



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Restoration

Wilf Bruch

August has been a good month for restoration at Ross Bay Cemetery. We have worked on some fifteen grave sites. Most do not stand out as dramatic changes in the cemetery. They are markers that have sunk below ground level and need raising or have been knocked off their base and just need a little glue to put them right. However the pictures here show a marker (H80W22) which was broken in four pieces and has been on the ground for probably 60 years. The base had to be dug up and streightened before the pieces could be put back together. This is a dramatic change and we are proud of our work.



There are still many of this type of broken marker in Ross Bay Cemetery and we will continue to repair them one at a time.

Project 2017/2018 Marker Photographs

Wilf Bruch

One of the assets of the Old Cemeteries Society is a searchable database that is accurate and fairly up to date. We are able to search by name, date of death, location, and a number of other criteria.

Our current project is to photograph each grave marker in Ross Bay Cemetery and link the photos to the corresponding plot number on the database. Given that there are in excess of 28,000 burials in Ross Bay Cemetery, this is a huge task; but, how hard can it be to take a bunch of pictures?

In reality, here's what goes into photographing a cemetery. First you have to establish a starting point and a plot number for each block or section so that the sequence of

pictures can be followed through the whole process. When this list has been completed, you are ready to go into the cemetery.

The second step is the hard part! Each site has to be "prepared". We walk the rows with brooms, trowels and shovels to clean each monument and make sure that all the features and names are visible. Many of the markers and curbing are overgrown, partly buried or covered with grass clippings from lawn cutting. This process can take a lot of time but is vital to the whole project.

Once this is complete (sections at a time) we can start taking the actual photos. This process takes a team of two unless the lighting is just perfect. One will handle the camera and the other will use a large piece of cardboard to provide shade so that the photos will be consistent with no shadows. We will take at least two pictures of each plot having a memorial feature on it. One to show the overall plot and one close-up of each feature. By feature, we mean names, curbing, architectural features and other inscriptions. On the larger monuments, this will entail taking lots of pictures! A regular battery will allow you to take around 500 pictures. Now it's time for a coffee or maybe something stronger!

Now you can download the group to your computer, hope the sequence is maintained, and edit each picture.

The next step is to transfer the group of picture to the OCS computer for adding to the database. This requires that each picture be re-named to the correspond with the actual cemetery address. (B87W36-1, B87W36-2 etc). Once this is done, each picture is "linked" to the corresponding database plot number.

Our database is built in Access and allows us to add a variety of fields that show when an address is displayed. Photos are one of the fields. When the project is complete we plan to add the database to our website to make it universally available.

For more information, email oldcem@pacificcoast.net or phone 250 598-8870

White Bronze Monuments Wilf Bruch

Ross Bay Cemetery has a number of these beautiful "white bronze" monuments. They are actually 99% zinc. Most were cast by The White Bronze Company of St. Thomas Ontario. This Canadian company was started by Mr H. B. Pollock in 1883. Prior to that, this product was manufactured by Monumental Bronze Company of Bridgeport Conn. They are definitely works of art but they did not enjoy the same acceptance as other more traditional stone grave markers. The company was sold in 1891 and ceased business in 1899.

This marker is located in Block H and dedicated to Mary Jane Walker, wife of Richard Walker, and to their nineteen day old daughter Martha. Mary Jane died March 18, 1890, aged 24 years.



Nellie Cashman Committee: Patrick Lydon, Chair, Nellie Cashman Committee

The Nellie Cashman Committee is pleased to report that the Parks Department, City of Victoria, has approved our application for a permit to place a memorial stone on the grave of Nellie Cashman. Nellie Cashman relatives in California, Jim O'Fallon and family, and the Sisters of St. Ann in Victoria were instrumental in obtaining this permit and we can now discuss the final plans for the memorial stone with Mortimers Monuments. We have sufficient funds in the Cashman fund to finance the basic design and we hope to have the details in my next instalment.

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As I am now living in James Bay, I have been able to attend the Parliamentary Players presentation that takes place Monday to Friday at the legislative building. The actors portray various prominent characters from the past like James Douglas and Emily Carr. One actress, Madeleine Humeny, plays the role of Mary Ellen Smith, the first woman elected to Parliament, but after reading "Gold Rush Queen" by Thora Kerr Illing, Madeleine has decided to play the role of Nellie Cashman in future. I am sure that American tourists will be both delighted and surprised to find that one of their own is so honored in the capital of British Columbia.

Some two weeks ago, I travelled by car and ferry to visit Dease Lake in northern British Columbia, and travelled by canoe to visit the remains of Laketon, the town where Nellie Cashman ran her store for some two seasons back in 1875. The site is a ghost town now but some of the old buildings can still be seen. There are some well preserved gravesites with hardwood fencing and I hope to have some photos for our next instalment.

Veterans Cemetery Expansion

Wilf Bruch

The expansion of the Veterans Cemetery in Esquimalt is well under way. There is a temporary access road through the cemetery to the new portion and some grave markers have been temporarily removed. Rock has been blasted and concrete foundations and pads are being constructed for a columbaria site. This addition is west of the old section and was recently acquired from the Gorge Vale Golf Course. Construction and ground preparation is due for completion later this fall. Watch for an update in our next newsletter.



From Cemetery Tour to Blog:

Diana Pedersen

Anyone who has been on a cemetery tour, or helped to put one together, knows that a lot of research is required to produce a successful tour. This research can make important contributions to local history and can be applied in a variety of ways, including use on other cemetery tours. One way to put that research into a more permanent and accessible form is by blogging—in my opinion, not as complicated and demanding as publishing a book and definitely more fun. Over the past decade, I have accumulated a lot of research on early sportfishing on Vancouver Island, much of which was undertaken for two tours given at Ross Bay Cemetery in 2011 and 2016. Last January, turning that research to another purpose, I launched a WordPress blog called *An Angler's Paradise: Sportfishing and Settler Society on Vancouver Island, 1860s-1920s*. <http://anglersparadise.wordpress.com>

One of the great things about blogging is making your own rules. I have chosen to post one long illustrated article a month (2,500-3,500 words) but most bloggers opt for shorter posts. So far my posts have featured the following people buried at Ross Bay: the Fox family from Sheffield, who established Fox's Cutlery store; Charles Morton, who built the first hotel at Shawnigan Lake; Richard Pocock, who edited a weekly hunting and fishing page for the *Daily Colonist*; W.F. Best, a Victoria assayer who caught a 55-pound salmon at Campbell River; Harry Caldwell, a surveyor who blew himself up while fishing with dynamite; and Dr. Frederick Lindsay Dickson, a veteran of the Indian Army who helped to introduce big-game fishing to Vancouver Island. I encourage anyone who is sitting on a great pile of research to consider blogging. Please check out my blog and if you'd like to receive a post once a month as an email, you can subscribe by using the button that says "Follow blog by email." Sportfishing history is not just "fish stories"!



G. Thomas Fox
1868-1924



Plot A 76/77 E 31
Ross Bay Cemetery



Daily Colonist
20 March 1907

Tombstone Oddities

Phoebe Hessel's gravestone in St. Nicholas Churchyard, Brighton, England

Born Phoebe Smith, she posed as a man and served in the British army to be with her lover and eventual husband, Samuel Golding. When he died she married a fisherman, Thomas Hessel. She had eight children. She was eventually granted a pension by the Prince Regent and attended his coronation parade in 1808.

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In Memory of Phoebe Hessel who was born in Stepney in the year 1713. She served for many years as a private Soldier in the 5th Regt. of foot in different parts of Europe and in the Year 1745 fought under the command of the Duke of Cumberland at the battle of Fontenoy where she received a bayonet wound in her arm. Her long life which commenced in the time of Queen Anne extended to the reign of George IV by whose munificence she received comfort and support in her later years. She died in Brighton where she had long resided December 12th 1821 aged 108 years.

Last Words

Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer 1839-1876



"Hurrah, boys! Let's get these last few reds, then head on back to camp. Hurrah!"

Custer and all his men were killed in the subsequent Battle of the Little Bighorn. His last words were reported by scouts from the Crow tribe who were employed by Custer and who withdrew before the battle began.

Chief Sitting Bull 1831-1890

"I am not going. Do with me what you like. I am not going. Come on! Come on! Take action! Let's go!"



Sitting Bull is famous for leading the Sioux tribe against General Custer's troops at the Battle of Little Bighorn in 1876. Fearing an uprising in 1890, a native police force attempting to arrest him was confronted by an angry crowd of his supporters and Sitting Bull was shot in the head.