



Shawnigan-Showe'luqun Focus

Volume Sixteen- Issue Two

February 2025 'Mim'ne'
"The time of the baby moon, the short month"

A Non-Profit Community Publication

The Art of Storytelling Festival 2025 - Building Connections

co-hosted by the Shawnigan Lake Museum and Cowichan South Arts Guild

In today's fast-paced, technology-driven world, we often find ourselves distanced from the true essence of community.

The digital age has brought convenience, but it has also created barriers to authentic human connection.

The simple act of gathering in person - sharing stories, experiences, and traditions, can help bridge these gaps and reawaken the sense of belonging that is fundamental to the human spirit.

Building in '3rd space' opportunities for people to gather

outside of home and work for face to face creative engagement and interaction is how relationships form and stronger communities are built.

The tradition of storytelling is a thread that connects the past, present, and future. Every culture has used storytelling to pass on important lessons, values, as well as individual and collective her/his-story.

Stories teach younger generations how to live, how to understand others, and how to relate to the world around them. Stories allow us to recognize

our commonalities, even across cultural divides.

In these moments of exchange, we learn about each other; we build curiosity, empathy, acceptance and respect, and become better equipped to navigate each other's differing perspectives.

We learn to celebrate our differences while embracing the universal values that unite us. We are gathering storytellers again, emerging and experienced, to participate in our annual Art of Storytelling Festival, Friday March 28th, 7 - 9pm.



Meet me at the museum!



Celebrating the creative potential in us all

Located in Shawnigan Lake's newly expanded Museum in the heart of the Village, the Friday evening portion of The Art of Storytelling Festival focuses on bringing together listeners and oral storytellers for a shared evening of connection for adults and interested youth.

We are very excited to be hosting local Chef & Storyteller Jared Qwustenuxun Williams as our honoured storytelling guest this year.

The Festival also includes opportunities for related workshops and activities beginning March 20th and culminating April 5th with an uplifting Story-Theatre performance - 'Bloom' for families & children 12 & under !!

If it interests you to participate by telling an approx 7- 10 min story at this event, feel free to contact us hello@cowichansouthartsguild.com before Feb 16th. You may also want to join us in supporting storytelling in other ways, We are an enthusiastic team and warmly welcome others who love the art of storytelling also!

More information on events & activities related to The Art of Storytelling Festival 2025, (March 20 - April 5) will be found on our website: cowichansouthartsguild.com and by contacting hello@cowichansouthartsguild.com

Submitted by The Art of Storytelling Team



You don't need to change, you need to love yourself for who you are

Jared "Qwustenuxun" Williams

Jared is a passionate Indigenous Chef, Salish culture educator, Hul'q'umi'num speaker and consultant



In this modern western culture, we are inundated with the idea that we need to change who we are to be perfect in the eyes of others. It's this ancient evolutionary need to be a part of the in group that's been co-opted by advertising and capitalism to make you feel like you need more than who you are to be accepted or fit in. It's not only untrue, it's harmful. This leads us to not only alter ourselves physically, but it

is severely damaging our children as they see this never-ending list of what they need to be perfect. Often forgetting the reassurance of their family that they are perfect just the way they are.

I heard this analogy somewhere recently and it really stood out for me.

What if the trees felt insecure about how they looked? What if the ones with thick cracked bark wanted smooth thin bark, what if the old thin leafed willow wanted the thick broad leaves of the maple, or what if the curly branches of the maple yearned to be straight like the fir tree. It is so obvious to us that the beauty of a forest is in the steadfast unique and authentic shape, size, and style of each tree. We would never judge a tree the same way we do ourselves.

When I was a kid, I was bullied. I had many people I thought were my friends treat me

very badly. I've written about it a lot, but the main point is that at that time in my life I would do anything to fit in. But I was different, I was not like the people I spent time with. So I always felt fake and I feel now that acting that way caused my bad situation. But when I made the effort to be myself my life changed dramatically for the better. I went from being locked into lockers and picked on daily to living my dream of running the largest Live Action Roleplaying organization in western Canada surrounded by people who loved me for who I authentically was. I

went from depressed and oppressed to free and flourishing because I simply started to be myself.

Fast-forward a few decades and that authenticity has become the foundation of my success.

I am unapologetically who I am and it is a strength that imitation cannot hold a candle too.

So if I have any advice in the new year, it's to be you...don't dim your light, find your family, and above all else don't fall for the new year new me. It's been about being the real you all along.

South Cowichan Library

Monica Finn
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Most Popular Books of 2024 at the South Cowichan Library:

- *The Midnight News* by Jo Baker
- *The Paris Agent* by Kelly Rimmer
- *Simply Lies* by David Baldacci
- *Clive Cussler: The Corsican Shadow* by Dirk Cussler
- *The Secret Hours* by Mick Herron

The Inspired by Reading Book Club, run by the Cowichan South Arts Guild, meets Tuesday, Feb 4, 6:30-8pm to discuss *Fire Weather: the Making of a Beast* by John Vaillant. The book for March is *Horse* by Geraldine Brooks, available from the library in multiple formats but request it soon! If you're unsure how to order, we're happy to help.

The Learning with Syeyutsus online lecture series has two 12-1pm talks this month: Feb 6 is Georgina Martin and Feb 20 is Nancy Turner & Chelsey Geralda Armstrong.

LEGO® Club happens every Tuesday, 2-5pm. We

provide the LEGO (and Duplo) and kids supply the imagination. Come ready to build! This is a free, drop-in event.

Intermediate Conversational Spanish meets 6:30 to 7:30pm on Tuesdays. Drop in to practice Spanish in a casual setting.

Conversational Scottish Gaelic is a fun way for people interested in learning Scottish Gaelic to practice together. Tuesdays, 6:30-8pm.

Intermediate Chess meets Wednesdays at 1pm. For experienced players looking for matches.

Tech Help: Drop in Fridays, Saturdays, and Mondays or make an appointment for one-on-one help with a mobile device or laptop.

If you know someone local unable to come into the library due to illness or injury, please let them know about our Home Delivery service. They can get books, audiobooks, and DVDs delivered to their door monthly.

The South Cowichan Library in the Mill Bay Centre is open:

10am - 8pm, Monday and Tuesday

10am - 5pm, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, & Saturday

Shawnigan Focus Weather — January 2025

Stats courtesy of UVic Weather Network and Weather Underground
Reported by Grant Treloar

Weather Icon	January Normal	Cigarmaker's Bay		Butler Road		Discovery School		Museum		Shawnigan Average	
		2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024
Average High	6.3	5.4	4.7	6.5	5.0	7.1	5.9	6.2	5.9	6.3	5.4
Average Low	0.5	-0.2	0.4	-1.7	-0.7	-0.8	0.4	-0.6	0.9	-0.8	0.3
Extreme High	15.0	8.2	12.9	11.2	13.6	11.0	13.4	10.1	13.5	10.1	13.4
Extreme Low	-21.1	-3.3	-11.3	-5.6	-12.9	-4.2	-12.8	-4.0	-11.2	-4.3	-12.1
Precipitation	215.3	75.6	294.7	58.7	248.2	58.7	237.1	57.5	236.9	62.6	254.2
Days w precip	20	11	24	12	22	13	25	12	23	12	24
Year Precip	215.3	75.6	294.7	58.7	248.2	58.7	237.1	57.5	236.9	62.6	254.2
Precip since Oct 1	534.7	806.2	971.0	745.9	881.7	643.7	870.6	622.1	748.0	704.5	867.8

2024 Rank since 1914: 54th warmest, 8th driest

Lake Readings	Jan 5	Jan 12	Jan 19	Jan 26
Temperature	5°	5°	4°	3°
Temperature 2024	2°	3°	4°	4°
Surface Elevation	116.93m	116.69	116.46	116.28
Elevation 2024	116.49m	116.79m	116.64m	117.13m

Comments:

The first week of January was very typical with showery & rainy days.

For the next 5 days there was a stretch of very foggy, grey days and mild temperatures.

Then the rain tap dried up, and from the 11th until the 30th there was no precipitation — very unusual for January.

The last two days of the month brought the rains back to add to the total rain for the month, but it ended up being only 25% of normal.

With the clear nights for much of the dry period there were 18 consecutive days with nighttime freezing temperatures, resulting in thick coatings of frost each morning.

Warmest day of the month was on the 10th, followed by a cool down for the rest of January, with temperatures bottoming out the last week with many areas dipping to -4° on numerous nights.

Rain fell only half the average number of days, but there were 11 days when the sun shone brightly. With the clear weather at it was easy to see the sun's march northwards at sunset from 4:29 on the 1st to 5:12 on the 31st.

Nearing the Finishing Line!

Lori Treloar
Executive Director

The museum expansion is nearing the end. Unfortunately, construction has taken much longer than expected. Groundbreaking happened in June 2023. It was supposed to be a 12 month project, but we are now in month 21.

We are truly grateful to funders, donors and



Meet me at the museum!

community members who have helped to make the expansion a reality. The society has worked towards this for at least ten years. It is wonderful, and a bit surreal, to see the dream become a reality.

There are still a few details to finish up, and we need a final inspection to get occupancy before we can formally re-open.

In the next few months, we will be organizing the old and new spaces and preparing for a Grand Opening, hopefully in April...watch for details. We think that visitors be surprised, and hopefully delighted. We have started planning events in the new space. This year, we will host the 3rd Annual Storytelling Event in late March. Oral storytelling has historically been the way to pass on knowledge and history. This fits very well with the purpose of the museum. For more details about the storytelling event, check out the article in this issue of the Focus.

Thank you to everyone who has reached out to volunteer. We need and appreciate your help!



Putting the finishing touches on the Timber Canopy Roof

We are almost ready for action.

Thank you also to those of you who have stepped up to help us with the project. We truly appreciate the recent donation of gutters, for the original building, from Gutters R Us. Thank you for being such a great community member and for providing us with your support.

We can't wait to invite you all in...



Gutters R US techs finishing up the gutter installation

Follow the Focus on Facebook, Instagram & Bluesky!

EJ Hughes Receives \$75 for use of his painting - 1958

Robert Amos
Author & Artist

When the new telephone directory came out in 1958 it was all in the news. It was the first time it had a colour illustration on the cover and the artist was E. J. Hughes of Shawnigan Lake. The directories had a total circulation of 676,000 throughout the province, and many copies found their way to other parts of Canada and the United States.

Wilf Bennett, in his column in the Vancouver Province on February 25, 1958 wrote "orchids are due to the British Columbia Telephone Company for its fine, bright Centennial cover on its new 1958 directory...I don't know if any other phone company has ever dressed up its drab directory with a coloured cover ... but it definitely adds color to the homes. (Even to the homes in which this is the only book!)."

The first cover was a painting of the first stern-wheeler, the S. S. Umatilla, arriving at Yale B. C. on July 21, 1858. The of success of this image was sufficient to encourage BC Tel to commission another directory cover from Hughes in 1961.

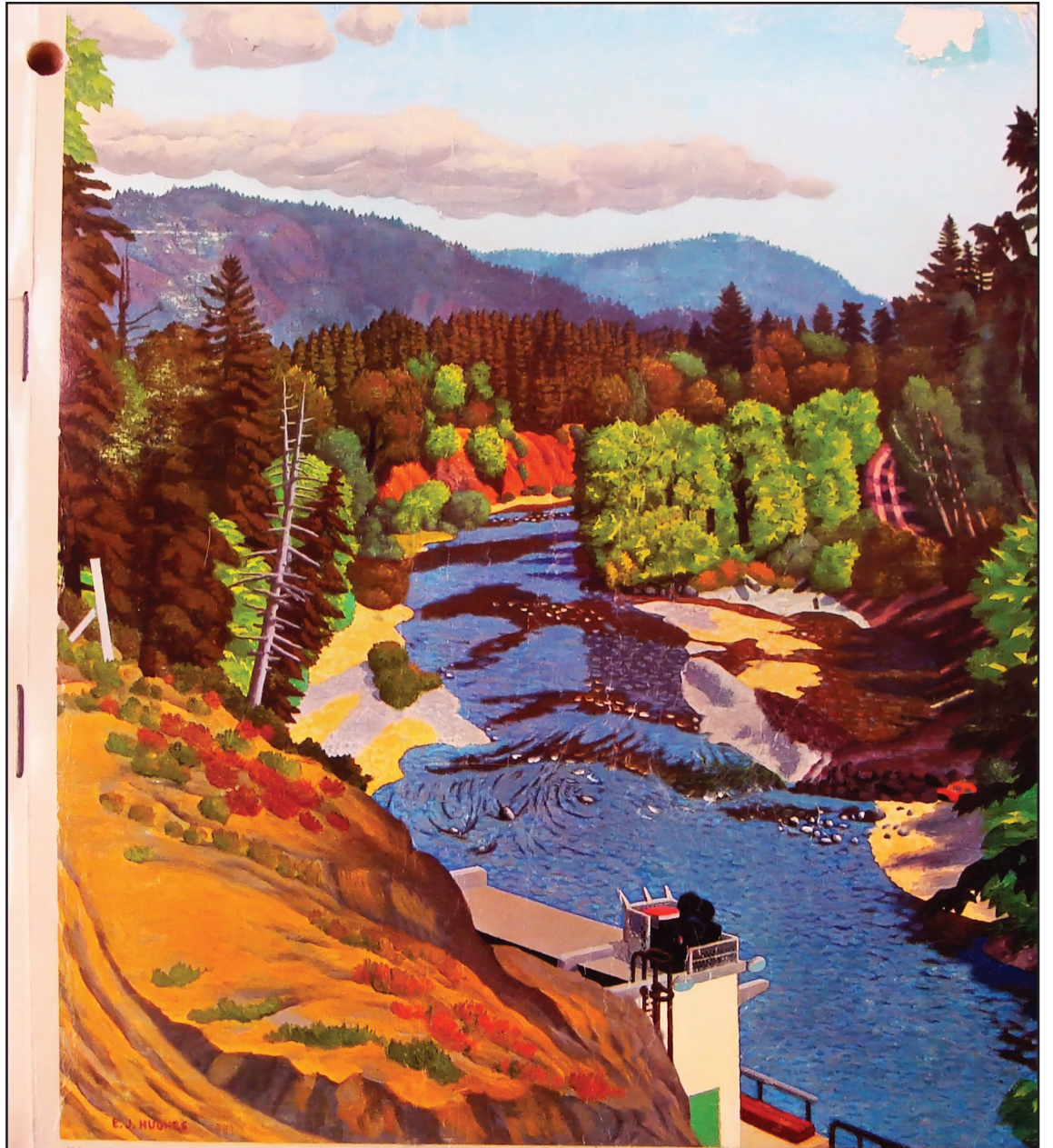
For this second prestigious commission Hughes chose to paint The Cowichan River near Duncan in July looking downstream. Among his many landscapes, this was a rare vertical composition.

He told Pat Salmon "this sketch was done on my 1958 Canada Council-sponsored sketching trip. I took the train from Shawnigan Lake to Duncan and walked from the railway station searching for motifs. Eventually I found this view in the Cliffs Road area, a little west of Duncan near the Indian reserve."

When the new telephone directory came out in March of 1961, the Vancouver Citizen, a contemporary newspaper, reported that in the far background of Hughes's painting "is Mt. Bruce on Saltspring Island. It was named for Rear Admiral Bruce, commander-in-chief (1854-1857) of the Royal Navy's flagship, HMS Monarch.

One of the telephone company's microwave stations, carrying signals between Vancouver and Victoria, is situated at the summit of Mount Bruce. In the left background is Mt. Tzouhalem, separated from Saltspring by Sansum Narrows which cannot be seen in this painting. Mt. Tzouhalem was named for Chief Tzouhalem of the Cowichan Indian Tribe, a leader whose exploits were legendary among Indians and whites alike in the last century. He is reputed to have had upward of 20 wives at the time he was murdered on Kuper Island in 1854.

The structure in the foreground of the painting is the pumphouse



The Cowichan River in July

CENTRAL VANCOUVER ISLAND TELEPHONE DIRECTORY



GABRIOLA ISLAND
NANAIMO

BRITISH COLUMBIA TELEPHONE COMPANY

built by BC Forest Products Company to supply water to its pulp mill in Crofton... The pumps are controlled by telephone circuits linking the pumphouse to the mill."

Hughes received a payment of \$75 for the use of his painting, and the Co-

wichan River in July was seen for a full year on the cover of every telephone book in British Columbia. It wasn't a lot of money, but as a form of advertising it was invaluable.

Hughes painted other views of the Cowichan River at Duncan in-

cluding one from the same spot looking upstream, and another of the "Black Bridge" not far downstream. And 45 years later, in 1993, he revisited the image in a watercolour which was shown the next year at a show at Shawnigan's Auld Kirk Gallery.

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*Photos should be 300dpi or
larger resolution*

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Sonia Furstenau Retires...

WE WON

Thank you Shawnigan for never giving up!



Photo by Laura Colpitts



At the South Island Aggregates Site, November 2015
(l-r) Alistar MacGregor, MP; Andrew Weaver, Green Party Leader;
Sonia Furstenau, Director Shawnigan Area B; Bill Routley, MLA; Doug Routley, MLA

Whether you are a Green Party supporter, or not, Shawnigan benefitted from Sonia's commitment to Shawnigan.

Shortly after she was elected, long-time Shawnigan resident, wrote this article for the Focus.

Sally Davies
Shawnigan Focus

There are moments in time when destiny is revealed; when we collectively understand that change is in the air. Thus it was in May 2015 when Sonia Furstenau stood on the steps of the Legislature to address those assembled on the lawn before her - people who had gathered to express their outrage at a Government intent upon turning Shawnigan Lake's watershed into a dumping ground for contaminated soil. Sonia raised her fist, and in a loud and determined voice declared:

"We ... Will ... Not ... Give ... Up" to the approving roar of the hundreds who stood before her. It was from this baptism of fire, that this same community came to the realization that our protests fell upon deaf ears. All reasonable and normal approaches to the people we elect had failed. It was then that a leader was forged and democracy prevailed.

As the CVRD Director for Shawnigan Lake, Sonia was not the first politician to take up metaphorical arms, there were a legion of people across the political spectrum who surrendered their time and money to fight the injustice of a government willing to risk safety of a community's drinking water as the "cost of doing business." It was Sonia's singular ability to inspire and draw from this pool of talent and resources, knitting them together to form a unified voice, that succeeded in getting a mining permit overturned for the first time in BC history.

It surprised no one who knows her that she was elected to the Legislature to represent the Cowichan Valley. In an increasingly confusing world, Sonia is a calm voice of reason, refusing to be mired by political rhetoric and immovable ideology. She is a collaborator and a peace maker, motivated by seeking solutions to problems that affect ordinary people.

Sonia has earned her place at the table where the future course of our Province will be decided; her decisions based on evidence and shaped by the values she espouses and has already demonstrated so well — trust, collaboration, and, above all else, love.

Sonia spent close to a decade contributing her significant skills, and strong voice as the leader of the BC Greens. Some of the things that were achieved by the Green Party during her tenure are:

- helping to shut down the contaminated soil dump in Shawnigan and standing with the community on cold and wet days on end to protest
- securing 10-day childcare for families across the province
- delivering paid sick leave and free summer transit for youth, making it more equitable for all
- protecting the environment, from safeguarding old-growth forests, which led to the extension of the Fairy Creek old-growth deferral, to fighting the LNG expansion and advancing climate action under CleanBC
- Historic investments in housing, healthcare and mental health.

The Green Party stated that 'Sonia has shown British Columbians that politics can be about putting people and the planet first.'

We thank you, Sonia, for your dedication and service.

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January 2025 Report

Department Members Attended 28 Incidents in January

- Wednesday, Jan 1 – MVI on Cameron-Taggart Rd
- Friday, Jan 3 - 1st Responder off W Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Sunday, Jan 5 – MVI on Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Tuesday, Jan 7 - 1st Responder off Sherburn Rd
- Saturday, Jan 11 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Saturday, Jan 11 – MVI on Fitzgerald Rd
- Saturday, Jan 11 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Sunday, Jan 12 - 1st Responder off Hartl Rd
- Monday, Jan 13 – Alarms Activated on Shawnigan -Mill Bay Rd
- Tuesday, Jan 14 - 1st Responder off Cameron-Taggart Rd
- Wednesday, Jan 15 – Structure Fire on Northgate Rd
- Wednesday, Jan 15 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan-Mill Bay Rd
- Thursday, Jan 16 – Structure Fire on Kalmar Rd
- Friday, Jan 17 - 1st Responder off Cameron-Taggart Rd
- Monday, Jan 20 - 1st Responder off Northgate Rd
- Wednesday, Jan 22 – Alarms Activated on Ingot Dr
- Thursday, Jan 23 – Alarms Activated on Ashley Rose Cl
- Thursday, Jan 23 - 1st Responder off McKean Rd
- Thursday, Jan 23 – Alarms Activated on Wildflower Rd
- Thursday, Jan 23 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Monday, Jan 27 – MVI on Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Tuesday, Jan 28 - 1st Responder off Renfrew Rd
- Tuesday, Jan 28 – MVI on Renfrew Rd
- Tuesday, Jan 28 - 1st Responder off Renfrew Rd
- Wednesday, Jan 29 – Alarms Activated on Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Wednesday, Jan 29 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan-Mill Bay Rd
- Wednesday, Jan 29 - 1st Responder off Renfrew Rd
- Thursday, Jan 30 – Alarms Activated on San Juan Pl

A Look Back To 2015

A Tongue -in-Cheek Column written by Bruce Fraser, former Area B Director

Fifteen years into the 21st century my crystal ball is fairly humming with the exciting indications in the near future for Shawnigan. Here are some of the images swirling around in the glass globe...

January: The Environmental Appeal Board will deliver its 500 page verdict and the industrial attempt to recreate the “Folly of Mt. Polley” in Shawnigan will fall to the pressure of public opinion, not without an epic fight, but for certain.

February: Two cases of middle-age rheumatism will persist into February, caused by excessive enthusiasm during the Shawnigan Shiver. Sorry no names, North Korea objects to their release.

March: South Cowichan Area Directors will suggest that Site C could be avoided by raising the weir at Lake Cowichan to a height of 50 feet, thus creating a sovereign hydro power source for households – should any be left above the flood line.

April: Premier Clark will announce the amalgamation of Goldstream Heights with Langford, allowing construction of a new highway by-pass around

the Malahat, surprising island residents that a liberal government would build a road to “nowhere”.

May: Shawnigan Station construction finally begins after a decade of horse trading with the Ministry of Environment over the presence of broken coke bottles in the underlying soil.

June: A Shawnigan Lake road end will be blockaded to prevent the outrageous encroachment by non-waterfront owning residents, and the use of coarse language while launching un-muffled boats.

July: The winter debris boom, long under construction for Mason’s Beach, will finally be installed only to be removed, immediately, to avoid incurring a swimming hazard and public liability.

August: Shawnigan House Coffee and Oma’s bakery will join with the Shawnigan Lake Museum to host “mocha & pastry night at the movies” in the new heritage amphitheatre, built on the Elsie Miles school grounds from timbers salvaged from the old community hall.

September: Shawnigan track-side residents will be woken by the horn of the passing excursion train carrying CVRD politicians to Victoria,

they being clearly visible in the dining car windows.

October: Bottled water from Shawnigan Lake will be hand carried to the Duncan Farmers Market in a “procession of solidarity” as the 2015 drought lingers into the fall.

November: The south end fire hall will finally be constructed on a barge and towed into place at the mouth of Shawnigan Creek where sufficient water is guaranteed... Timberwest has granted the Improvement District some lake bottom acreage for the purpose...but the province is still arguing over lease charges for the water...and the MOTI is still working on the causeway necessary to get the fire trucks to land. Fisheries and Oceans has delayed their permit until their one remaining officer has concluded her work in Newfoundland, and Island Health is simply conflicted over sewage disposal from the barge.

December: Prime Minister

Trudeau will declare the Shawnigan Watershed a “World Conservation Area”, resulting from a Private Member’s Bill jointly sponsored by MP’s Collins and May in a show of unprecedented multiparty collaboration.



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Malahat Legion Member Awarded King Charles III Coronation Medal

Jeff Lydiatt
Malahat Legion

Shawnigan Lake's Malahat Legion was pleased to see one of their veteran members, Virginia Bauder, receive a King Charles III Coronation Medal. Cowichan-Malahat-Langford Member of Parliament, Alistair MacGregor, presented the medal at the Arbutus Ridge Golf Course on January 18th, 2025.

The medal was presented in appreciation for Virginia's

the community, alongside a certificate commemorating her achievement. Virginia was among 13 deserving recipients recognized for their remarkable achievements. The King Charles III Coronation Medal is a historic honour, marking the first time Canada has issued a coronation medal. Only 30,000 deserving Canadians will receive this medal, making Virginia's achievement all the more notable.

Virginia's impressive record

spans decades. As a young Girl Guide Pathfinder, she received the prestigious Canada Cord award at just 14 years old. This award is the highest honour achievable as a Pathfinder. Virginia went on to serve in the Canadian Navy with distinction, retiring after 33 years as a Chief Petty Officer Class 1. Her exceptional service earned her a Member of the Order of Military Merit (MMM) in 1999.

Since joining the Malahat Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion in 2011, Virginia has continued to support various groups and charities. She has personally helped raise thousands of dollars for the Malahat Legion through grant applications. Virginia also aids veterans and widows with disability claims and pensions and supports local organizations like Broken Promises Pet Rescue and the Food Bank. Her dedication to the community was recognized with a nomination for the 2023 Duncan Chamber of Commerce Black Tie Award.

Isabelle Hammer, President of the Malahat Legion, expressed her heartfelt gratitude to Virginia, citing the recent grants she secured as instrumental in modernizing the Legion's facilities, including new flooring, a renovated kitchen,



and updated furniture.

The King Charles III Coronation Medal is a significant honor, awarded to individuals who have made outstanding contributions to Canada or achieved exceptional success abroad¹. The medal features a crowned and robed effigy of King Charles III on the front, with the inscriptions "CHARLES III DEI GRATIA REX" and

"CANADA" circumscribed around it. The reverse side displays a ring of 13 frosted triangular shapes, being Canada's provinces and territories, and the Canadian Royal Cypher.

We at the Malahat Legion are delighted to recognize Virginia as a valued member and wish her ongoing success in her exceptional community service.



outstanding contributions to of service and achievements

The Heat of a Village Outwarms a Heartless Blaze

February 7, 1976
Victoria Daily Times

A Column by Max Low

It was quite a simple notice, really.

And yet there was one word that roused a whole community and moved a family close to tears.

That word was "friends."

"A Community Burnt-Out Shower, Wednesday night at 8 in Shawnigan Lake Community Centre Hall, For Our Friends the Wachtins," read the hand-written sign that appeared on the doors of the village stores.

Steve and Joan Wachtin, who run their little local Popular Press printing business and have lived in the village less than two years, just couldn't believe that word.

Tragedy struck the Wachtins one week ago today when fat from a pan in which Joan was cooking tacos caught fire and the blaze quickly destroyed the old wooden house they rented in the village.

They lost everything and unfortunately none of their possessions were insured. Luckily, no one was injured.

Three of their four children—Randy, who will be 13 next month, Mark, 12, and eight-year-old Heidi—were ice skating in the nearby Mill Bay Arena at the time. Their 19-year-old son Ted lives in Victoria.

Now, a charred cake with melted candles sits sadly surrounded by blackened plates in the burned-out shell of the Wachtins' old house. For last Saturday was Mark's birthday and the tacos were to be for the party.

The family was left with only the clothes each of them was wearing. But the warmth of the response from the country community outdid the heat from the flames. And that response was instant.

"A few minutes after the fire started there was Mrs. Weiten telling us we could stay with them," said Joan Wachtin. Neighbor Phil Weiten and his wife have put up the whole Wachtin family, dormitory-style, in their basement this week. They are moving into another rented house in the village this weekend.

Someone at the fire mentioned that little Heidi had only her skates to wear, and within five minutes he had a pair of slippers. And just like that, people from near and far, some who knew the Wachtins and some who didn't, flocked with gifts of bedding, clothes, and money.

"Shawnigan Lake Volunteer Fire Brigade members risked their lives to put out the blaze and then gave us a cheque for \$100," said Steve.

"My own son (Ted) sent us money ... and I thought, boy, where have I gone right," he added.

"And right here people we know are hard up for food have given us cheques for \$20 or more," said Joan. "We're not going to go without anything. It's sure nice to feel so loved."

It was business as usual on Wednesday morning when I popped in to see Steve and Joan in the quaint round cedar building (designed and built by Doug Treit of Shawnigan) that houses the Popular Press.

Until a year ago, the Wachtins' business was in a basement in Store Street in Victoria, but when their lease ran out, they decided to move it near where they lived.

It's a two-person operation, with hand-setting done in the old style, specializing in beautifully-made business cards and name and address labels.

"We're going to teach the kids to carry on because this trade is being lost," said Joan, "and it's a nice way to print."

And what about the shower?

"Oh yes, we're all going tonight," Steve said enthusiastically. "We don't go to many parties and this one's for us. We wouldn't miss it."

It was nothing grand that night. There were no speeches, just a lot of warmth and good wishes as 200 or more squeezed into the little supper room adjacent to the main hall and took their turn talking to the Wachtins.

The First Shawnigan Lake Company of Girl Guides gave up their night to use the room and were there in uniform to serve coffee and cakes.

One man arriving late poked his head in the door and saw the huge crowd and said: "Gee, where's the band?"

There was no band, but there was music as school friends and Girl Guides sat around Heidi in a circle on the floor and sang songs.

Along one wall stretched a table covered with gifts people had brought. Some were unwrapped, some were in brown paper, some were in gay Christmas or birthday wrapping. Some were new, some used. There were toys, clothes, blankets, tins of cookies, jars of homemade preserves, rice, small pieces of furniture... even a Bible.

So great was the response that the Wachtins now have far more than they need, and Joan said she is thinking of setting up a free store where local people who need things can go and pick them up.

All the Wachtins—Steve, Joan, Randy, Mark (who has a *Times* paper run in Shawnigan), and Heidi—couldn't believe they were the center of such friendship.

But to the people of Shawnigan Lake, it was nothing too unusual.

Well-known Alice "Brownie" Gibson, who has lived there since 1928, said: "In the old days, we used to have community showers

for brides, but there are too many weddings to do this now. We haven't really had anyone burned-out like this before."

There were firemen and United Church people at the shower, but, said Brownie, no one organization or person was responsible for it.

"It's just a community effort. It's always been like this at Shawnigan. All we did was put up a sign in the store, that's all. We didn't contact anyone. They just came."

To those who live in big cities, this kind of spirit may seem foreign. And it may seem even more unusual considering the Wachtins are Americans who came from the little town of Fallbrook near San Diego in California and immigrated to Canada five years ago. But it's kind of nice.

"I feel, in essence, this sort of thing is Canada welcoming them because we like them so much," is the way Brownie Gibson puts it. "The Wachtins are such nice, kind people themselves—everything they have, they share."

And now, as Steve Wachtin says, he has found that "all the people in our village are our neighbors, our friends."

"Do you know," Steve says emotionally, "the day after the fire a man came up to me in the street and said, 'You don't have to worry ... we'll take care of you.'"

"I didn't believe it!"

Cold Water Milfoil Removal

Dave Munday
Shawnigan Basin Society

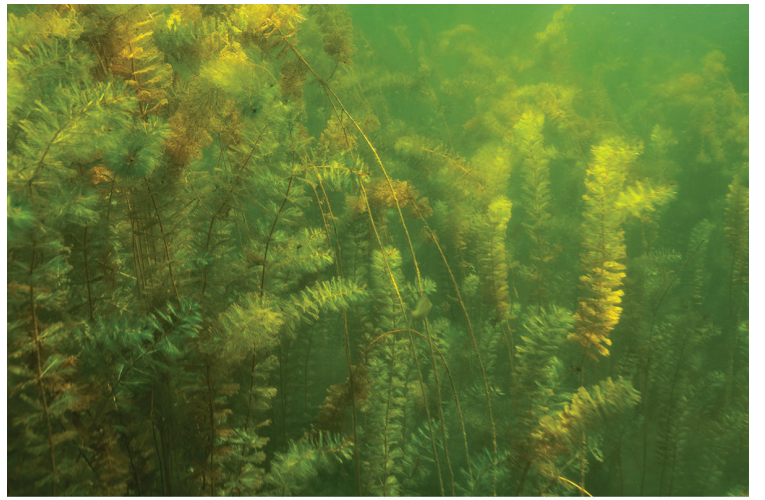
Shawnigan Lake has a growing problem with Eurasian Watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*) (EWM or milfoil). This is an invasive plant species that has spread throughout the Great Lakes and the west coast of North America, including Vancouver Island. This plant was first documented in Shawnigan Lake in the late 1970s and was the subject of a EWM Management Plan developed by funding from the Shawnigan Residents Association (SRA) with support from Shawnigan Lake School (SLS) and Shawnigan Basin Society (SBS).

SRA maintains an annual permit to allow milfoil removal during the summer months using SCUBA divers that gather the milfoil into bags for disposal at composting facilities. In addition, some waterfront owners control milfoil using various means – tarps that block the light required for growth are one of the tools used to control this plant in their foreshore areas.

The biology of milfoil makes it difficult to control. The plant is very delicate, and fragments are released when the plant is disturbed. These fragments will root and grow new plants; indeed, the plant's main

means of reproduction is via these fragments. Although Milfoil produces seeds in the late summer, the literature suggests that these seeds are not an important means for milfoil spreading.

SBS is focused on controlling milfoil during cold water periods. The literature indicates that plant fragments will not result in new plants if the water temperatures are below 10 degrees centigrade. In fact, the plant does not really start growing until the water temperature reaches 15 degrees centigrade. We have conducted trial removal projects and have reached the conclusion that the most efficient approach is to use a suction system operated by a diver that delivers the plant material into a floating bag that strains the plant material from the water. We will be testing this system this winter in the West Arm of Shawnigan Lake. We have had great cooperation from The Lakehouse organization to allow for deployment of our operations from their dock system. The divers will be using surface supply, which means they can operate



Milfoil in Early Summer

for extended periods compared to SCUBA divers, who must change air tanks from time to time. The divers are familiar with milfoil and can selectively extract milfoil while leaving the native plants in place. Milfoil has a rhizomatous rooting system and the divers will extract these roots along with the rest of the plant. The collection bag is large enough to support a day's removal activity. At the end of each day, the bag of milfoil will be loaded onto a trailer and the milfoil will be taken to a suitable disposal facility.

SBS has recently acquired underwater cameras that we will use it to monitor the removal areas to see the

extent to which milfoil recolonizes these areas. The Management Plan for Shawnigan Lake emphasizes that eradication of milfoil is likely not an achievable objective. We can only hope to control the EWM abundance in the lake. The plan is to use drone surveys to identify where milfoil is most dense, and we will focus on controlling milfoil growth in those areas. SBS is applying for grants to facilitate these planned removal activities. We are working with the CVRD to develop milfoil controls. This plant is present in a number of lakes in the region, and what we develop for Shawnigan Lake may be of assistance in others lake systems.



Milfoil in West Arm

Nature Rambles

Genevieve R. Singleton
Nature Interpreter, Biologist

Knowledge Keeper Jared Quwustenuxun Williams tells me that the Elders call this Sheyutun tu sthima. Huy ch q'u Quwustenuxun!!

In English it is known as Hair Ice and is only found between the latitudes of 45-55 degrees in areas where there is rotting, deciduous wood. A fungus called Exidiopsis species, which lives

in moist rotting deciduous wood, causes these crystals that look like cotton candy to form when temperatures are slightly below 0 C and the air is humid.

Analysis of the ice shows that the tannin and lignin molecules end up in the ice. Researchers hypothesize that one or more of those organic molecules keep the ice crystals from growing larger. If the tempera-

ture stays cool Sheyutun tu sthima can last several days.

Every day I see miracles in nature.

Huy ch q'u (Hul'q'umi'num' for thank you) for taking the time to read this. In my journey about Truth and Reconciliation I decided one step I could take was to learn words in Hul'q'umi'num', our local language.

Interested in learning

more about local nature? Please follow me at Facebook Genevieve Singleton Quw'utsun Nature Rambles.

With gratitude I ac-

knowledge that I live in Quw'utsun, Cowichan Tribes, unceded territory, who have been providing stewardship to the land and water here for millennia.



Shawnigan Focus Team

Co-Editors:
Lori Treloar
Kim Hennecker

Advertising and Accounting:
Kim Hennecker

Layout:
Grant Treloar

*Mailing address: 1775 Shawnigan-Mill Bay Rd
Shawnigan Lake BC V8H 3B7*

*250-743-8675
shawniganfocuseditor@gmail.com
shawniganfocusads@gmail.com*

COMMUNITY GROUPS

- **CVRD Director for Shawnigan Lake Area B**
Sierra.Acton@cprd.bc.ca
- **Area B Parks Advisory and Area B Advisory Planning Commission**
https://www.cprd.ca/list.aspx# (sign up for meeting notifications)
- **CVRD Public Input to the whole Board**
LegislativeServices@cprd.bc.ca
- **Shawnigan Improvement District**
2nd Monday of each month 7 pm at #1 Fire Hall
- **Shawnigan Lake Museum**
Contact us for information: 250-743-8675
museum@shawniganlakemuseum.com (web): shawniganlakemuseum.com
- **Shawnigan Residents Association (SRA)**
For info: (web): *www.thesra.ca*
- **Shawnigan Lake Community Association (SLCA)**
Contact: *bburr@shaw.ca*
- **Shawnigan Basin Society**
#102-1760 Shawnigan Mill Bay Road. Contact: *info@shawniganbasinsociety.org*
- **Young Seniors Action Group (YSAGS)**
Contact: *ysagssl@gmail.com (web): blog.ysag.ca*
- **South Cowichan Community Policing (SCCP)**
Contact: 250-929-7222(web): *southcowichancommunitypolicing.ca*
- **Royal Canadian Legion Malahat District Branch 134**
Events: (web) *malahatlegion.ca/upcoming-legion-events*
Contact: (web) *malahatlegion.ca/contact-us*
250-643-4621
- **Cowichan South Arts Guild (CSAG)**
Contact: *hello@cowichansouthartsguild.com (web): cowichansouthartsguild.com*
- **Shawnigan Quilters** - Wed. 9-2 at Lion's Hall (former Sylvania School)
- **Rotary Club of Shawnigan Lake Eco Club**
Meeting Info & Contact: *ShawniganRotaryEcoClub.ca*
- **Malahat Lions Club**
Contact: 250-743-0569

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