

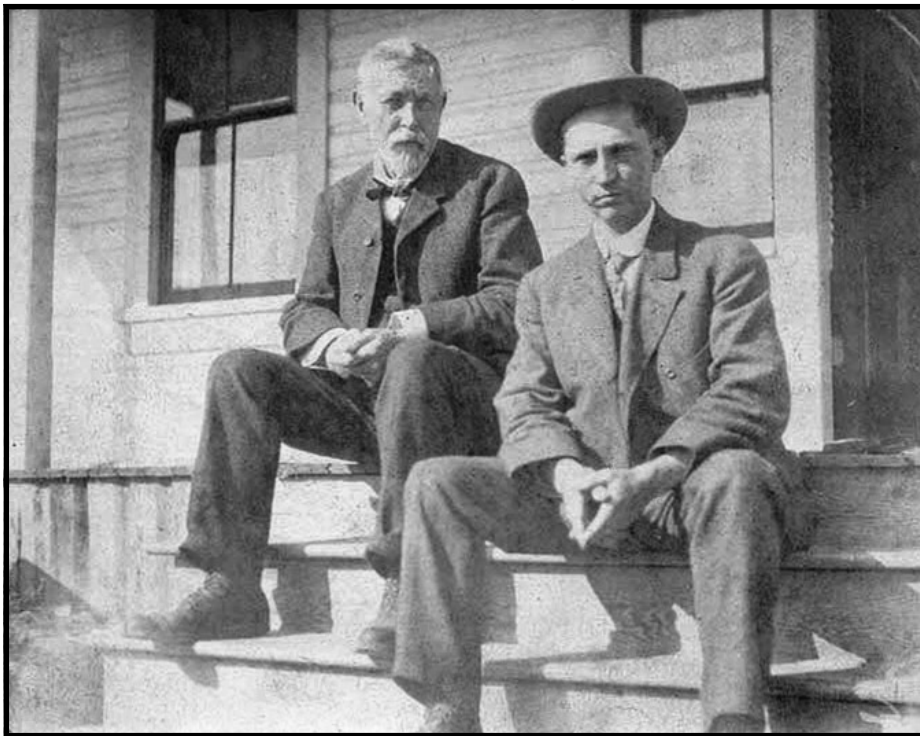
HISTORIANA

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THE BOWEN ISLAND HISTORIANS

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Mannion Family



On Left: Joseph Mannion

Research and communication are the backbone of family history. This was very evident recently when several descendants of the Mannions, one of the first families to settle on Bowen, gathered on John Wilmot's boat moored in Snug Cove. John Wilmot is the great-grandson of Joseph Mannion and the grandson

of Norah Mannion, Joseph's daughter by his second marriage. Convenor for the gathering was Bruce Russell, Miller's Landing resident and long-time friend of John Wilmot. Guests were Hubert Christie, Joseph Mannion's grandson, whose mother was Margaret Mannion, Joseph's daughter by his first marriage. Mr. Christie's two sons, Don and Robert, were

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A TRADITION OF SUCCESS

July 21st and 22nd this year played out a familiar scene: crowds converging on Bowen Island to get a glimpse of some of its unique homes and gardens provided by the People, Plants and Places Tour.

When this fund-raiser for the Historians and the Memorial Garden began nine years ago, it was only one of a handful in the Lower Mainland; no doubt one of the reasons it became so popular, needing little to no marketing to sell out. This privileged situation has changed in recent years, yet the PPP Tour remains the local benchmark of its type.

It seems that almost every neighbourhood these days has a version of the home/garden tour; not surprisingly, as it has clearly proved a successful means of raising interest in gardening as well as funds. One might expect this situation to have affected the attendance of the PPP, but if the 2001 Tour is any indication, it remains a unique and well-organized crowd favorite.

This continued success is

THEY ALL COME BACK...

On a Sunday morning a few weeks ago, I received a call asking if the Museum could be opened for a gentleman and his mother who had once lived on the island and were here for the day. The name slid past my ears without making much impression. After an initial "Oh, brother!" (internal, of course), I made an appointment for the early afternoon as it was evident that they had come from quite a distance.

After greeting them and rechecking the name, the light dawned. Glenn! Of course! I had heard the name connected with the Union Steamships resort. This was the wife of Bill Glenn, son of William Glenn the constable, and her son Scott. She lives in California where she and Bill, after a short stint of working for the Union, had moved during the war so that he could pursue his love of aircraft. His wife said, "He was always crazy about planes; he'd often forget what he was doing

while he watched them fly over." They looked in at the Bowmart and Helen Holte recognized her immediately. Scott and his mother were gratified to think that anyone remembered who they were and were certain

Mrs. Glenn was saluted in the Undercurrent as one of Bowen's notable ladies, beautiful and sadly eccentric. Madge was born on the island and both she and young Bill went through Bowen's school as our photographs of the pupils in 1931 attest. She grew up a beauty, resembling her mother, to become one of Canada's leading models. She certainly graced the cover of *Chatelaine* and it is said that her picture was on the flat-fifty Players tin for years. She keeps in touch with Dal Richards, so perhaps she knows how Bowen is faring.

The memories of Bowen were mainly sweet as our pre-war memories tend to be. But, as we entered the logger's cottage Mrs. Glenn said, "This is like the cottages we were allowed to live in, in winter. During the summer we had to live in tents, the summer visitors needed the cottages. But this is much nicer than those were."

Now that we are in contact, there will be a



Madge Glenn on the cover of Chatelaine, January, 1945

that Madge would be delighted to know. Scott lives in Colorado and keeps in touch with Madge in Montreal.

Many Islanders will remember the family. In fact, just this year the elder

...Mannion family continued

there. Also present were Dorothy Lawson, archivist for the Historians, and Lois Meyers-Carter, archival volunteer and writer of the weekly Island Neighbours column in the Undercurrent.

A bit of background might be useful here. In 1885, Vancouver pioneer businessman Joseph Mannion purchased 850 acres on the west side of the island. After selling that property, he concentrated on his 640 acres fronting on Deep Bay. This area, including two points and extending back to Killarney Lake, was where, about 1887, he built a comfortable and well-furnished home for his wife, Sabrina and their three children: Charles, Norah and Clarence. The elder daughter, Margaret, from Mannion's first marriage, was at convent school in New Westminster. The prosperous Bowen family had books, magazines, a governess, a private schoolhouse, household staff and a Chinese cook. The three young children spent much of their time outdoors exploring their surroundings and daring

each other to greater deeds of daring-do.

At first, the neighbours consisted primarily of the Spanish and Filipino fishermen in Snug Cove but before long, other families arrived, including the Davies, Beckers, Dormans, Flores, Graftons, Parkers, Cassidays and Banfields. Special family friends included the Ward Debecks and their children: Edna, Ned and Birdie. In the last two years of the Mannion family presence on Bowen, Margaret came home from the convent and lived with the family until she married Dr. Harvey Christie of Toronto. The Mannions moved back to Vancouver in 1898 so that the children could attend high school.

Some of the discussion centered on the personality of Norah Mannion Wilmot, who had been a spirited daughter, wife, mother, mother-in-law, grandmother and author. John Wilmot had been close to his grandmother. The Christie's told about contacts with New Zealand relatives who were descended from Margaret Mannion's brother

In Memoriam:

The Executive and Members were saddened by the death of Earl Mather on September 9th. Earl was active with the Branch #150 of the Royal Canadian Legion and had many friends there. Last year, he was part of the team which put together a fine Remembrance Day exhibit in the Museum. We are sorry to have lost our friend, Earl. He is survived by a son and grandchildren and by his wife, Marlene. Marlene, an active and energetic member of the Historians, has served several terms as President and is a member of the current Executive and on the PPP Steering Committee.

We also mourn the deaths of:

Lynne Anderson - Sept.
Elaine Cunningham - Sept.
Thomas Gilday - June
Rosa Helenius - September
William Hoosen - May
Bob Magee - July
Judith Mallett - July

SCHOOL PROJECT DEVELOPED

If you wandered into the Bowen Island Museum and Archives this summer, don't worry, the tornado that has been breezing through has gone for now. If you made your way through the debris, amidst the flying papers and chugging photocopiers, one would notice a small but determined project was coming to life in a Frankenstein-esque kind of way.

Erin McLeod and Trevor Takach, two summer students who were creating the proverbial whirlwind, were chosen to create something that has not been tried through the Historians before. We had to create from scratch, a group of specific learning objectives as required by the local school board, and incorporating them into Bowen Island history. We were given free reign to use the contents of the Archives and the Museum and were given the opportunity to pick the brains of several knowledgeable Historians.

Both Erin and I stepped off the ferry on Bowen for the first time when we were on our respective ways to be interviewed, and wasted no time by immersing ourselves in the history and politics of the Island.

We met with teachers at the Bowen Island Community School, with Dr. Spear from Island Pacific School and received their opinions and insight into what would make this collection of lessons stand out from the variety of other such packages educators receive and never use. We took the concepts of adaptability, user-friendliness and the relevance of primary sources into consideration and went back



Trevor Takach, and Erin McLeod with President Beverly Underhill

to work. In the end we assembled fifteen complete lesson plans that incorporated a variety of subjects (from math to politics) by using Bowen history as the illustration. We had a variety of source material, including rain records on Bowen during the 70's to letters and photographs, which we scanned and added to the text.

In the end, we wound up with a product that is roughly 250 pages, filled with interesting and relevant lessons for Grade 5's. Some of the activities include role-playing the Snug Cove marina development; creating works of art through the inspiration of historical Bowen photographs and the always popular lawn bowling with water balloons.

The response from the teaching professionals has been very encouraging, and both of us will return to our studies with a sense of accomplishment.

NEW PUBLISHING PROJECT LAUNCHED

The year 2001 has been exceptionally productive at the Museum and Archives. And busy! As Trevor Takach and Erin McLeod worked to develop exercises and units that would fit in with the grade 5 school curriculum, a new committee met to discuss the development of a proposal drafted by Historian Bob Cathro: the publishing of new book.

Headed by Ross Carter, the committee has been fortunate to bring into its fold: Historians Bob Cathro, Beverly Underhill and Pamela Malkin, plus local authors Paul Grescoe and Brian Scrivener, who are helping out in an advisory capacity. Taking on an entirely different perspective from the Irene Howard book **Bowen Island: 1872-1972**, this project will focus on the vast array of unique historical photographs housed in the Archives, and be tied together by interesting tales from the “Resort Era” on Bowen Island.

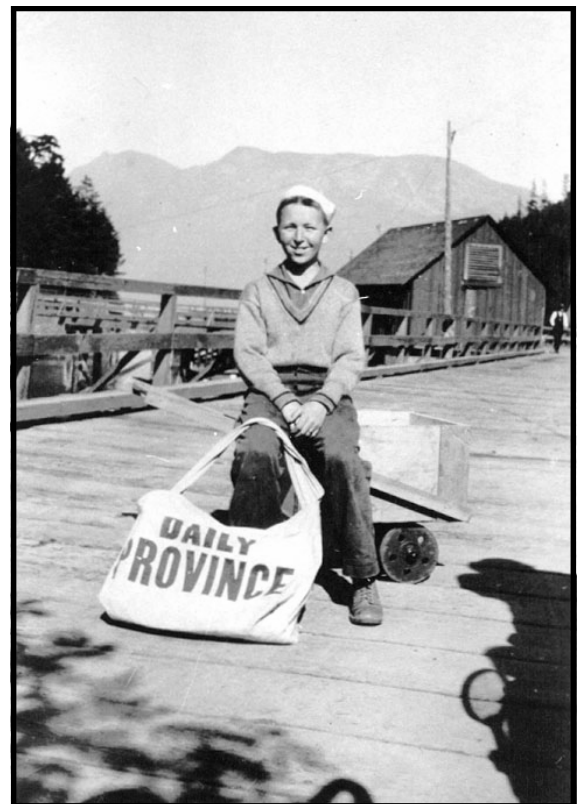
Summer student, Adam Bower, was hired on a grant in June to start the preliminary research, reporting to the Steering Committee on the type of materials housed in the collection, what there is an abundance of, and where more research will need to be done. By the end of the summer, he had put together a flushed-out version of the original proposal, including the chapter subjects that will likely be focused on.

Administrative Secretary Matt Conacher will be continuing this process during the winter months, and will develop a ‘mock-chapter’ that can be used in order to pursue funding. The coffee-table style book will be published by the Historians, as was the Howard book, a process that may take some time but will ultimately reap greater rewards creatively

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Although there are many photographs and documents in the possession of the Archives, we need people to dig through their old photo-albums and for anything related to Bowen as a destination from c. 1900-1960. Most helpful would be personal stories (preferably written down) of the time you, your loved ones or friends spent here. Who fell in love at a picnic? What happened one night during a Moonlight Cruise? Who fell off the dock after having one too many...? Any input is welcome, and even if it’s not used in the book, it helps build the historical record at the Archives. And who knows? Maybe the story you tell will

DO YOU KNOW WHO THIS IS? →



FOLLOW-UP: CENOTAPH PROJECT

Bob and Pat Cathro toured the Western Front of the Great War (1914-1918) in France and Belgium during June 2001. They were able to visit the cemeteries and memorials that commemorate the five Bowen men who are named on our cenotaph, as well as Reginald and Charles Underhill who had a family connection through mining claims south of Snug Cove. Most of these men were killed during the principal battles in the early part of the war – Ypres, Vimy and the Somme. The bodies of two of the men were never found and their names are listed on the Canadian National Vimy Memorial and the British Thiepval Memorial. The cemeteries and memorials are beautifully tended and landscaped by

the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

The information gained from this visit has resulted



Myles Green in 1916

in a renewed effort to compile complete files on the history of these men as part of a Remembrance Day display for the museum. Posters are

being prepared that present profiles of each of them with portraits (where available) and photos of their headstones. Among the new information that has been received is our first photo of Myles Green (in uniform) along with a Vancouver newspaper report of his death in April 1916. These were obtained from his descendants on Vancouver Island through the efforts of Roy Collins. As well, portraits of the two Underhills (also in uniform) were located by their nephew Dick Underhill, and the mystery of why Cameron Smith was buried in a British cemetery south of Arras when he died

in the capture of Vimy Ridge, situated on the north side of the city, has finally been cleared up.

A display is also being planned for school

SOME MORE RESEARCH NOTES...

ROBERT BUELL

On February 27, 1927, Ena M. Buell wrote to James Hargreaves, who was in charge of Correspondence Schooling with the Department of Education in Victoria. Giving her mailing address as Bowen Island, her letter explained that she and her husband Harry did not live near a school and there were only 8 children of school age where they lived, which was not enough to establish a school. Her letter gave no other details of their location but it was presumably a logging camp. "I would greatly appreciate any assistance you could give me in teaching my boy (of 6 years), as I wish to keep him up in his studies with the average school child, so, when the time comes in the future, when he can attend a public school he will not be too much behind the other children of his age", she wrote. In due course, the arrangements were made and young Robert began to receive his classes by mail at the Bowen post office. The letter is on file at the B.C. Archives.

Less than 21 months after that letter was mailed from Bowen, Robert Buell was dead of "asphyxiation from accidental drowning" at Hackett Bay, Gambier Island. The death certificate showed that he was 71/2 years old, that he had lived there for five years and that his occupation was given as "School Boy". He was buried at Mountain View

CAPTAIN WESTERLUND

The Vancouver City Archives were established by the legendary Major J.S. Matthews between 1933 and his death in 1970. He amassed a wonderful collection of photos and recollections, many of which have a Bowen connection. For example, he conducted several interviews with William Grafton, who worked at City Hall, and was a close friend to Capt. W.J. Twiss, a city alderman who Matthews felt was mainly responsible for establishing the archives. The Twiss family had a cottage at Hood Point in the 1940's and he served a term as president of the Vancouver Pioneer's Association. Through Twiss, the Major met several other Hood Point residents and was able to obtain the guest register from the Howe Sound Hotel. The Matthews files, which were a primary research source for Irene Howard, are available to the public as microfilmed file cards and correspondence. Unfortunately, they have never been carefully indexed and crisscrossed so it is easy to miss items of interest.

Which brings us to Captain Olaf Westerlund. He staked the Consuela Vanderbilt and Frederick Vanderbilt mineral claims above Bluewater in June, 1896. Matthews filed a memo on Westerlund in 1932 that indicates that he was Swedish, was captain of a schooner on the west coast of Vancouver Island and later became a marine pilot sailing the cutter Claymore from Skunk Cove, West Vancouver. It's the reference found for

UPCOMING EXHIBITS...

Visitors to the Museum in early November will be treated to two upcoming exhibits. After extensive research, including a trip to sites on the Western Front, Director Bob Cathro has written about the Great War and specifically about Bowen Island's soldiers who never returned from the Front. Their names decorate the cenotaph in Snug Cove; but until now, they have remained fairly anonymous. Mr. Cathro has collected the information on their service overseas, where they fought and died. Also included are some unique photographs that have been collected and scanned from family members, pictures of their graves and Canadian memorials. The exhibit will also feature popular songs from the Front, some poetry, and an interactive section for children to help them gain an understanding of the events and sacrifice of our veterans.

Concurrently at the Museum will be a school exhibit featuring the 1894 Guestbook and Minutebook for the Bowen Island School Board, an old school desk, bell, and a mystery guest from the turn of the century who will 'instruct' Museum visitors.

Many hours of work have been put into these exhibits, and it will certainly be a worthwhile trip down to the Museum and Archives.



TEDDY BEARS WANTED!

Do you have a funny, furry, old and shabby or new and handsome Teddy Bear that you could loan for a month or so? We're asking because guest bears are needed to help decorate the Museum for its second annual Beary Merry Christmas. This is the jolly program in which local kindergarten and grade one classes make and hang bear decorations on the Museum's Christmas tree, visit the bear display and hear a bear story. Last year, the Museum hosted more than 70 bears, but this year, we would love to beat our own record and display at least 100 bears! If you have a Teddy Bear who would like to go visiting,

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