



NANAIMO MUSEUM

100 Museum Way, Nanaimo, BC, V9R 5J8
TELEPHONE 250 753.1821
info@nanaimomuseum.ca www.nanaimomuseum.ca

APRIL 2006

Sometime in the early 1900s, the connection between Nanaimo and the Friuli region of Italy was so strong that the children there apparently knew more about Nanaimo than they did about Rome. In fact, says Nanaimo author and University of B.C. instructor Lynne Bowen, at least half the people listed on a war cenotaph in the village of Tarcetta were people from Nanaimo. "It was really quite strange to see since we were so far from home," she said. Bowen is the author of the book *Boss Whistle*, published by Nanaimo District Museum, which recalls the history of coal mining on Vancouver Island. With the latest feature exhibit at the museum all about Italians, coupled with the fact that she is now working on a book about the strong ties that exist between the Harbour City and several regions in the northeast corner of Italy, she has been asked to deliver a talk called *Italian Connections* on Saturday, April 8 at 1 p.m. at the museum. The names Sedola, Gusola, Maffeo and Cuffalo are just some of the Italian citizens who have made significant contributions to Nanaimo over the years, says Bowen. "Most Italians came to Nanaimo because of extreme poverty back home," she said. She cites a lack of jobs and a system of land inheritance that saw not just the oldest son in the family getting a chunk of land when the father died, but all the sons. This made it harder for people to survive in the predominantly rural culture of the area. "As waves of Italians immigrants became permanent residents in the British Columbia towns that first gave them jobs, a strong connection between pairs of communities in B.C. and Italy were maintained," she said. "And these connections are as strong today as they were in the past." At one point, according to Bowen's research, Italians were leaving for other countries more than any other culture on earth. Today, B.C. is home to Canada's third largest Italian population, and Nanaimo certainly played a part in welcoming several waves of these hard working people over the last century. For more information on Bowen's lecture, call 753-1821.

MARCH 2006

Coal Mine Bus Tour - Black Diamond in the Rough

It's been called a black diamond, and for some it created untold wealth. For many others, it was more indicative of what they got stuck with in their Christmas stockings in a really lean winter. Or worse.

No matter how you look at the "black rock that burns", it did fuel the settlement and growth of many of the beautiful B.C. communities we now live in and enjoy. Nanaimo, the third oldest city in the province and the second largest on Vancouver Island, has a rich history that's more steeped in coal than most.

Throughout its reign, coal mining was a tough and often fatal way to chip out a living. Massive explosions often ripped through the mines, destroying both the lives of the unfortunate miners as well as the families left behind. Met with disdain for their lives and treated as dispensable, many coal miners took to the streets against their employers and staged the biggest, nastiest labour strike in Canada at the time of the First World War. And yet others, like the Dunsmuirs, were presented with opportunities and quickly became some of the most wealthy and powerful men and women of their time.

Recounting the good times and bad, as well as all the interesting coal mining tales in between, is Nanaimo District Museum's Coal Mine Sites Bus Tour. This three-hour excursion covers all the hot spots of the city's former gravity train industry. From Departure Bay to Mt. Benson to Cranberry, Extension and Morden mines, this tour will leave you with all you ever wanted to know about "mining the Rock for coal."

For more information, call 250-753-1821, or visit www.nanaimomuseum.ca.

FEBRUARY 2006

Nanaimo Fortunata! (Lucky Nanaimo!)

Nanaimo District Museum's Newest Feature Exhibit
Until May 29, 2006

Nanaimo , from its earliest days, has been regarded as a place of opportunity. The prospect of work in the mines, inexpensive farm land and commercial opportunities have attracted men and women from every continent. Over the years, the Nanaimo District Museum has celebrated the contributions of immigrants who settled here and raised their families.

Nanaimo Fortunata! (Lucky Nanaimo !) reflects on the contributions of Italians to Nanaimo . Using photographs, maps and objects, and with support from individuals and the Felice Cavallotti Lodge, we invite you to come and learn their story.

The first Italian to visit Vancouver Island was Captain Alejandro Malaspina who anchored briefly in Nootka Sound . On the mainland, a Jesuit priest, Father John Nobili, worked as a missionary in the Okanogan in the 1840s. The 1858 Fraser River Gold Rush attracted thousands of miners from California and some of these men, recent arrivals from Italy , may have sought work in local coalmines. Who arrived first in Nanaimo , however, was not recorded.

The contributions of Italians and its close community have been recognized by Nanaimo and British Columbia . Features of the community such as Maffeo-Sutton Park, Giovando Lookout (Newcastle Island), Holden Corso Road and the Italian Fountain (Port Place Mall) celebrate their contributions to Nanaimo. On an international scale, the civil defence work of former mayor Pete Maffeo during WW II was recognized when he was awarded the O.B.E. (Order of the British Empire).

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Press Release

Feb. 23, 2006 - Nanaimo District Museum to host presentation on Robert W. Service and his celebrated ballads

Dr. Walter Epp, History Professor, Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, Ontario and his three sons Nathan, Anthony and Jonathan, are conducting a centenary tour, including a stop at Nanaimo District Museum this Saturday (Feb. 25) at 1 p.m., celebrating the writing of Robert W. Service's most celebrated ballads "The Shooting of Dan Magrew" and the "Cremation of Sam Magee", and the publication of the Songs of a Sourdough in 1907.

This tour, which includes places relevant to the life of Robert W. Service, includes the Yukon, France, Scotland and England, Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, Greece and the Ukraine as well as museums and theaters across Canada. Dr. Epp and his sons present Service's ballads within the context of the 1896-1898 Yukon goldrush and included in the performance are: "The Spell of the Yukon, The Ballad of Salvation Bill, The Ballad of the Ice Worm Cocktail, The Cremation of Sam Magee and The Shooting of Dan Magrew."

Dr. Walter Epp, 2005 winner of the Lakehead University Distinguished Instructor Award and nominee for the Canadian 3M Teaching Fellowship, is presently on a lecture tour of Canadian Studies Centers in European



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Universities where audiences are enthralled by Robert W. Service's powerful imagery, cantering rhyme and robust adventure situated during the Klondyke Goldrush.

Dr. Epp and his sons are pleased to have the opportunity to present "Robert W. Service - the Bard of the Yukon" on Vancouver Island where Service spent time before leaving for the Yukon.

Nanaimo District Museum is located at 100 Cameron Rd.

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For more information, call Debbie Trueman at 250-753-1821
Nanaimo District Museum 's

Heritage Weeks Events

Heritage Week Antiques Road Show - Saturday, February 18 from 10 am to 4 pm at Port Place Mall

Bring in your favourite treasures, keepsakes, collectibles and heirlooms to have them appraised by the experts!

\$10 for 1st item, then 2 for \$15 for a brief verbal appraisal

Hourly door prizes!

Brought to you by the Museum and Zonta Club of Nanaimo

This Year's Appraisers Include:

Hugh Bulmer and Neil McAllister from Maynards Fine Art Auctioneers, Vancouver; Michael Hartmann and Ted Rye, universal, Nanaimo ; Pamela Mar, textile expert; Neil Williams, book expert; Rod Liddicoat, jewelry expert.

Feature Exhibit: Nanaimo Fortunata!

Nanaimo Fortunata! (Lucky Nanaimo !) opens during Heritage Week, and reflects on the contributions of Italians to Nanaimo .

Opens February 21 at Nanaimo District Musuem

Runs until May 29, 2006

Saturday, February 25 at 1:00 pm at Nanaimo District Musuem

Robert Service – Bard of the Yukon

The museum staff is excited to offer international performer, Walter Epp, performing some of the many ballads Robert Service wrote such as "Cremation of Sam McGee, The Spell of The Yukon and The Shooting of Dan McGrew". Enjoy Klondike refreshments. Space is limited so book early! For more info call Bobbi at 753-1821.\$5 adults.

Week of February 18

Ted Dandy Historical Writing Contest

This year's theme is Nanaimo Celebrates and is open to students from grade 2 to 7. Students write a 1-2 page entry describing Nanaimo Celebrations. Students may use pictures (drawings or photographs), computer presentation (PowerPoint)...the possibilities are endless. For more info call Bobbi at 753-1821.

Launch of Museum Photo Contest: Nanaimo Celebrates

Because we want you to be ready for this sixth installment of our annual Photo Contest, we're letting the cat out of the bag and telling you well in advance what we're looking for this year...Nanaimo Celebrating! Time to dig out your photo albums...

More Great Events at the Museum!

Saturday, March 25 from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm at Nanaimo District Museum

Italian Cultural Demonstrations

Visit the Italian exhibit and participate in cultural demonstrations such as sausage making, games and crafts.

Saturday, April 8 at 1:00 pm at Nanaimo District Museum

Italian Connections with author Lynne Bowen

As waves of Italian immigrants became permanent residents in British Columbia towns that first gave them jobs, strong connections developed between communities in British Columbia and Italy . These connections are as strong today as they were in the past.

Saturday, April 22 from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm at Nanaimo District Museum

Photograph Restoration Workshop

How do you preserve all those photos and negatives stashed away in shoeboxes? Join instructor Wilf Hatch to learn about proper care and storage of new and old photographs.

Saturday, April 22 from 9 a.m. to noon starting at Nanaimo District Museum

Coal Mine Sites Bus Tour

Join Ray Brookbank for this immensely popular tour of Nanaimo 's most famous mine sites. Sells out fast so book early! \$25 for members, \$30 for non-members

Saturday, May 20 at noon

Opening of Bastion Season & Cannon Firing

Watch for opening celebration during Empire Days

Saturday, May 27 from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm at Nanaimo District Museum

Scrap Booking Workshop

Learn the history of scrap booking and some of the techniques for storing and displaying your treasured pictures. Bring a few photographs and/or memorabilia and your imagination. To book call Bobbi at 753-1821. Cost: \$10

Feb. 1, 2006

Media Release

Re: Voices of the Snuneymuxw First Nation

The ancestral voices of Nanaimo 's indigenous people will soon reap the benefits of modern technology with the creation of the virtual exhibit with the working title Voices of the Snuneymuxw First Nation.



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The goal of the project is to digitally preserve the fading Hul'qumi'num language as Elders tell their stories and incorporate the recordings into a virtual exhibit of Snuneymuxw artifacts in other museums around the globe.

The price tag to conserve the language, now spoken by as few as six local Elders, as well as to create the exhibit is approximately \$170,000. Just over \$144,000 in federal funding has been earmarked for the project, with the remainder coming from cash and in-kind donations from both Nanaimo District Museum and the Snuneymuxw First Nation.

The museum and the Snuneymuxw First Nation will be working with project partners Nick Tuele, Art of Art Consulting and Zero One Design Inc. on this innovative new exhibit. Valuable input and support for the project will come from Malaspina College and linguistics projects currently in progress at Simon Fraser University and the University of Victoria .

“Helping preserve a language and other important cultural materials for the Snuneymuxw people is an important task and we're honoured to be a part of it,” said Debbie Trueman, general manager of the museum. The research and stories gathered for this project will also be used to create the First Nations gallery in the new museum space.

“Our exhibition will feature digital images of the significant artifacts held in these museum collections, which include house posts, masks, rattles, headpieces and spindle whorls among others,” said Lorraine Littlefield . “Our preliminary investigation reveals at least 500 artifacts in these museums were collected from the Snuneymuxw First Nation in the past.”

The opportunity to digitally record the Elders who are fluent in their native language and incorporate their powerful memories and insights into a virtual exhibition is a timely opportunity to preserve what might otherwise be lost.

The virtual exhibition will also tell the story of the Snuneymuxw First Nations in modern times in order to demonstrate the continuum that exists from the legends of the ancestors – ‘the stones and bones they left behind long ago’ - to the realities and dreams of the Snuneymuxw today.

Due to the history of acculturation and colonization, Snuneymuxw cultural material is limited in museums in Canada . “However, through the medium of a virtual exhibit, the cultural resources that are contained in significant museum collections around the world can be drawn together to show the artistic and spiritual wealth of the Snuneymuxw.”

Cultural materials are found in collections in the Museum of Civilization , Royal British Columbia Museum , Vancouver City Museum , Museum of Anthropology , Burke Museum in Washington , Voklerkunde Museum in Berlin , British Museum in London , Chicago Field Museum and the American Indian Museum in New York

Side Bar

The virtual exhibit Voices of the Snuneymuxw First Nation will tell the story of a unique history in a rich and compelling manner. Aspects of the story will include an examination of their exclusive traditional territory, comprised of more than 98,000 hectares north of Neck Point to Boat Harbour in the south, Gabriola Island and other small islands to the east and the western reaches of the Nanaimo River watershed.

The Snuneymuxw territory also shared an additional 104,000 hectares with other First Nations including seasonal villages, fishing villages and resource areas in Qualicum, Chemainus and on the Fraser River .

With their central location on Vancouver Island, the Snuneymuxw enjoyed extensive cross-cultural exchange and intermarriage with other First Nations bordering on their traditional territory. Aspects of this history have not previously been acknowledged and will serve one of the focal points for the virtual exhibit.

Other chapters of the story will include the first contact with Europeans (Alcala-Galiano and Valdes arrived in 1792), signing of treaties with James Douglas in 1854, traditional aspects of their culture including spirituality, food, sports, clothing, and art.

JANUARY 2006

"Stories of the Southend"

Nanaimo Southend-born-and-raised resident, Laura Ramsay, has generously included Nanaimo District Museum in her project "Stories of the Southend". The project will gather stories from people who have a history in the Southend and we encourage our members to send in their stories.

Give us your name (including maiden name if applicable), phone number, year of birth, story location, time period and any photos or memorabilia you may have that relates to the story. To get you started..."Since all remembrances are valued, I remember when...." Please mail or email your story (or stories) to Laura Ramsay 1031 Halibuton St. V9R 6N5 or info@nanaimomuseum.ca by April 1st please.

With a new Museum comes new branding...

With the unveiling of our new museum in 2008, we will roll out this new stylized logo, chosen for a clean simplicity that echoes the harbour — the thread that runs through the entire Nanaimo Story — to better represent our new place in a growing and dynamic downtown Nanaimo.

In Memoriam

It is with heartfelt sadness that we say goodbye to museum member Paula Berry, who recently passed away, and extend our condolences to her many family, friends and other loved ones in this difficult time. Paula will be remembered fondly.

NDM receives \$170K grant to produce virtual exhibit

Nanaimo Museum will help preserve "Voices of the Snuneymuxw First Nation" with new Virtual Museum of Canada funding "Our Elders say that the old people are speaking to us through the stones and bones they left behind long ago. It is time to listen and hear their story."

Nanaimo District Museum and the Snuneymuxw First Nation will be working with project partners Nick Tuele, Art of Art Consulting; Donna Gerds, Simon Fraser University; Imogene Lim Malaspina University- College, Dave Robertson University of Victoria, and Zero One Design Inc on this innovative new exhibit. Today the old voices of the Snuneymuxw First Nation Elders grow faint and there are now fewer than six Elders who are fluent in the Hul'qumi'num language. This virtual exhibition at the new Museum will tell the story of the Coast Salish people — those who have occupied the eastern shores of south-central Vancouver Island for more than 5,000 years — through the voices of the Elders.

The opportunity to digitally record the Elders who are fluent in their native language and incorporate their powerful memories and insights into a virtual exhibition represents a timely opportunity to preserve what might otherwise be lost. The virtual exhibition will tell the story of the Snuneymuxw First Nation's unique history in a rich and compelling manner. Through the medium of a virtual exhibit the cultural resources that are contained



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in museum collections around the world can be drawn together to show the artistic and spiritual wealth of the Snuneymuxw.

There are at least 500 artifacts in these collections. As well, the virtual exhibition will tell the story of the Snuneymuxw in modern times to demonstrate the continuum that exists from the legends of the ancestors to the realities and dreams of the Snuneymuxw today. The research and material gathered for this exhibit will be used in creative ways for the First Nations exhibit in the new museum.

Museum gets \$5,000 boost from RBC

Nanaimo District Museum received a significant financial boost recently from the Royal Bank of Canada for the planned new museum space. The funds will go a long way in establishing a fine new museum for Nanaimo and for the many visitors we welcome every year. Museum staff and board members extend their gratitude to the Royal Bank for this generous contribution to our city's cultural heritage.

Museum manager Debbie Trueman, second from right, poses for a photo with Tim Manning, Regional VP Commercial Banking BC, Graham MacLachlan, Regional President BC, Moira Jenkins, VP Vancouver Island Northern Commercial Banking and Jane Black, Regional VP Vancouver Island North.

Welcome Katimavik!

Once again, the museum is pleased to welcome several Katimavik participants — Aaron Rogers from Dawson Creek, B.C., Stephanie Lefebvre from La Sarre, Quebec and Vincent Poirier from St. Roch De Richelieu, Quebec — who will lend their helping hands to the important work the museum does over the next several months.

New textiles

The Museum's textile inventory received a boost recently from the Canadian Costume Society of Victoria. Unfortunately, the society is now defunct, but the museum's textile experts, led by Pamela Mar, were able to secure quite a number of costumes and fashions, from the 1850s and up, as a result of the closure. The items pictured above will be on display for a few more weeks.