

Good evening, fellow members of West Vancouver Historical Society. Thank you for joining us.

We thank you, our members, for your constant loyalty, support and encouragement. We appreciate your understanding of the value and importance of community history and heritage: that the past influences the present, and the future. We rely on your contributions of knowledge and memories, documents and images. You are our knowledge philanthropists, and the community's "citizen historians". We value your contributions as we value your generous financial support. We appreciate the significant increase in your donations to your society, as you renewed your memberships this year. Thank you.

Activities During 2020

Although Covid-19 has curtailed our activities, we have had a productive year.

- Our monthly board meetings have continued, via Zoom.
- We have kept you informed through email notices and updates to our website and through our newsletter, *Memories*.
- At the beginning of each month, Marny Peirson changes the historical information board in the kiosk at John Lawson Park.
- The theme this month is May Day. In June, it will be Streetscapes.
- with pictures of shops and theatres long gone from our community.
- We are pleased to announce that PayPal has been installed on our website. PayPal enables online renewal and purchase of our publications. We are also refining the membership renewal process.
- Over the past year, we have established connections with local community groups, notably the West Vancouver Community Arts Council.
- We have maintained and strengthened our existing ties with the museum, the archives and the library, with Lighthouse Park Preservation Society and with the West Vancouver Streamkeepers Society.

2020 Highlights

40th Anniversary 2020

West Vancouver Historical Society celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2020. While we could not mark this milestone as it deserved, we did what we could, by notifying the members and the community.

Navy Jack House

Thanks to the efforts of members of our board and the society, and of the district's Heritage Advisory Committee, the Navy Jack House Citizen Group was established to advocate for the preservation and restoration of West Vancouver's oldest building.

Navy Jack House, built by John Thomas in the 1870s, long before there was a West Vancouver, represents the foundations of our community. The house stands at an early intersection of European and indigenous cultures. Thanks to the work of genealogists and historians around the province who volunteered their time and expertise to research the story of John (Navy Jack) Thomas, new information about his life and his family relations has come to light.

John Lawson and his family were the next owners of the house. Lawson established the first post office and general store in his home. The first council meetings were held there, thus laying the foundations of the political and economic future of West Vancouver. Emma MacFarlane, then the Hookham family, and finally, the Williams family, followed the Lawsons as householders. They lived in the house for 46 years, until the death of Lloyd Williams in 2017 when the house reverted to the municipality.

The story of the house is in the report, *The Navy Jack House, the Case for Preservation and Restoration*, on our website. We produced an informational video about the case for preserving Navy Jack House, which is on our YouTube channel. In February, Laura Anderson and genealogist Brenda Smith presented a video session on Navy Jack House at North Shore ElderCollege.

Speakers, Presentations and Community Partnerships

Although we had to cancel our public meetings and presentations, our Local Voices series, in partnership with the library, continued in 2020 with two presentations.

"Shooting the North Shore" by award winning news photographers Mike Wakefield and Ralph Bower, was the last Local Voices presentation before an audience. Both Mike and Ralph have agreed to contribute to our new calendar, by the way, which I will talk about a little later. We followed "Shooting the North Shore" with a virtual video series called "Heritage and Neighborhood Character in West Vancouver."

All of our videos can be found on the society's YouTube channel, which we launched last year.

This year, we participated with the museum and with the archives in preparing an exhibition on the contribution of women to the growth and development of West Vancouver. Again, the records, materials, information and memories contributed by the community was invaluable in creating the exhibition.

The exhibition, *A Most Honourable Contribution*, includes Gwladys Davies, among other notable women of West Vancouver. Gwladys Davies operated the Blue Dragon Teahouse in Horseshoe Bay. She was our first female councilor and one of the first Guide leaders in West Vancouver. Due to constraints imposed by Covid, the exhibition has been postponed until 2022. However, there will be a display at the library and a Zoom presentation by Daphne Hales about the history of Guiding, on Thursday, July 15th.

We will circulate the details to members when it's available.

2021 Highlights & Planning

With the support of a grant from the West Vancouver Foundation, and we hope, from the District of West Vancouver, we are preparing the first in a series of curated audio walking tours through local neighborhoods called *Storied Walks of West Vancouver*. We hope to work with the district and with our Indigenous neighbours to install historical information signs throughout the community in public areas. We hope these will be developed along with a community inventory of existing signs, plaques and cairns.

Publications

We are publishing our first calendar, *Local Visions 2022*. The calendar will continue the *Local Voices* theme: photographs that represent the contributor's connection to West Vancouver. We expect it will be available for purchase by September.

A new book is in the works. Based on my 35 years' experience in municipal politics and research in the municipal archives, I wrote a book, which I have titled *Inside West Vancouver, People, Politics and Planning in West Vancouver since 1912*. I would like to thank my colleagues and friends who read the manuscript. I am happy to say the book is now being edited. The book is being edited by Andrea Lister, former editor of *British Columbia History* magazine.

Our Publications Committee - myself, Dave Barker, John Moir and Lynda Roberts - is managing the book's production. Dave and John contributed to the production, and the success, of the three books we have published: our centennial book *Cottages to Community; Arrivals and Departures* about the B.C. ferry system; and *Dreamers and Designers*, a history of the development of West Vancouver, each written by Francis Mansbridge. We are grateful to have Dave and John working with us again, and for the contributions of municipal archivist Reto Tschan.

We will keep you informed of the progress of the book, and the date it will be published. We intend to sell the calendar, and our latest book at very reasonable rates and we encourage you to reserve your copies early.

We are grateful for a generous donation by Tom and Margaret Taylor. Many of you will know the Taylor family as long-time residents of West Vancouver, and of Tom's career in education here. Tom and Margaret have given the inventory of his book *Glimpses, World War II West Vancouver through the eyes of the papers and a paperboy*, to the society. *Glimpses* is a unique portrait of West Vancouver as it was. It is an essential document of our past that informs our present and our future. We hope to have copies of *Glimpses* in every school library in West Vancouver, and eventually to have it available in a digital version. Tom and Margaret established a scholarship at West Vancouver Secondary School which we will continue to support through sales of the book.

We are working on a number of other book and video proposals, and look forward to telling you more about these, as the projects come together.

WVHS Board

West Vancouver Historical Society exists to recognize and celebrate our community's history.

Community Advisory Committees

We work to achieve this by collaborating with individuals, community groups and with the municipality. Laura Anderson serves on the district's Heritage Advisory Committee. Tom Wardell served on the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee until last fall. We hope to expand our service on municipal committees - it is not necessary to be a member of the board to do this. If you are interested in learning more, please do get in touch with us.

Farewell and Welcome

We say thank you and farewell to two long serving members of our Board and one more recent member.

Elaine Graham was a great protector of, and advocate for, Lighthouse Park, and of the Point Atkinson light station, a national heritage site. Marilyn Rhodes, as our treasurer and membership chair, managed our financial situation and our roster of members. Gail McBride wrote our Strategic Plan, managed the redesign of our website and served as Board Secretary. Her latest contribution was to bring PayPal to our website. Fortunately, Elaine, Marilyn and Gail are continuing as members of our society.

West Vancouver, and our society, lost more than its share of community members over the past year. We say farewell to Don Grant, a former board member who played a key role in bringing about the restoration of the Hollyburn Lodge. Don's contribution to our community can be seen on the Hollyburn Heritage Society website. I encourage you to visit the site - it's a treasure trove of mountain heritage and history.

We welcome two new members to our board, Lynda Roberts and Stephen Price. Lynda, a law librarian, jumped right in as membership chair and treasurer. Laura Anderson helps her with membership and Barb Hunter with financial matters. Lynda is updating our accounting methods and our antiquated computer system and software. Stephen Price teaches at the Montessori school in Eagle Harbour. Stephen plans to concentrate on liaison with schools. He is acting recording secretary and managed the technical production for this Zoom AGM.

I am retiring as president as of this meeting, after four years in the role. I will continue to serve on the board as past president. Our society's new president will be elected at our meeting in June.

We hope that the vaccine and preventative measures will be successful in allowing us to resume normal activities this autumn, including our annual barbecue. We appreciate the loyalty of our members and hope to resume regular contact as soon as possible.

It bears repeating - you are our knowledge philanthropists, our citizen historians, and we appreciate that contribution as well as your financial support. With your support and encouragement, the history and heritage of our community lives on. As we make history every day, we are mindful that we are creating a legacy to future generations.

This Report will be posted on the WVHS website. For more information about West Vancouver Historical Society, our projects and how you might participate, get in touch through the website contact page or through our office at Gertrude Lawson House.

Thank you for joining us this evening, particularly those who live outside our community.

Respectfully submitted,
Rod Day, President, WVHS 2020-2021