

Burfield's Bombardier



Burfield Bombardier at First Lake c. 1968 (Fred's later residence in background, and current site of propane tank for Lodge)



Out for a run, likely above the Lodge on Sitzmark Trail, late 1960s



Fred and 1 of the 2 current day owners Steve Richards, c. 1982, sale day near First Lake. (Note the rental cabins in background)



A restored Bombardier Snowmobile in 1983 with other current owner Ken Holowanky.

A few noteworthy 'notes':

The Bombardier was purchased from a farm at Knutsford (near Kamloops, BC) where it had been used as a school bus. Fred purchased the 'bus', likely in 1967, as a means to move skiers and cabin owners around the mountain after the chairlift burned in the mid-1960s. It is the hope of the HHS that the machine will be re-united with its former working partner, the 1949 John Deere MC Crawler. At a yet-to-be-built pavilion/museum located near First Lake.

Peggy Burfield, March 2017

The following information was obtained courtesy of J. Armand Bombardier Museum, Valcourt, Québec

1952 R18 Bombardier Snowmobile:

- The original color of this model was maroon, one side loading door, and one escape roof hatch
- Capacity: 15 passengers or 2,500 lbs.
- Engine: Chrysler Industrial 251 115 H.P.
- This vehicle was sold to Industrial Engines Ltd. from Edmonton, Alberta
- There has been 274 (1952) models produced by Bombardier Snowmobile Limited of Valcourt, Québec
- For several years, snow removal had been causing snowmobiles to be driven on gravel or asphalt roads. It therefore became necessary to equip them with an interchangeable ski/ wheel system that would respond to prevailing terrain conditions. In 1951, the company started assembling 12 and 15 passengers "R" series vehicles that were also characterized by an all steel body based on the B12 Bombardier snowmobile design and modified at the front to provide room for wheels. This was how the R series was born. They were produced from 1951 to 1981. These snowmobiles were used for both civilian and military applications in many northern countries.



Assembly line in Valcourt, Québec
Photo courtesy of the J. Armand Bombardier Museum



The Bombardier at its current home, Steve and Ken's cabin in the Pasaten Valley near Manning Park, BC

Retired workhorse gets needed restoration



NEWS photo Mike Wakefield

ERNIE MacFarlane (left), the last person to drive this John Deere tractor used on Hollyburn Mountain since 1949, helps load the now retired workhorse for transport to Langley with the help of Bruce Macdonald, of Macdonald Trucking and Excavating, on Sept. 6.

Erin McPhee

emcphee@nsnews.com

MEMBERS of the Hollyburn Heritage Society are in the midst of a project that will breathe new life into a historic piece of machinery that greatly impacted life on the mountain.

The non-profit Hollyburn Heritage Society was founded in 1998 with the intention of preserving the historical aspects of Hollyburn Mountain for present and future generations. In line with their vision, society members have undertaken many projects over the years, from compiling a photographic database to restoring the Hollyburn Ski Lodge.

Their newest initiative is their work towards displaying a restored John Deere tractor that first rolled onto the mountain in 1949.

Peter Tapp, whose father Bob was the society's co-chairman and is considered to be one of the pioneers of the mountain, is serving as the project facilitator.

Tapp who has been going up the mountain his entire life and still spends time in his family's cabin, says he's happy to offer his time to such a meaningful venture.

According to Tapp, in 1946, the Burfield family purchased the ski camp from a group of partners who immigrated to Canada from Sweden, renaming it the Hollyburn Ski Lodge. The family had a horse that aided them

in their many tasks for the next few years until 1949, when Fred Burfield purchased a Model MC John Deere tractor from Purves Richie, retail distributors of John Deere products in Vancouver.

As it replaced the use of horses, the tractor drastically changed the capabilities of the pioneers.

Over the following 30 years the piece of machinery was used to build roads and trails, pack the snow on ski trails, transport dignitaries aboard a "stone boat," and help in the construction of many log buildings, some of which are still standing.

Cypress Bowl Recreations purchased the downhill ski area in 1984, and the 30-year-old tractor, which was still in operating condition, was used for the first winter season, though was later deemed redundant, so ever since, sat parked in the mountain's operations yard. However, it hasn't been forgotten.

With the permission of Cypress Mountain staff, society members are in the midst of having the historic tractor, which Tapp says, "looks like a rusty old piece of metal," transformed into its former vibrant self and put on display for all visitors to the mountain to see.

With the help of one of Tapp's friends, North Shore resident Kim Defaveri, who works at the John Deere location in Langley, the restoration is already underway, the work donated by the company.

See Plans page 54

Plans call for tractor to be put on permanent display

From page 51

The transportation to Langley was donated by another friend of Tapp's, part of West Vancouver's Macdonald Trucking and Excavating.

John Deere will continue the restoration work over the next year. The goal is to restore the tractor to operating condition, but that will be dependent on workers' assessment, says Tapp.

The plan is to unveil the tractor at the 2008 Pioneer Skiers Reunion, held annually in September, co-organized by the Hollyburn Heritage Society and the Mount Seymour History Project, and held, alternately, on

both mountains.

Tapp met with Fred Burfield, who currently lives in Parksville, in July and gave him a copy of their tractor restoration proposal.

"His eyes just lit right up," says Tapp.

Burfield is expected to be in attendance at the unveiling.

The current plan is to situate the tractor on permanent display outside of the Hollyburn Ski Lodge.

West Vancouver resident and architect Michael Barnes has designed a gazebo-like structure to house it, protecting it from the elements.

For more information on the Hollyburn Heritage Society and its projects, visit www.hollyburnheritagesociety.ca.



photos courtesy Hollyburn Heritage Society

FRED Burfield uses his trusty John Deere tractor to plow some snow in the early days on Hollyburn Mountain. In the photo at right, taken in 1950, Burfield is seen using the tractor to tow the West Vancouver mayor and council of the day on a tour of Hollyburn Ridge.



Restored tractor returns to Hollyburn

John Deere 'crawler' left to rust for 25 years

Loren Romei

lromei@nsnews.com

AFTER years of waiting, the Burfield family's John Deere tractor has been restored to its former glory and is ready to be put on display to celebrate Hollyburn Mountain's history.

Bob Tapp, the co-chair of the Hollyburn Heritage Society, and Peter Tapp created a proposal to restore the tractor back in 2007.

Four years later, John Deere has completed the restoration project free of charge. The tractor, which Fred Burfield purchased in 1949 to replace the family horse, now looks brand new.

Peggy Burfield, Fred's daughter, got to see the restored tractor in person for the first time June 4 when she rode it in the West Vancouver Community Day parade.

"When they started it, it brought back a flood of memories from my childhood. It sounded just like it did all the time. . . . It was pretty emotional to hear it," she said.

She said when family was told about the restoration project they were very excited.

"History is important to everyone and that's a bit of our family's heritage, so I guess it's important to our family's history and the mountain was a huge part of our family," she said.

In 1984, Peggy said her family left the mountain and her father was very disappointed that he had to leave the tractor behind. Peggy said the tractor was their "lifeline." It was used to clear trails and transport necessities, like food and firewood, she said.

Since the Burfields left the mountain more than 25 years ago, the old tractor sat unused and was constantly exposed to



NEWS photo Cindy Goodman

HOLLYBURN Lodge old-timers Bob Tapp (from left), Gordon Knight, Alex Swanson, Bert Baker and Fred Burfield surround the refurbished John Deere "crawler" that was used to clear pathways around the cabins and routes to Hollyburn Lodge near Cypress Mountain. The tractor was last used in the spring of 1985, but with the work of volunteers and the generosity of John Deere the machine is gloriously restored.

the elements until the Tapps, with the support of the Hollyburn Heritage Society, decided to revive the rusting machine.

The Tapps have wanted to restore the tractor, more properly called a "crawler" because of its caterpillar tracks, as part of the society's efforts to preserve and protect the history of Hollyburn Mountain since the non-profit society was formed in 1998.

Preserving the mountain's history is personal to the Tapp family. They went up to the mountain to spend time together for years. Bob remembers the sound of the tractor well.

"It's a very distinctive sounding tractor. . . you could hear it across the creek from where our cabin was and we were trying

to get the kids to sleep and there was this tractor making all that noise," he said.

Renewing the tractor is one of the many restoration projects the society has taken on since its creation. The society's board of directors wants to use the tractor to draw attention to the society's efforts. They hope to create a pavilion to put pieces of the mountain's heritage, like the tractor, on display.

Peter said the plans to create the pavilion are in the works, but it is going to be a pricey project.

Along with the pavilion museum, he said the society's ultimate goal is to restore Hollyburn Lodge.

Burfield's 1949 John Deere MC Crawler "Truly it is another 'one-horse-shay'..."



Fred and the West Vancouver Mayor and Council



Fred Burfield at work

One of the many projects of the Hollyburn Heritage Society spearheaded by Bob Tapp was the restoration of this 1949 John Deere tractor. Fred Burfield's tractor was instrumental in the development of the Nordic area of Hollyburn, and for over 30 years it was known as the 'workhorse' of the cabin community. An article in the May 12, 1976 edition of the West Vancouver times, entitled "The Changing Face of Hollyburn Ridge" described it this way:

"...Fred is still carrying on, assisted by his wife, daughter, and a little old John Deere crawler tractor. Had records been kept, a book could be written about that little machine. Cars, trucks and jeeps by the dozens it has rescued from ditches and snow drifts, thousands of miles of snow trail packed by its blade and tracks, hundreds of tons of supplies hauled up the mountain. Truly it is another 'one-horse-shay'..."

In 1984 it was retired to the Cypress Mountain works yard where it sat exposed to the elements until 2007 when Bob and son Peter took it to the John Deere factory in Langley. Through the corporate generosity of John Deere, and the assistance of a great many volunteers, the 'Crawler' was restored to better than new condition.

After its unveiling in the West Vancouver Community Day Parade in June 2011, it returned to the mountain for a weekend visit with friends. Before Bob's passing in October 2014, he was the last of the five men shown above in the North Shore News article from June 29, 2011. All five men lived well into their eighties and nineties, including Fred (seated) who was 92. Bob accredited their long rich lives to the good mountain air and healthy environment of life on Hollyburn Mountain.

The tractor is currently on display at the West Coast Railway Heritage Park at Squamish, until a suitable shelter of its own is built on Hollyburn. We anticipate the shelter will also house the Burfield family's 1952 Bombardier 'snowmobile'.

In April 2000 Bob, together with Gordon and Lola Knight, formed the not-for-profit Hollyburn Heritage Society to preserve the heritage and rich history of the mountain. Its ultimate goal was the restoration of Hollyburn Lodge, completed in January 2017. This was an extensive project requiring the cooperation of government, private, and corporate sponsorship at an estimated cost of over \$1,000,000.

For further information and to learn more about Hollyburn Mountain, its history and the Society's projects, please visit www.hollyburnheritage.ca.



Riley Tapp with family and friends, June 12, 2011

The Hollyburn Heritage Society would like to thank the following for their contribution to the restoration of Burfield's 1949 John Deere Crawler Tractor:

- Deere Hitachi Specialty Products**, Langley: restoration of the tractor
- NT Machine Shop**, Langley: machining of the engine components
- Norlang Parts**, Langley: supply of miscellaneous used parts
- Macdonald Trucking Ltd.**: moving and delivery of the Crawler
- Coastal Tire**, Gibsons: donation of used Crawler for parts
- The West Coast Railway Association**: Storage of the Crawler at the Heritage Park, Squamish

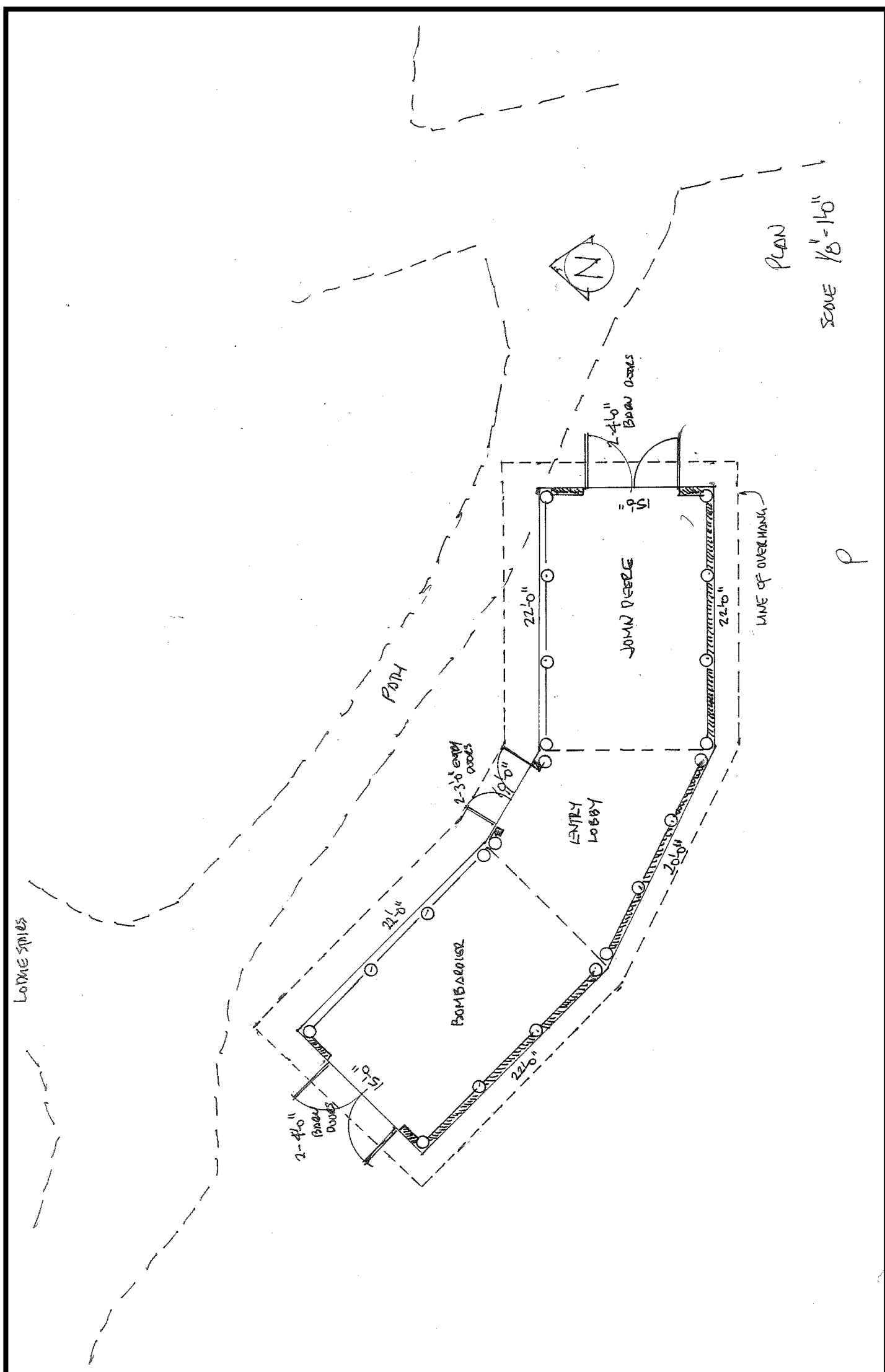


The 'fathers' of the mountain together with the restoration team, with Fred and Peggy Burfield, June 12, 2011

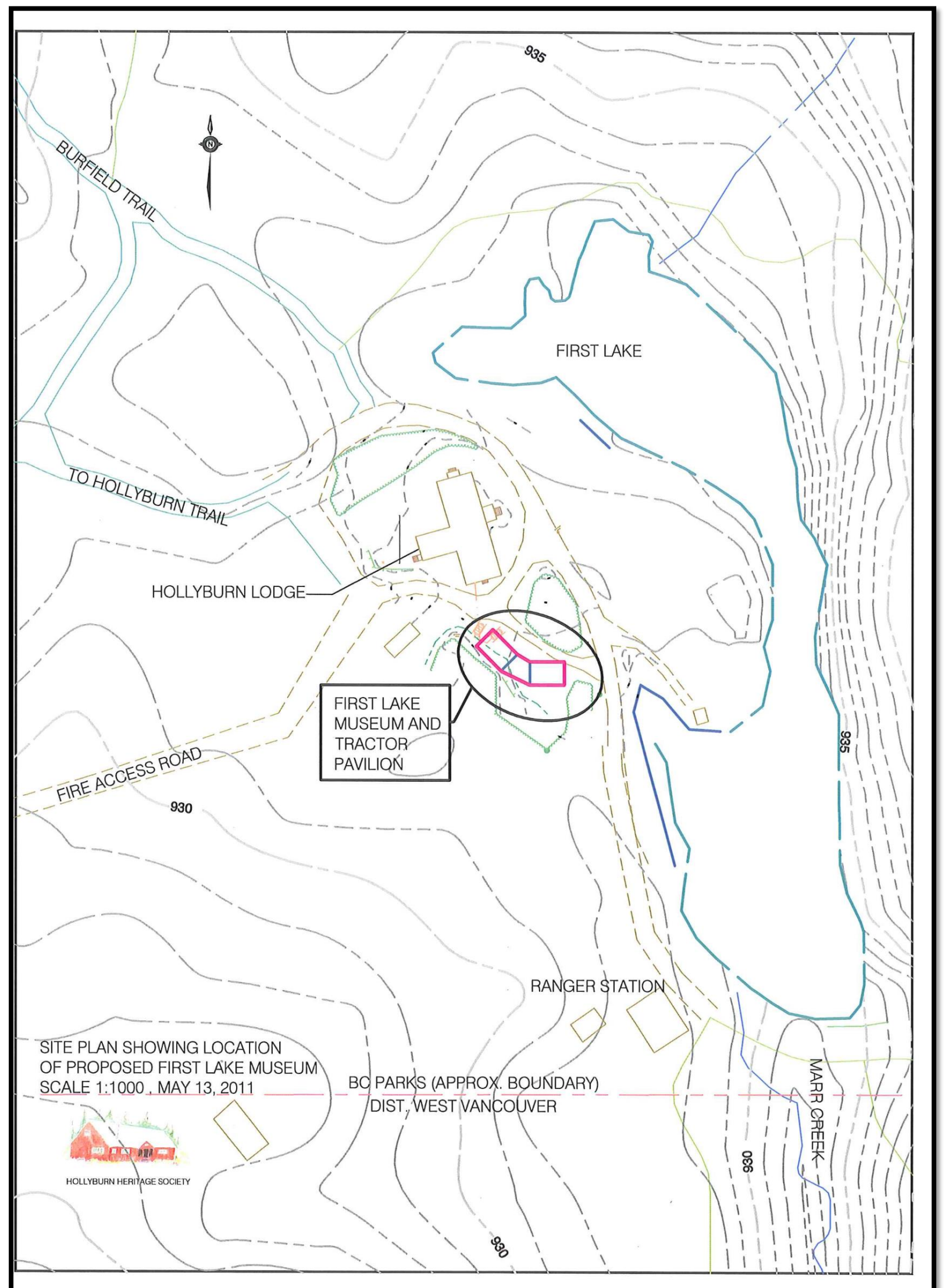
Proposed Tractor / Bombardier Museum and Location



Proposed Tractor Pavilion at Hollyburn
 Courtesy of Michael P. Barnes B. Arch., Architect AIBC, FRAIC, CSC



Proposed Tractor Pavilion at Hollyburn
 Courtesy of Michael P. Barnes B. Arch., Architect AIBC, FRAIC, CSC



Site Option Plan for Location of Proposed Pavilion