

Hollyburn Heritage Society



Issue No. 11 - December 2007

Since 1998 Hollyburn Heritage Society has been producing an annual newsletter to inform you of the history & heritage of the “Cypress Mountain” ski area. A small group of Society volunteers have preserved almost 100 years of recreational activity since the first ascent of Hollyburn Peak in 1908 by the Vancouver Mountaineering Club, forerunner of the B.C. Mountaineering Club.

Incorporated in April 2000 and having a registered charitable status with Canada Customs & Revenue Agency, we welcome financial donations for which you will receive an income tax deduction receipt. Funds assist in the publication of these information bulletins and support other HHS programs that advance the Society’s mandate. B.C. Parks & Cypress Bowl Recreations Partnership do not receive any funds from HHS. HHS membership is by way of donation: financial – volunteer time – items (photographs, articles etc.). Cypress Bowl Recreations Partnership has permitted HHS to mount panels & some artifacts in the “Back Room” of Hollyburn Ski Lodge to relate this history. Restoration of this lodge is a center piece for our society. Hollyburn Ski Lodge was constructed in 1926 on a site beside First Lake from building materials reclaimed at the abandoned Nasmyth lumber mill at 2,500 ft.

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The Old Stove - entrance to " 'Back Room' "

Of the myriad of things that people require for their comfort, none is more important than the stove. However, a stove is not a light-weight object. Yet almost every cabin has one that came up the mountain on the back of its owner, usually in pieces to be reconstructed when all the pieces were assembled at the cabin. The stove in Hollyburn Ski Lodge is no exception, except it was brought up on a stoneboat pulled by "Red" the horse owned by the Burfields. This stove cost \$400 in 1947 and was used until after 1984 when the Burfields were bought out by the provincial government. During winter it consumed 50 gallons of stove oil per week. It was the food preparation center for all those tasty blueberry muffins and delectable blueberry pies. The berries were the wild variety harvested just outside the lodge. Today, it's a no-no to pick the berries, since they are in a 'park' and they are also reserved for the bears.

Following is a story on the lodge stove by one of the women who worked there.

"We used to cook on this old stove. Winter 1983/84 I worked at Hollyburn Ski Lodge for Fred Burfield and his daughter Peggy. Along with another half-dozen or so girls, I worked in the cafe and sold hot drinks, soup, sandwiches, muffins, and pie slices - all made here for hungry skiers. To cook the soup and bake the muffins and pies, we used this here oil-burning stove. Winter mornings could be cold in the café. There were days we'd come to work and the milk in the creamers on the counters was frozen solid. We knew the first order of the day was to get the stove lit and get the soup cooking and a batch of muffins in the oven so that the place would be cozy before the first visitors arrived.

The stove was not so simple to light. I'd turn the valve about just the right amount to start a drip of oil and, in the chamber of one of the burners, build a small pyre of sticks to light the oil once enough had dripped in there to ignite. How much to turn

the valve? How much oil was needed to ignite? You just had to learn this by doing it a bunch of times and maybe turning a few batches of muffins to charcoal briquettes - 'cos that's what'd happen if you got too much oil in the chamber and the stove burned too hot. You could turn a whole pie to a carbon frisbee. Nobody, not even Ernie who worked the ski-rental shop, would eat it.

On top of the stove we cooked soup in big pots - big enough to fit a raccoon inside - and tho' we never did that, we did on one occasion find a mouse in the soup pot. Its very drowned body lifted forth on the first ladle brought up in the morning. The soup pots were too large for the 'fridge; at night they remained uncovered in the main part of the lodge to cool down. Miss Mouse thought to have a nice nip of soup but wound up swimming in the excess.

When the stove was going this cafe was warm and cozy even when it was a howling storm outside. With the first batches of muffins on their way with coffee a-brewin', we'd have good hot drinks and eats and a sweet place to warm the toes of the early bird skiers who'd come in after a few cardio blasts around Grand National. (Trails were not groomed like today.)"

This year HHS welcomed more poems from Art Senft ~ "Snefty"

Hollyburn 1940 to Now

We leave the city far below

To visit a heritage lodge

That we know.

Many fond memories

Of years gone by,

We found in this paradise

Close to the sky.

Now, here it sits,

In need of repairs

Worn down floors, wobbly stairs.

So! Please take a moment,

To search your heart,

Cypress needs Hollyburn

They are not far apart.

*An 81 year sight, has endured,
The challenge of nature,
Still to be seen,
Only if we act now,*

*With a foremost thought
In your mind.*

Only Mother Nature

Can leave this lodge behind.

From Horses to 'Cat'

Wherever we find humans, like dogs, horses are usually also found. In 1925, when Eilif Haxthow was running “the Restaurant” at the ‘old mill’ ski camp, a couple wranglers brought along a few horses with the idea to offer rides to visitors that wanted to see the mountain. To the best of our knowledge, this idea was not successful.

For the most part, loads were packed up the mountain on the backs of people. Some fellows made a bit-o-money packing everything from grub to stoves; a group once carried up a piano. To us today, it looks like it was a game to see who could pack up the heaviest load - Brian Creer, a diminutive but wiry 5'5", packed up 150 lbs. for one cent per pound! Women hikers were not afraid to pack their own loads - "The Bread Lady" at The Forks used to carry regularly a 100 lb. sack of flour to her cabin.

After the three Swedes established the Hollyburn Ski Camp at First Lake, Ted Russell, a West Vancouver Ranger on Hollyburn, had a horse called “Baldy”. He had Baldy pack supplies up the trail in 1935 to 1942. In 1937, Baldy made 207 trips up the mountain, sometimes two in a day. Ted said that he was one smart horse; he could carry two hundred pounds with no sweat. The heaviest load he ever had to take was 380 pounds and for that Ted said he was "a bit angry for a couple days." Ted commented a famous man once said, "Animals are such nice people, but I wish people could more often be nice animals."

When the Burfield family took over as owners of the ski lodge in 1946, they had a horse called

"Red." There was a small horse barn to the west side of the lodge where Red dwelled. Probably Red's biggest load was in 1947 when he was used to bring up Burfield's new stove aboard a stoneboat on the trail from The Forks.

In 1949, the Burfields exchanged their horse for a Model MC John Deere tractor, commonly called a 'cat' - name brought about by its tractor treads instead of wheels that makes it move like a caterpillar. Purchased from Purves Ritchie, retail distributors for John Deere products in Vancouver, it was in use on the mountain for all things haulable until 1984. It cleared snow on the tote road from The Forks to Hollybum Ski Lodge, built roads and trails, packed snow on ski trails, and helped in the construction of log buildings. On one memorable occasion it pulled a stoneboat filled with West Vancouver dignitaries who were visiting the Ridge. When Cypress Bowl Recreations Ltd. became the ski operator, they used it for another year after which it became redundant. Since 1985, this little old John Deere 'cat' has languished with undeserving ignominy at the CBR works yard, a hulking mass of rusting metal.

That is until Hollybum Heritage Society came along and saw value in displaying this historic vintage machine. Peter Tapp, son of Bob Tapp, society Co-Chair, with permission from Cypress Mountain staff, developed a restoration application for the John Deere Corporation who each year donates restorative work to some of their vintage equipment. Peter has been assisted by his friend Kim Defaveri, a North Shore resident who works at the John Deere location in Langley. Restorative work, that will take about a year to complete, has already started. Transportation to Langley was also donated by another friend, Bruce Macdonald, West Vancouver's Macdonald Trucking and Excavating. The plan is to unveil the restored tractor, hopefully in operating condition, at the 2008 Pioneer Skiers' Reunion that will be held on Hollyburn on September 17th. 2008. Michael Barnes, West Vancouver architect, has designed a gazebo-like structure to protect the tractor from

weather and vandalism. The display will be located near the Hollyburn Ski Lodge.

On 2010 Winter Olympic Paralympics Games, Snefty wrote:

*The world will be watching,
Our Canadian team,
To own the podium
We train and we dream.*

*We have the mountains
Where snow falls steady,
A promise to all,
Our teams will be ready.*

*Supreme is the challenge,
In the race to glory.
The podium count,
Will be the true story.*

Accomplishments for 2007

As a new year enters, HHS develops a Capital Budget for the year. 2007 was no different, Gordon Knight lists projects that HHS might work on and how much they might cost. However, during the course of the year, the item may change and others come into focus. That certainly was the case for 2007.

The big project for 2007 was to begin accumulating funds to complete the restorative work outlined by Don Luxton in his "Restoration Feasibility Report Hollyburn Lodge," completed October 2006. As a result, HHS developed a partnership with Josie Chubbuck, Deputy Director, District of West Vancouver, Parks & Community Services, Christine Monaghan, Manager Partnership Development and Linda Swain, General Manager, Cypress Bowl Recreations LP, to achieve this accumulation of funds. Early in 2007, a meeting with representatives from B.C. Parks, VANOC, Linda Swain, CBR LP, Josie Chuback, DWV and HHS was held where upon \$400,000 B.C. Parks Olympic Legacy Funds were distributed to projects that applied to B.C. Parks for funding - HHS applied for funding to restore Hollyburn Ski Lodge. \$100,000 was allocated to this project provided that the remaining funds are accumulated

prior to start of project. It is intended that start and completion for this restorative work will be May to October 2009.

In June, HHS volunteered to be the fund raising group to hopefully raise the almost \$900,000 required to restore the lodge. This is a slow process; however, we remain positive that the lodge will be restored in time for 2010 Winter Olympics. As you read this, we could use all the help you might offer – if you know of any fund raising agency that is looking for a project to support? Let us know!

Another project on the 2007 Capital Budget was the Hollyburn book. Author Francis Mansbridge recently said that publication date will be autumn. 2008. The publisher is Ronsdale Press, owned by Ronald Hatch, a Hollyburn cabin owner.

Francis has documented the history of Hollyburn which includes its leading personalities and many stories. Don Grant will be supplying photographs from Hollyburn Heritage Society's extensive collection.

Another very interesting and important project was undertaken by Peter Tapp, Co-Chair Bob's son, to restore and put on display the little tractor that Burfields purchased in 1949 to replace their horse. Each year John Deere Corporation selects presentations for restoration of some of their manufactured vintage equipment. This year they selected Burfield's tractor for restoration. Read its story in this newsletter, "From Horses to a 'Cat.'

And of course we continued to receive family albums with photos pertaining to life on Hollybum and obtaining oral histories. Among those interviewed were Jack Roocroft, 1950 North American Ski Jumping Champion, Bob Forrest, who was active on Hollyburn from 1932 to 1934 and stayed at Pollough Pogue's cabin, and George Bury, an early mountaineer on the west coast, now living on Manitoulin Island (Georgian Bay area).

How about joining HHS - donate! Time, photos, memorabilia or some money? Then attend:

**Hollyburn Heritage Society
Annual General Meeting
Wednesday May 21st 2008 At 7:30 p.m.
West Vancouver Seniors' Center Northwest
corner 27th/ St. & Marine Drive III West
Vancouver**

Also in 2008-

**I 6th Annual Pioneer Skiers' Reunion will be
held on Hollybum, at the lodge
Wednesday September 17th**

A big welcome to all skiers, hikers, cabin folk from years behind 1970's.

Skiers Passed On

Vernon Cuthbert (Bert) Brink

A true Environmentalist, Bert made his first trip up Hollyburn with the St. Marks Boy Scouts Troop at age 13. In his youth he built a cabin near 6th Lake, which was later used as a First Aid hut. He helped develop “Skiers Aid” a forerunner of the Ski Patrol. Graduated from Kitsilano High School in 1928. Graduate UBC, 1932, Botany – joined the Varsity Outdoor Club, developed a love for the mountains. With the late Neal Carter explored Garibaldi Provincial Park, named Mt VeeOcee and Carter Glacier in the McBride Range. Explored Chilcotin, became enamoured with area. Professor UBC Agriculture, Agronomy – active mountaineer with Alpine Club of Canada, especially encouraging new members to sport.

Jim Graham

A true local – graduate Magee High School. Jim made frequent trips to Hollyburn in his early youth and built a cabin there. With his wife Isabelle, a volunteer at Vancouver Aquarium, Jim developed an interest in that Stanley Park landmark and assisted in the development of facilities including the Amazon Gallery. He served on the Board of Directors for several years. During the last decade, Jim became interested in HHS projects. He wrote “Reflections of Hollyburn” and donated some excellent vintage photographs which may be found on the HHS web site.