

Hollyburn Heritage Society



Place of Memories Since 1926

Issue #5 - November 2001

2002 - 76th anniversary for Hollyburn Ski Camp Lodge at its First Lake site

Hollyburn Heritage Society (HHS), creators of the Hollyburn Ski Camp Heritage Project and the Hollyburn Cypress Heritage Project, is the official title of the group of pioneer skiers who have seen fit to preserve the history, culture & heritage of this area. Come in to the ski camp to have a rest, a hot chocolate or a cool beer and see our displays of old photographs, memorabilia and ski equipment from yesteryear in the "Back Room".

2002 will be the 76th anniversary for the lodge at its present site. Folks have lamented that it might be replaced. Our society decided rather than wait for a new building, to mount displays in the old lodge.

HHS has received registration from Revenue Canada for a charitable Donation number and welcomes donations for which you will receive an income tax deduction receipt.

Commemorative coffee mugs and beer steins are for sale in the cross country area at the Hollyburn Gift Shop & Hollyburn Ski camp, and in the alpine area at the Cypress Gift Shop.

Coffee Mugs\$7.50
Beer Steins\$8.50

Funds from donations and sales assist in the publication of these information bulletins and support other museum objectives. All funds are used to advance the museum mandate; B. C. Parks or CBRL do not receive any funds from the Hollyburn Heritage Society.

HHS is seeking assistance from you, readers of the HHS newsletters. How would you like to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Hollyburn Ski camp lodge - a pin - a badge - a party - OR? Please/Fax your suggestion to either Bob or Gordon.

We are acquiring a good collection of artifacts. We need pictures - of the Swedish cabin builders - interior of the ski camp - later transports; half-tracks, buses, trucks - the chairlift - Deacon's tows. We will copy and return.

For more information:

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People have asked us, "Where did you get your logo." It is liked for its image and simplicity - just like the Hollyburn Lodge, which it is, with its background of evergreens. It started with Bob Tapp discussing the Hollyburn Ski Camp heritage project with Jackie Baker in 1998. Jackie said she would draw something for the group to use as they saw fit.

Jackie was born in Vancouver in 1925 to artistic parents. Her father, H. Faulkner Smith had a fine arts and commercial studio/school in the Marine building. He taught commercial art to veteran students after W.W. II. Jackie received her art training from her father, and worked for McMillan Bloedel in the mapping department, draughting maps for logging before her marriage to H.J. (Bert) Baker in 1947.

Jackie was a "Hollyburner" from a way back. She rented one of the ski camp cabins with a group of girls. Then she and Bert acquired Challenger Ian cabin in 1951 when it was newly constructed. As a family they enjoyed holiday life on the mountain.

With a family of three, Nancy, Patsy and Tom, Jackie's artistic endeavours continued throughout her life. As a painter, she loved the beauty of flowers; as a craftsperson she loved knitting; and then as a spinner and weaver she loved working with wool. She would order her bales of raw wool from New Zealand, spin it, and then weave on her mother's 100 year old loom built in Quebec.

In 2000, a commemorative picnic table was erected on the shore of First Lake by her family to the memory of Jacqueline Mary Baker a delightful, peaceful place.

If you would like to buy an unframed copy of the original of Jackie's painting that became our logo, let us know.

The Jones operated Westlake Lodge until 1950, when they sold it to Don Lee. Lee operated it until 1954, when Norm Deacon took over the entire facility. Deacon made much needed improvements; installed a total of five rope tows designed by Bob McLellan. Deacon operated the lodge for 18 years until 1972 when Ron Caverley became owner. When Ron took over Westlake Lodge, he renamed it Cypress Park Resort. After making further improvements and alterations to the facilities, Ron sold Cypress Park Resort to the McCandless. Unfortunately, a fire consumed the entire complex in 1984.

Today the area that was once a thriving ski resort has "returned to nature." The original site at West Lake is unidentifiable. A remnant of metal frame at the far end of the lake was part of a rope tow. The second site for the rebuilt Westlake Lodge, a knoll at the end of the original access road, is grassed and barren. The slope above that saw skiers gliding thereon decades ago has revegetated. The Baden-Powell Trail is located just east of the knoll where Westlake Lodge once stood. A trail referred to as the Chink Trail contours to the west connecting to several cabins located along it, to join with the Main Trail leading to Hollyburn Lodge.



WESTLAKE LODGE rebuilt by the Jones, 1939
(Photo: Jones)

The Other Lake, West Lake. The Other Lodge, West Lake Lodge, then Westlake Lodge

To date, our newsletter information has centred around Hollyburn Lodge at First Lake.

In the spring of 1932, Roland D. Brewis from West Vancouver conceived the idea of a lodge for hikers and skiers to be located at West Lake. The owner of this property was Edward Mahon from North Vancouver, who owned 400 acres (162 hectares) on Hollyburn Ridge that included West Lake and east to near Capilano River. Brewis approached Mahon with his idea for which Mahon was enthusiastic to the point of financing the construction of the lodge. That summer, Brewis set about constructing a trail from the top of 15th Street to West Lake, so named because it was the most westerly lake on Mahon's Hollyburn property at 2,800 ft. (848 m.) elevation. In September, Brewis engaged three Finlanders: Axel Nordmann, Emil Ronn and their associate, "Shorty." During that cold deep snow winter, they constructed a large log building - main room, 20'x 40'; two wings, 18'x18', kitchen and comfortable overnight accommodation, beds with springs & mattresses. This wonderful lodge was opened, March 18th, 1933.

During 1933, two members from Hollyburn Pacific Ski Club (HPSC), Mickey Pogue and Irish Beaumont constructed a ski jump trestle on the ski hill at West Lake, which had already been cleared by Jack Summerfield from West Vancouver. The ski hill was 275 ft. long and a 38% grade. The "three musketeers" - Nordal Kaldahl, Tom Mobratten and Henry Sotvedt - trained on the West Lake jump and declared it second only to the jump at Revelstoke. Brewis created the Vancouver City Championships, a ski jumping competition with the donation of the handsome West Lake trophy. The winner received a miniature replica and had his name inscribed on the large trophy which remained at West Lake Lodge. The first competition was held Sunday, March 11, 1934. Nordal Kaldahl was the champion.

An estimated 3,000 hiked up the 15th Street trail to view this event. Mr. Mahon was also a viewer. Irish Beaumont, co-builder of the trestle won the B-class jumping and the combined event. West Lake area also became headquarters for the HPSC where most of their ski jumping competitions were held on the new jump.



WEST LAKE LODGE constructed at West Lake by Ron Brewis, 1933 (Photo: Brewis)

In years following, West Lake Lodge enjoyed further extensions and much popularity as a ski resort. However, on March 16, 1937, Edward Mahon died. Mrs. Mahon and their son Bryan decided to sell the lodge. Roland Brewis was unable to purchase it and the lodge was sold to Fred and Harry Jones. In 1938, the West Vancouver municipality expanded its water supply shed to include West Lake as part of Brothers Creek. As a result, the Jones were faced with two options: abandon the West Lake Lodge, or dismantle the buildings and reconstruct in an area outside the water shed. They chose to dismantle and reconstruct. The area chosen for the new site was a knoll at the base of a hill that provided a good ski hill but at a lower elevation. They titled this lodge, "Westlake Lodge."

