

Hollyburn Heritage Society



Issue No. 16 - December 2012

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 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, if over \$25. Funds assist in the publication of these information bulletins and support other HHS programs that advance the Society's mandate. HHS membership is by way of donation: financial - volunteer time - items: photographs, news articles etc. (please, no equipment - we have no place to store it!) Cypress Bowl Recreations LP, the ski operator permits us to display panels in the "Back Room" Hollyburn Ski Lodge.

Restoration of this lodge is the centerpiece for our society. It was constructed at this site, 3,000 ft. elev., beside First Lake in 1926, using reclaimed materials from a building at 2,500 ft. elev. part of then abandoned Nasmyth logging operation

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The Burfields of Hollyburn

1946 those hardworking Swedes had decided they had enough struggles with Hollyburn Ski Camp, it was time to move on. That nasty War was over and they wanted to go home - to Sweden. Skiing among the guys on Hollyburn were a couple fellows that really, really loved this place. They resided with their family in West Van near the little store in West Bay area, "The Black Cat." Their names - Harry & Fred Burfield.



Revelstoke circa 1940

Originally from Revelstoke, that awesome pioneer centre for ski jumping, the Burfields came from England - father Joseph Harry arrived in 1912 and his wife, Emma Jane a short time later. They were married in Nelson in 1914 and by 1915 when son Harry was born were residents in Revelstoke where father worked as an Express agent for CP

Rail. Second son, Fred was born 1918 in Revelstoke. The family remained here for ten years. Enough time for these young fellows to develop a love for skiing. 1926, the family moved to England, but only for two years. When they returned, they came to Penticton and by early 1930's moved to Nelson.

Skiing never left these two fellows, as they became more involved in the following years. Harry became competitive in ski jumping, as a member of Nelson Amateur Ski Club. Mid 1930's, the family moved to West Vancouver. Wow! Now Harry & Fred could really indulge in skiing, living at the foot of the Ski Jumpers' Mountain, Hollyburn. They became members of Hollyburn Pacific Ski Club. Harry was the most competitive and actively competed throughout the Pacific Northwest until he joined the RCAF in 1943. He trained as a pilot, and kept in shape playing other sports. When the war ended, Harry was back to competitive skiing and performed very well - often placing ahead of the ski champion of the day.



Harry Burfield circa 1945

For a couple years, Fred and Harry worked at Hedley - Harry, as a carpenter and Fred as a baker. Fred wanted to work as a miner, but his baking was so popular that he became the baker. He finally got his choice when a new cook arrived and burned Fred's

pies. Fred left the kitchen and got his choice - work underground.

1946 things were changing on Hollyburn. The senior Burfields wanted a change and a desire to be independent. The elders purchased Hollyburn Ski Camp and of course, would now be living on the mountain, sons Harry & Fred joined their parents. Skiing in winter was now a daily pursuit. It also meant work - summer, looking after things that were troublesome the previous winter; maintaining the lodge; work on trails; serving the summertime hikers and visitors. Winter, the myriad of daily chores associated with this now popular Vancouver skiing venue on Hollyburn. To hikers and skiers, the senior Burfields were known as "Pop" and Mrs. Burfield.

Like his grandfather, Harry was a skilled carpenter, and really enjoyed his work.



Burfield Family, Hollyburn Ski Lodge c. 1946

Their move to Hollyburn, the Burfields renamed the ski camp to Hollyburn Ski Lodge was also joined by two young women, Fred's wife, Evelyn (Evy) Kathleen, married 1942 and in 1951, Harry married Katherine (Rene) Ann Morrison. Before their children arrived Harry & Rene acquired a wonderful canine companion - Prince, part Newfoundland. Fred and Evy also had a dog, "Bowser."



Fred, Bowser, & Evy late 1950's

The elder Burfields soon had grandchildren join their family circle - Harry & Rene with Richard in 1952 and Marion, 1955. Fred and Evy had daughter Peggy, 1956. However by 1950, the elder Burfields had moved off the mountain to West Vancouver. 1953, Mr. Burfield passed away age 73 and in 1966 Mrs. Burfield died. Harry and Fred inherit the lodge.



Fred & Harry Burfield beside Fred's John Deere Tractor circa 1950

Early 1950s, the sport of skiing was evolving in leaps and bounds. Lifts to get skiers to their favourite slopes were the order of that

time. Hollyburn Chairlift opened in 1950 and the new Westlake Lodge became a second major centre for skiers. Harry was interested in supplying skiers' needs. He opened his ski shop at top of the new chairlift. By 1959, Harry had moved his family to North Vancouver and then 1961, with the new Tod Mountain (Sun Peaks) now under development they moved to Kamloops. 1966 Harry sold his share in the lodge to Fred. A footnote to Harry Burfield, in addition to skiing, with service in RCAF he developed a second passion - flying. He lost his life June 1971 piloting a sightseeing trip to Tod Mountain showing some people interested in buying the resort. A second tragedy struck the family when son Richard was killed in an avalanche while skiing on a mountain in central B.C.



Fred, Evy & Peggy Burfield circa 1960

Fred & Evy continued to manage Hollyburn Ski Lodge. Even with the arrival of daughter Peggy, they continued to live on Hollyburn. Then as life progresses, unhappy events also occur. Such it was with Fred when his Evy died from cancer, leaving Fred as a single Dad to raise Peggy. As a student Peggy

would go down the mountain to stay with her grandmother in North Vancouver to attend school. She would return on weekends and during summer. As a young adult Peggy worked at Hollyburn Ski Lodge with her father until 1983 when the entire now cross country ski operation and Hollyburn Ski Lodge was bought by Cypress Bowl Recreations Ltd. as part of the privatization of ski operations on the mountain.

Finally, Marion now lives in Lone Butte and Peggy near her father live in Nanaimo. 2012, Marion published a biography of her father - "Flight was in his Spirit", The Life of Harry Burfield; published by RikKur Publishing.



(L-R) Fred Burfield, his daughter, Peggy & niece, Marion Burfield at the Pioneer Skiers' Reunion on September 19th, 2012

Accomplishments

As this is being written, the status of Hollyburn Lodge is starting to percolate. We can't reveal any details at this time, except to say that it is anticipated and we hope the ownership of the lodge will be transferred to the District of West Vancouver in order for its restoration to be completed.

In addition to this project, Don Grant presented his newest film, "Hollyburn Lodge Through the Seasons & Generations" to several enthusiastic groups including the West Vancouver Historical Society & the Hollyburn Ridge Association. Parts of this video may now be viewed on our new, expanded website:

www.hollyburnheritage.ca

September 19th, HHS held the 20th Annual Pioneer Skiers' Reunion hosted by Cypress Mountain in Cypress Creek Lodge to a crowd of cheerful 1930's to 1950's skiers and hikers. An interesting article in North Shore News by Laura Anderson the previous weekend, Sept. 16th issue, brought several new senior skiers to enjoy the party. The following week, NSN photographer Mike Wakefield had a page of photos from the party on "Bright Lights" page.

In 2013, the 21st annual get-together of this event will be held on Mt. Seymour, hosted by Mt. Seymour History Project, with Alex Douglas & Mt. Seymour Ski operator.

Hollyburn Heritage Society's Annual General Meeting

The 13th Annual General Meeting of HHS will be held on Wednesday May 15th at 7:30 p.m. in West Vancouver Seniors' Centre, NW corner 21st Street & Marine Drive.