

Alberni Valley Museum
and Heritage Commission



**Alberni Valley Museum and Heritage Commission
Meeting of Wednesday September 7, 2016
7:00 pm in the AV Museum**

Minutes

Attending:

Bert Simpson
Judy Carlson
Penny Cote
Nancy Blair [for Marta Williamson]
Kenn Whiteman [for PAMHS]
Libby Manson
Dan Washington
Gareth Flostrand
Pam Craig
Ken Rutherford [for McLean Mill]
Jamie Morton, Manager of Museum, Heritage and Culture

Regrets:

Neil Malbon
Jolleen Dick
John Douglas
David Taberner
Paul McDougall
Marta Williamson

Called to order 7:05 PM.

1. Moved by Pam Craig, seconded by Judy Carlson, that the agenda of the September 7, 2016 meeting be approved.
2. Moved by Nancy Blair, seconded by Penny Cote, that the minutes of the June 1, 2016 meeting, as amended, be approved.
3. Correspondence
 - No correspondence to report.

Museum and Heritage Commission City of Port Alberni

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4. Updates:

- McLean Mill Governance – Ken Rutherford and Jamie Morton summarized recent developments:
 - a. City Council and the Board of Management will meet with Council's legal advisor on Friday, September 9 to discuss organizational options, as the next step. The two options being considered are a non-profit society or a community corporation, similar to the Community Forest.
 - b. The WVIHS contract with the City of Port Alberni ends on December 31, and the WVIHS has given notice to its employees.
 - c. Discussion ensued concerning:
 - i. The need to have a succession strategy in place, and the short time until the new governing body is to assume management.
 - ii. Care of the site and its collections in accordance with heritage standards and the terms of the contract with Canadian Heritage.
 - iii. Issues with a corporate/for profit model – lack of City control, inability to apply for ACRD & other government grants.
 - iv. What has been done/spent at McLean Mill this year? Concerns expressed about lack of transparency.
- Heritage Cave Preservation Initiative:
 - a. Judy Carlson presented on a mountain cave on the upper Nahmint drainage, discovered by Hans Rohmer in 2005. The cave contains faunal remains, such as marmot and bear bones, as well as pictographs. There has been some disturbance and excavation of the resources – some loss of bones from trampling, and a Royal BC Museum excavation of roughly one square metre by one foot depth a few years ago. Judy Carlson is concerned about the preservation of the cave and its heritage resources, in the face of increased hiking activity.
 - b. Discussion ensued concerning Heritage Commission action, such as writing a letter to the RBCM, Archaeology Branch, or First Nations. The sensitivity of this issue for the Nuuchaltnan nations was noted. Following discussion, a motion was moved, seconded, and carried, to send a letter expressing the concerns of the Heritage Commission to the Nuuchaltnan Tribal Council. This will only be sent following more investigation of the situation, to respect First Nations protocols concerning the cave.
- Other Updates:
 - a. Jamie Morton noted that City of Port Alberni and ACRD staff will be meeting on September 8 to discuss shared services – it may present an opportunity to raise the issue of shared heritage and museum services.
 - b. Gareth Flostrand noted that as part of the Museum Operating Model stakeholder group's work, Director of Community Services Theresa Kingston has been authorized by Council to prepare an Arts, Culture, and Heritage Plan for the City of Port Alberni. To be completed by December 2016, this will provide a broader framework for the integration of the museum and heritage services in the community.
 - c. Distributed passes & T-shirts, and a final call for volunteers to staff the Parks, Recreation & Heritage/AV Museum booth at the Fall Fair.

5. Reports:

5.1 Penny Cote reported for the ACRD

- The UBCM Conference is being held in Victoria at the end of September, with City Council and the ACRD Board attending – noted that there will be potential funding opportunities at some of the corporate booths/displays.
- The airport project is going well, with good progress on both the runway and the upgraded lighting.
- At the Mayor's Breakfast this morning, there was discussion of InFilm stock footage, available through the North Island Film Commission. Sandy McRuer was now certified as a local location scout for the TV & film industry. Ken Rutherford noted that there had been some shooting at McLean Mill NHS.
- Penny Cote has been invited to the Island Agricultural Fair – next year's fair will be hosted in the Alberni Valley.

5.2 Bert Simpson reported for the WVIHS.

- The monthly meeting has been deferred to September 13 – next week.
- Noted the success of the live steam show, and restoration of the machinery and line shafting in the Millwright's Shed to operational status, done by Les Stevens and Mike Hobson this summer – it provided a new attraction at McLean Mill. They also participated at the Courtenay and Nanaimo fairs with steam machinery.
- Wednesday speeder and diesel-electric runs to McLean Mill were introduced this summer, with mixed results in numbers of riders.
- The Truck Show at the IHC was successful, held over two days, with 54 trucks participating, and hundreds of burgers sold – crowds were good.
- WVIHS volunteers were now preparing for their Fall Fair display.

5.3 Kenn Whiteman reported for the PA Maritime Heritage Society.

- The next monthly Board meeting is on Monday, September 26.
- There was a great improvement in the performance and morale of the summer staff this season, attributed to the leadership of recently-hired coordinator Nicole Shanks-Startup.
- Work proceeds on the shelter for the steam launch *Swan* – trusses are to be erected on September 15, and the roof should be on by the end of the month. The work has been carried out by volunteers – with Sandy Fitzpatrick in particular supplying carpentry expertise – and with ACRD grant funding. After the roof is complete, a viewing platform will be constructed adjacent to the vessel, and restoration will continue on the *Swan*.

5.4.a Libby Manson reported for the Community at Large.

- The Alberni Fall Fair is taking place this coming weekend, opening on September 8, and running through September 11.
- The annual Port Alberni Toy Run will be held next weekend, Saturday and Sunday, September 17-18.

5.4.b Gareth Flostrand reported for the Community at Large.

- The Barkley Sound Choir is seeking new members – Wednesdays from 6:45-9:00 at the AV United Church.
- The AV Community Band is seeking new members – Wednesdays from 7:00-9:00 in the E. J. Dunn Band Room.
- The Timbre Choir, under new director Rosemary Lindsay, is seeking new members – Tuesdays at 7:00 at Trinity Church – contact Pat Venn.

- Saturday and Sunday, September 10-11, 10:00-4:00 – 4th Annual Paint-Out, Saturday at Sproat Lake Provincial Park, and Sunday at Harbour Quay.
- Bulldogs games at 7:00, Friday September 16, and on Saturday, September 17. The Friday game will feature a Tailgate Party in support of Literacy Alberni.
- Saturday September 17, from 11:00-3:00 – the 60th Anniversary of the AV Rescue Squad, held in its hall.
- Sunday, September 18, 10:00 AM, the Terry Fox Run, starting at the Alberni Legion.
- Sunday, September 18, 5:00, Film Fest Alberni presents *Angry Indian Goddesses*, at the Paramount Theatre.
- Wednesday, September 21, 3:00-7:00 – AV Volunteer Fair at Echo Centre.
- Sunday, September 30, Cops for Cancer Tour de Rock, arrives in Port Alberni at noon.

5.5 Judy Carlson reported for the ADHS

- The ADHS Board will meet next week to discuss the implications of the changes to the BC Societies Act.
- At the public meeting of October 20, author Lynne Bowen will be speaking on the topic of Italian immigration.
- Next year at a public meeting, author Michael Layton will present on the settlement and exploration of Vancouver Island.

5.6 Jamie Morton reported for the AV Museum.

- We are pleased with the additional programming and exhibits made possible by our two summer students, Emma and Jonathan. As well as implementing the two off-site summer exhibits, *The Plywood Girls* and *The Dolls of John Halfyard*, and offering historic walking tours of South and North Port Alberni, they welcomed about 1,500 visitors to the Train Station on their days there, in addition to the passengers on the train.
- *Vacation Land: Pleasurable Diversions in the Alberni Valley* was successfully mounted, with a public event held on August 18 – response has been positive.
- We have a travelling exhibit from the RBCM – British Columbia's War: 1914-1918 – arriving in late October, in time for Remembrance Day. We hope to have educational and public programming relating to this exhibit. *Vacation Land* will be partially deconstructed and masked, then remounted in January, when the travelling exhibit moves on. For our summer exhibit we will develop another major in-house exhibit, *Alberni's Home Front*, to commemorate and recognize the 75th anniversary of World War II's local impact in 1942; the internment of Japanese residents, the construction of the Army Camp, the formation of the Pacific Coast Rangers, as the community was placed on a war footing.
- The Museum's Film Fest Alberni fall program started in August, with three more films to be shown in September [Sunday, September 18, 5:00, at the Paramount Theatre, *Angry Indian Goddesses*], October, and November.
- Summer programming was quite popular, with the Camp Roots camp, in cooperation with Parks & Recreation, particularly well-received.

5.7 Dan Washington reported for the City of Port Alberni

- Another successful Our Town series completed this summer – two in July and two in August – the McLean Mill even on July 26 was particularly memorable.
- Kenn Whiteman noted that the Maritime Discovery Centre – the pier and buildings – could provide another suitable venue for Our Town.
- The 45th Salmon Festival was a success, with some 1,700 tickets sold, and 1,300 fish weighed. The winner scaled 54.4 pounds. Dan Washington will serve as President of the Salmon Festival for next year.

- City Councillors will be attending the UBCM Conference in Victoria later this month.

5.8 Ken Rutherford [for Neil Malbon] reported for McLean Mill NHS

- Total visitation for the July-August season was 6,300 people – down a little from previous years.
- The #11 Diesel locomotive/Crew Speeder runs introduced for Wednesdays saw mixed results, but provided another option for visitors. Regular events – five “robberies,” the Pirate Train, Teddy Bears’ Picnic, etc. were fairly well attended. Spring and fall cruise ship tours augmented three in August, the latter three with a total of 147 visitors. Many of the tourists visiting Mondays-Wednesdays, without train service, were European, and generally seemed delighted with the limited offering at the Mill on those days.
- The automatic fire pump system failed, and a temporary system has been installed to permit the ongoing operation of the mill. The estimated cost of permanent repairs is \$65,000.
- Upcoming are two Fall Steam Specials, on September 10 & 17, and a National Forest Week event for some 300 elementary school students will be held on September 21. Half will arrive by train and half by bus, with positions reversed on the trip back. This event is sponsored by the BC Ministry of Forests, Island Timberlands, and Timber West, with various activities and demonstrations for the students, as well as lunch.
- The Thunderbirds provincial wildfire crew is clearing undergrowth/fuel in the display forest area near the former Visitor Centre.
- The Chamber of Commerce has organized promotional video shoots of the operation, including drone and GoPro footage of the mill and train – the mill will be filmed cutting and the steam logging show operating at the September 10 Steam Special.
- The kitchen in the former Visitor Centre now has the plumbing roughed-in – a temporary operating permit may now be possible.
- Development is proceeding on a 60-site campground adjacent to the Mill.
- Doug Harrison may be featured in an art show at the Train Station later this year.

5.9 Pam Craig reported for the School Board

- Everyone busy with the return to school & academic year startup – after last year’s restructuring and resulting uncertainty, the mood is more relaxed this year.
- The Alberni Valley Early Years Centre is being opened at E.J. Dunn School, with a grand opening event planned for later in September. This program is intended to welcome students and families entering the educational system in a wholistic manner.

5.10 Nancy Blair [for Marta Williamson] reported for the Community Arts Council

- Four Tea on the Terrace events were held – two each in July and August – revenue was down significantly from last year.
- Registrations and revenue from the summer art programs and writing workshops have also declined, so some financial concerns.
- However, participation in the Charity Golf Classic resulted in a good result, with some \$8,000 generated for the CAC.

- Wednesday, September 14, at 5:00, the new pool murals will be unveiled at Echo Centre, and on Saturday, September 17, a Music in the Garden event will take place at the Rollin Centre.
 - Carol Schulz will be the next artist featured at the Rollin Centre.
 - Ken Rutherford noted that a well-known Qualicum artist was doing a painting of one of the historic trucks at McLean Mill.
6. Other Business
- Ken Rutherford noted a visit from the "Travelling Islanders," producers of a Vancouver Island Travel Blog, who were impressed by the train & mill, and wrote a positive review/blog of the experience. He mentioned also that Shaw TV was at the site shooting a video production focussing on Vancouver Island people – they were interviewing the mill crew and volunteers at the mill.
7. Next Meeting
- 7:00 PM, Wednesday, October 5, 2016, at the AV Museum.
8. Adjournment
- Moved at 8:40 by Pam Craig to adjourn the meeting.



Gareth Flostrand, Chair
Alberni Valley Museum and Heritage Commission

Davina Hartwell, City Clerk
City of Port Alberni