

Langley Heritage Society

{Fall 2021}

PO Box 982 Stn Fort Langley
Langley, BC V1M 2S3

www.langleyheritage.ca
@LangleyHeritageSociety

"Providing the window into the past to preserve Langley's heritage for today and tomorrow"

President's Message

It was very unfortunate that our monthly speakers' meetings and social events had to be cancelled. The directors were busy managing our properties and contributing to events and concerns of the community.

Thanks to Mark's tech skills, we had Zoom meetings, socially distanced meetings, and participated in a genealogy society meeting. Thanks to our partners at the Langley Centennial Museum, I was able to present a virtual Murrayville Bus Tour to a large group on the internet.

Other activities and improvements included a new roof for the CNR Station, a new furnace for the Lattimer House, and a new roof for the Wark-Dumais House. We also assisted Milner Community Association to pay for restoration work resulting from a flooding that was not covered by insurance.

We were unable to sponsor school children to attend the museum because it was closed for Covid. We have provided \$60,000 towards equipping the two new classrooms that will be part of the new museum centre.

I want to thank our caretakers, the directors, and volunteers who have provided residents and visitors to Fort Langley CNR Station a beautiful site in which to view our history.

A special thank you to Helen Williams who has had to adapt to changing circumstances and severe weather while developing new programs and helping in many ways.

Looking forward to a more normal year.

Fred Pepin

LHS President

"The Langley Heritage Society is located on the traditional and unceded lands of the Kwantlen, Katzie, Matsqui, and Semiahmoo peoples. We respect this land and its original occupants."

Inside This Issue

{ Page 2 to 3 }
Lest We Forget

{ Page 4 }
BC Genealogical Society
Update: Salishan Place

{ Page 5 }
Knowledge Network: Retelling
BC's Rich and Diverse History

{ Page 6 to 7 }
Down By The Langley Station
Ode to David Hockin

{ Page 8 }
Society News &
Spotlight: LHS Restored Building

Lest We Forget: Aboriginal Veterans



George Hadden, Tommy Fillardeau, Bob Brown, and James Hadden in uniform outside of the Edal Cafe. (Photo: Langley Centennial Museum)

Although they had few rights, Indigenous men in Canada stepped forward in significant numbers to serve during the Great War, World War II, and the Korean War. Every eligible man between the age of 20 and 35 from Okanagan Head of the Lake Band enlisted. George McLean, a Douglas Lake cowboy, returned home a decorated hero after single-handedly killing 19 of the enemy and capturing 40 others. Roy Cromarty (aka Sam Garner) was a Sto:lo man who lost his life in the fall of 1917. Locally, Thomas “Tommy” Fillardeau, of mixed Métis/Kwantlen heritage, served during the Second World War. (His great-grandfather worked for the Hudson’s Bay Company at Fort Langley.) The Langley Centennial Museum’s digital archive includes the above photo, and a very brief biographical sketch of Tommy:

“Thomas “Tommy” Fillardeau was a fisherman by trade. He was born October 10, 1922 to George Fillardeau and Teresa Thompson. He was raised on the Kwantlen reserve on McMillan Island. He served with the Irish Fusiliers in World War Two. On October 29, 1973 he was walking down what is now Glover Road on McMillan Island when he was hit by a car and died.”



A Veterans Pole Memorial at Coqualeeza in Chilliwack highlights the names of Sto:lo soldiers who served, beginning with the Boer War, some with connections to Langley: William & George Allard (WWI) Ovid and Lawrence Allard, James Fidele, James Fillardeau, Earl Fillardeau, Thomas Fillardeau, and Albert Wicks (WWII). Not all soldiers of

mixed heritage identified as Indigenous at a time when racist attitudes prevailed. Wilfred (Stittum) Gabriel was a member of the Kwantlen Band who also served during the Second World War and is buried in the Fort Langley Cemetery's military section. His name appears on the **Aboriginal Veterans Tribute Honour List** at <http://www.vcn.bc.ca/~jeffrey1/tribute.htm>

When Indigenous soldiers returned home they were treated as second class citizens: they couldn't vote in federal or provincial elections, were denied assistance under the War Veterans Allowance Act (education, employment, and land grants), while others lost their Indian status because they had been away from their reserve for four years. It wasn't until 1995 that Indigenous veterans were officially recognized as a group.



This Remembrance Day we honour their memory, and all men and women who sacrificed for Canada. Langley Heritage Society will be placing wreaths at Murrayville, Langley City, Aldergrove, and Fort Langley cemeteries during ceremonies.

Benefits of Membership



As announced in our Summer Newsletter, Langley Heritage Society is now an affiliate member of the B.C. Genealogical Society, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary. Recently Fred Pepin and Mark Forsythe gave a Zoom presentation to members who were watching from across the province. They were impressed with the restoration and conservation work of LHS, and, in particular, Fred's 40 year commitment to heritage preservation in the Langley region. After the talk we received many questions about LHS's projects, and this message:

"Just wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed your's and Fred's presentation on the Langley Historical Society. I have lived 60 odd years in Surrey and never knew such work was being done. I just love to see old homes being saved. Fred's years of dedication is a wonderful inspiration to your Society and to all people in BC to try and hold onto these Heritage homes or other structures that can be saved. I like that they are now bringing revenue to help pay for their restoration." - *Mary Turnbull*

A reminder that Langley Heritage Society members can register for many BCGS seminars and this fall's guest speakers by using the Affiliate #5862. To see this fall's programs, visit <https://www.bcgs.ca>

Digging In: Salishan Place by the River

The foundation has been excavated and geothermal drilling is underway at Salishan Place by the River in Fort Langley. Expected to open in 2023, the Township of Langley project is in partnership with Kwantlen First Nation, and in collaboration with Katzie, Semiahmoo, and Matsqui First Nations. The new 36,000 square foot centre will include a community library, art gallery spaces, 167 seat presentation theatre, community museum and archives, a new Indigenous museum, print-making studio, Indigenous repository and several conference amenities.

Langley Heritage Society donated \$60,000 to sponsor student classroom spaces and encourages other community groups and businesses to step forward. A residential development will be built on adjacent Township lands to help fund the project which has received federal, provincial, and municipal grants. For more information, floor plans, and to make a donation, visit <https://tinyurl.com/y6fu9prd>



Thirty holes are being drilled, each of them 300 feet deep, to absorb the earth's energy for heating and cooling of the facility. (Photo: Mark Forsythe)

British Columbia: An Untold History

The Knowledge Network is launching a history series with a twist: giving voice to people often neglected by historians. **British Columbia: An Untold History** uncovers Indigenous resistance through decades of brutality, the exploitation of migrant workers, race riots, the changing role of women, and efforts to protect land, water and fish in a resource-driven economy. It's also about resilience and the people who built B.C. — rebels and dreamers included.



Langley Heritage Society board member and local author Mark Forsythe is among those interviewed (inside the Fort Langley National Historic Site) and he assisted producers with vetting of material. The series is airing during the 150th anniversary of B.C. joining Confederation, and can be seen on the Knowledge Network beginning Oct 12 (for 4 weeks). Free streaming at: <https://www.knowledge.ca/program/british-columbia-untold-history>



Commuter rail, 111 years ago. First Electric Train From New Westminster To Langley 1910 (Photo: BC Archives)

Down By The Langley Station

Two summers ago Langley Heritage Society and Creative Compass Society presented *Wheels of Time* from the CNR Station platform. Stories and songs about Fort Langley's history and the station's role in community life proved popular with visitors and helped animate our storytelling. Alas, the Covid-19 pandemic halted live production, but now the original cast (all volunteers) reassembled to rehearse an updated version that is being filmed.

New scenes highlight Jacob Haldi for his wife Jessie's inheritance enabled the Haldi's to leave money in their will to build a bridge to McMillan Island, and Flood of 1948 — a dramatic episode in the life of the Fraser Valley. Creative Compass is led by Brigitte Sieb who has a long history of volunteering in the arts, music, and theatre. Her enthusiasm is infectious, and a desire to build new relationships between the arts, local community, and different generations is inspired.

During filming, the station platform was alive with hand carts filled with passenger baggage, milk cans ready for transport, and a freight scale to weigh cargo for incoming steam trains.



dering the Langley CNR Station and passenger car. The backless benches are being well used atop the retaining wall and the Township's *Discover Historic Fort Langley* sign is set back, with barrier fencing, so people can easily stop and not block visitors and residents strolling by. **Special thanks to Ryan Coad and Greg Mayer from Roads Operations** for their vision to improve the area's pedestrian flow and increase the community's enjoyment in and around the heritage site.



Actors rehearsing new lines during September 2021. (Photo: Mark Forsythe)



Station volunteer Bill Wiseman had the velocipede back in operation. Quite a workout, said Bill, after running it up and down the track several times. (Photos: Helen Williams)

We're very grateful to the Township of Langley for landscaping and finishing the corner at Glover and Mavis bor-



Before social media, best gossip in town was to be had at train stations. Here Ruth Bedell and Barb McLeod (playing Mary Simpson) catch up on the latest news during *Wheels of Time* filming.

This Olde House Gets a Facelift

The Henry Leaf House is a historic 124 year old home, with carriage house, in the Township of Langley. It recently received a complete coat of paint, actually two coats, and probably never looked better! Many thanks in part to a heritage-painting grant from the Township of Langley and the skill of David Hockin, of DJ Hockin Painting & Decorating, who did a meticulous and skillful job.

David had his retirement /birthday party on August 31, 2021. Both Lynda and Ted Lightfoot had the privilege of being his last painting customers. A small celebration was held with some members of the Langley Heritage Society in attendance, who gave his masterful job full marks!



Pictured (left to right) in front of the Henry Leaf House: Tom Annandale, Fred Pepin, Helen Williams, Lynda Lightfoot, Maureen Pepin, David Hockin, and Mike Frost. (Photos: Ted Lightfoot)



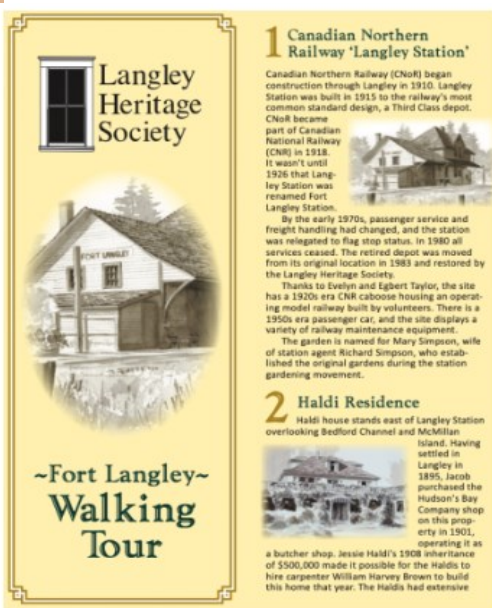
Working on the last day of his retirement, David Hockin, as we know him best, with paint and paintbrush in hand. Thank you for all your hard work beautifying so many of Langley's built heritage.

"David is a dedicated volunteer for all heritage throughout Langley and his painting customers. He came to our rescue when called upon at various Langley Heritage Society properties." - Fred Pepin

"A painter by profession, David has the talent to fix and build most everything heritage. From pouring a cement floor in the CNR Station's coal shed, fixing the depot's old door knob mechanisms, refurbishing the caboose interior, installing drain pipe underneath the platform, repairing the agent's ticket dispenser, not to mention all the painting ... the list is endless and your creative solutions appreciated. It's been an absolute pleasure working with you at Langley's CNR Station." - Helen Williams

Fort Langley Walking Tour Brochure Gets a New Look

Soak up local history through the soles of your feet! We've updated our Fort Langley Walking Tour brochure. It's available at the National Historic Site, Langley Centennial Museum, or access the PDF version at www.langleyheritage.ca



Kobi Cristian from the Langley Centennial Museum worked closely with station manager Helen Williams to review every description, for each stop along the tour, and painstakingly verify Langley's historical facts.

We're also thankful to artist Brian Croft for the beautiful images featured in the Fort Langley brochure.

Stroll by more of Langley's built heritage in the Murrayville Walking Tour available on the LHS web page.

Up on the Roof

Part of the responsibility of managing heritage properties is keeping buildings in good repair. Langley Heritage Society recently invested in a new roof for the historic Wark/Dumais farmhouse located on the campus of Kwantlen Polytechnic University. Some brick work was required to improve the home's



flashing, and new eavestroughs were added. The shingles are made from recycled tires, and are expected to last for decades. (The same shingles were installed on the Fort Langley CNR Station in the summer of 2020.)

Thanks to LHS board member Shawn Feddes for the photo of this beautiful farm home built in the 1890s by Langley's first reeve, Robert James Wark. It was later a successful dairy farm operated by the Dumais family. More information and a student-produced video about Wark/Dumais House can be found on the LHS website at <https://www.langleyheritage.ca/warkdumais-house/>

Supporters & Suppliers

Langley Heritage Society wishes to express our gratitude to all our volunteers and supporters who contribute to our projects.

Bob McPherson, Electrician
604-530-8715

Nufloors
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Robertson Plastics
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Ken Wong @ **Genesis Alarms**
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Rod Nicol @ **Go With The Flow Plumbing & Heating**
604-803-7951

Barbara Bryson @ **Wisteria Guest House in the Fort**
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