



Heritage News

CENTRAL OKANAGAN HERITAGE SOCIETY
SPRING 2016

CELEBRATING OUR NATURAL LANDSCAPES

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Munson Pond
- Learning about Brent's Mill
- Brent's Grist Mill Stabilization Project
- Okanagan Brigade Trail
- Mission Creek Restoration Initiative
- Okanagan Rail Trail Initiative
- Heritage Grants Program
- 2016 Heritage Award Winners
- COHS News in Brief
- Heritage News



Source: COHS Fonds

MUNSON POND: This family portrait was taken shortly after Robert and Eliza Munson and their children arrived in the Benvoulin area in 1890. The couple was very active in the community, including being instrumental in the planning and building of Bethel Presbyterian Church (Benvoulin Heritage Church).

Munson Pond and COLT

by Tracey Read

I'm a newcomer to the beautiful Okanagan Valley and one of the many aspects that I appreciate is the ease of access to natural landscapes within the City. Munson Pond is one such destination - a little-known jewel hidden in plain sight near the major intersection at KLO Road and Benvoulin Road.

Access to the pond is via Munson Road which is located off Benvoulin just north of the Kelowna Christian School. At the foot of the road is a newly completed public parking lot which connects to accessible level gravel trails that meander around the perimeter of this beautiful and important wetland area.

European ownership of the land surrounding the pond dates back to the Munson family which pioneered in the area in the 1890s; some descendants still live nearby. In the 1950s, hundreds of tonnes of gravel were hauled away to be used in the construction of the floating bridge over the lake. The pond is the result of the locally high water table seeping into the depression created by the removal of so much gravel.

The City of Kelowna purchased the farm with a long-term plan to create an inner-city natural habitat that would protect the rare and endangered ecological community which is home to dozens of species of birds and mammals, a variety of plants and trees and several kinds of fish.



To complete the vision, approximately 3 acres of land that bordered the water body were secured through a home-site severance with the Berard family whose roots on the site go back to 1918. This process enabled the family to continue to own the remaining parcel while enlarging the project at its northern edge, thus providing a buffer between the farm and the public land.

A rare remnant of a mature cottonwood forest is an important feature of this added parcel. In the past, forests of this type were common to the Okanagan's lowlands but agriculture and development have taken over, resulting in habitat loss for resident and migrating birds, rodents, mammals, amphibians and reptiles. The BC Conservation Data Centre has designated this ecological community as being endangered and notes it is one of the most rare types in the province.

The preservation of the wetland is a joint venture between the Central Okanagan Land Trust (COLT) and the City of Kelowna. In 2014 COLT applied for funding from EcoAction, a source not available to the municipality without a partnership with a not-for-profit society in the community. As a subset of Environment Canada, EcoAction strives to strengthen biodiversity, protect wildlife and plants and improve habitat values. Over three years, the funder will provide \$90,000 with the project to be completed by March 31, 2018. To fulfill its commitment, the community (represented by COLT) can provide cash as well as in-kind donations. Hundreds of volunteer hours have been an invaluable asset managed by the Land Trust.

The covenant, or agreement, that is registered on the title sets out the environmental values of the property and specifies that the City can't develop any portion without the prior agreement of the Land Trust.



In 2015 - year one of the three year plan - the gravel trail, fencing, an elevated walkway in a marshy area and a small bridge were completed. Volunteers from Starbucks, the Kelowna Lions Club and the Kelowna Christian School worked long hours doing weed clean-up and starting to plant what will eventually see the addition of 8,000 trees and plants.



In the spring of 2016, two viewing platforms near the parking area will be completed. In 2017, the Land Trust will install interpretive signage to highlight historical and environmental information. Once the project has been completed, the City has a maintenance plan in place. COLT will perform annual inspections and recommend any updates that may be required.



In addition to the land in the City/COLT agreement, the City has set aside approximately six additional hectares that will be accessible from Burtch Road. Together, the two projects will provide an important buffer between nature as it once was, and the increasing demands for dense urban development which will continue through the years.

On the sunny April day when I visited the pond, I was struck by the silence and the sense of complete removal from the busyness of the city which is so close by. The only sounds were those of Canada geese protecting their nesting sites and the whoosh of the wings of a great blue heron flying overhead. I can well imagine enjoying the changing of the seasons as the year progresses, as the buds on the trees and shrubs fully develop and later change colour in the autumn. Thanks to the City of Kelowna and the Central Okanagan Land Trust, we will enjoy the pleasures of Munson Pond for decades to come.

Learning about Brent's Mill

by Carol Millar



A group of students from the Waldorf School had a fun outing at the Brent's Grist Mill Heritage park on April 15. Small groups of students went to three stations at the site. They picked out stinging nettle to make a tea, helped make bee boxes to encourage bees to the park and learned about Brent's Grist Mill. The students were engaged and all left impressed by the age of the mill and how water power could run the mill. Ask any one of them what a grist mill does and I'm willing to bet

they could explain it to you. As a bonus, they got to see workmen stabilizing the mill. All in all a great day and a great learning experience. This great experience was repeated on May 6th by another local group of students.



Brent's Grist Mill Stabilization Project

by Lorri Dauncey



Brent's Grist Mill is one of four structures (farmhouse, milk house and stone cairn) that were moved in 2002, downstream from their original site, to the newly created *Heritage Homestead and Grist Mill Park* at the foot of Dilworth Mountain. The buildings were moved onto new concrete foundations, retaining their original relationship to each other as well as their close proximity to Mill Creek. During the intervening years there has been some conservation work undertaken on the farmhouse and milk house but only minimal stabilization work has been done on the Mill

building. The Grist Mill built in 1871, is the most significant of the four structures and the one most at risk. Early this year, the City of Kelowna hired a team to proceed with the stabilization. In March, work at the site got underway.

A heritage conservation plan for the stabilization of the Mill and addition was created in 2014. This plan recorded the current condition and interventions necessary in order to ensure that the heritage value of the building was preserved. The conservation plan recommends the best conservation practices as identified in the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*.

The first step in the stabilization of the Mill was to raise the building and add new beams under the original ponderosa pine sill beams. Missing sill beams were also replaced in the addition. Once this work was complete the floor in the Mill was no longer bowed. (The Mill had originally been built on a stone foundation).

The addition has undergone a significant amount of stabilization work, including repairs on each of the ten main posts. The addition roof has had significant roof rafter and roofing board (strapping) replacement due to the very poor condition of the original materials. The Mill and the addition are in the process of being re-roofed with hand split cedar shakes, similar to the original roof.



A significant amount of the board and batten ponderosa pine siding is being reattached and repaired. Much of the material had been removed in order to facilitate the moving of the building, pulled off by vandals or fallen off due to disrepair. Where possible original square nails are being reused as well as new square nails to complete the siding repairs.



Last fall, the site underwent a clean-up. This spring, the contractor sorted through all the original materials on site as well as materials that had been either salvaged or purchased for the project. Fortunately, three missing boards needed to complete the Brent's Mill logo in the building's interior were found and re-installed next to the one still in-situ.

As part of the stabilization of the building, new hold-downs and strapping have been added as unobtrusively as possible. New tie beams will be added in the loft space of the Mill.

The windows and doors will not be restored at this time but will be boarded up to complete the stabilization process by the end of June. New screens below the sill beams will help preserve the foundation by keeping out wildlife and helping with air flow. Once Brent's Grist Mill is stabilized and secure, it is hoped that the next phase will begin for this important building and site.



Okanagan Brigade Trail

by Janice Henry

British Columbia is a province of uncommonly beautiful landscapes with our rivers, lakes, mountains and the Pacific Ocean. While today our geography draws tourists from around the world, First Nations and early settlers had to develop routes to navigate the diverse landscape. Formidable obstacles included mountains to climb, rapids to run, lakes and streams to cross which created significant barriers for trade.

The Okanagan Brigade Trail – was created to circumvent the natural features. The trail found the most advantageous way to get furs and trade goods between New Caledonia and Thompson River area in the interior to the Pacific Ocean at the mouth of the Columbia River. It was the route first used by white men in the Okanagan and no doubt followed paths established centuries prior by Canada's First Nations people. It was a departure from traveling major rivers, to a route that went overland by horse through the arid Okanagan Valley and northern Washington State. As many as 200 to 300 horses composed a brigade, with each horse carrying between 160-180 lbs. The average day's journey was between 15 and 20 miles and was dependent on the available horse feed and the varied terrain.

Portions of the Okanagan Brigade Trail are still visible and accessible today in spite of the substantial influx of people since it was first used by white traders in the early 1800's.

One group – the *Trails of the Okanagan* is working to see that a 3.3 kilometer section of the Trail is upgraded to serve as a connecting point – between Peachland and Summerland. The group says views from portions of the trail are among the best in the Okanagan.

The Westbank Museum also has plans to bring recognition to the Okanagan Brigade Trail, through the creation of four statues. Consisting of a First Nation's woman and man along with a fur trader and his pack horse, the statues will be made by artist Dave Kasprick of NanOOSE Bay. Once the statues are complete they are to be placed on the island between Highway 97 South on ramp from the north, a prominent location within West Kelowna. For those wanting to make a contribution to the fund-raising goal, please contact the Westbank Museum.



For those wanting more information on the trail itself, a booklet called the *Okanagan Brigade Trail* is also available at the Westbank Museum.



Mission Creek Restoration Initiative

by Don Knox

Prior to the settlement of the Mission Creek Delta by Europeans in the mid 1800's, the creek would regularly overflow its banks and create new pathways to Okanagan Lake. This process provided a rich habitat for many species, especially the landlocked Sockeye Salmon that we call Kokanee. As settlement of Kelowna progressed, the flooding of the creek increasingly became a problem for the residents. The solution identified was to raise the banks and contain its path to a channel rather than having the system wind back and forth as it naturally wanted to do. While this helped with the flooding issue, it caused problems with the natural function of the creek, particularly with the Kokanee spawning habitat. The meanders that had provided the spawning beds for the Kokanee had been removed and the population of this popular sport fish plummeted to less than 10% of the original levels.

"...the creek would regularly overflow its banks and create new pathways to Okanagan Lake."

The *Mission Creek Restoration Initiative* is a group that was formed to work to repair the damage done to the Mission Creek Corridor, in a way that will help to recreate the natural function of the riparian system. The Working Group is made up of representatives from the Ministry of the Environment, Okanagan Nations Alliance, City of Kelowna, Regional District of the Central Okanagan, Westbank First Nation, Friends of Mission Creek and Central Okanagan Land Trust. The group has been meeting for the past ten years and are excited about the completion of this first project.

Early in the process, the areas of potential re-naturalization had to be identified. The section downstream of East Kelowna Bridge (where the creek comes out of the canyon) was the only section deemed appropriate for restoration. There are subsections where it is not appropriate to consider rebuilding the water path because of residential development or the slope of the surrounding land.



The first project property chosen for purchase became available at an opportune time and was in a portion of the watercourse that was proper for Kokanee spawning. The work was carried out between November 2015 and March 2016 by City of Kelowna workers (who did an amazing job). Everything went fantastically well. The dike was realigned to create, what will be a new area of habitat that will mimic that, which nature originally provided. During the spring freshet (melt) the water has flooded the entire section as planned. This summer the

final part of the work will be done. This work will include the 'notching' of the creek bank to encourage it to meander in a way it would be able to do if not contained by the restriction of the narrow channel. This is a chance for the community to help repair a mistake that was made by our well-meaning but uninformed ancestors.

To see the full story, please visit the website www.missioncreek.ca



Okanagan Rail Trail Initiative

Over the past months, the new owners of the rail trail corridor – City of Kelowna, Municipality of Lake Country, the North Okanagan Regional District, and the Okanagan Indian Band - have worked together to lay the preliminary framework for building a hard-packed trail from Coldstream to Kelowna. It is now up to all interested parties to raise the \$7.86 million that the trail is expected to cost.

This amazing route will cover close to 50 km in a continuous corridor, providing a link to all communities along its path and featuring many of the valley's most scenic spots. One highlight for those of us who appreciate and support built heritage is that the new trail will take visitors right past the gates of Brent's Grist Mill Heritage Park! A wonderful opportunity for the public to get up close and personal with heritage structures. A meter of trail construction will cost \$160, and contributions of any amount are greatly appreciated!

To get involved or to make a donation to the construction of the trail – visit the volunteer group's web-site at okanaganrailtrail.com.



Kelowna Heritage Grants Program



COHS is well into its ninth year of managing the City of Kelowna Heritage Grants Program (CoKHGP). The program was created to recognize the value of heritage in the community by providing financial support to owners of heritage properties. The program promotes the conservation of residential, commercial, industrial and agricultural heritage. Grants assist with a portion of the costs incurred in maintaining the building's exterior including the foundation. Only buildings

listed on the Kelowna Heritage Register are eligible to apply for grants from the program. The Kelowna Heritage Register currently has 209 properties listed, including 21 that are protected by a Heritage Designation Bylaw. All granting decisions are made by a committee of community volunteers with heritage expertise. The Kelowna Heritage Register can be accessed at <http://www.kelowna.ca/iHeritage/Scripts/>. For more information on the program contact ~ Lorri Dauncey at ldauncey.cohs@telus.net

The old Willits-Taylor Drug Store building, 375-387 Bernard Avenue, was built in 1913. The building was awarded a heritage grant for the repair and repointing of the brick façade and the painting of the window sashes, frames, cornices and parapet. The work is now complete.

This building's heritage value lies in its having accommodated, for most of its time, one of the longest operating businesses in downtown Kelowna, the Willits-Taylor Drug Store (1899-1996; on this site 1901-1980s). The establishment of the first drug store near by in 1899 and its moving to this site in 1901 are representative of the establishment of Kelowna's initial commercial and shopping district along Bernard Avenue. It also has value as a very good example of the Commercial Style, with brick walls enlivened by decorative stone trim and classical detailing.

(SOS, Kelowna Heritage Register)



2016 Heritage Award Winners

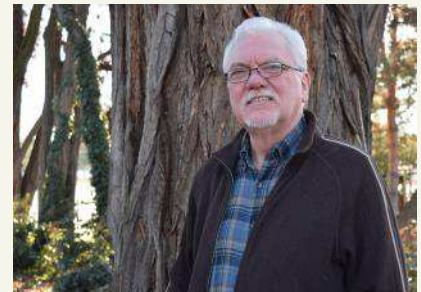
The 2016 Heritage Awards were presented at a ticketed luncheon event at the Laurel Packing House on February 17th – as part of Heritage Week.

Special thanks to:

- Rutland Residents Association members for setting tables and serving our guests
- Birte Decloux and Carol Millar for emceeing the event
- Cheryl Spelliscy, Lorri Dauncey, Janice Henry, Birte Decloux and Carol Millar for serving on the awards selection committee
- Kelowna Museums – for providing the venue at no charge
- And to all our corporate sponsors for their support

Distinguished Community Service. *Given to a person or persons in recognition of their service to the community in the heritage field.*

Bob Hayes was the recipient of this year's service award. Bob has contributed thousands of hours to many groups and historical projects over the years, including replacing the grave markers in the Chinese section of the Kelowna Memorial Park and identifying unmarked graves in the Kelowna pioneer cemetery and various historical talks. Bob is active in a number of groups including the Okanagan Historical Society, Kelowna & District Genealogical Society and Lake Country Museum.



Conservation project on a building currently in residential use.

Awarded to a residential building that has recently undergone an exterior restoration and/or rehabilitation. The high standards, innovation and commitment to heritage conservation are recognized.

C.B. Ghezzi House, 2089 Pandosy Street, built in 1945 by R.C. Wilson for Carlo Ghezzi who established the Domestic Wines and By-Products business (became Calona Wines Ltd). The current owners recently repaired and repainted the house, conserving many of the original elements of the house and yard.

Continued conservation of a building. *Given to a building to recognize the high quality of its preservation and maintenance over the years, in keeping with its original design and structure.*

Kelowna and District Memorial Arena, 1435 Water Street was built in 1948 to memorialize the men and women who died in the second world war. Today Memorial Arena is still used by the community as a hockey rink.



Recognition Award for the Rehabilitation and Renovation of a Landmark Building

Landmark CN Station, 1175 Ellis Street, is a federally designated heritage railway station built in 1926. In 2010 the building found a new use as a pub-style restaurant. The renovations included maintaining some of the original details with the maintenance of the heritage character of the building.



Conservation of a Neighbourhood or Area. Awarded to a neighbourhood or area that has largely remained unchanged over time or has been revitalized through the restoration and/or rehabilitation of its buildings and streetscape.

The Fintry Estate, was built in 1909 by Captain James Cameron Dun-Waters (The Laird of Fintry) and his wife Alice. For 30 years Dun-Waters turned the undeveloped delta into a productive farm and impressive estate. The estate was later turned into a provincial park and continues to be maintained by Friends of Fintry and BC Parks.

Special Heritage Project To recognize and honour special projects and accomplishments in the Central Okanagan. This may include advocacy, awareness and planning heritage and historical projects **(Two Awards Given)**

Sncēwīps Heritage Museum (Westbank First Nation), opened in June 2014, has been in the making for many years. The museum was created to preserve the heritage and natural history of the Sylix people. The museum provides access to archeological artefacts, archival materials as well as historical and contemporary art.



Kelowna's Paramount Theatre was opened in 1949 and could seat up to 840 people. Over the years the theatre was expanded to include two additional theatres. The original Paramount sign is recognized as an important landmark on Bernard Avenue. The Paramount Theatre was closed at the end of March, a month after receiving the Special Project Heritage Award. The owners will be redeveloping the building and the site this year. It is hoped that the sign will be incorporated into the design of the new project.



Source: KPA

Thank You to Our Heritage Week Luncheon Sponsors:



DAVARA

Rutland Residents' Association

Steven Nicholson



COHS News in Brief

Welcome to COHS Newest Board Members, Ernie Park and Tara Hurley



Ernie Park is a retired city of Calgary urban & regional planner (31 years) who moved to Kelowna with his wife Frances in 2011.

Tara Hurley has been the community archivist at the Kelowna Public Archives, Kelowna Museums since 2007.



COHS at Guisachan Heritage Park:

COHS's intimate involvement at Guisachan Heritage Park came to an end in November when we were notified by the city that they would be taking over the gardening function at the park. This concluded a twenty-five year relationship with the gardening, grass cutting and grounds maintenance in the park. The gardens were restored by COHS volunteers when Guisachan Park was created in 1986.

After 25 years of COHS in the Garden Shed, and for many years the Milkshed, there was a great deal of furniture, equipment, files and miscellaneous to move. Staff and directors all pitched in to move the material from Guisachan to Benvoulin. With no space at Benvoulin for storage the only solution found for our immediate need was the purchase of a large metal storage container. Again directors and staff stepped up financially – with over \$900 coming in to off-set the cost. COHS would welcome further donations, as the cost was unplanned and therefore unbudgeted. All donations will receive a tax deductible receipt.



Heritage Week 2017: Heritage Week 2016 was another success, with a range of activities including a Mystery Tour, High Tea, and a Heritage Awards Luncheon, to name but a few. Work has already begun on the 2017 version, with the celebration of Canada's sesquicentennial with the Heritage Week theme of "This Place Matters - My Canada". COHS director Carol Millar and volunteer Frances Park are taking leadership of Heritage Week 2017. A community meeting was held on May 10th to look at potential community collaborations and partnerships and to explore applying for a joint grant that would benefit all local heritage groups. A second meeting took place on June 1st.

Demolition of Brick Building on Water Street: In May 2016, the demolition of this early brick building began as part of the redevelopment of the site for Westcorp's new downtown hotel. This early one-storey building was used as a horse & tack and leather shop and in later years as a Vegetable Marketing Board office, BC Tree Fruits storage and recently as Metro Central (Community Church). In preparation for demolition, a hazardous materials investigation of the existing building on Water Street revealed that the concrete stucco on a portion of the exterior contained asbestos. Removal of the stucco revealed brick walls which were sourced from Kelowna Brick Works once located at the foot of Knox Mountain. (1905-late 1930s). Fortunately some of the brick was salvaged and will be reused. COHS was able to salvage a couple of radiators and windows.



COHS News in Brief



Benvoulin Windows Phase 2: In 2015 we completed the much needed conservation work on the south window at Benvoulin Heritage Church. The work involved removing each of the seven sections – while keeping the building functional. Each section was taken off-site for the gentle removal of old paint, the application of linseed oil, new putty, and in a number of cases panes with flat glass were replaced with wavy glass, followed by several applications of a linseed oil based paint, in the historically appropriate black. At time of printing COHS has successfully secured two significant grants, one from the Central Okanagan Foundation and the other from the Colin & Lois Pritchard Foundation to do the three remaining windows. We are grateful to our community partners, without whose support – this project would not be possible.



Heritage BC/Arts BC Conference: Granville Island – COHS was well represented at the May 5-6-7 conference. COHS Board members Don Knox, and Birte Decloux, as well as members Alasdair Smith and Peter Chataway – along with Janice Henry attended. With the theme of *Place-Making - Where Arts and Heritage Collide*, the group took part in a range of workshops that both challenged and inspired. One of the highlights was a key-note talk by Norman Hotson, one of the main architects in the 1977 re-envisioning of Granville Island. This federally

owned property is one of Canada's most popular tourist attractions second only to Niagara Falls. He described how the 37 acre parcel "was a sand box waiting to be filled in." Of interest to central Okanagan residents is that Norman was the architect for the Rotary Center for the Arts in Kelowna.



COHS Fundraising Concerts: *Two Dollars Short*—Classic Country and Rock & Roll Band performed two concerts on May 14th and 15th. The group generously donated their time and talent and helped us raise \$3,100 for various conservation projects. Thank you to musicians Bob Bissillion, Peggy Kingman, Marcel Lemieux and Ron Hillcoff. Thank you as well to Boyd Autobody & Glass for providing bottled water, to all who volunteered at the event and those that purchased tickets.



Benvoulin Heritage Park:: Benvoulin Heritage Church, Reid Hall and the beautiful park grounds are available for rentals for events such as weddings, receptions, birthdays, anniversaries, musical and theatrical performances and art shows to name a few. The gardens are once again looking beautiful with all the hard work by Jim Elwood, the park gardener, and the Spring Bee volunteers in April. For more information please contact the COHS office at (250) 861-7188.



HERITAGE NEWS

BOARD MEMBERS & ADVISORY BOARD

President

Don Knox

Vice President

Cheryl Spelliscy

Treasurer

Judy Funnell

Secretary

Birté Decloux

Directors

Dave Elliot

Shona Harrison

Tara Hurley

Carol Millar

Ernie Park

John Pendray

Advisory Board

Cynthia Hunter

Lorainne McLarty

Michelle Rule

STAFF

Executive Director

Janice Henry

City of Kelowna Heritage Grants Program

Lorri Dauncey

Benvoulin Park Gardener

Jim Elwood

Site Caretaker at Benvoulin Park

Percy Lujan

HERITAGE NEWS

National Trust of Canada's Top 10 Endangered Places List is released annually to bring national attention to sites at risk due to neglect, lack of funding, inappropriate development and weak legislation. From unique 19th-century landmarks to simple vernacular housing, stone railway stations to Modernist airports, heritage districts to single buildings, the list has become a powerful tool in the fight to make landmarks, not landfill.

For 2016 the list includes:

Canada's Wooden Grain Elevators – Rural icons vanishing from the landscape.

Vancouver's Chinatown, Vancouver, BC – Development wave crushes culturally unique neighbourhood.

Former Royal Alberta Museum Edmonton, AB – Modernist gem under threat.

Spaca Moskalyk Ukrainian Catholic Church, Lamont County AB – Marker of Ukrainian heritage could be lost.

Prairie Grasslands, SK – A storied landscape of natural and cultural value at risk.

Nottawasaga Lighthouse, Collingwood, ON – Imperial Tower crumbling into the bay.

Gibson Isolation Hospital, Belleville, ON – Tearing down a piece of heritage for the Deaf.

Saint-Vincent-de-Paul Penitentiary National Historic Site, Laval QC – Historic federal penitentiary wasting away.

St. Stephen Post Office National Historic Site, St. Stephen, NB – A National Historic Site being demolished by neglect.

Harbour Grace Court House, Harbour Grace, NL – Handsome colonial treasure deserves a fair trial.

For more information on these sites: www.nationaltrustcanada.ca/issues-campaigns/top-10-endangered-places



COHS thanks the **City of Kelowna** for their support through an Arts, Culture and Heritage Operating Grant for 2016

COHS thanks the **BC Government** for a 2015 BC Gaming Grant



Newsletter: Lorri Dauncey & Janice Henry (editor)