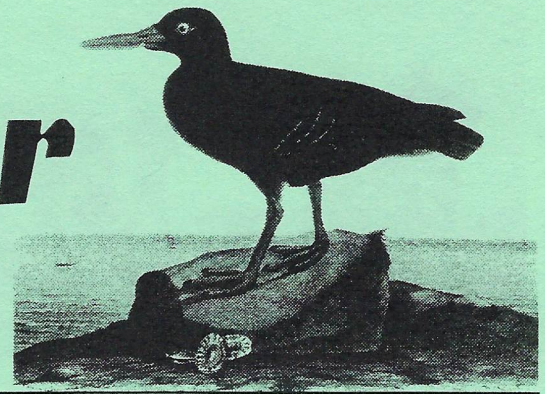


Oystercatcher

The Newsletter of the

Salt Spring Trail and Nature Club



Winter 2002

Calendar

November 28

Social evening at United Church at 7:30 pm. Lindsay Elms will give a talk on *The History Of Hiking the Vancouver Island Mountains*.



December 10

Christmas Lunch at Meaden Hall at 12 noon. Tickets (\$15) can be purchased at Soapworks or from Leaders of Hikers, Walkers or Ramblers.



January 23

A.G.M. at Meaden Hall at 5:30 pm for 6 pm dinner. Pot Luck. Dues are due at this time. Membership \$17 dollars a person for the year.

OYSTERCATCHER

Oystercatcher is published three times annually. Comments, articles or ideas are welcome. Mail them to Oystercatcher, Salt Spring Trail & Nature Club, Box 203, Salt Spring Island, B.C. V8K 2V9

Fall Trip to Princeton

Fred Howell

The Castle Resort, a short distance from Princeton, housed us in log "cabins" on grounds which held the remains of a Portland Cement factory and a movie set containing mini sets ranging from a castle with a moat, Grecian statuary, a Swiss chalet, a formal French boulevard, and a tête-à-tête wrought iron gazebo—at first a dizzying array.

The group assembled for a happy hour on Monday in a large screened gazebo. Folks were quite mellow, many having relaxed in hot tubs. Our dinner was catered by the owners of the Apple Tree Restaurant who provided all our meals: delicious, unstinting food; even lunches were most substantial (despite the first day when concern was voiced by Bryan A who missed his cookies—this serious concern was rectified the next day.)

The 15 hikers travelled an hour to reach the starting place to climb Lodestone Mountain. It was a steep climb, after a slothful summer. Several commented "This is good for us" to which Lynn said "This is damn good for us". A trail passing Lodestone Lake at 1825 m, called the Hudson's Bay Brigade Trail, has historical importance since this was the route that furs were brought from the interior by horses to Fort Langley. The name 'Lodestone' suggests magnetized iron deposits disrupting compasses—we walked some of the H.B. Trail after lunch at the lake, but it wasn't till we were descending that some claimed to see the actual peak. When the recon' group—Brian & Margie, Ann & Hugh, Betty & Lynn—came in June there was still snow, which was too deep for them to go beyond the lake.

The second day the hikers climbed Holmes Mountain overlooking views of the Similkameen River Valley. It was a delightful day, often shaded by trees. After descent, we drove to the summit of Mount Baldy to be surrounded by magnificent high grasslands, with panoramic scope and views of Princeton. Our intrepid leaders Brian and Hugh gave us two excellent days!

Both days the walkers made use of the excellent Kettle Valley Rail Line portion of the Trans Canada Trail. On Tuesday they drove up the Princeton-Summerland Road, parking at an access point. The route was a steady 1% grade. The Trail made three loops to gain altitude, giving wide views across the countryside of open cattle grazing; it was home to deer and birds. Before starting back, lunch was eaten under trees beside the trail—a welcome rest! At this point the trail crossed the road, the route used to return to the cars. It was a warm 9 km walk, and most were ready for a nap or hot tub soak.

On Wednesday, on a different part of the trail, they drove toward Coalmont, following the Tulameen River (one car was left in Princeton). The trail from the road to the river was quite rough, but the rest of the route was excellent. The route led through a curved tunnel which replaced two bridges that often used to wash out in spring floods. Then it was down hill—a very gentle descent for 11 km. The area was wooded and there were many rapids. Above were hoodoos—strange formations on the cliffs—and further on the Vermillion Cliffs whose rocks were really red. Near the end was a trestle, and a 1000 foot tunnel, and then into Princeton. While the drivers were taken back to get the cars the rest went to the Dairy Queen for much needed cool treats—an oasis! Everyone enjoyed the walks, which were well planned. Thanks to the leaders Margie, Betty and Lynn.

On Tuesday evening we were given a slide presentation and very knowledgeable commentary by Madelon Schouten, president of the Vermillion Forks Field Naturalists. Among many other things, she mentioned the harvesting of red ochre by First Nations groups for use, when mixed with pig fat, for pictographs. Her slides pictured the many plants and animals of the region. Despite being weary, we all listened with interest. ■



Trail Mix

New Members:

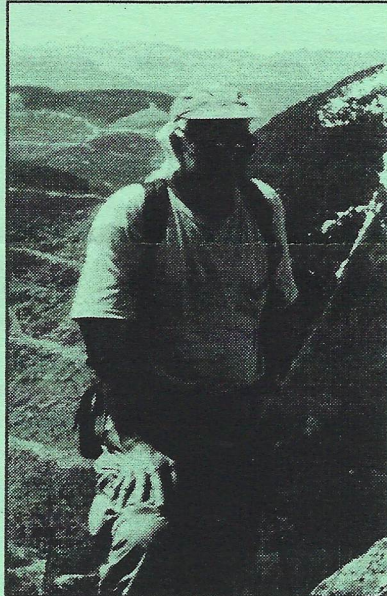
Margaret Farup, Mary Carlson, Ping Drage, William and Dorothy McCann, June Perry, Lynne Fraser, Julie Tyler, Arlene Lester



Taxi Fare: Remember, \$1 for a trip to North End, \$2 to South End, Ruckle Park, \$3 to Musgrave, etc.
Day trips off-island, \$0.25/km.



Email : If you now have an Email address, send it to Membership Secretary Lynn Thompson at lthompson@saltspring.com



Trailblazers: Ian Fraser

When we first started this column we said no executive members would be mentioned...it would be lesser-known behind-the-scenes workers who would finally get the credit they deserve. Well now its time for the exception. Ian Fraser was a president of the club many years ago. But unlike most presidents, he just kept working. Ian became the trail master... a job that requires a lot of work but little recognition. Whenever he or some other member discovered problems on any trail we use...Ian went to work. Strapping a chainsaw on his back he would trudge for miles into the bush to remove a huge windfall...or a whole series of windfalls. The little band of helpers who accompanied him would vary from month to month...but Ian was always there. Hikers and walkers would find clear passage on all of our trails. They would glance briefly at newly cleared or cut blockages seldom realizing the work involved or who had done it. Ian also found time to be chairman of a little known offshoot of the club...the stewardship commit-

tee that worked in Ruckle and at Maxwell provincial parks.

So here's a salute to Ian Fraser who's now retiring from trailblazing to spend more time with his arthritis.

Bill Harrington

President's message

Martin Williams Property

Thank you to all the generous members who donated to the cause. The Club gave five thousand dollars from funds and in excess of another ten thousand dollars was raised from individual members. Owing to their generosity, it seems the target of ninety thousand dollars has been met. Surveying and legal work will now begin; the closing date is expected to be early in January at which time pledgers will be asked to mail a cheque. Tax receipts will be issued to them and those who have already donated.

Burgoyne Bay Park

The Friends of Salt Spring Parks Association has now had its A.G.M. Our Representatives on the Board are Bill Harrington, Patricia Lockie and Linda Quiring. A background report is being prepared over the next five months. This will cover the basics for providing public recreation opportunities in the park which should include some good trails.

Simon Rook



FBCN REPORT

Nancy Braithwaite

THE FALL GENERAL MEETING OF THE FBCN was held at Tantalus Lodge in Whistler on the 20th–22nd September; the theme of the meeting was *Peak to Valley, The Ups and Downs of Life in a Mountain Environment*. A report of this meeting will appear in the next B.C. Naturalist. The weather was superb—so much so that there were only 25 people at the AGM—the rest went up the mountain! There was a better turn out for the Directors' meeting.

Bev Ramey, the Conservation Chair of the FBCN came to speak to the Trail and Nature club on the 24th October. I felt she gave an excellent account of everything the Federation does, using the method of "Show and Tell". She brought with her a copy of the report of the Recreation Stewardship Panel, a new management and funding model for Fish, Wildlife and Park Recreation. Owing to great concern throughout the Federation about the future of those things in the hands of our present provincial government, the President sent a fifteen-page Commentary to Mr. Strachan and members of the panel on the 14th October. Anyone wishing to read this report and the commentary please contact Nancy Braithwaite (537-9335).

"Give a copy [of Green Legacies: A Donor's Guide for B.C.] to your lawyer or broker for Christmas."

The *Handbook for Waterfront Living, On the Living Edge* by Sarah Kipp and Clive Callaway, has now been printed and is available to FBCN members at a discount. There is one in circulation amongst members. It is strongly recommended to people who own waterfront property.

Green Legacies—A Donor's Guide for B.C., is also available. It is a collaborative project to reach out to donors with Nature Conservation interests, professional financial advisors and

lawyers. The club has a copy which is available to members (ring 537-9335). Give one to your lawyer or broker for Christmas.

Nature Wild, the magazine for Young Naturalists' Clubs of B.C. can be ordered from the YNC Coordinator, c/o Vancouver Natural History Society, Box 3021, Vancouver, B.C.

V6B 3X5. A one-year individual or family membership costs \$15 and includes a new-member pack, 4 issues of *Nature Wild* and, for children in Vancouver or the lower mainland, special Explorer Days and field trips. See sample in Cobbler's Box.

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General Information

The Salt Spring Trail and Nature Club features Tuesday outings September through June at three levels of ability. The monthly schedule of outings and events is published the final Wednesday of the month in the Driftwood. The fourth Thursday of each month the Club meets at 7:30 PM in the lower hall of the Ganges United Church. The Club is affiliated with the Federation of BC Naturalists.

Ramblers enjoy walking without pressure to keep up speed. Members of any level fitness are welcome. Ramblers have frequent "time-outs" for taking pictures, examining flowers, plants, stones, fossils, and hugging trees. Rambles start at 10 AM and usually end around 1:30 PM

Walkers move at a relaxed pace taking time to smell the roses. Walkers usually try to avoid long steep climbs and will stop to catch their breath along the way. Walks are generally less than 8 km and end around 2 PM.

Hikers like long, adventurous and occasionally quite strenuous hikes, and like to gain a bit of altitude. Hikers need good strong boots and a good but not excessive level of fitness. They may smell the roses, but do it rather quickly. Hikes usually start at 10 AM and finish between 2:30 and 3:30 PM.

Membership: Annual dues are \$17.00 per person. New members must sign a waiver. Send waiver form and membership dues to Membership Secretary, Box 203, Salt Spring Island BC, V8K 2V9.

Rambling on Gabriola Island

Thirty-five Ramblers spent a relaxing three days in September at "The Haven by the Sea" located on tranquil, picturesque Gabriola Island. The resort looked out on beautiful Taylor Bay. It had nine acres of waterfront property, comfortable accommodation, buffet meals, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, also hot tubs.

Each morning we explored the island. Each day had something new to offer. The sandstone Malaspina Galleries resembling a giant cresting wave. Drumberg Park with views of the southern Gulf Islands and boat traffic, lunch at the Sieve Bay Pub. Another morning we had a very informative tour of a greenhouse growing hydroponic peppers. In the United Church yard we found a few of the many petroglyphs on Gabriola. Afternoons were free to visit the many galleries, and studios. Some took advantage of the pools and hot tubs at the Haven. We sampled various restaurants—Susies was the favourite. If you haven't visited Gabriola, try it—you will like it. All the Ramblers did.

Betty and Jack Sharp

Happy trails to all in 2003!
Why do we count people at the beginning
and not the end of our walks?

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