No. 22 | November 2026

Newsletter

"A life not documented is a life that within a generation or two will largely be lost to memory."



President's Message



Dear Friends,

At a recent in-person Coffee Chat in Nanaimo, I was reminded again of how much Sea Island's heritage lives in the stories we share, the landmarks we protect, and the memories we preserve. Its rich heritage spans enduring Indigenous roots and farming traditions, the early growth of aviation, a Second World War military presence, and the close-knit communities that shape and have shaped Richmond.

A week after the Nanaimo Coffee Chat, we hosted a booth at Richmond's Veterans Street Banners Program event at the Colonel Sherman Armoury. We honoured Sea Island veterans—many of them members of our own families—by sharing stories of their courage, service and community. This issue features three of those stories in remembrance of all Sea Island veterans. We also sadly note the passing of four Sea Islanders (see In Loving Memory).

Our dedicated volunteers continue to work hard to archive historical photographs, document family oral histories and preserve the legacy of our island (see as an example, *The Tale of the two Eburnes*, this issue). The SIHS newsletter offers you access to these rich stories and so much more.

Ours is a collective effort, and we cannot do it without you. Whether you have an old family photo to share, a story to tell, or a passion for local heritage, your voice is an essential piece of the puzzle.

Thank you for helping keep Sea Island's rich heritage alive through your membership, volunteer efforts, and by sharing our work with others.

Eunice Robinson

President

Sea Island Heritage Society

The ongoing work we do!

Here are highlights of what the Society has been up to this Fall.

In-person Coffee Chat - Nanaimo

On Friday, September 18, 2026, the Society took its monthly Coffee Chat on the road, all the way to Nanaimo on Vancouver Island. Nine of the Lower Mainland members caught the early ferry and spent the day in Nanaimo, connecting with the Society's Vancouver Island community. The day was a great success. Read more about this event on page 6.

Veteran Stories Project

On Saturday, September 26, 2026, the Society participated in Richmond's Veterans Street Banners Program event at the Colonel Sherman Armoury. A huge crowd gathered to honour Richmond veterans whose banners are raised around City Hall from October 1st - December 1st (2026-2028). Many banners are of Sea Island veterans. Read more about the event and efforts to expand our records of Sea Island veterans and their stories on page 8.

AGM 2026

On Thursday, October 15, 2026, the Society held its Annual General Meeting (AGM), followed by a virtual Coffee Chat. The Board of Directors remained the same with seven directors.

The Society is still looking for someone to fill the role of **Secretary**. If you are interested, please contact Eunice Robinson at eunice@genbug.ca.

Upcoming Events

Fundraising

The Sea Island Heritage Society is a small non-profit organization. It relies on a few fundraising endeavours to continue its research and community support. They include the sale of calendars or books about Sea Island and the annual and lifetime membership of each of you.

The Society obtained permission from the late Doreen Braverman's family to have her book "*The Story of the West End of Sea Island, 1932 to 1950"* reprinted. We are hoping to have 100 copies for sale in time for Christmas. The printer has advised that we are competing with the local elections for priority. And, we still have copies of our 18-month calendar (2026-2027) available for purchase.

Buy a calendar

In honour of the Sea Island Heritage Society's **25th anniversary**, the Society created an 18-month (2026-2027) calendar full of photos from Sea Island. We still have copies of this lovely calendar, a possible Christmas gift for a loved one.

The cost is:

- $15.00 if picked up.
- $20.00 if mailed to you anywhere in Canada.

If you would like to purchase a calendar, please send us an email at info@seaislandhome.org.



Become a member

The Society seeks members for 2027, offering annual and lifetime options to support the ongoing preservation of the Sea Island heritage. Becoming a member or donating a membership to a loved one as a Christmas gift is easy.

We offer both annual and lifetime membership. Our lifetime membership is $100. Our 2027 annual individual membership remains at $15. We also welcome returning members.

Fees can be paid in one of two ways:

Mail a cheque for your membership or donation to:

Sea Island Heritage Society

Box 88051, Lansdowne Mall

Richmond, BC V6X 3T6.

Join, renew your membership, or donate to the Society via e-Transfer to:

treasurersihs@seaislandhome.org.

Coffee Chats 2027

Save the date or month!



The Society has heard your comments and will be switching its Coffee Chats format for 2027. We are planning four "in-person Coffee Chats" (with virtual possibilities) in 2027, including events in Langley, Sea Island (Richmond), and Vancouver Island.

Events will include on-the-road and local gatherings, with some accessible via Zoom.

Four events are being scheduled:

- **March** will be in Langley.
- **May,** our yearly Sea Island celebration event, set for May 15, 2027, at the Sea Island School on Sea Island in Richmond.
- **June** will coincide with Richmond Doors Open and will be held at the Society's locale at the Sea Island School. Richmond Doors Open is put on by the Richmond Museum and aims to inspire curiosity about the community's history and heritage.
- **September** will be a road trip to Vancouver Island, following September 2026's successful Nanaimo event.

Stay tuned for more details!

Newsletters 2027

Bringing Sea Island's Heritage to Your Inbox

We think of the Sea Island Heritage Society's newsletter as a **digital time machine**—one that lands right in your inbox, packed with stories from Sea Island's past. For five years, we've worked behind the scenes to create a new edition every quarter, and we're delighted that readers near and far have joined us for the journey.

Heading into 2027: A New Chapter for Our Time Machine

As we look ahead to **2027**, our newsletter is getting a slight tune-up! We want to make sure we are always bringing you the highest-quality Sea Island heritage stories without cluttering your inbox.

Here is what is changing next year:

- **Quality Over Quantity**. We will be sending out three newsletters in 2027. Think of it as a more exclusive digest of the best Sea Island heritage updates and events delivered right to your inbox.

- **A Changing of the Guard**. Our co-editor, Marylin Low, is stepping down from key writing/research duties to focus on new adventures in writing. Gratefully, Karen Tourangeau will continue in the editor's role.
- **Still in the Society**. Don't worry—Marylin isn't going far! She will still be cheering us on in the background and stepping in whenever we need an extra hand or an expert eye.
- **Fresh Perspectives**. We are absolutely thrilled to welcome David England and Yulia Radchenko to the newsletter team! They are stepping up to bring their passion for local heritage, fresh ideas, and new energy to our upcoming issues.

Our mission to protect and share our community's incredible past remains the same. Thank you for being a part of our journey as we head into this next chapter!

A Message from Marylin

It has been an honour to serve on the newsletter team for the past five years. I still remember the morning Karen and I met in an Ironwood parking lot and imagined what a newsletter could offer the Society. We decided to make it happen—and what a journey it has been!

My sincere thanks to everyone who shared stories and personal memories over the years. Your voices have helped bring Sea Island's heritage to life. I will remain involved with SIHS while turning my attention to a personal project: writing "letters to my grandchildren" about the experiences and life lessons I hope to pass on.



Coffee Chat on the Road – Our Nanaimo Adventure

(September 18, 2026)

Setting Sail

Our Coffee Chat hit the road for the first time in many years, and what an adventure it turned out to be! Nine of us from the Lower Mainland rolled out of bed early on Friday, September 18th, to catch the 7:45 a.m. ferry from Tsawwassen to Duke Point. The timing could not have been better — the sun was shining, the sea was glass-smooth, and the crossing to Vancouver Island felt more like a treat than a commute.

This was a special trip: the very first time our Coffee Chat had ever been held on Vancouver Island, in Nanaimo, and we could not wait to meet our members there face to face.

A Warm Welcome in Nanaimo

Once we landed, a few familiar faces met us for a quick lunch at a local restaurant before we made our way to the main event. We set up at the Beban Park Social Centre in Room 1 at 2300 Bowen Road, ready to welcome our Vancouver Island community.

Coffee was poured, light refreshments were laid out, and the room quickly filled with conversation. We brought along displays of veterans' stories and highlights from the new Vampire jet facility that recently opened at the Comox Heritage Air Park, including a video from its opening event back on April 1st of this year. We also set out



Figure 1. [Doreen King, Wendy Bechdolt, Ron Hall, Doug Eastman, Murray S. McPherson, V. Hammell, Eunice Robinson, S. Hammell, Barb Nielsen, M. Allardice in Nanaimo]. (September 18, 2026). (Source: Sea Island Heritage Society).

copies of Bill McNulty's book, *Sea Island: The Beginning of Richmond* and a good stack of our 18-month Sea Island calendars, filled with wonderful photos that gave everyone plenty to point at, laugh about, and reminisce over.

A Rousing Success

By the end of the afternoon, 18 people had come through the doors, nine of them Island members joining us in person. With roughly 50 members on our Vancouver Island mailing list, that turnout represents a fantastic slice of our community showing up — a result we are thrilled with for a first-time event.

It was a truly wonderful afternoon: old friends reminiscing, new acquaintances made, and plenty of stories shared about the communities we all lived and worked in on Sea Island. The event wrapped up at 3:30 p.m., and everyone headed off still smiling, into a gorgeous fall afternoon.



Figure 2. [Doreen King, Miriam Peacock and Barb Nielsen in Nanaimo]. (September 18, 2026). (Source: Sea Island Heritage Society).

Among the memories that came up, Miriam (Elliott) Peacock recalled babysitting the Hamalock kids — and it turned out Eunice (Hamalock) Robinson was right there in the room to hear it. Sandy (Meneice) McPherson told the story of breaking her leg at the Hammells' place when she was six; Sandy and Eunice had already compared notes on it earlier, which filled in some background on what might have happened, and Marcia (Richardson) Alderdice and Sue Hammel later confirmed the details. There was also a lovely moment when the two Marcias in the room — Marcia (Richardson) Alderdice and Marcia (Williams) Whiteside — realized neither had ever met anyone else who shared both their name and its pronunciation. And Dick McClellan had everyone captivated recalling his family's stories and the train sets he loved as a kid.

Homeward Bound

We made our way back to Duke Point in good time to catch the 5:00 p.m. sailing home to Tsawwassen, where several of us treated ourselves to a lovely dinner on the ferry, taking in the scenery and chatting about how well the day had gone.

Looking Ahead

The takeaway from this trip is clear: Coffee Chat is going on the road again! Days like this one remind us how valuable it is to meet face to face, relive old times, and make new friends — and we cannot wait to plan the next one.

Richmond Veterans:
SIHS at the Banner Program Event

(September 26, 2026)

How We Learned about the Street Banners Program

We heard about Richmond's Veterans Street Banners program through SIHS member Debbie Jiang. Debbie and Ron Fontaine belonged to Legion Branch 291 and had presented the Veterans Street Banners proposal to Richmond Council, which endorsed it.

The program honours Richmond veterans while commemorating the Royal Canadian Legion's 100th anniversary. Eligible Richmond veterans served in the Canadian Armed Forces or Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

During the Sea Island Heritage Society's 25th anniversary celebration in May, Debbie took the stage to invite attendees to nominate veterans who live or had lived in Richmond. She explained that the Royal Canadian Legion would verify each nominee's service before approval. The banners would be installed on streets around Richmond City Hall from October 1st through to December 1st for three years (2026-2028).

Her remarks resonated especially with those of us whose parents had served. She emphasized that every veteran's story deserves to be preserved and shared, and that the banners keep remembrance visible beyond a single day in November. We were interested. So was Edward Norwood Steele's daughter, Cathie Nesbit (Steele), as were many other Sea Islanders at our May event.



Figure 3. [Cora Brown veteran, Edward "Ted" Norwood Steele]. (September 26, 2026). (Source: Sea Island Heritage Society).



Figure 4. [The New Westminster Legion Centennial Pipes & Drums Band at the Veterans Street Banner event at the Armoury in Richmond, British Columbia]. (September 26, 2026). (Source: Sea Island Heritage Society).

Launching the Centennial Celebrations

On Saturday, September 26, Legion Branch 291 began the Royal Canadian Legion's 100th anniversary celebrations with the Veterans Street Banners event at Colonel Sherman Armoury on No. 4 Road in Richmond. The New Westminster Legion Centennial Pipes & Drums Band performed to the delight of the audience.



Figure 5. [Debbie Jiang speaking at the Veterans Banners event]. (September 26, 2026). (Source: Sea Island Heritage Society).

More than 400 people attended the event, including Richmond dignitaries, Legion members, Air, Army and Navy Cadets and many of the 114 families whose veteran was being honoured with a banner.

We commend Debbie Jiang and her team for their efforts to honour Richmond's veterans, reminding us that every veteran has a story that deserves to be told.

The SIHS Display

The Society's booth offered names of 37 Sea Island veterans identified to date, including 25 represented by banners. We know there are many more. Maps marked the areas where they had lived on Sea Island - Acme Cannery, RCAF Station Sea Island PMQs, Burkeville and the Veterans' Land Act subdivision of Cora Brown - while photographs and stories shared their experiences. Several had served in the Canadian Expeditionary Force (First World War), including Wilford Ernest Clark from Burkeville and Daitaro Araki and Kazuo Harada from Acme Cannery. A binder provided 18 veteran stories for this and future events.



Figure 6. [Vernon Clark (left) and Paul Novak (right) sharing stories of veterans and growing up on Sea Island]. (September 26, 2026). (Source: Sea Island Heritage Society).

Through the display, we honoured Sea Island veterans and their stories. We also encouraged those present to help us expand the Collection by adding to the list of Sea Island veterans and documenting their stories for future generations.

Help Grow the Collection

To add a name or story to the SIHS Collection, contact Marylin Low at seaisland20@gmail.com or Eunice Robinson at eunice@genbug.ca. We would love to hear from you.

Joseph Anthony MacDonald (Master Corporal)



Figure 7. [Joseph Anthony MacDonald]. (unknown date). (Source: Mary MacDonald).

Mary (Florence) MacDonald shared with the Sea Island Heritage Society that her father, Joseph Anthony MacDonald, joined the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps (RCASC) on May 30th, 1951, and was honourably released on May 29th, 1976.

While serving with the RCASC, Joseph (Joe) received the Korea Medal, United Nations Service Medal, United Nations Emergency Force Medal, Canadian Forces' Decoration and Parachute Badge.

Joe (aka Bud) was born and raised in Antigonish, Nova Scotia along with his 10 siblings. He maintained a certain level of physical fitness and was very social, not only in his personal life but also his military work life as a Mobile Support Equipment Technician.

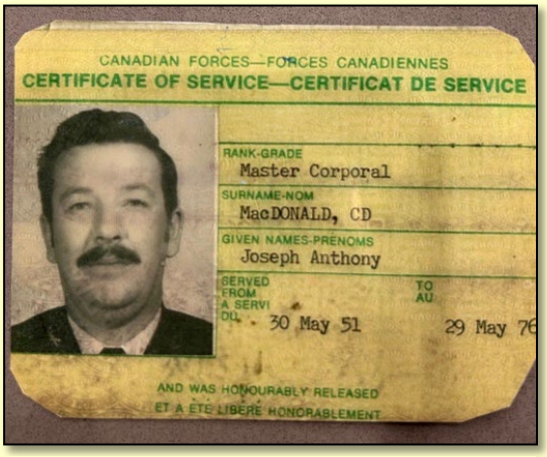

CANADIAN FORCES—FORCES CANADIENNES
CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE—CERTIFICAT DE SERVICE
RANK-GRADE
Master Corporal
SURNAME-NOM
MacDONALD, CD
GIVEN NAMES-PRENOMS
Joseph Anthony
30 May 51
29 May 76
AND WAS HONOURABLY RELEASED
ET A ETE LIBERE HONORABLEMENT

Figure 8. [Joseph MacDonald Canadian Forces Certificate of Service]. (1976). (Source: Mary MacDonald).

The MacDonald family was stationed at a Canadian Forces Europe in Soest, Germany in 1956, Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Kingston, Ontario in 1959 and in 1966, posted to the Air Force Station on Sea Island in Richmond, BC where they resided at 114 Greenway Avenue until their family's transfer to RCAF Station Jericho Beach in Vancouver, BC in 1973. While on Sea Island, their neighbours were the Norman, Tutte, Stover, Buss and Bissonnette families. Fond memories of Sea Island included friendships made while on the military base as well as many trips to Richmond Square Mall, the building of the Lansdowne Mall and of the new Vancouver International Airport.

The picture of Mary and her father was taken at their family's PMQ at RCAF Station, Jericho Beach in Vancouver, BC by Mary's mother, Rita, in 1974. Mary joined the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) in 1973 and served until 1982.



Figure 9. [Private Mary MacDonald with her father, Master Corporal Joseph MacDonald]. (1974). (Source: Mary MacDonald).

Charles Alexander (Lex) Riesterer

Excerpt from a family story written by son, Michael (Mike) Riesterer, photos from the Riesterer Family Collection



Figure 10. [Lex Riesterer]. (unknown date). (Source: Riesterer Family Collection).

My father, Lex Riesterer, was the only son of Charlie and Thelma Riesterer.

Lex's father, Charlie, was a Lieutenant in the Royal Garrison Artillery and a motorcycle dispatch rider in Somme and at Passchendaele, two of the deadliest engagements of WW1. He was severely wounded at Passchendaele and did not return to active combat.

Charlie's father, Robert Riesterer, was a German-born brewmaster who arrived in British Columbia in 1872 and went on to establish five breweries in Victoria, Vancouver, New Westminster, Port Moody and Nelson. An historic brewery building, originally established by Robert Riesterer in 1892, is still home to an active brewery (the Nelson Brewing Company) that continues to utilize the historic subterranean cellars with Ward Creek running through the middle.

Lex's mother, Thelma, was the granddaughter of John and Mary Parker who arrived in Fort Victoria on January 16th, 1853, with seventy-three other settlers and their families on the last voyage of the Hudson's Bay Company barque, Norman Morison. Thelma's aunt Hannah was the first girl of European descent born in Victoria, and other members of her family made their own unique contributions to the history of B.C.



Figure 11. [Charlie, Thelma, Clara, Ann and Lex]. (unknown date). (Source: Riesterer Family Collection).

Lex was raised in Penticton, B.C., where he developed a lifelong love of the outdoors.

He was active in the scouting organization and attained the Queen's Scout Award, the highest youth award achievable in the Scouting movement in the Commonwealth.



Figure 9. [Lex and his dog, Lucky]. (unknown date). (Source: Riesterer Family Collection).

While in his mid-teens, his summer job was delivering supplies by horseback on a primitive 16-mile trail up the Ashnola River valley to the remote high-altitude hunting and fishing camp on the Cathedral Lakes operated by the

legendary pioneer Herb Clark.

Lex joined the Air Force at the beginning of WWII and was a wireless operator and tail gunner in a Lancaster bomber. He was first based in Egypt and later in India as one of the Burma Bombers, flying troops and supplies to the Chindits, a famous British and Indian Army Special Services force operating deep behind enemy lines to wage guerilla warfare against the Imperial Japanese Army.



Figure 10. [Lex, front row on left]. (unknown date). (Source: Riesterer Family Collection).

Shortly after the end of the Second World War, Charlie and Thelma purchased a 14-acre lakefront property on Shuswap Lake.



Figure 11. [My father Lex with his parents (my grandparents) Charlie and Thelma]. (unknown date). (Source: Riesterer Family Collection).

Lex and his cousin Ken Behnsen arrived a month later to clear the land and begin construction of a lodge and cabins. By this time Lex's sister Clara was married to Andy Conley and Lex had married my mother, Joyce. Soon, the entire Riesterer family, together with cousin, Ken Behnsen, moved from Vancouver to help build and operate Twin Cedars Lodge.

The luxury lodge, located at Magna Bay, officially opened in 1948 and the family members all lived at Twin Cedars until Charlie Riesterer passed away in 1952 at the age of 61.

After the death of my grandfather, Twin Cedars was sold. My aunt and uncle, the Conleys, moved to Catalina Crescent in the Sea Island community of Burkeville. My family followed them a year later, purchasing a small two-bedroom home at the end of Lancaster Crescent, fittingly named after the famous four-engine British bomber that my dad flew in during the war.

While living on Sea Island, my father began working as a carpenter, and this eventually led to him starting his own company, C.A. Riesterer Construction Co., building many residential homes in Richmond during the 1950s and 60s before expanding into industrial and commercial buildings.

Lex retired in 1979 but joined his son in several subsequent business ventures including KOJI Colour Labs, one of the first businesses in Vancouver to offer same day photo finishing, and Port Guichon Float Home Village, the first strata-title float home development to be approved in BC.

In later years he moved to Cortes Island and became an accomplished artist, working in watercolour and stained glass.

An Army Veteran from Cora Brown

written by Frances O'Grady (née Kellett)

Boyd Kellett was born in Hanley, Saskatchewan, on September 24, 1922. He was seventeen years old when he enlisted with the Saskatoon Light Infantry in 1939. He had to wait in Newfoundland until he was 18 years old before going overseas.

In 1940, Boyd went overseas with the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (PPCLI). They were trained in England. In June 1943, they sailed to Sicily, Italy as part of the Canadian Light Infantry (PPCLI). This was one of the largest seaborne invasions by the Allies.

They freed Sicily from the Germans who were moving north through Italy. The CLI had two big battles in Italy - Ortona and Liri Valley. They advanced to France in 1944 where fighting continued.



Figure 12. [Boyd Kellett on crutches]. (unknown date). (Source: Frances O'Grady née Kellett).

Boyd was shot in the tibia in France. His lower leg and knee had to be amputated. This ended his fighting in World War II. For his bravery, he received the 1939-1945 Star, the France and Germany Star, the Defence Medal, the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal, and the War Medal.

He recovered with other wounded Canadian soldiers in Shaughnessy Hospital in Vancouver, British Columbia. He met nurse Isabel Yeomans and they married on February 4, 1946.

They moved to 175 Myron Drive in Cora Brown, a Veterans' Land Act subdivision on Sea Island. Their four children were born while living on Sea Island. In 1968, they were expropriated and relocated to Burnaby, British Columbia.

In 2026, Boyd Kellett's family nominated him for a Richmond veteran street banner. His banner, along with 113 others, are displayed on streets around Richmond City Hall until December 1, 2026, and again from October 1 to December 1 in both 2027 and 2028.



Figure 13. [Boyd Kellett's veterans banner]. (2026). (Source: Debbie Lee Jiang).

The Tale of the two Eburnes (Sea Island and Vancouver)

In the Sea Island Heritage Society's February 2024 edition of its newsletter (https://seaislandhome.org/SIHS-newsletter_FEB2024.pdf), the Society wrote the story of Eburne, a community on the northeast corner of Sea Island named after William Henry (Harry) Eburne, touching on Eburne in Vancouver, Eburne on Sea Island and the Eburne Post Office. The Society stated that "Initially Eburne was an area consisting of the northeast end of Sea Island (where the McArthurGlen Designer Outlet is now located), the slopes of South Vancouver (renamed Marpole in 1916) and the area across the middle arm of the Fraser River around the Town Hall (moved to the Brighouse area in 1919)." Although the minutes of the Lulu Island West Dyking District Commission list the Town Hall - the first Richmond Town Hall located on Lulu Island, on River Road, just south of Cambie Road – as in Eburne, an 1897 surveyor's map of the area called it the "Townsite of Inglewood." The Society has not been able to verify how the northwest corner of Lulu Island was also referred to as Eburne.

Since then, many of our readers have asked for clarification on the confusion of the many Eburnes. We have structured the following story to include a timeline of events on both sides of the North Arm of the Fraser River, hoping to alleviate this confusion.

One cannot be faulted for being confused when trying to determine where the community of Eburne was situated on Sea Island (an island in the North Arm of the Fraser River, part of Richmond, British Columbia). Depending on your source of information (federal, provincial or municipal), you may have come across addresses such as Eburne, R.R. # 1 Eburne, foot of Shannon Road Eburne, Eburne P.O. and a few variations in between. You have probably also seen Eburne Townsite and Eburne Station along the way to confuse you even more. And if that was not enough, there used to be an Eburne Island, now part of Mitchell Island, an Eburne Public School in Vancouver and an elementary school named Harry Eburne Elementary School on Lulu Island, an Eburne Avenue (present-day S.W. Marine Drive) in Vancouver, and to date, there is now an Eburne Way and Eburne Place on Mitchell Island in Richmond.

This is the fascinating tale of Eburne, a "town" that existed in two cities (Sea Island, Richmond and Vancouver), all named after William Henry (Harry) Eburne (1855-1924) who arrived in British Columbia in 1875 with his foster parents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Cridland. Everything named Eburne in the Richmond and South Vancouver area was named after him.

In the 1890s, in British Columbia, the historical Eburne community spanned the northeast corner of Sea Island (now the site of the McArthurGlen Designer Outlet), in Richmond and the mainland area of South Vancouver, which was officially renamed Marpole in 1916.

Following the opening of the North Arm Bridge (also known as the Sea Island Bridge or the Marpole Bridge) connecting Vancouver to Sea Island and the Middle Arm Bridge (also known as the Lulu Island Bridge or the Eburne Bridge) connecting Sea Island to Lulu Island in 1889, and the opening of the Eburne Post Office and General Store in the Eburne area of Sea Island in 1891, the community grew around the store. The grocery store, the post office and a blacksmith shop huddled at the foot of the bridges, providing vital services to the Sea Island farming community.

Eburne, R.R. #1 Eburne and Eburne P.O.

The 1931 Census used the *de jure* method of enumeration. This meant people were recorded according to their **permanent residence** or base. With 1931 being at the height of the Great Depression, many Canadians were displaced and searching for work. Individuals living in work camps, hobo jungles (an encampment of unemployed, homeless people during the Great Depression), or moving constantly would use a P.O. Box to receive correspondence, and census enumerators would record this as the closest available "residence" or tracking point. And, since Sea Island was considered rural where most homes did not have formal civic addresses or street names, enumerators used Eburne for the residents living in the Eburne town area, R.R. #1 for the residents living outside the Eburne townsite and Eburne P.O., for rural or transient residents to indicate their closest mail hub.

In the screenshot of the 1947 Wrigley map of Vancouver and parts of Richmond below, you can see the Eburne neighbourhoods in both cities (green borders), along with others named after Harry Eburne indicated with red pins.

Eburne (Sea Island) was located at the southern landing of the North Arm Bridge (Sea Island Bridge or Marpole Bridge), on the northeast corner of Sea Island, bordered by Grauer Road and the North Arm of the Fraser River to the north, the Middle Arm of the Fraser River to the east, Miller Road to the south and into farm boundaries, 300 acres of farmland purchased by Jacob Grauer in 1895. In a 1930 map of the wards of Sea Island, Eburne was Section 20, part of Ward 1 (Sea Island).

Eburne (Vancouver) was located at approximately present-day East Boulevard to the west, Oak Street to the east, 70th Avenue (Townsend Road) to the north and the North Arm of the Fraser River to the south.

Pin 1 shows the location of the Eburne Public School in Vancouver, pin 2 - Eburne Island also known as Anderson Island, pin 3 - 160 acres pre-empted by Eburne at the bottom of present-day Fraser Street, pin 4 - North Arm Bridge (Sea Island Bridge or Marpole Bridge) and pin 5 - Middle Arm Bridge (Lulu Island Bridge or Eburne Bridge).

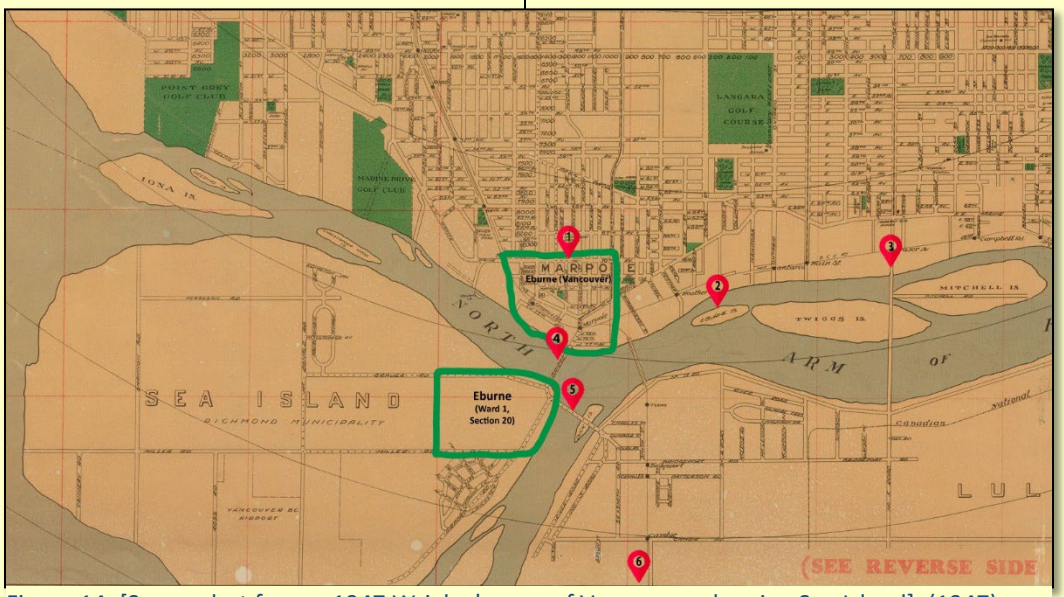


Figure 14. [Screenshot from a 1947 Wrigley's map of Vancouver showing Sea Island]. (1947). (Source: Vancouver Archives VA-LEG1800-017).

Timeline

Just like other rural areas of Canada, Eburne Post Office was the social and economic hub of its community. It was housed in a general store (Eburne Post Office and General Store, Churchill & McKay General Store and Grauer's Store) operated by a local postmaster and played a large role in the establishment of Eburne on Sea Island. The following is a timeline of how Eburne (Sea Island) came to be:

1862

The first Europeans settled in South Vancouver, in the area now called Marpole. Others followed in the mid-1860s, with the pre-emption of Crown land. The Marpole area was originally a Musqueam village named ċəsnaʔəm where for thousands of years it had been occupied by the Coastal Salish peoples. Evidence of Musqueam settlements can be found in the remains of the Marpole middens which extend from 70th Avenue to the Fraser River. It is commemorated in Marpole Park at 72nd Avenue and Cartier Street with a national historic plaque.

1865

In 1865, George Garripie pre-empted the land that was District Lot 318, P.R. 518, between the modern-day roads of East Boulevard, Oak Street and 70th Avenue in Vancouver. This land, initially known as North Arm, would become known as Eburne Townsite (also known as "Eburne Station") after William Henry (Harry) Eburne and renamed Marpole in 1916.

1867

On July 1, 1867, the Dominion of Canada was created (Confederation) and the provincial postal services were merged into the Post Office Department of Canada.

1868

On April 1, 1868, the first *Post Office Act* of the new Dominion took effect.

1871

The first census of Canada was taken on April 2, 1871. British Columbia was not part of the first census as the province only joined Confederation on July 20, 1871.

1875

In February 1875, Harry Eburne travelled from Ontario to British Columbia by train to San Francisco, then by the coastal steamship Enterprise to Gastown (present-day Vancouver). The Enterprise could not go up the Fraser River and stop in New Westminster as usual, because the Fraser River was frozen from the first week of January to the middle of March that year. Harry Eburne was with his foster parents, the Cridlands. Harry and the Cridlands were trying to get to Christopher Wood's place on Sea Island, whom they knew in Ontario. With no roads through the woods to the North Arm, they hired men to take them from Gastown in the Burrard Inlet to Sea Island by rowboat. They got to Christopher Wood's place at midnight, about eighteen hours after they left Gastown.

Harry Eburne and the Cridlands settled near the home of Christopher Wood on Sea Island and Harry quickly went to work for Fitzgerald McCleery and other farmers for the summer. At the end of the summer, he pre-empted 160 acres of land east of the North Arm Road (modern-day Fraser Street in Vancouver) but soon abandoned it.

1878

In the 1878 Henderson's Directory, Eburne (Vancouver) was given its first official name as North Arm with a population of twenty-six.

Harry Eburne bought a small island (District Lot 528) in the North Arm of the Fraser River, just to the east of present-day Cambie Street (Vancouver). Harry farmed on the small island (District Lot 528), eventually named Eburne Island after himself. It was also known as "Anderson Island." The water between Eburne Island, Twigg Island (also known as Bell's Island) was infilled to create what is now present-day Mitchell Island. Eburne Island was joined with Twigg Island in 1922, and Twigg Island was subsequently joined by infill to Mitchell Island in 1926, all part of Richmond.

1879

On November 10, 1879, Lulu and Sea Island were incorporated under the name "*The Corporation of Richmond.*"

1880

The Richmond Council divided the Municipality of Richmond into three wards and revised it to five wards in 1892. Sea Island was Ward 1.

1881

In 1881, Richmond's first Town Hall was erected on Lulu Island at the corner of River Road and Cambie Road. It was a modest wooden building constructed for just $488. The Richmond Town Hall was moved to the Brighouse area of Richmond in 1919 to be more central.

Harry Eburne bought an acre of George Garripie's land at the southeast corner of District Lot 318), at the southern end of Fourth Street (present-day Hudson Street) in Eburne (Vancouver) for $1.00.

After two attempts at farming, Harry Eburne opened a store near the old church on the north side of the Fraser River, on the land he had bought from Garripie, at the bottom of Fourth Street (present-day Hudson Street), opposite the east end of Sea Island, in present-day Marpole (Vancouver). Although the settlement was still officially named North Arm, Harry Eburne's business activities in the area made him well known and respected and soon people began referring to the North Arm settlement as Eburne. Ten years later, the name was officially changed to Eburne.

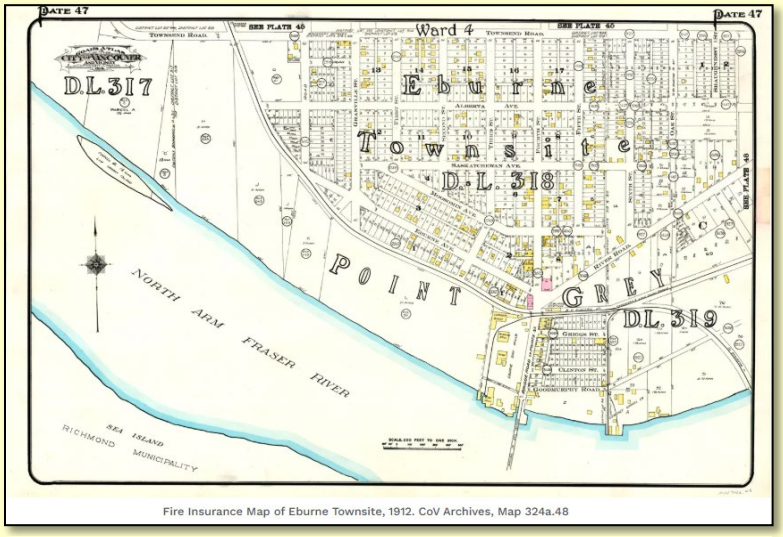


Figure 15. [Fire Insurance Map of Eburne Townsite in Vancouver]. (1912). (Source: Vancouver Archives, Map 324a.48).

1882

On January 1, 1882, the North Arm Post Office opened on Lulu Island, in the home of John W. Sexsmith who was also the first postmaster (January 1, 1882, to April 3, 1885). It remained in the Sexsmith home until 1885.

1885

The North Arm Post Office was moved from the house of J.W. Sexsmith on Lulu Island to Harry Eburne's store on the Vancouver side (in present-day Marpole). Harry Eburne became the second postmaster (October 1, 1885, to July 26, 1894) of the North Arm Post Office, renamed Eburne Post Office in 1892. Harry Eburne and J.W. Sexsmith were friends.

1889

In December 1889, two bridges connecting Vancouver to Sea Island (North Arm, Eburne #4, Sea Island or Marpole Bridge) and the other connecting Sea Island to Lulu Island (Middle Arm, Eburne #5, or Lulu Island Bridge) opened, making access easier to neighbouring communities.

1890

On January 21, 1890, after receiving a petition signed by settlers from both Sea Island and the mainland requesting that the North Arm Post Office name be changed to Eburne Post Office as a great deal of confusion was arising in the mail delivery, the Post Office Inspector sent a request to the Postmaster General, requesting a name change from North Arm Post Office to Eburne Post Office. A handwritten note on the back of the Inspector's requests reads:

> "Eburne is the name of the Postmaster of the "North Arm." As there is no P.O. on the North Arm of the Fraser between New Westminster and the North Arm P.O. it is difficult to see how missing of correspondence can arise. The P.O. of Dutch Village near Halifax is located by known as "North Arm" if that is any argument."

1891

In 1891, Harry Eburne moved the North Arm Post Office store he had initially opened on the North Arm of the Fraser River opposite the northeast corner of Sea Island to the east end of Sea Island between the bridges (the Marpole and Eburne bridges) – a very central location to catch the trade of the two islands (Sea Island and Lulu Island).

1892

On October 1, 1892, the name of the North Arm Post Office was officially changed to Eburne Post Office.



Figure 16. [Eburne Post Office and General Store on Sea Island]. (circa 1890s). (Source: Library and Archives Canada, item number 2265828).

1894

Between 1894 and 1908, the Eburne Post Office saw three more postmasters, S. Churchill (October 1, 1894, to August 31, 1903), James P. Dill (October 1, 1903, to July 13, 1904) and Sidney Bell (August 1, 1904, to August 19, 1908).

Jacob Grauer and his wife Marie opened a butcher shop near the Eburne Post Office and General Store and ran it until 1910, when it was sold to Pat Burns & Co. who moved their operation across the bridge in present-day Marpole, in 1911.

1898

In 1898, Harry Eburne sold his general store and post office to Churchill and McKay. The Eburne Post Office and General Store, now called Churchill & McKay

General Store, was about where the Grauer's Store was later built. Harry Eburne started a chicken farm near the site of his first store (Marpole) and became a successful and well-informed chicken farmer.

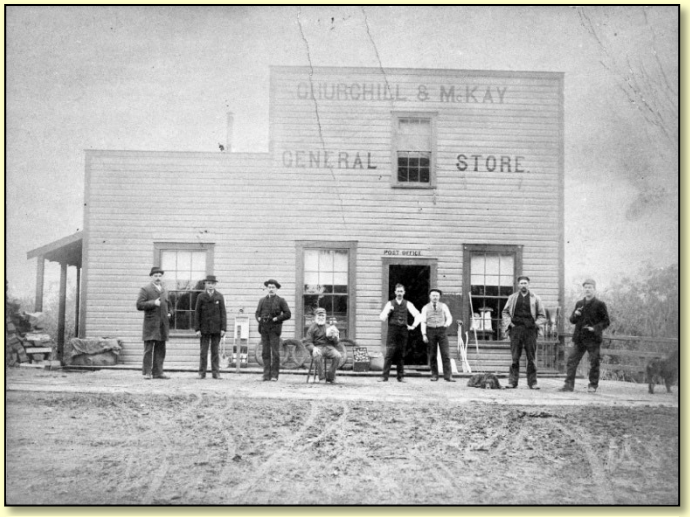


Figure 17. [Churchill & McKay General Store, in Eburne on Sea Island]. (circa 1890s). (Source: Vancouver Archives VA-AM1376-CVA-158-1).

1903

In 1903, Jakob "Jake" Grauer Sr. bought the store and post office from Churchill & McKay and ran the post office himself, until it was turned over to Mr. & Mrs. Jack McGinness in 1936. Mr. McGinness had started as an assistant postmaster in 1911.

1907

The first "Eburne Public School" was built in present-day Marpole. It was a one-room building on West 70th Avenue. In 1913, a four-room frame building was built on the same ground and the school was renamed "Marpole."

1908

Jakob Grauer Sr. was the postmaster of the Eburne Post Office from October 1, 1908, to March 31, 1936, until he passed away.



Figure 18. [Eburne Post Office at Grauer's Store on Sea Island]. (1923). (Source: Richmond Archives 1985-39-149).

1910

Eburne (Vancouver) became part of Point Grey, which separated from the rest of South Vancouver to form its own municipality. In 1912, the Municipality of Point Grey changed the name of Fourth Street to Hudson Street, a name it retains to this day.

1911

On May 15, 1911, the Eburne Station Post Office opened in present-day Marpole. It was renamed Marpole Post Office on June 1, 1916.

When Pat Burns & Co. moved the Grauer's Butcher Shop (they had purchased) across the river, in present-day Marpole, R.M. "Rudy" Grauer, the son of Jacob and Marie, bought the property where his parents' butcher shop had been. This property became the well-known Grauer's Store, a place where locals would drop by to stand around the stove and hear the latest gossip. The property grew to include the old post office/print shop building and the

Eburne Post Office continued from the Grauer's store property until its closure in 1947.

1916

In 1916, the name of Eburne (Vancouver) was changed to Marpole to avoid confusion with the Post Office / Eburne area on Sea Island.

1924

On June 20, 1924, Harry Eburne passed away at 68 years old. He was living at 62 West 63rd Avenue in South Vancouver when he died.

1929

Point Grey and South Vancouver amalgamated with the City of Vancouver, and Marpole became a neighbourhood in the larger City of Vancouver.

1936

The little island (DL 528) owned and farmed by Harry Eburne was designated Eburne Island with the assistance of Vancouver City Archivist Major J.S. Matthews.

John William McGinness and Rudolph Martin Grauer both acted as postmaster of the Eburne Post Office for a brief period in 1936 after the passing of Jacob Grauer who was the postmaster.

1937

John William McGinness was the last postmaster of the Eburne Post Office until its closure in 1947. Mr. McGinness was the postmaster from October 15, 1937 to March 6, 1947.

1947

On March 31, 1947, Eburne Post Office closed. Most of the mail handling was moved to the new Marpole Post Office in South Vancouver.

1957

On July 3, 1957, the Oak Street and Moray Channel bridges were opened. With the new bridges open, the old North Arm bridge (Sea Island Bridge or Marpole Bridge) was removed and the traffic past the Grauer Store was significantly reduced.

1960

An elementary school named Harry Eburne Elementary School opened at the northwest corner of Lulu Island (8671 Odlin Crescent, Richmond) in 1960. It began as a primary annex to Bridgeport Elementary School but became an independent entity in 1977. The school closed in 1982, after commercial and industrial development in the region reduced the number of residences.

1976

On May 31, 1976, after the opening of the Arthur Laing Bridge, the Grauer brothers were forced to close the failing Grauer's store.

1981

In early 1981, the Grauer Store property was sold and the buildings were demolished. This was the end of Eburne on Sea Island.

Conclusion

Thomas Kidd called Harry Eburne's arrival on Sea Island dramatic, while others called him a "colourful" character, a great raconteur. No matter his attributes, Harry Eburne left enough of an impression to have two neighbourhoods in two cities named after him, along with an island, some roads and a school in Vancouver and one in Richmond.

Through our research, we noted that at times some dates (years) differed from the ones found on government documents, possibly being recounted from memory. Where possible, we used the dates

and years on government documents. We were unable to confirm that Eburne also included a small portion of the northwest corner of Lulu Island in Richmond. Like Eburne (Vancouver) being called Eburne for ten years by the locals before officially being named Eburne, it is possible that locals referred to the northwest corner of Lulu Island as Eburne because residents had their address as P.O. Box Eburne, while surveyors for that area of Lulu Island referred to it as the "Townsite of Inglewood."

We hope that the maps, information and timeline above, have helped clarify the confusion of the two Eburnes. Lastly, as you navigate the many Eburnes, if you come across photographs of the late 1890s, early 1900s with Eburne being the only information available, if it is hilly in the photo, you are looking at Eburne (Vancouver). Sea Island has always been and remains flat land surrounded by dikes.

Newspaper Article – '756' Review

On June 7, 2026, Jason Vanderhill sent scanned copies of four issues of the '756' Review newspaper to the Society. Jason donated the issues to the Seaforth Highlanders Museum a few years back. The Museum did a fabulous job of digitizing the issues, and Jason felt the Society should have a copy.

The '756' Review was the Official Organ of Aircraft Lodge 756, International Association of Machinists that Boeing Canada workers had access to.

The article "My Day – At Sea Island" was written by Lionel Martin and was featured on page 4 of the Volume II, Vancouver, BC., January, 1944 edition of the '756' Review.

Due to the small size of the print, the Society has retyped the content of the article verbatim below.

My Day – At Sea Island

By LIONEL MARTIN

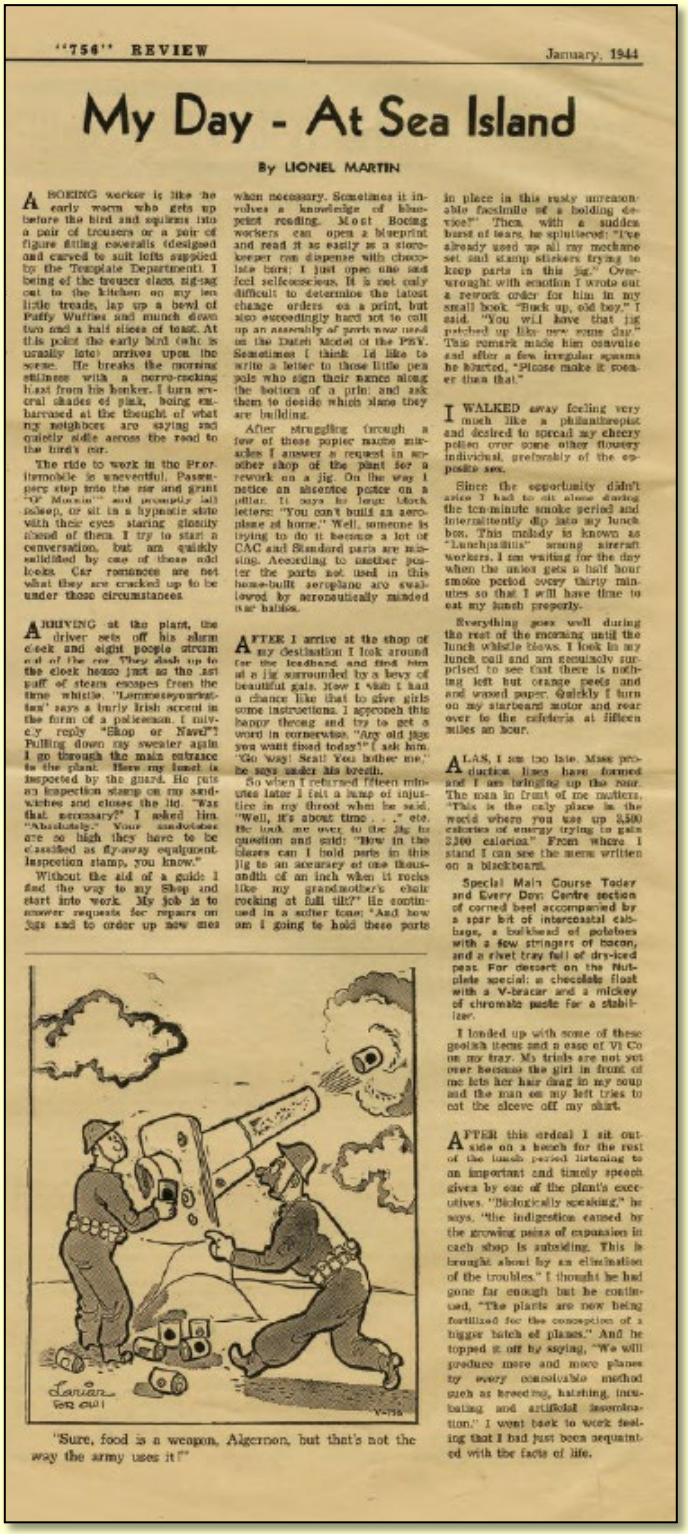
A BOEING worker is like the early worm who gets up before the bird and squirms into a pair of trousers or a pair of figure fitting coveralls (designed and curved to suit lofts supplied by the Template Department). I being of the trouser class, zig-zag out to the kitchen on my ten little treads, lap up a bowl of Puffy Wuffies and munch down two and a half slices of toast. At this point the early bird (who is usually late) arrives upon the scene. He breaks the morning stillness with a nerve-racking blast from his honker. I turn several shades of pink, being embarrassed at the thought of what my neighbors are saying and quietly sidle across the road to the bird's car.

The ride to work in the Prioritymobile is uneventful. Passengers step into the car and grunt "'G Mornin'" and promptly fall asleep, or sit in a hypnotic state with their eyes staring glassily ahead of them. I try to start a conversation, but am quickly solidified by one of those cold looks. Car romances are not what they are cracked up to be under these circumstances.

Arriving at the plant, the driver sets off his alarm clock and eight people stream out of the car. They dash up to the clock house just as the last puff of steam escapes from the time whistle. "Lemmeseyourbutton" says a burly Irish accent in the form of a policeman. I naively reply "Shop or Navel"? Pulling down my sweater again I go through the main entrance to the plant. Here my lunch is inspected by the guard. He puts an inspection stamp on my sandwiches and closes the lid. "Was that necessary?" I asked him. "Absolutely". Your sandwiches are so high they have to be classified as fly-away equipment. Inspection stamp, you know."

Without the aid of a guide I find the way to my Shop and start into work. My job is to answer requests for repairs on jigs and to order up new ones when necessary. Sometimes it involves a knowledge of blueprint reading. Most Boeing workers can open a blueprint and read it as easily as a storekeeper can dispense with chocolate bars; I just open one and feel selfconscious. It is not only difficult to determine the latest change orders on a print, but also exceedingly hard not to call up an assembly of parts now used on the Dutch Model of the PBY. Sometimes I think I'd like to write a letter to those little pen pals who sign their names along the bottom of a print and ask them to decide which plane they are building.

After struggling through a few of these papier mache miracles I answer a request in another shop of the plan for a rework on a jig. On the way I notice an absentee poster on a pillar. It says in large black letters: "You can't build an aeroplane at home." Well, someone is trying to do it because a lot of CAC and Standard parts are missing. According to another poster the parts not used in this home-built aeroplane are swallowed by aeronautically minded war babies.



"756" REVIEW January, 1944

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Since the opportunity didn't arise I had to sit alone during the ten-minute smoke period and intermittently dip into my lunch box. This malady is known as "Lunchpailitis" among aircraft workers. I am waiting for the day when the union gets a half hour smoke period every thirty minutes so that I will have time to eat my lunch properly.

Everything goes well during the rest of the morning until the lunch whistle blows. I look in my lunch pail and am genuinely surprised to see that there is nothing left but orange peels and and waxed paper. Quickly I turn on my starboard motor and roar over to the cafeteria at fifteen miles an hour.

ALAS, I am too late. Mass production lines have formed and I am bringing up the rear. The man in front of me mutters, "This is the only place in the world where you use up 3,500 calories of energy trying to gain 3300 calories." From where I stand I can see the menu written on a blackboard.

Special Main Course Today and Every Day: Centre section of corned beef accompanied by a spar bit of intercoastal cabbage, a bolthead of potatoes with a few stringers of bacon, and a rivet tray full of dry-iced peas. For dessert on the Nut-plate special: a chocolate float with a V-bracar and a mickey of chromate paste for a stabilizer.

I loaded up with some of these geodetic items and a case of Vi Co on my tray. My trials are not yet over because the girl in front of me lets her hair drag in my soup and the man on my left tries to eat the sleeve off my shirt.

AFTER this ordeal I sit outside on a bench for the rest of the lunch period listening to an important and timely speech given by one of the plant's executives. "Biologically speaking," he says, "the indigestion caused by the growing pains of expansion in each shop is subsiding. This is brought about by an elimination of the troubles." I thought he had gone far enough but he continued, "The plants are now being fertilized for the conception of a bigger batch of planes." And he topped it off by saying, "We will produce more and more planes by every conceivable method such as breeding, hatching, incubating and artificial insemination." I went back to work feeling that I had just been acquainted with the facts of life.

"Sure, food is a weapon, Algernon, but that's not the way the army uses it!"

After I arrive at the shop of my destination I look around for the leadhand and find him at a jig surrounded by a bevy of beautiful gals. How I wish I had a chance like that to give girls some instructions. I approach this happy throng and try to get a word in cornerwise. "Any old jigs you want fixed today?" I ask him. "Go 'way! Scat! You bother me," he says under his breath. So when I returned fifteen minutes later I felt a lump of injustice in my throat when he said, "Well, it's about time ... " etc. He took me over to the jig in question and said: "How in the blazes can I hold parts in this jig to an accuracy of one thousandth of an inch when it rocks like my grandmother's chair rocking at full tilt?" He continued in a softer tone: "And how am I going to hold these parts in place in this rusty unreasonable facsimile of a holding device?" Then, with a sudden burst of tears, he spluttered: "I've already used up all my mechano set and stamp stickers trying to keep parts in this jig." Overwrought with emotion I wrote out a rework order for him in my small book. "Buck up, old boy," I said. "You will have that jig patched up like new some day." This remark made him convulse and after a few irregular spasms he blurted, "Please make it sooner than that."

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In Loving Memory

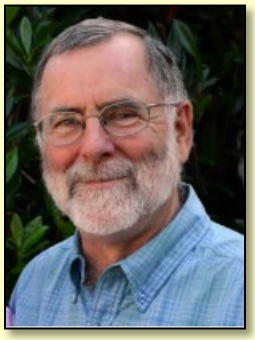
Sadly, we have heard of four Sea Islanders who passed away since our last newsletter.

CAMPBELL, Major Daniel Michael, OMM. AFC, CD, Ret. (1929-2026)



Major Daniel Michael Campbell, Ret. passed away in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, on May 7, 2026, after a brief illness in his 98th year with family by his side. Dan was born in Saskatoon on January 29, 1929, during the Great Depression. At 18, he enlisted in the RCAF, training on all manners of aircraft: Tiger Moths, Harvards, Lancaster Bombers, T-33 jets and helicopters. While stationed at Sea Island as a Flight Lieutenant, he met his soon-to-be-wife, Mary "Jiggs" (née MacDonald), also in the RCAF as a Leading Air Woman. To marry Dan, Mary had to leave the military. They married on April 13, 1953, and had three children, Michael, Stephen and Teresa.

DUNCAN, Robert William Patrick "Bob" (1947-2026)



On July 20, 2026, Bob passed away in Victoria, British Columbia, surrounded by family. He leaves behind Verna, his wife of 53 years and four children: Darren, Allison (Mike) Gratz, Laurie, Peter (Christina) and many grandchildren. Bob grew up on RCAF bases across Canada. At every place he lived, he loved to spend time outside. After his Dad's posting at Patricia Bay, the family moved to Sea Island, before relocating to North Bay, Ontario where he spent his formative years. For most 36 years, he worked as an entomologist for the federal government at the Pacific Forestry Centre in Victoria. Bob was a founding and active member of the BC Fruit Testers Association.

FISCHER, David William "Dave" (1943-2026)



On July 4, 2026, David William Fischer "Dave" passed away with family by his side. David was born on June 11, 1943, in Medicine Hat, Alberta, where he was raised and spent most of his life. From a young age, David loved to stay busy. As a young boy, he was a Royal Canadian Air Cadet and spent a summer at the RCAC camp on Sea Island in 1958. He leaves behind his wife, Carol Fischer (née Betton) and children, Terry (Kathryn), Kevin (Tracey) and Dean (Robyn) and grandchildren.

YAMAMOTO, Isamu "Sam" (1921-2026)



Isamu "Sam" YAMAMOTO peacefully passed away on September 23, 2026, in his home in North Delta, just as he wished.

Sam was born on Sea Island and lived a remarkable life defined by quiet strength, determination and perseverance. He was predeceased by his beloved wife, June YAMAMOTO, his sister Emiko and his brothers, Mas and Tom. He leaves behind three children, Chris (Jan), Darwin (Sandra) and Norine, five grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. He is survived by his sisters, Hamako and Midori, brother Tats and many loving nieces and nephews.

Sea Island Artifacts and Memorabilia

Over the past few months, we have had some lovely donations. Donations are welcomed and appreciated. If you are downsizing or just cleaning out those boxes from the basement or attic, anything "Sea Island" would be most appreciated. Contact Eunice at eunice@genbug.ca.

CONTACT US

If you have questions, comments, or want to share your memories and photos, we would love to hear from you.

To submit a letter, documents, photos, or a cheque for your membership or donation via snail mail:

Sea Island Heritage Society
Box 88051, Lansdowne Mall
Richmond, British Columbia
V6X 3T6

To be added to our e-Newsletter, or send us an email: info@seaislandhome.org

To join, renew your membership or donate by e-Transfer: treasurersihs@seaislandhome.org

Website: https://seaislandhome.org

Follow us on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/seaislandheritagesociety

"Sea Island is located within the traditional territory of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Peoples."