

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,

The SIHS has been very busy since April, participating in many wonderful events:

- Regional Richmond Heritage Fair
- Sea Island Heritage Society's Annual Celebration and Reunion held at the Sea Island School gym
- Doors Open
- Burkeville Daze
- And, as always, our fun and informative monthly online Coffee Chats!

We've enjoyed involvement in all these events. Many people stopped by to ask questions about Sea Island's past, some were younger people asking wonderfully curious questions about the places and people of Sea Island.

In May, Bill McNulty's book, *Sea Island, British Columbia - The Beginning of Richmond*, was published and available for sale at our annual celebration - over 75 books have sold since then! See details about the book this issue.

As September marks the beginning of a new fiscal year for SIHS, we will be holding an Annual General Meeting in October online. Join us in recognizing our accomplishments while giving input for the future, especially how we might celebrate our 25th anniversary in 2026.

In this issue we honour World Teachers' Day with the story of Mrs. Newton, a teacher at Sea Island School in the 1950s. The story of Mah Look is a well-researched genealogy of his farming family. Terry Slack shares the hard work and tenacity gained from river life. The stories help to keep our heritage vibrant and visible.

A huge thank you to our directors and volunteers for their tireless efforts. They continue to investigate and archive material, update and maintain website and social media accounts, balance the books, and deliver quarterly newsletters. They are terrific.

In closing, I ask that you take time to remember our recently passed Sea Island friends. Their memories are an important part of our legacy.

Finally, my thanks to all of you! Without your support, we would not be able to operate and offer educational opportunities to the community in the way we do.

Eunice Robinson



President

Sea Island Heritage Society

The ongoing work we do!

As usual, we have been quite busy since our newsletter in April 2025. Here's some highlights:

- In April 2025, we met with Maria Martins, Manager of the Agassiz-Harrison Museum, to discuss best practices to digitize the Society's Collection to make it more accessible to the members of the Society and the public, while keeping cost in mind. A work group is actively aligning a new set of naming conventions for folders and files within our Collection.
- Since April 2025, our website has gone through a review and we are now working on updating identified content and adding a new webpage on the Chinese pioneers of Sea Island and possibly a new webpage of the farms/farmers of Sea Island. We are hoping to go live with the new content in December 2025.
- As you all know we have a Facebook page for the Sea Island Heritage Society. You can find us here: <https://www.facebook.com/seaislandheritagesociety/>. We constantly post updates and photos of interest while responding to your comments. We're excited to announce that we now have a second location! One location is never enough! You can now be social with us at two Facebook locations. Our second site is the "Sea Island Heritage Group." You can connect with us there at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1330798908139801>. As a member of the group, you can post photos and comments for others in the group. Check it out. There is at least a new posting every two weeks.

Sea Island Heritage Group

Public group · 67 members



Request Centre

DANCE LESSONS

If any Burkeville residents took dancing lessons from Marge Berry or remember her, please contact Sharon Bordeleau (née McDonald) at sdbordel@rogers.com.

Upcoming Events

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING -



Calling on all members to join us at the virtual Annual General Meeting (AGM) to be held on October 16, 2025, via Zoom (email notice forthcoming).

This will be an **evening event**, combined with our monthly Coffee Chat. The AGM will start at 7 p.m., followed by the Coffee Chat. The whole evening event will be held from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Current members can vote on SIHS matters.

COFFEE CHATS



A HUGE benefit to being a member of SIHS is your access to participate in the monthly Coffee Chats. The Coffee Chat is a Zoom event that is held on the 3rd Thursday every month from 10 a.m. to noon. We send every member a Zoom link to these events a week prior to when they occur. Coffee Chats are not held in July, August or December.

We've been asked by some of our members to consider having the occasional Coffee Chat in the evening. Because of these requests, the evening of October 16th we are holding two events, the AGM will start at 7 p.m. followed by the Coffee Chat ending at 9 p.m.

The events are lightly themed, but they also provide a forum for us all to connect from wherever we are and spend a couple of hours together.

Perhaps you have a desire to discuss something of importance or feel the need to connect with an acquaintance you haven't seen or spoken to for some time. Maybe you want to bring up some interesting point or just sit back and listen to the rest of us ramble on.... This is the place to do it!

For the remainder of 2025 the dates and themes of the Coffee Chats are:

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>September 18, 2025 10 a.m. to noon</p> | <p>Reunion Review & 2026 Coffee Chat ideas</p> | <p>We'll share some photos and stories from the reunion. Let's talk about the location for 2026, a celebration of 25 years! We're also seeking input from everyone on CC topics for 2026. This is your chance to participate, and to bring your ideas to the Chat! See you there.</p> |
| <p>October 16, 2025 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. (Evening Event)!</p> | <p>AGM & Sea Island WWII</p> | <p>Learn about Sea Island's role in WWII, the activities, the people and an unexpected romance.</p> |
| <p>November 20, 2025 10 a.m. to noon</p> | <p>Signage Discussion</p> | <p>We have a few different signage projects on the go on Sea Island. Hear an update on what & where these are and to give input on these and future projects.</p> |

As a member, look for an email invitation to these events as we get closer to them. If you're not a member but would like to participate, just send us an email and we'll happily provide you with the Zoom link. New participants are always welcome! See the end of the newsletter for contact information.

If you have any questions or need some assistance with Zoom don't hesitate to reach out to David England, our VP. He will gladly walk you through it before the Coffee Chat.

Looking forward to seeing you all online!

LOL! THE STORIES WE TELL – FROM THE JUNE COFFEE CHAT:

- We used to wave then swim out to the guys on the tugboats in the North Arm. Once, one of the guys swam to shore. We were too shy to meet him so hid behind the logs while he visited with parents, Jim and Bess Hamalock, and then swam back to the tug (Eunice Robinson née Hamalock and Marilyn Low née McClellan).
- I remember as a toddler (age 3) my dad took me to the river on the dike by the Marpole Bridge to see the 1948 Flood. I didn't know what was floating down the swollen river, but dad said it was a dead cow (Doug Eastman).
- During the 60's, a large dredging pipe stretched from Golflands to the new terminal. As kids, we challenged ourselves to crawl inside it as far as we could before turning back, often losing sight of the entrance after a few yards. It was a scary experience for me, though others seemed unfazed. Looking back now I realize we were crazy! (David England).

- When I was a young teen my morning paper route included the weather office at the Vancouver Airport South Terminal. I had to walk up the outside stairs at the back of the building. At the top, outside the entrance door was a side landing on the stairs that jutted out where they launched weather-gathering balloons (Doug Eastman).
- I delivered the newspaper to the women's barracks on the RCAF base. As usual, when a male is present in the barrack, someone would shout out a warning that there was a man inside. I was always looking out for him not realizing they were talking about me, a young boy!! (Doug Eastman).
- We used to make mud pies in the ditch and, hiding there, we'd throw them at cars passing by. One time we successfully hit a car multiple times, later to find that car parked in my family's driveway - they had come to visit my parents! (Doreen King née Forsyth).

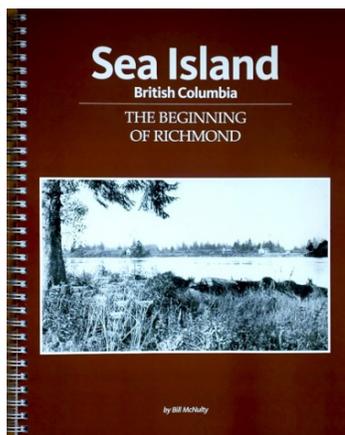
MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

December is the time to join or renew your membership with the Sea Island Heritage Society. We offer both annual and lifetime membership. If you are a lifetime member, no action is necessary.

Watch for the further reminders in the November's newsletter and notices prior to and during the month of December.



SEA ISLAND BRITISH COLUMBIA - THE BEGINNING OF RICHMOND



By Bill McNulty

This is a must read for all past and current residents of Richmond, BC and the surrounding areas and others interested in learning about the rich heritage and history of Sea Island. Packed with historic details, readers are provided with a broader and more complete understanding of changes and accomplishments of those that lived on Sea Island.

The author, an elected Councillor for the City of Richmond and a long-time resident, provides chronological insights into Sea Island, BC, where Richmond truly began.

The book is 223 pages, full of Sea Island's past to enjoy for many years. It contains over 380 photos of which over 75 are unique, never seen before images from the Sea Island Heritage Society's collection.

Books can be obtained from the Sea Island Heritage Society at \$40 CAD each. We ship anywhere in Canada for an additional \$24 CAD per book. Contact us at info@seaislandhome.org.

SPRING 2025 WAS BUSY!

The Society was involved in its usual three Spring events, the Society's *Sea Island Celebration*, *Doors Open*, and *Burkeville Daze*. This year, the Society was invited to participate in the *Richmond Regional Heritage Fair* as judges.

The following are bits and pieces of these events.

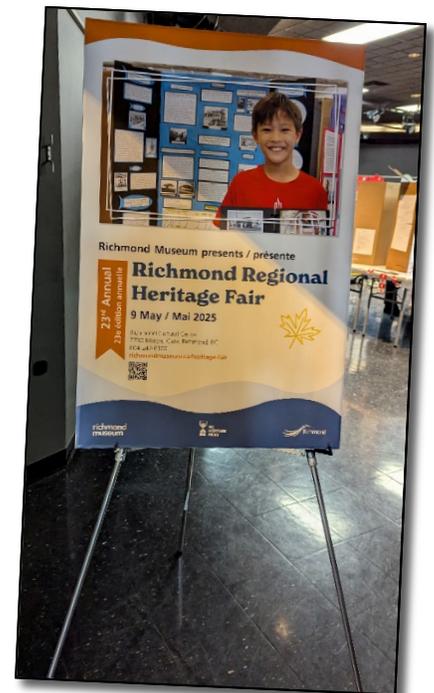
RICHMOND REGIONAL HERITAGE FAIR

The Richmond Museum contacted the Society, requesting interested judges for the Richmond Regional Heritage Fair. What an honour!

On May 9, 2025, Karen Tourangeau & Marylin Low got up early and headed over to the fair held at the Richmond Library and Cultural Centre. Being first-time judges, Karen and Marylin were each paired with an experienced judge and spent the day interviewing Richmond students from Grade 5 to 7 who had 15 minutes to present their project and answer questions.

The topics ranged from tough subjects like scars of residential schools to more science-based projects and lighter subjects like the Edmonton Mall. As all judges learned about each student's project, some stood out and were identified for potential awards and a chance to go to the Provincials.

Good luck to the students moving on to the Provincials, and congratulations on a great effort by all the students!



DOORS OPEN

It was a very successful day with over 26 individuals stopping by at the Sea Island Annex (formerly Sea Island School) to learn more about the history and heritage of Sea Island.



During the day, Eunice Robinson and David England presented a copy of Bill McNulty's book, *Sea Island, The Beginning of Richmond*, to Tamás Revoczi, the President of the Sea Island Community Association (SICA) for the Renée Robinson Memorial Truth & Reconciliation Library at the Sea Island Community Centre.

SEA ISLAND CELEBRATION



This year's Sea Island reunion became a celebration at the Sea Island School gym, where we hope to host and celebrate our 25th anniversary next year.

Thanks to our treasurer, Doreen King, and her husband, Peter, for getting chairs, tables and tablecloths to help us set up.





With displays set up around the gym, tables in the middle and a photo booth area in front of the “The Best Little School in the World” sign on the wall, guests started to arrive and mingle.

Along with displays on Find-a-Grave entries, Sea Island veterans and others, we set up a table at the front of the gym to promote Bill McNulty's book, *Sea Island, British Columbia - The Beginning of Richmond*.



This year, a display on the Chinese pioneers of Sea Island, was a new addition.





The afternoon continued with refreshments, lots of refreshments!

Thank you to all the volunteers who made it happen, and most of all, thank you to all who attended and made this a positive day of mingling and connecting.

BURKEVILLE DAZE 2025



Once again, as we have done for the past 10 plus years, the Society participated in *Burkeville Daze*, an annual family-oriented event hosted by the Sea Island Community Association. This year's event was held on June 22, 2025.

Our class photo books and house history books were a great hit. Curious residents stopped by and helped us add more names to class photos and provided information about some of the houses in Burkeville.



This year, we added Bill McNulty's book "*Sea Island British Columbia - The Beginning of Richmond*" to our display. A few residents walked away with their own copy.

Dorothy Annette Fletcher (Mrs. Newton)



Figure 1. [Dorothy Annette Fletcher (Mrs. Newton)]. (unk.date) (Source: SIHS Collection).

Dorothy Annette Fletcher was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba on November 25, 1929, to Edward Durlin Fletcher (born Burma, 1896) and Lena Grace Reid (born New Brunswick, 1895). A brother, Edward Reid followed in 1933. In the years between their two children's births, the Newton family moved to Vancouver where Dorothy attended Point Grey Junior High and graduated from Lord Byng Senior Secondary School. She then attended Vancouver Normal School for teacher-training from 1948-1949 where she met her future husband, Donald Gladwyn Newton. Some will recall Mr.

Newton as a teacher at Cambie Junior High (and other schools) who was happy, well-liked and respected by his students!

Mrs. Newton began teaching at Sea Island Elementary in 1950, mostly grades three and four, while Mr. Newton began his career in the Kootenays. However, he soon returned to Vancouver to be closer to her and subsequently they became the very first couple to be married at the new Fairview Baptist Church on June 29, 1951, reception following at Point Grey Golf and Country Club. They then took up residence in Richmond at 233 Wellington Crescent in Burkeville.



Figure 2. [class photo - Sea Island School Division 6]. (October 1955). (Source: SIHS Collection).

Practically everyone has heard of the MacLean's Method of Handwriting and Mrs. Newton was an advocate. It was obvious her penmanship was immaculate, and she fostered this attribute in her students.

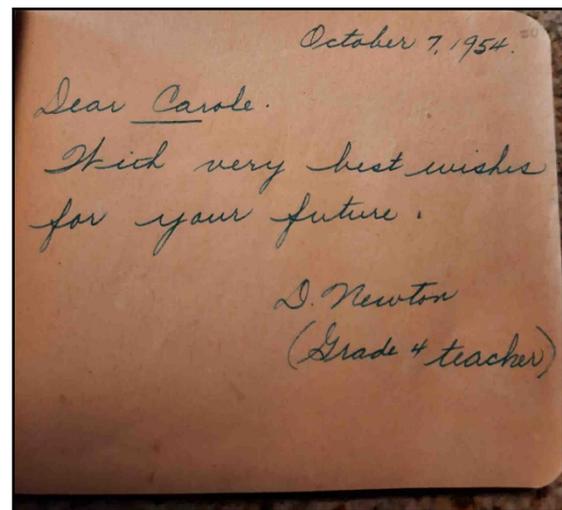


Figure 3. [Mrs. Newton's penmanship - note to Carole Lefler]. (October 7, 1954). (Source: Carole Lefler).

SIHS archivist Doug Eastman recalls, being a southpaw, having to push his hand through wet ink with a straight pen, consequently producing messy, smudged copies time after time--let us just say that he struggled with it all. But, and he

says kudos to his teacher, he remembers travelling by bus to the Orpheum Theatre to hear the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra...to appreciate 'the finer things in life'. In class they would sing songs from musicals such as *Oklahoma* played on Mrs. Newton's record player and, as well, just listen to classical music with eyes closed and visualize what and when each different instrument was playing. It doesn't get much better than that. How is that for a 'classical' education?

In 1959 the Newton family left Richmond and relocated to Vancouver and Mrs. Newton retired from classroom teaching. Raising a family, becoming a Brownie leader and working in a PTA affiliation with her daughters' elementary school brought her to the year 1974. It is at this time that she accumulated eight years of teaching assignments at Sir Wilfred Laurier, Sir Guy Carleton, Walter Moberly Annex and Captain James Cook, all elementary schools located in Vancouver. Her role in these instances in the words of her daughter Denise:

"...frequently involved providing instruction and support to students with diverse learning and language needs. Dorothy excelled at building a positive rapport with children and their families, offering encouragement, and boosting each student's confidence and esteem."

This work could be considered comparable to the dedication being practiced in Resource and Withdrawal and Special Needs Departments in most Canadian schools today.

An interesting aside: a name and address on the death registration of Edward Reid Fletcher, Mrs. Newton's brother, helped us locate a

niece, Diane Dunaway, who along with her husband owns Dunaway Ranch Bee Happy Honey in Williams Lake, British Columbia. She is an author, apiary inspector and bee handler and it was through her that the contact details of the Newton daughters, Carolyn and Denise, were found. We all know bees are very important in our world today. According to Ms Dunaway, there is evidence the bees can be used to find land mines. In recent years in Fairfax, Virginia, they have been used to find bodies--'tiny crime fighters with wings' (as per Mary Ellen O'Toole, director of George Mason's College of Science).

The Newtons enjoyed many trailering holidays, Cultus Lake being a favourite destination. Lively games of bridge kept Mrs. Newton and her close circle of friends occupied. She also had a talent for creating beautiful flower arrangements.

Unfortunately, life does not always go as planned and Mrs. Newton passed away at the very young age of 52 on November 11, 1982, and as her daughter Denise stated, they never had the opportunity to ask her about her life and career experiences once she and her sister became adults, teachers and mothers themselves.



Figure 4. [Find-a-Grave entry for Dorothy Annette Fletcher Newton]. (unk date). (Source: Find-a-Grave).

MAH Look, Chinese pioneer farmer

The Sea Island Heritage Society brings you its second Chinese pioneer family story. This is the story of MAH Look, a Chinese farmer on Sea Island, his wife GIN Shee, and their children as we know it so far. Much is still a mystery, like where did the children go to school. The Society has located living descendants of two of the children. The descendants of MAH Wah live in the USA and the descendants of MAH James live in Canada. The names of the older generations follow the traditional naming convention of Chinese names, surname first followed by given names. The names of the younger generations are written given names following by surname. The story has been condensed for the newsletter. Please contact the Society for the longer version.



Figure 5. [MAH Look, 45-years old]. (April 28, 1924). (Source: C.I. 44 - Library & Archives Canada).

MAH Look was born on March 26, 1879, in the village of Ping On, in the province of Guangdong in China. MAH Look arrived in Canada aboard the Empress of Japan ship on May 22, 1895. He settled on a farm on Sea Island located on the east side of Shannon Road, in the 200 block, across from where the late Doreen BRAVERMAN

lived by the Acme Cannery.

Harmony MAH, the great granddaughter of MAH Look and GIN Shee said:

“When her Dad (Dennis MAH) was three years old, her great grandfather MAH Look and her grandfather, MAH James, took him

to see the house on Shannon Road before it was demolished in 1950.”

GIN Shee, MAH Look’s wife, was born in about 1874 in the village of Gow Long, also in the province of Guangdong in China. She arrived in Vancouver aboard the Empress of Japan ship on July 3, 1909, and joined her husband on Sea Island. GIN Shee arrived with two children, MAH Hong who was 13 years old and MAH Woo Fong who was 8 years old.



Figure 6. [GIN Shee, at approximately 50 years old]. (June 13, 1924). (Source: C.I. 44 certificate - Library & Archives Canada).

By 1923, MAH Look and GIN Shee had 10 or 11 children. It is possible that the boy known as MAH James is the same person as MAH Chong (*the Society continues to try to confirm this matter*). The two elder boys were born in China and arrived in Canada with their mother. The other eight (or nine) children were born in Canada, seven of them on Sea Island and one in Vancouver. The Society has located living descendants of two of MAH Look and GIN Shee’s sons: MAH Wah and MAH James.

GIN Shee passed away on January 14, 1946. MAH Look and GIN Shee were still living on the farm at 230 Shannon Road, on Sea Island when she passed away. She is buried beside MAH Look at the Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Burnaby.

MAH Look passed away on March 20, 1963. He had retired from farming and was living with his daughter, MAH Ong Nee “Nina” and his son, MAH Donald, at 868 West 17th Avenue in

Vancouver at the time of his death. MAH Look is buried beside his wife at the Forest Lawn Memorial Park.



Figure 7. [Tombstone for MAH Look, 1879-1963, Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Burnaby]. (November 29, 2024). (Source: Sea Island Heritage Society).

The characters on his tombstone read top down and right to left. Translated in Pinyin, they read as follows:

MAH Xin Xu (Cantonese: MAH Shin Shu or MAH Sin Soo) / Taishan County, Bai Sha District / Upper MAH Shek Ping An Village.

THE CHILDREN

The eldest son, MAH Hong, was born in about 1896 in the village of Ping On, in the province of Guangdong. On May 20, 1924, when he registered under the *Chinese Exclusion Act, 1923*, he was listed as a restaurateur in Vancouver. MAH Hong would have been 28 years old at the time. His brother, MAH Woo Fong, was also born in the village of Ping On in about 1901. On June 9, 1924, he registered under *Chinese Exclusion Act, 1923*, he was listed as a cook in Mission City, BC.

MAH Wah was the first son born on Sea Island on May 2, 1903. On November 17, 1920, at the

age of 17, MAH Wah sailed to Hong Kong from Vancouver. He returned to Canada on July 8, 1922. While in China, he married CHAN Choi Yuk (born on November 22, 1894). They had their first daughter, Betty MAH born in 1921 before returning to Canada. MAH Wah went back to China in 1928 at the age of 25 years



Figure 8. [Photo of CHAN Choi Yuk, wife of MAH Wah, from her Hong Kong Identity Card]. (1954). (Source: George WONG Family Collection).

old. He returned to Canada in 1930. While in China MAH Wah and CHAN Choi Yuk had a second daughter, Bik Shui MA (aka Beck Sheu MAH), born on June 19, 1929. They also had an adopted son, Gok Gun MAH Gok Gun who was living in North York, Ontario in 2006.

CHAN Choi Yuk and their two daughters never had a chance to immigrate to Canada. MAH Wah passed away on January 7, 1931, in Vancouver. His daughters were ten and almost four years old.

Beck Sheu MAH married Fun WONG (aka Chick Sheu WONG) in China. Chick Sheu WONG immigrated to Nassau in the Bahamas around 1953. Beck Sheu MAH followed two years later and they opened a grocery store. They had seven children, all born in the Bahamas. The whole family immigrated to Florida in the USA in 1974.



Figure 9. [Photo of the Beck MAH and Chick WONG family. Left to right: Robert WONG, Beck Sheu MAH, George WONG, Chick WONG, Eugene WONG, Yvonne WONG, Mary WONG, Berlin WONG, and Rondol WONG taken in Nassau in the Bahamas]. (1968). (Source: George WONG Family Collection).

CHAN Choi Yuk, MAH Wah's wife immigrated to Miami, Florida in 1975 at the age of 80 years old.

MAH Moi "May", MAH Look and GIN Shee's first daughter, was born on January 5, 1910, in Vancouver. MAH May married YIP Foo. Together they had two daughters. MAH May passed away in Vancouver on May 25, 2000.

MAH Young was born on January 16, 1912, on Sea Island. He married WONG Alice. They had one son. MAH Young passed away on June 17, 1948.

MAH Jean was born on February 26, 1914, on Sea Island. She married THOM Harry Jung of Nanaimo where they lived until they passed away. MAH Jean and THOM Harry had four children. MAH Jean passed away on March 17, 1978.

MAH Yew, also known as MAH Neil and MAH Neil Fong was born on September 22, 1915, on Sea Island. MAH Neil Fong was married twice. He first married LOW Annie Lin Ying in 1940. They had two children. By 1953, MAH Neil Fong was married to LEE Ella. They had three sons. MAH Neil Fong passed away on November 16, 1978, in Vancouver.



Figure 10. [MAH Neil Fong, photo by Yucho Chow Studio]. (circa 1939). (Source: City of Vancouver Archives AM1688-S1-F6-: 2021-034.352).

MAH Ong Nee "Nina" was born on November 18, 1916, on Sea Island. When MAH Look passed away in 1963, he was living with MAH Nina and his son MAH Donald at 868 West 17th Avenue in Vancouver.

MAH Chong was born on November 15, 1919, on Sea Island. Other than appearing on both of MAH Look and GIN Shee's C.I. 44 certificates (Chinese Immigration registration during the Exclusion Act), the Society has not been able to locate other information on MAH Chong.

MAH James was born around 1921 based on his marriage certificate. MAH James married LEW Yoke Tani "Elsie" on November 21, 1946, in Vancouver. LEW Elsie was born on January 26, 1923, in Vancouver.

James and Elsie had four children. They were married for 60 years before James passed away in 2006. Elsie passed away on February 16, 2020.

MAH Donald was born on April 18, 1923, on Sea Island. He was single when he passed away on October 24, 1979.

PART 2: Slack Family River History



written by Terry Slack

Terry Slack has shared many vivid memories of family life at the mouth of the North Arm of the Fraser River.

Read about Terry's early years living with his family on a float house on the North Arm Jetty, an extension of Iona Island, in the 2025 April SIHS newsletter. He ended Part 1 with:

We'd get our groceries for the week, but the real problem was water. We found a spring, over directly across the river from us, which is now Pacific Spirit Park on the University of British Columbia Endowment Lands. We used to row across there to 'Booming Ground Creek' where people were sorting logs. There was also a splitter mill there. This is where we got our water for a while.

A Move to the North Side of the River

When living on the Iona Island jetty, we would row across McDonald Channel to visit friends on Sea Island. We always had to hide the old rowboat high up in the slough marshes.

By late 1953, we decided that rowing across the river for fresh water was precarious much of the time. You had to go at high tide because of all the mud flats. We decided to wait until Christmas for the big 16-foot tides of winter and move our float home to the north side of the

river. One of the log salvage boys towed the three family floating homes. One belonged to my grandfather Frank, another to my father, Alf, and one to my dad's brother, John (Jack). We could only get them off the beach on the big tides to tow them across the river, and squat again. But there was fresh water for us to drink. We were the first family to move across the river from the North Arm Jetty. We stayed there until 1956/57.

When we crossed over, we happened to make a mistake. We put our houses on Musqueam Reserve land, beaching them across the river and the next thing we know there is a bang on the door. It was two Musqueam men from the reserve. They said, "You can't stay here, this is our land." We understood that and asked, "Where can we go?" They told us to move just a little bit west of Booming Ground Creek, we would find a leased piece of land. H. R. MacMillan used this as a booming ground. They told us to put the float houses there. So again, we waited for another big tide of winter and moved them over to that area.



Figure 11. [Booming ground and North Arm Jetty from monument lookout]. (2025). (Source: Janet Mak).

Now we were a little bit east of the lookout, on Southwest (SW) Marine Drive where there's a monument dedicated to the exploration of the

Fraser River. The trail we took, from the float house to get to SW Marine Drive, goes up /down the cliff face and is still there about one block east of that monument.

There was a huge landslide the day before Christmas that year (ca.1953) where we parked the float house. Smashed trees and massive amounts of mud covered the little float house. One end was starting to sink. We got the backend into the forest on logs and an old plank became a floating walkway! The float house roof collapsed, and the old lumber scow got stuck solid in slide mud. A big flood tide was coming in fast. There was no stopping the water from filling the house, so mom put our Xmas presents on top of our interior float house floating stuff. A later low tide and digging around the float house with the help of booming ground workers and neighbours freed our house from being stuck in the mud. It was a big cleanup just to get the float house in shape for the next few days. Next tide, it was floating again! We did it - one room done and warm with the stove working. Oh, what a Christmas we had!

We walked 3.5 miles from Booming Ground Creek to a little store in Dunbar to get our groceries and then walked back all the way along Southwest Marine Drive, down the trail to where our houses were. It was kind of a treat, because we never had to row up the river anymore. It was a walk instead of a row, a very long walk. Etched in a rock along the Booming Grounds trail is Terry's story.

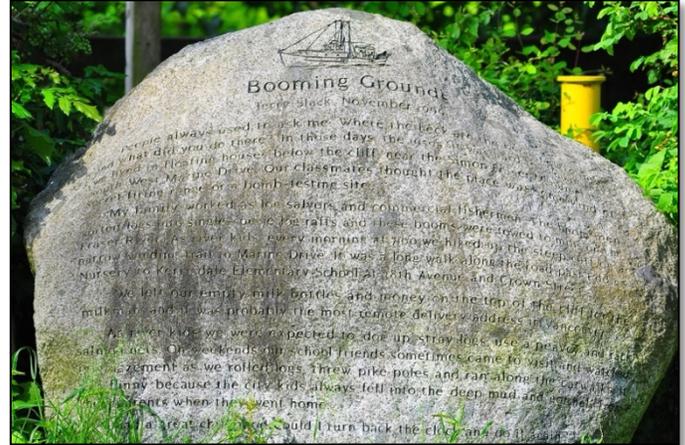


Figure 12. [Terry's booming ground life etched in rock]. (1999). (Source: Terry Slack).

Booming Grounds

Terry Slack November 1999

People always used to ask me. Where the heck are the booming grounds? And what did you do there? In those days it was hard to explain we lived in floating houses by the Simon Fraser Monument on Southwest Marine Drive. Our classmates thought the place was some kind of secret firing range or bomb testing site.

My family worked as log salvors and commercial fishermen. The boom men sorted logs into single-specie log rafts and these booms were rowed to mills on the Fraser River.

Every morning at 7:00 we hiked up the steep cliff on a narrow winding trail to Marine Drive. It was a long walk along the road past Eddie's nursery to Kerrisdale Elementary at 8th Avenue and Crown Street.

We left our empty milk bottles on the top of the cliff for the milkman and it was probably the most remote delivery address in Vancouver.

As river kids, we were expected to dog up stray logs, use a peavey and rack salmon nets. On weekends our school friends would sometimes come to visit and watched with amazement as we

rolled logs, threw pike poles and ran along the catwalks. It was funny because the city kids always fell into the mud and got hell from their parents when they went home. What a great childhood. Could I turn back the clock and do it again?

In 1956/57, our family was the first to leave the booming grounds. We decided that we wanted to be closer to schooling and amenities, so we moved to Blenheim Street, on the Blenheim Flats. We rented a house at 7325 Blenheim Street. I was sixteen or seventeen at the time. That's where we really connected with the people in the Celtic Island area and around Celtic Slough.

Then in 1959, we moved to 28th and Dunbar and bought a house. The last payment for the house on 28th was around 1963. I helped pay for the house mortgages working at B.C. Packers Celtic Shipyard as an apprentice boat builder and shipwright and fishing for sockeye during the summer on the night tides. We would chop up mill log ends or "Lily pads" and sell as firewood. Three mortgages later we managed to burn the last payment receipt stamped paid in the fireplace.

It was difficult at first to learn the ways of earning some money from the river, but the family worked very hard at it. I am the last of the Slack family that gillnetted for salmon.

I have caught sturgeon numerous times. One time, I caught a rare green sturgeon in the North Arm of the Fraser. It was a beautiful fish. I always treat them with respect by removing them from the net and releasing them back to the river. Why? My grandfather and uncle said, "These are fish that belong to the King." That is what they understood in England. Atlantic sturgeon entering the English Rivers in the 16th and 17th century belonged to the King of

England, and they should not be consumed by the fisherman or the common people of England. I practice catch and release of sturgeon in the lower Fraser River to this day.



Figure 13. [Terry's carving of a sturgeon he donated to the Sea Island Heritage Society]. (2024). (Source: Marylin Low).

I spent quite a few years log salvaging and gillnetting in the North and Middle Arms of the Fraser River and loved all the years doing what I loved! I was involved in countless salmon and sturgeon conservation efforts over the many, many years of fishing in those Arms. My dad, Alf Slack, left me with this: "Son, when you take so much from a wonderful river, make some time to give back to the North and Middle Arms of the Fraser River. You must talk for the river whenever possible!" And that's what I have tried to do.

Co-editors' note: Terry continues his Fraser River advocacy long into retirement, participating in many environmental groups. A few include the Fraser River Coalition and Fraser River Sturgeon Conservation Society as a founding member. He published *Distribution of Green Sturgeon* in BC for a 1996 Cordillera publication. Terry also helped create the Pacific Spirit, Fraser River and Abasu Parks as well as many Fraser River public walkways in

Vancouver/Marpole/Dunbar. He continues to host walking history tours of the area.

For his ongoing commitment to the river, he has received:

- 1986 Expo Award of Appreciation.
- 2001 Fraser River and its Fishery Award from the Fraser River Coalition.
- 2003 Queens Golden Jubilee Award.
- 2005 Mayor's Environmental Achievement Award (Vancouver).

- Vancouver Natural History (Frank Sanford Award for Community Service 2006).
 - Nature Vancouver Volunteer Award 2020.
- View a short video of Terry proudly telling his story at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UZuyYBkUX1U>.

Watch for more river stories in our 2026 newsletters!

IN LOVING MEMORY

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

CASSANDRA "SANDY" PAULINE BUDD NÉE GATES (1957-2025)



Cassandra "Sandy" Pauline Budd (née Gates) died suddenly on July 2, 2025, at the age of 68 years old. Sandy's uncontrived charm and personal strength brought out the best in others. She was a fantastic cook, and a great champion for social, labour and environmental causes. Sandy is survived by her husband of 49 years, Curtis James Budd and siblings, Vince, Joanne, Dan and Jenny. She was predeceased by her sister Robin, mother Pauline Alice Gates and Ronald Harvey Gates. Sandy leaves behind a large extended family throughout Canada.

JOHN "JACK" FRANCIS HOGGARD (1943-2025)



John "Jack" Francis Hoggard died peacefully on April 6, 2025, at the age of 82. Jack was raised on Sea Island where his family operated a dairy and potato farm. He moved to Delta when he was 11 years old. Jack was known for his deep love of dairy and potato farming, his love for animals. He had an unwavering work ethic and was an easygoing spirit. He is survived by his wife, Mary Ann, his children, Jack Jr. (Diana), Kimberlea (Andrew), Ed (Sarah), and his stepchildren, Sandra (Jag), Kirk (Chelsea) and Jordan. He was also a proud grandfather.

JOY KAUSS NÉE HALL (1944 –2025)



Joy, a long-time resident of Sea Island, passed peacefully July 17, 2025. She moved to Sea Island in 1948 with her father, mother and two older brothers, living at 451 Ferguson Road in the home her father built. She played on the Sea Island Slicers softball team. When the Sea Island Heritage Society was formed, Joy became an active member, attending the coffee meetings and the reunions. She accumulated many lifelong friends and will be dearly missed by all.

This picture was taken at Joy's home when she had some of the SIHS ladies for lunch.

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> and join the Sea Island Heritage Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1330798908139801>

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