

# GATEWAY

BETTER COMMUNITY THROUGH BETTER BUSINESS

2014 ISSUE

**Nanaimo:**  
Looking back,  
moving forward



1889 ~ 2014

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## Welcome from the CEO

My 'nana' lived to be 97. She had an amazing memory. Even going back to the 1917 Halifax explosion recalling the fact she was bathing on the garden level of her parent's hillside home at the time of the cataclysm. She awoke as the dust was settling, still safely in the tub, but a quarter mile uphill on the second floor of another building.

She said that was the reason she always kept her bathrobe on the edge of the tub. Warned us that it was a good idea – just in case your world blew up you could maintain your modesty while all others around you were running around in a panic in various states of undress. Important stuff if you've lived through it. Another example of the wisdom of the statement "you need to know where you came from to know where you're going."

At 125 years old, can you imagine the memories our Greater Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce has and the lessons it might be able to pass on? The words we've put down on these pages are drawn from the archives of the Chamber and the City of Nanaimo. They are a miniaturized view of Nanaimo then, with a few touches of Nanaimo today and some thoughts about ourselves for the future.

Today's Chamber of Commerce has its origins in 1889. Population then was 4,000, living in fairly high density for the size of the town. But Nanaimo had a very specialized work force in those days – coal miners and those who served them. They didn't need, and couldn't afford the use of, extra space.

The mercantile, commerce and banking crowd was not large, but they knew they needed to form a group that could meet to discuss matters of mutual interest, maybe band together in some group-buying to save money, and work together to convince government of the benefits of their contributions to the community.

Today, the Chamber of Commerce serves a community of around 6,000 licensed businesses and a population close to 100,000. The Chamber offers its members group health insurance programs for businesses with as few as one employee. It provides debit and credit card merchant programs that are among the lowest cost in the marketplace. The Chamber's "Member 2 Member" marketing program provides discounts on fuel purchases, travel, accommodations and dozens of other offers – all the time, year-round. We present monthly luncheons that regularly attract 150-plus guests to hear speakers of community significance. And, during our 125th anniversary year, we'll be presenting a number of other 'extra' special events.

As it was 125 years ago, today's Chamber is an excellent forum for initiating business contacts, assisting business development, engaging in Nanaimo's business social scene and exposing your unique value proposition in a variety of environments. Your participation is essential to improving the Chamber's performance on your behalf.

Enjoy this year's edition of our Gateway magazine and take a few minutes to look back and compare what was with what could be.

**Kim Smythe**, CEO Greater Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce  
ceo@nanaimochamber.bc.ca



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# GATEWAY

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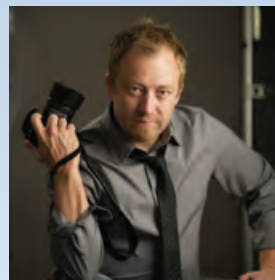
The Nanaimo Museum's new permanent exhibit features a broad collection of artifacts and stories. Artifacts from the museum's rich Chinese collection feature prominently in the exhibit. The exhibit also includes Nanaimo's civic history, heritage homes from the Old City neighbourhood and a re-created general store.

Special thank you to the Nanaimo Museum for use of historical photos, which were generously provided for publication from the organization's extensive archive collection.



**ALEXANDRIA STUART** writes and edits feature articles, journalism, fiction, and promotional materials. She's been published in newspapers, magazines, and a variety of online media. After five years as co-producer and host of Arts Now on Shaw Television, her interest in broadcast media shifted to radio. She currently co-produces The Farmer's Table, a monthly documentary program focusing on the local food movement and small-scale

agriculture for CKGI Gabriola Co-op Radio. In 2013 Alexandria was awarded Vancouver Island University's Barry Broadfoot Award for Journalism in Creative Non-Fiction.



**DIRK HEYDEMANN** of Heydemann Art of Photography and HA Photography has his photo studio located in the beautiful Harbour City. He has been shooting professionally as a commercial and wedding photographer for more than 20 years. The best and most rewarding part of his job is seeing and hearing that his images have made an impact and difference in people's lives. Dirk is thrilled to be apart of the Gateway magazine team.



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Mike Gogo with crew from his sawmill.

# Industry: Gogo family

**L**ROP THE NAME 'GOGO' anywhere in Nanaimo and listen to the stories start. It is the family name of one of the first pioneers to settle in Nanaimo and now lays claim today to an incredible legacy of music, art and business.


The 639-acre Gogo family farm has been in operation for more than 100 years. Today, Mike Gogo has diversified the farm to include a woodlot, sawmill and Christmas tree farm. Gogo is proud to point out that no more timber is cut each year than is naturally regrown.

Brother Ken Gogo didn't grow trees as much as he grew a family of talented singer/songwriters and provided a family setting with wife Dodie that turned virtually the whole household into lifelong entertainers. Canada's legendary rock band and Juno Award-winning Trooper, now resurfacing due to popular demand, has served as family and home on the road to son Paul Gogo since 1995. Paul's cousin David, son of Mike, is a multiple Juno Award nominee and winner of Canada's Maple Blues Award.

Other family members haven't attained the same kind of fame but all continue to represent one of Nanaimo's famous names in music and art.

A trip up to the Gogo farm to cut a Christmas tree from the lot is a long-time tradition for many, many Nanaimo families. It's here that you'll see Mike's collection of historic forestry equipment and, when the rest of the family isn't handing out saws and giving you tips on taking down your own tree, you might just run into a spry, white haired fellow with a twinkle in his eye and a hearty laugh – it's not Santa, it's Mike Gogo. ☺





# Resource extraction gives way to Nanaimo's high-tech industry

**B**EFORE IT WAS “Nanaimo,” this was a company town by the name of “Colville” where the call of the mine whistle reigned over every citizen. After incorporation, support systems were built to help the people involved in the mining activities, and the town built into the city it is today. Coal seams lay below but the area had much more to offer in the form of resource-based industry like fishing, whaling, quarrying, agriculture and milling.

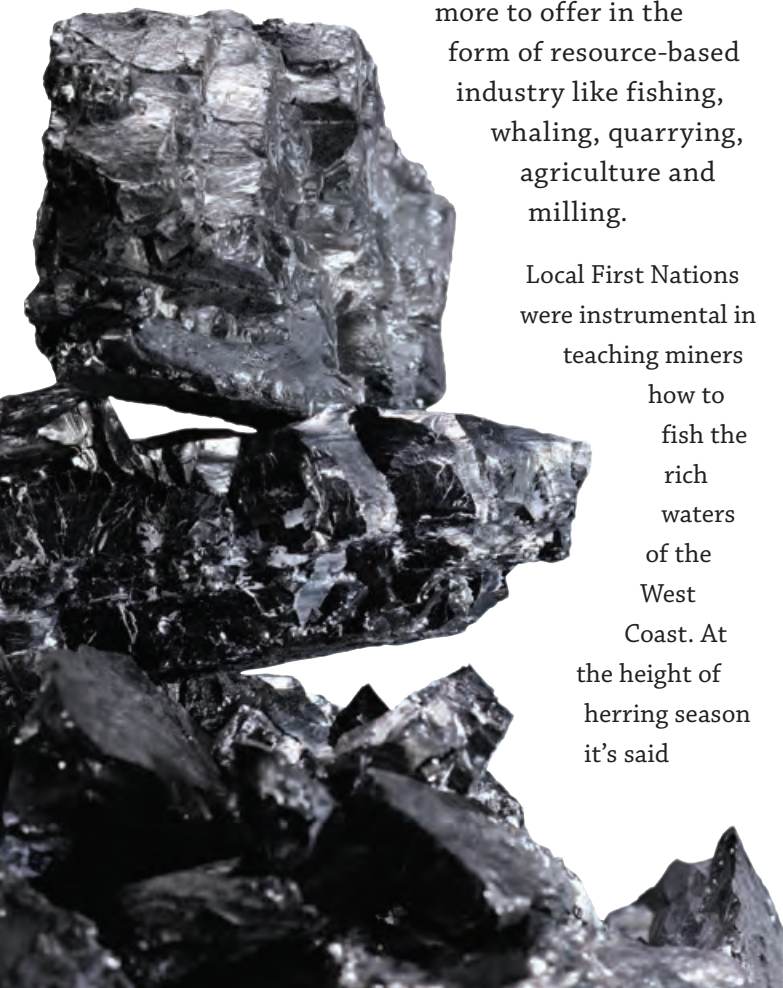
Local First Nations were instrumental in teaching miners how to fish the rich waters of the West Coast. At the height of herring season it's said

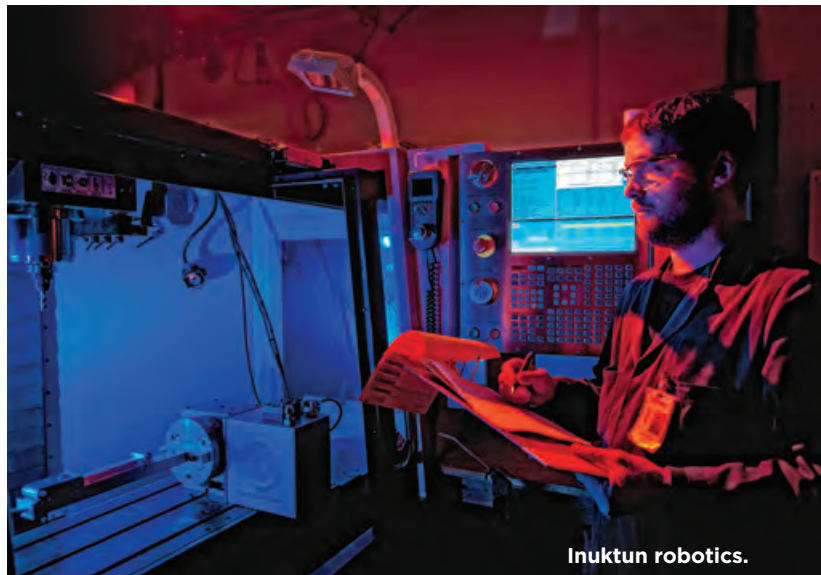
that you could practically walk on the water teeming with fish. Stone quarried from Newcastle Island, Jack Point and Gabriola Island was in high demand and can be found in San Francisco's United States Mint Building, the Post Office and Customs House in Victoria, and several prominent buildings in Vancouver including the Carnegie Centre, all built around 1900.

As the coal market dried up, forestry quickly filled the gap. Early forestry relied heavily on the ox, horse, and railway networks. Today forestry activity has shifted toward a careful management model to ensure that it remains sustainable for generations to come.

Our economy has also diversified with retail and wholesale trade, business and finance, port operations, tourism, transportation, government services, health, and education. Entrepreneurism is also becoming more prominent in the community. Along with the freedom to chart their own course in business, entrepreneurs enjoy choosing the most productive environment for their work. For many a home office is the answer but for others, co-working spaces are the best fit. This emerging trend offers all the benefits of an office environment together with the ability to dictate exactly how, where, and when the work will be done. The concept of shared space is gaining momentum in Nanaimo and its strong entrepreneurial base will breed the demand.

The expansion of the knowledge-based economy is another important factor as we move forward. A recent Nanaimo Economic Development study points to 350 tech-sector businesses spread over 19 unique categories that were





responsible for 2,730 jobs in 2012. Their combined economic impact was \$199 million. Companies excelling in robotics as well as remote-operated vehicles are just a few of those who have brought Nanaimo worldwide recognition.

The power of the tech-sector also extends to recreational

applications like video gaming. A planned animation studio may be another business we welcome in the near future.

Just as young men and women were drawn to Nanaimo to mine in the past, our thriving knowledge-based economy is set to attract and retain young talent for the future. ☾



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# Families

## Markedly different from Nanaimo's origins to today

### FAMILY LIFE 1890S

**I**T'S EARLY TUESDAY morning and mother is packing metal lunch buckets for father and their sons – 18, 16, and 14 years old – with a chunk of crusty bread, hard cheese, and an apple. Each also gets a Nanaimo Bar with a chocolate crumb crust, custard filling and chocolate coating. The calorie-dense confection provides much-needed energy that lasts through the day. There's more to it than that, though. Down in the dark, dank mineshaft the treat is a reminder of home. During their midday break the boys think of the fresh air

above and the safety of their mother's embrace. The dessert bar tastes like love.

In the three-room cottage on Farquhar Street, mother works alone – they lost two daughters to the diphtheria outbreak in 1890. She strips the beds to wash the sheets by hand in a basin out back and hangs them on the line beside the blankets airing out. After sweeping the wood plank floors and wiping the counters free of the ever-present sheen of dust and ash, she visits Manson's Store on Haliburton Street to buy flour for bread. Other staples will wait until father



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A family in the 1890s.



Present day family life.

brings home the pay packets. There's still enough for supper that night: leftover mutton, potatoes, and greens from the garden that produces year 'round in the temperate climate.

The day passes quickly and she's barely finished re-making the beds when the men return up the hill, coins jingling in their empty lunch buckets. The large kettle on the woodstove is boiled and ready to fill the bath that the four will share in turn. After supper the boys play cards at the table by lamplight while mother darns socks and mends their shirts, continually caught and torn on the sharp edges of the mine walls. Father meets friends at the Dew Drop Inn for a pint – just one pint – and returns home early. There's no work in the mine tomorrow so they will rise before the sun to spend the day fishing and hunting. Game, wildfowl, and fish stock are free, plentiful sources of food. Even with the boys' wages, it's hard to keep the family of five fed on \$30 a week. Hopefully the mine will have them back underground by the weekend.

## FAMILY LIFE 2014

On a typical Tuesday, Mark, 12, and Shannon, 14, will walk to their north-end home from school, let themselves in, and microwave a pizza snack. Mom returns from her job at a downtown bank around 4:15 p.m., immediately pulls a ready-made lasagna and a loaf of garlic bread from the freezer, sets the oven to preheat, and goes upstairs to change clothes. Returning in jeans, T-shirt and cardigan, she balances a full laundry basket on her hip. It rests on the marble-topped kitchen island while she slides the lasagna tray into the oven. In the adjoining laundry room she moves damp clothes to the dryer and refills the high-efficiency front-loading washing machine. Mark calls from the dining room, asking for help with his homework.

The timer goes off and mom goes to slide the garlic bread into the oven. "Kids, clean off the table and get changed. You need to leave right after dinner." Her husband walks in

from the garage, gives her a quick kiss on the cheek and follows the children upstairs. She empties a bag of prewashed chopped romaine lettuce into a bowl followed by packaged croutons and a generous splash of bottled Caesar salad dressing.

The family eats quickly, saying little. With a quick, "Thank you," to mom, the kids gather equipment bags and head to the car with their father. After dropping them at soccer practice and dance rehearsal in the centre of town, he sits in the car with a cappuccino in a to-go cup and uses his smartphone to catch up on e-mails from the regional manager at the furniture store.

At home, mom sits in front of the kitchen computer playing a little Scrabble before catching up on messages, making online bill payments, and moving money between accounts. She pores over the family budget. Both parents work full time for a total of \$100,000 a year. Taxes on their incomes, goods and services, property, gas, and contributions to Employment Insurance and Canada Pension Plan consume 40 per cent of that; shelter is around 30 per cent; and food, 15 per cent. Heat, electricity, telephones (home and cellular), cable, Internet, insurance (home and life), medical, dental, orthodontics, clothing, sports and activities, two cars (payments, insurance, gas, maintenance), dining out, and holidays eat up the rest.

It's a balancing act to keep the family of four afloat without turning to credit cards. Fees for the next session of dance lessons are due at the same time as the orthodontist bill. But with the weather warming the gas bill will shrink, she thinks, moving numbers around on the spreadsheet.

When they return the children retreat to their rooms to play online videogames and chat with friends. Downstairs their parents watch pre-recorded television sitcoms before bed. Tomorrow will look a lot like today, just swap soccer for swimming lessons. ☾

# Nanaimo Bar

## Heaven in your mouth

**T**HE NANAIMO BAR, that delicious dessert delight, has a storied history as hotly disputed and varied as the versions of its 'original' recipes. Ask any group of Nanaimoites and you're likely to get a debate going on its origin, but many say it goes back to mining days and was a sweet, high-calorie confection packed into lunch kits for the men doing their work in the deep coal seams.

The earliest printed version of the recipe can only be traced back to the 1950s, but its legendary past is far more interesting, colourful, and the thing that brings on debate. In 1985, then Mayor of Nanaimo, Graeme Roberts, launched a Nanaimo bar contest to find the ultimate bar recipe with local resident Joyce Hardcastle winning unanimously. Today, it is Hardcastle's recipe that is still considered the "ultimate" and her recipe was featured in a 2013 episode of Pitching In on Canada's Food TV Network. ☾



Joyce Hardcastle with the official Nanaimo bar recipe.

## WILLS, ESTATES AND FAMILY LAW

Michael L Warsh is a highly experienced, highly educated family lawyer in Nanaimo, specializing in Family Law and Wills and Estates Law. This can range from wills, divorce, custody and access issues to inheritance and all other aspects of Estate Law. Sabrina Yeudall practices family, employment and labour law, with a focus on preserving the long term relationships which necessarily exist in these contexts. Sabrina is also an experienced negotiator in the areas of employment and labor law.

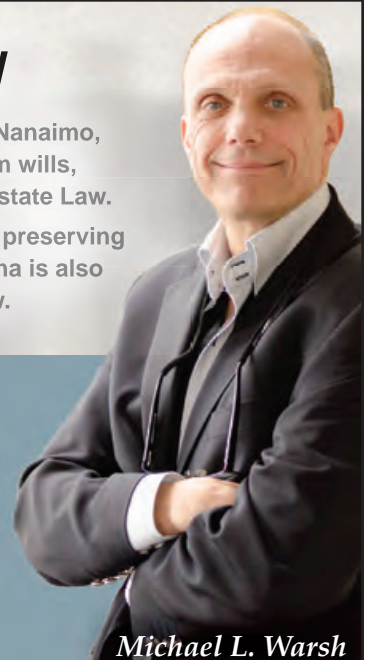


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# Those Sporting McNabbs...

**L**ARRY McNABB HAD been an elected councillor in Nanaimo for 25 years and was the chairman of the Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission for two decades when he died in 2011. He came from a long and broad line of local hockey, sports and athletic heroes.

Larry was well-known for his 15-year pro hockey playing career, dominating as one of the game's most feared enforcers. Don Cherry often complained when he was sent out on a shift against Larry claiming he was the hardest hitter he ever opposed. Larry's hockey career saw him bounce around Canada and the U.S., serving two stints with the Vancouver Canucks in their WHL years. He also had a successful 15-year run as coach of the Nanaimo Clippers, including their three straight league title years in the mid-1970s.

Born in Saskatchewan, McNabb moved west in 1956 where

family followed and grew around him. While Larry played for and coached the Nanaimo Clippers, brother Cliff stepped up to become owner of the team. Cliff's commitment to hockey and amateur, youth sport in Nanaimo resulted in Nanaimo dedicating another ice sheet and arena at Beban Park 20 years ago as the Cliff McNabb Arena.

Despite Larry's gruff exterior, he had always been an ardent advocate of arts and culture. As an apparently unlikely chairman of the city's Cultural Committee, he was often heard to say, "two weeks ago I couldn't spell culture, now I'm supposed to be in charge of it."

The Larry McNabb Sports Zone celebrates his vision. The zone includes the Nanaimo Ice Centre, the Nanaimo Aquatic Centre, Serauxman Stadium and the Rotary Field House. Ten statues identify and mark the zone. Today, the McNabb name in sports, business and community service is not only represented by these dedicated public art pieces, but carried on daily by this wide-reaching and influential family. ☾



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# Sports and

The region's raw landscape also provides simple and accessible outdoor recreation options that are just as attractive today as they were more than a century ago.

Looking back, winters were cold enough to turn swimming holes, and even Buttertubs Marsh (formerly known as The Dykes), into skating rinks. In an extreme year the Millstone River could become a long, icy trail. There are even tales of Nanaimo Harbour freezing, allowing passage to Newcastle Island via ice skates. Temperatures don't drop like that any more so today the city has given skaters indoor options at Frank Crane Arena, Cliff McNabb Arena, and at the Nanaimo Ice Centre with four separate ice sheets.

When the sun shines, swimmers flock to the Nanaimo River, Long Lake, Colliery Dam Park and Westwood Lake as they did more than 100 years ago. Bowen Park's outdoor pool also attracts thousands in the summertime. Today, when the weather is less cooperative, pools at the Nanaimo Aquatic Centre and Beban Park are available year round.

In mild weather, Nanaimo Harbour and our surrounding lakes provide pristine boating, waterskiing and wakeboarding. Jacques Cousteau described Nanaimo as having some of the best temperate water diving in the world



**T**HE NANAIMO LIFESTYLE included a healthy dose of sports and recreation from the earliest days. By the turn of the century Nanaimo's citizens had established their own bicycle, cricket, curling, lawn tennis, lacrosse, gun, yacht, lawn bowling clubs and more.

These teams accomplished a lot. The Nanaimo Hornets rugby team (formed in 1888 as the Rovers) captured five provincial championships. The Nanaimo Athletic Football Club, established in 1890, won the provincial championship six times. Today, the Vancouver Island Raiders, the city's junior Canadian football team, are in possession of the Cullen Cup for 2013 as B.C. Football Conference champions.



Nanaimo Timbermen Lacrosse



Nanaimo Clippers Junior A Hockey

# Recreation

(second only to the Red Sea). The harbour is home to three sunken wrecks, and one, The Saskatchewan, sunk in 1997 and declared one of B.C.'s best artificial reefs, has hosted more than 100,000 dives.

Nanaimo's golf roots took hold with the Nanaimo Golf Links, a nine-hole course above Bowen Road that was created in 1922. Growing demand led the enthusiasts to establish the Nanaimo Golf Club high on a ridge with sweeping views of Departure Bay. The old course was closed when the new course opened in 1962, and today it's ranked among the best 18-hole courses in B.C.

Nanaimo takes the most pride in its outdoor spaces. Sports teams remain active on lacrosse, football, rugby, baseball and soccer fields. Today the city boasts more than 588 hectares of parks and more than 100 kilometres of trails, six in-city lakes, and seaside beaches for all sorts. For those who prefer the beaten path, downtown Nanaimo offers Heritage Walks, and the Harbourfront Walkway is one of the single most popular attractions in town for strollers and runners alike.

Cities grow and evolve – as Nanaimo is – but sports and recreation amid the natural beauty surrounding us will remain the foundation as the city moves forward. ☺





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Success for All

# Arts *and culture*



A passion for arts and culture lays at the very heart of Nanaimo

*L*ONG BEFORE EUROPEAN settlement, our First Nations created fascinating rock carvings of fish, birds, and other animals. These pieces had deep, spiritual meaning and tell the stories of their creators. In Petroglyph Park today, you can view these compelling displays, Nanaimo's first works of art, in their natural environment.



continued on page 18

## The Nanaimo & District Hospital Foundation is proud to support your healthy community

The Foundation strives to ensure that all members of our community have access to exceptional healthcare services that focus on treatment and prevention. Your business can make an impact on the health of this community by donating today!

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**“The rich musical history is a factor in the success of our professional orchestra, the Vancouver Island Symphony (VIS) today.”**

continued from page 17

As settlement took hold, Nanaimo moved from company town into incorporation, bringing an influx of residents, and they wanted entertainment. Travelling showmen, theatrical troupes, dancers, and musicians began making regular stops to perform here. Many of these entertainers came through The Nanaimo Opera House on Church Street, a three-storey hotel and performance space that opened in 1889. It offered opulent seating for 800, a full orchestra pit, and the capacity to host the largest, most lavish productions touring the West Coast including the New York Metropolitan Opera. At the time it was the only theatre of its kind west of Winnipeg. But performing arts were only one piece.

Vancouver Island and Nanaimo were home to prominent Canadian landscape painter E.J. Hughes. His work highlights evocative symbols of life here: fishing villages and farmhouses, the sea and land, and slices of daily life against the backdrop of the coastal mountains. In 1938 Hughes was

commissioned to create a mural, Capt. (Lieut.) Malaspina Sketching the Galleries of Gabriola, for the Malaspina Hotel. The mural was boarded up during a later renovation and nearly lost forever when demolition crews were sent to the building in 1996. After the massive piece was moved to safety, prominent Canadian art restoration specialist Cheryle Harrison was recruited to bring the piece back to life. After countless hours of work, the mural now hangs in its own viewing room at the Vancouver Island Conference Centre. An important piece of our rich cultural history was pulled from the past to shine once again.

A musical ancestor from our past also endures today. In 1864, The Philharmonic Orchestra Society was established. Many of its players went on to build the Junior Brass Band in 1872, two years before Nanaimo’s incorporation. In 1889 they decided to remove the label “junior” and became the Silver Cornet Band. In 1950 they were renamed again as the



Nanaimo Concert Band, which is now known as the longest continuous community band in Canada. An active band, you'll find them performing in parks and halls up and down Vancouver Island year round.

This rich musical history is a factor in the success of the professional orchestra, the Vancouver Island Symphony (VIS) today. Under the artistic direction of prominent Canadian conductor Pierre Simard, the orchestra is thriving. In 2013 the City

of Nanaimo presented its Excellence in Culture Award to the VIS.

At the heart of its success is the passion and enthusiasm of Simard and his team. "Over the last two years, we have looked carefully at the symphony's role in the community making sure that we are contributing to the creative capital in Nanaimo," says executive director Margot Holmes. This means providing high quality entertainment as well as enriching the community's cultural life. Educating younger audiences about orchestral music to

ensure that the VIS will remain strong for years to come is just one of their strategies.

Our strong foundation in the arts combined with the energy and enthusiasm of new residents guarantee that arts and culture will always have a place in Nanaimo. The city identified culture as the fourth pillar of the community this year, highlighting the importance of the creative economy to Nanaimo's vitality. This rich cultural life has run through our veins from the very beginning, and ensures that lovers of the performing and visual arts will keep coming back for more. ☾



# The Waterfront

## Nanaimo's defining feature

**N**ANAIMO MAY HAVE BEEN built on coal, but without the waterfront it wouldn't have made it very far. The city was built up around the coal loading wharves that sent the black diamonds into market. With activity and labourers came the support infrastructure that slowly reshaped the face of the downtown waterfront into what we see today. The waterfront stood as the hub in a city plan where streets radiated up and out like the spokes of a wheel.

The Esplanade No. 1 Pit Mine and loading wharves once dominated the downtown waterfront. In the 1800s, tidal inlets took different paths throughout downtown. Commercial Street was once a trail following Commercial Inlet where the buildings stood on pilings on one side. Most were destroyed in fires in 1878 and 1894.

"It wasn't until the early 1900s that we saw significant modifications to the waterfront itself," says Chris Sholberg,

City of Nanaimo heritage and community planner.

The downtown core itself was almost an island due to a tidal ravine that wrapped almost all the way around.

What would become

Commercial Street and Victoria Crescent grew from inlets that were filled with mine tailings and paved over early in the 1900s. As shoppers had clear areas to navigate, more businesses opened in the area. Downtown was soon teeming with businesses supplying food and dry goods as well as hotels and many pubs.

Fully detached from the downtown core at the time, Cameron Island and Museum Bluff were actually an island. This inlet was also filled in with coal slag and later housed the CPR Ferry dock.

Terminal Avenue was formerly a ravine that filled and emptied with the tide. Known then as Ravine Street, the stench drove residents to demand it be filled in as well, joining the waterfront to the rest of the downtown area. The city was moved to deal with the nuisance, Sholberg says, but there was an economic benefit as well because of the usable land that was created. Later this strip became a key stretch of the Old Island Highway through south Nanaimo.

When coal shipping shifted away from downtown, the area took on more urban uses, though the docks continued to host ships like the Princess





Patricia and later the ferries, which moved people between Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland.

As Nanaimo's population grew its landscape changed to meet their needs. Where there were inlets today stand the Port Theatre and Vancouver Island Conference Centre in a fully paved downtown core. Where the waterfront was once dominated by industry it now supports tourism, retail shops, restaurants, and new luxury condominiums with stunning views of Nanaimo Harbour and beyond. The waterfront walkway is the jewel of the city.

There is still plenty of activity in the waterways like the remaining boat basin. Fishermen and pleasure boaters from all around the world cast their lines ashore for both short- and long-term visits. The basin is also an important commuter hub for Protection Islanders who make their way back and forth in small motor boats and kayaks each day.

The waterfront also remains an important recreation hub and community gathering place for residents. The green space at Maffeo Sutton Park hosts festivals and families at play, while Swy-a-Lana Lagoon provides a spot for a quick dip and a sandy beach.

Moving forward, the area will continue to grow and change with the Nanaimo South Downtown Waterfront Initiative. This is a long-term vision to fully integrate the

continued on page 23



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continued from page 21

use of the land to support community, cultural, economic, environmental, and social needs.

“There was an understanding that these had been industrial lands but that wasn’t the long term planned use,” Sholberg says.

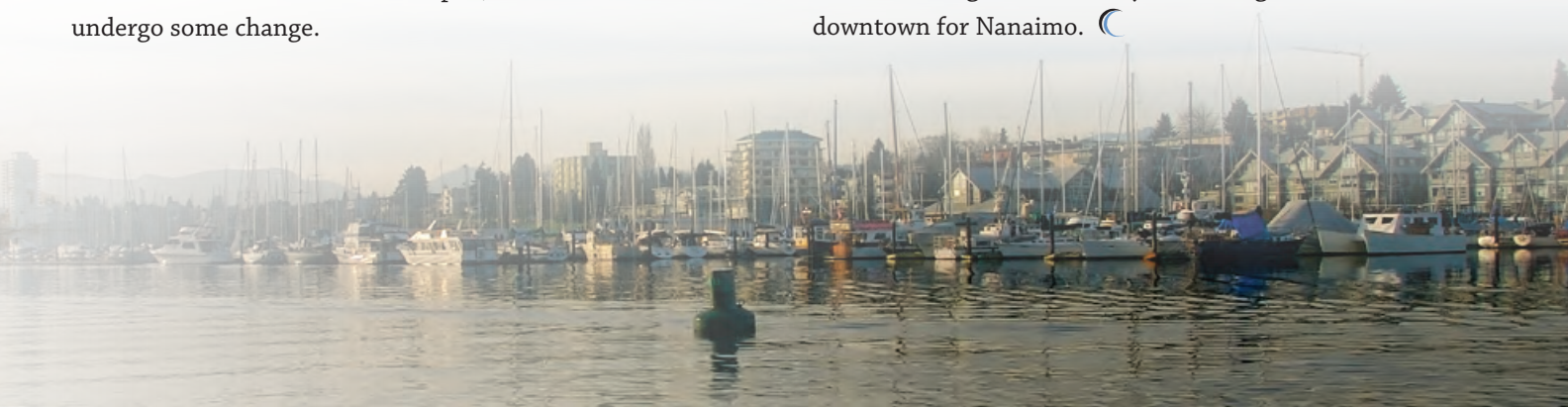
Creating new space on the waterfront, more publicly accessible space, was a crucial aspect of the plan. All angles are being examined in this reimagining of the waterfront, Nanaimo’s most prized asset.

As the south waterfront is developed, downtown itself will undergo some change.

**This is a long-term vision to fully integrate the use of the land to support community, cultural, economic, social and environmental needs.**

“We’re doing it to enhance what we have already. We’re trying to keep old elements but there’s a need to allow new development there as well,” Sholberg says.


It’s a balancing act on the way to crafting a vibrant, liveable downtown for Nanaimo. ☾



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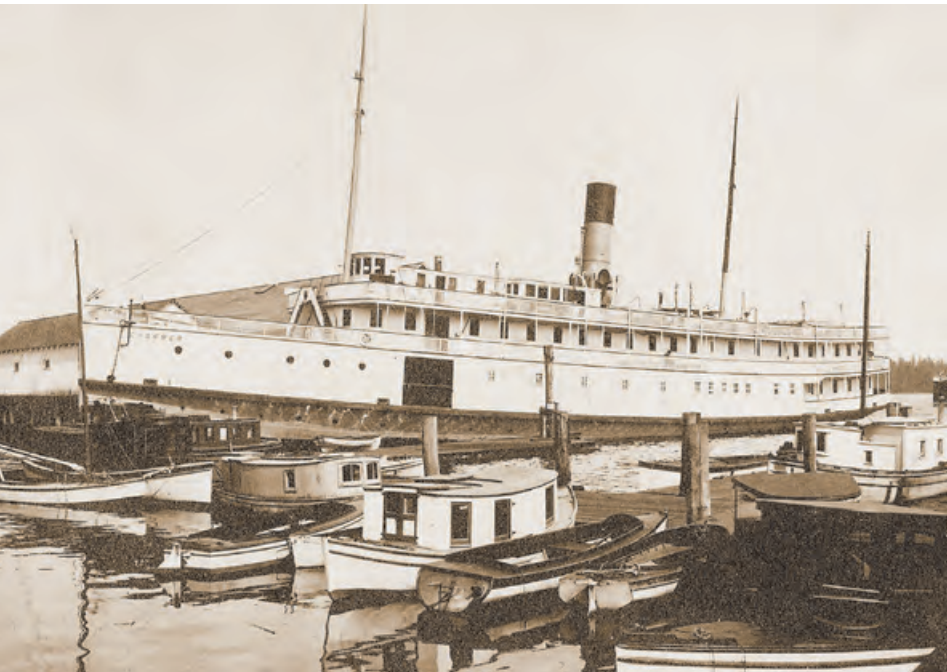
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# Transportation

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**A** KEY TO NANAIMO'S success has been its adaptability. As the economic landscape changed, Nanaimo left "The Coal City" days behind and adopted the moniker "The Hub City." Connecting water with rail with road made it easy for people and goods to converge and disperse.

After the builders of the Esquimalt & Nanaimo (E&N) Railway managed to negotiate the challenge of the Malahat Drive near Shawnigan Lake, the train between Nanaimo and Victoria made its first journey in 1886. In 1888 it went on to establish twice-daily trips into Victoria carrying passengers and freight.


The S.S. Maude also brought freight and passengers between Nanaimo and Victoria on regular sailings. The Princess Patricia, a turbine-powered passenger vessel that also sailed between Nanaimo and Vancouver kept such a tight schedule that miners are said to have set their workday by her comings and goings.

Today Nanaimo proudly wears the moniker "The Harbour City," welcoming thousands of passengers and freight via cruise ships, ferries, and cargo tankers at the deep-water port facility.

With water, road, and rail transportation established,

the city is growing in a new direction: into the air. For decades the Nanaimo Airport has provided shorter-run flights to the Vancouver airport and Island communities, but recent runway expansion has opened it up to accommodate larger planes and offer direct flights to Alberta and Seattle. Vancouver Island has become a desirable and now convenient home for oil and gas industry workers. Airline operations are beginning to move into the United States as well. The Nanaimo Airport is poised to serve a high volume of tourists as well as commuters from other cities and provinces who want to enjoy the beauty and business opportunities in Nanaimo.

Looking forward, the crowning jewel of Nanaimo's transportation capacity and downtown rejuvenation will be the redevelopment of the waterfront Wellcox Property. Long-term plans place this as a hub for ferries, buses, and rail while offering easy connections to the airport.

Ideally situated on the waterfront in the centre of Vancouver Island, Nanaimo is a place that connects many things, people, and places, ever adaptable and making things happen. 



# Cassidy Airport

**N**ANAIMO AIRPORT in Cassidy, just south of the Harbour City, has been the site of extensive activity over the past five years. In order to expand its services and attract new air carriers, the core assets – the terminal and runway – both required some attention.

A technology upgrade was required to ensure instrument flight rules could be followed to allow aircraft to land and take off under inclement weather conditions, like fog. This was necessary to increase the reliability of travel. An extended runway was needed to accommodate the possibility of larger aircraft that could service destinations further afield. A larger terminal was also identified as a priority to serve larger passenger groups which the larger aircraft, and more frequent service, would produce.

According to Mike Hooper, airport chief executive officer, the improvements have delivered outstanding results.

“We were excited to introduce daily service to Calgary through WestJet in 2013,” Hooper said. “This is partly responsible for a near 20 per cent increase in passenger counts in the past year.”

In 2014, daily service to Seattle was added with YCD also currently servicing a growing volume of charter flights featuring aircraft as large as a Boeing 737 ferrying passengers back and forth to resource centres in northern B.C. and Alberta.

A modern airport with increasing passengers numbers and growing interest from air carriers is just one more way that Nanaimo’s connectivity makes it a highly appealing business base. ☾



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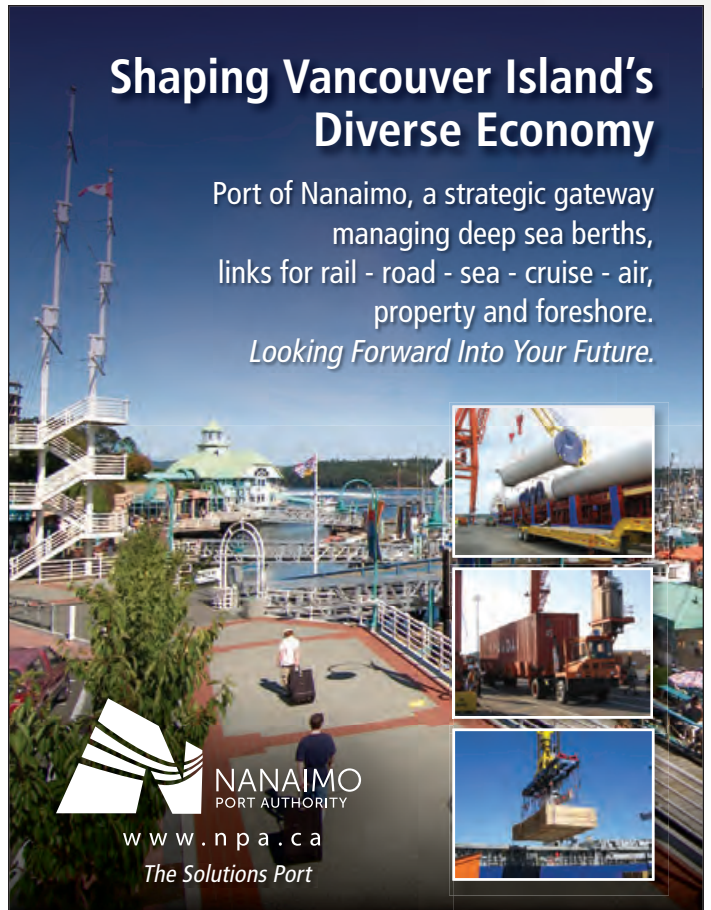
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### DEPARTURE BAY FIRST NATIONS PORTAL

This massive wooden structure near the beach marks the site of the burial ground and winter village where the Snunymexw First Nation lived until the mid-1800s.

### PETROGLYPHS

A short hike through the forest south of Nanaimo leads to First Nations carvings of mystical wolf-like creatures, fish and human figures at Petroglyph Provincial Park.

### TOTEM ON NEWCASTLE ISLAND

Near the ferry dock, this towering piece of First Nations artwork is a reminder of the Snunymuxw villages that once existed here. While on Newcastle, take the perimeter walk.

### NEWCASTLE ISLAND SANDSTONE QUARRY

Walk among giant boulders left behind at the quarry that operated from 1869 to 1932 on Newcastle Island provided the stately columns of San Francisco's U.S. Mint Building and many other landmark structures across North America.

### NANAIMO BASTION

From mid May through Labour Day, you can tour this 1853 Hudson's Bay Company coal mining office, arsenal, and storehouse. It's also one

# 10 Great Places to touch history



Morden circa 1950-60, Boiler House remains, Water Tower.

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### CANNON FIRING CEREMONY

Every day at noon from mid-May through Labour Day you'll hear the sound of bagpipes and the blast of the cannon at the Bastion.

### COAL TYEE BRONZE BUST

Near the Lighthouse Bistro on the waterfront you can see the former chief of Snunymexw First Nation, Coal Tyee, who told the Hudson's Bay Company about Nanaimo's rich coal deposits.

### COAL AT PIONEER SQUARE PARK

The last piece of coal taken from White Rapids Mine in 1949 is on display downtown above the site of one of the city's early mines.

### SHACK ISLAND

In Piper's Lagoon Park, Shack Island is a small group of brightly coloured cedar-shingle weekend cabins built in the 1930s. At low tide, it's an interesting walk over. Fail to pay attention and it can be an undesirable walk back.

### WELSBACH GAS LAMP


Only one gas lamp still stands in town, where Church Street meets Front Street.

### HAND FORGED ANCHOR

At Pioneer Waterfront Plaza rests a massive anchor recovered from the harbour. Along downtown's Waterfront Walkway, interpretive signs display images of the historic ships that built the city.

### MORDEN COAL MINE

This small, undeveloped day-use park contains the only remaining coal tipple on the Island. This concrete tipple was built in the early 1900s by the Pacific Coal Company, and was the first of its kind in the region. The first sod was turned at this mine in 1912; in its first year of operation the mine produced 76,000 tonnes of coal and was considered a model of safety. Plagued with worker's strikes and declining profits, Morden Mine was shut down in 1930. It basically signaled the end of coal for the area. Today, community groups are searching for ways to preserve the area and establish an interpretive centre, memorial, and tourist attraction.

Some people muse that one of our biggest attractions for future visitors is Nanaimo's past. Thanks to Tourism Nanaimo for this excerpt from their Visitor's Guide. For the location of these attractions, please contact [www.tourismnanaimo.com](http://www.tourismnanaimo.com). 



# Multiculturalism

## Key to Nanaimo's past and future

**N**ANAIMO WAS BUILT on coal mines as was the city above ground: it was built on the backs of the settlers who came to live here. They were English, Scottish and Irish, American, Finnish, Japanese, Chinese, Norwegian, Croatia and Italian, and they helped to shape Nanaimo into what it is today.

With them came cultural traditions and celebrations like Guy Fawkes Day, Robbie Burns Day, Hogmanay, St. David's Day, and Victoria Day. Churches of all denominations were also built to allow them to worship as they did in their homelands.

The hard work of these settlers is echoed all around in Nanaimo's architecture, culture, crafts, and sports. Many of the city's early homes were built in the styles popular in Britain at the time.

Traditional sports had a powerful way of uniting their communities. English settlers established Nanaimo's first cricket team in 1864 with many sports following suit.

In particular, the Chinese immigrant population made a significant impact as they were instrumental in the mines and railway construction. They built and inhabited several Chinatowns, all taken by fire. Today there's a revived hope that a modern Nanaimo Chinatown will rise again in the downtown area.

As with the influx of labour in the past, today's new Canadians bring their diverse cultural identities, skills, and traditions to the community. The Immigrant Welcome Centre at the Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society welcomes hundreds of new immigrants from more than 50 countries around the world every year. The diverse population extends up the hill to Vancouver Island University where



continued on page 31



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Diversity is celebrated every June in the Old City Quarter with the Multicultural Festival.

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carry with them the skills needed to keep Nanaimo growing. They are a vital part of our labour force, injecting fresh ideas into the way business is done.

As it was in the very beginning, ethnic diversity continues to be a vital contributor to the cultural, economic, and social pillars of Nanaimo life as we look forward and create a new tomorrow together. ☾



Basil Chau of Man-Lee Oriental Imports is eyeing plans to begin building a modern Chinatown with his investments in downtown Nanaimo.

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NANAIMO'S COMMUNITY PULSE

# The City of Festivals

## From marine to agriculture

**I**N THE SUMMERTIME Nanaimo becomes a city of festivals where you'll find weekends between June and September packed with activities, many of them in the water.

Nanaimo is best known for its Bathtub races. Established in 1967 with a lot of hard work by then-mayor Frank Ney, the Nanaimo Marine Festival stretches over a full weekend in July with a parade and fireworks display, all culminating in the world-famous Bathtub Race.

Now more than 30 years old, a different sort of seafaring race – the Silly Boat Regatta – is the flagship fundraising event for Nanaimo's Child Development Centre. Every July around 10,000 spectators at Maffeo



Nanaimo's Carnival in the Ravine.

Sutton Park cheer community teams and their home-made contraptions through the thrill of victory and the equally

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thrilling, often waterlogged, agony of defeat. The childlike energy and enthusiasm of the development centre is everywhere at the most charming race event of the summer.

Entertaining but on a more serious note, the Save-on-Foods Nanaimo Dragon Boat Festival is a relative newcomer to Nanaimo. Established in 2003, the community lovingly welcomes teams of dragon boaters and enthusiasts from around the province. More than 14,000 spectators and participants help raise money to benefit the community over the course of the weekend while supporting and celebrating cancer survivors.

Out of the water, the cornerstone event of the summer celebrates something we all encounter three times a day: agriculture. Looking back, farming was an attractive alternative for mine workers when they finished their contracts. New settlers also brought wisdom and experience from their homelands to work the soil in Nanaimo. In 1894 the first Nanaimo Dairy, Agricultural, and Horticultural Society Fair was held near Bowen Park. Moving forward, it sowed the seeds for what we know today as the Vancouver Island Exhibition (VIEX). Held every August at the Beban Park fairgrounds, the weekend's festivities attract more than



Nanaimo's Silly Boat Races.

20,000 visitors. Over the years VIEX has expanded to provide entertainment and amusement for all ages with a midway, fair rides, carnival food, and high quality live entertainment.

"It's important to strike a balance between agriculture and urban fun," says Karen Streeter, VIEX vice president. But VIEX remains true to its roots as an agricultural fair with a mandate to showcase the importance and value of agriculture.

Over the last 120 years, the operators of VIEX have watched agricultural life in the mid-Island area come full circle. For most of the 1800s and 1900s the majority of the



Vintage Equipment display at Nanaimo's annual Vancouver Island Exhibition.



food needed was produced on Vancouver Island. Starting in the 1950s a shift occurred and more food was imported. Today it's estimated that the Island has only a three-day supply of food at any given time.

In recent years, the local food movement began to shift that trend by encouraging and supporting the resurgence in small-scale agriculture. Farmers and urban families alike are encouraged to produce more of their food right here at home. At one time all livestock were barred within city limits, but in 2010 the municipality allowed chickens back into the yards of city lots. Moving forward, city council may be open to relaxing other regulations that will make it easier for residents to produce their own food.

The largest and longest-running event, VIEX educates fairgoers about our agricultural past and feeds hope for the future of farming.

"It's really about teaching people how agriculture affects their everyday lives, especially in an urban environment," Streeter says. "It's the same goal then and now."

Food systems are changing, and more and more local families are preparing to pursue lives in farming. Celebrating agricultural heritage at VIEX is a great step toward greater food security on Vancouver Island. ☾

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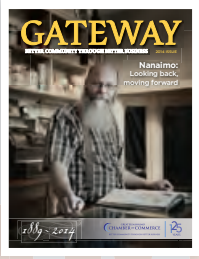
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# Place Names

**C**ANADA HAS ITS SHARE of unusual street names but in this area, Nanaimo really stands out from the crowd. In the early days, most streets were named for settlers and prominent businessmen. More recently, much of the new development under late mayor Frank Ney reflected his whimsical nature and sense of humour. Protection Island owes its pirate-themed street names to Ney.

How about a neighbourhood devoted to Robin Hood: Cavalier Place, Cross Bow Drive, Excalibur Street, Friar Tuck Way, King Arthur Drive, King John Way, King Richard Drive, Little John Way, Merry Men Way, Sherwood Drive, Sheriff Way, Sir Lancelot Place, and St. George Street (with Sugarloaf Mountain topping it off).

Have you ever driven by places like

Buttertubs Drive, Bob-O-Link Way, Shangri-La Road, or Lazy Susan Drive and wondered where they found their names?

One of the most widely discussed is:

## JINGLE POT ROAD

Popular theories include: a) miners signaling the shaft elevator by jiggling stones in a pot or, b) the sound their lunch pails made as they walked home with coin-filled pay packets inside.

Another theory is that the household money was kept in a teapot and at the end of the week, if there was “jingle in the pot,” a night at the pub was a possibility.

We took to the streets to see if Nanaimo’s citizens had heard stories about the origins of some of the most unique place names we could come up with. As it turned out, we had them stumped, but they came up with some interesting ideas to ponder.

## BERGEN-OP-ZOOM DRIVE

“Probably named after somebody? Bergen, Op... a couple of German settlers maybe?” – Brian Escott

## DINGLE BINGLE HILL TERRACE

“Dingle sounds like some sort of bell. Maybe you could hear a bell from there or there was a fire station?”

– Brian Escott

Actual source: A toddler in the Ney household came up with this word combination one day.

## GIGGLESWICK PLACE

“I’m thinking candle wicks?”

– Denise Long

Dingle Bingle Hill Rd

“Something funny going on there? Maybe a theatre, something like that there in the old days?” – Brian Escott

“Sounds like a street that a bunch of kids would live on.”

– Ciro DiRuocco

## PORCUPINE HILL TERRACE

“That’s gotta have something to do with porcupines? Living on a hill?” – Denise Long

“I don’t think there’s many porcupines in Nanaimo so I wouldn’t know where that name came from.”

– Trevor Barratt

“Now we don’t have porcupines on the Island as far as I know. Maybe it looks like it, resembles it? Maybe it has a spiny, kind of hump on it or something like that?”

– Brian Escott

“That’s obviously where Mr. and Mrs. Porcupine live. And I’m sure there are lots of prickly bushes and other prickly things.”

– Ciro DiRuocco

## TWIGGLY WIGGLY ROAD

“That has got to have some garden snakes and lots of trees.”

– Denise Long

“I would think maybe there’s a lot of tree branches in the area?”

– Trevor Barratt

“Somebody certainly likes alliteration here don’t they? Maybe a windy road?”

– Brian Escott

Actual source: One of Ney’s children chose this name from Beatrix Potter’s stories about Peter Rabbit. ☾





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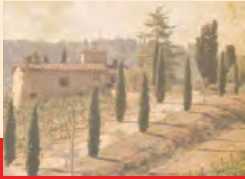
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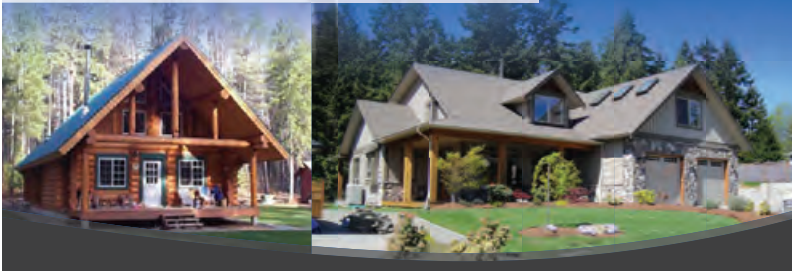
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