

# The Almanac



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[Deborah Hudson,  
photo by Jenna Hauck,

## A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

This time of year we are reminded of the importance of family, friends, and community, and the major roles that each play within our lives. In my first few months as Director of the Chilliwack Museum and Archives, I have already come to experience the great warmth and strength of the Chilliwack community, and am proud to have inherited the directorship of an organization that is able to play such a key role in preserving and sharing the stories that bring Chilliwack's families, friends and unique communities together.

The success of the book *Memories of Sardis*, recently published by the Chilliwack Museum and Archives, is the result of an effective collaboration between a group of long-time residents interested in sharing their experiences of growing up and living in Sardis, and the staff of the Museum and Archives, who also contributed their writing, editing, and design skills, along with their own knowledge of the area's history. The publication includes over 50 photographs from the collection of the Chilliwack Museum and Archives, all of which have been generously donated over the years by individuals and families with ties to Sardis, who have had an interest in preserving the area's local history.

In celebration of the book's publication, the Museum and Archives hosted a special event in November which included a book signing attended by many of the book's 15 authors, as well as a unique opportunity for the authors and the general public alike, to share with each other further stories from their personal memories of Sardis. From the antics of kids picking hops, to the activities of the area's many foxes, to the haunting sounds of beating drums being carried across the fields from the Stó:lō winter dances, it was clear from the reminiscences shared on the day that

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## A CHRISTMAS TRADITION

The Chilliwack Museum Christmas program, developed for students of our local School District #33, offers a step back in time based on the recollections of Jenny Kipp, otherwise known as Mrs. William Knight. The original interview with Jenny Kipp was published in the Chilliwack Progress Newspaper in the Dec. 23, 1940 edition, and featured “the fun and problems of arranging for Christmas in the 1870’s”. Jenny Kipp, born January 12, 1866, was 74 years old at the time of the interview, and her comments were recorded as she lifted a pan of cookies from her oven. She was reputed to be one of the “best cooks in town”.

Jenny’s recollections span many decades, starting when she was a child at Centerville school enjoying the Christmas tree party and basket supper, and later as a newly married young woman at age 17, enjoying the large family gathering around the dining room table at her parent’s home.

Jenny recalled: “Things got really started for Christmas way back in September.” Her mother was renowned for her butter and prepared it for shipment by putting the butter in 100-pound tubs. The butter was then “neatly stamped with an oak leaf and an acorn” for her father Isaac to take on his annual selling and buying trip to Victoria. Isaac came back from these “shopping expeditions” with great supplies of sugar, flour, biscuits, raisins, currants, and other household necessities. Many of these items had made their way to Victoria from San Francisco. Jenny recalled “the raisins and currents all had to be cleaned and stoned by hand before the Christmas puddings and mincemeat could be made.” The fruit cakes, puddings and mincemeat were made months ahead of Christmas and were allowed to mellow in the cool dark cellar.

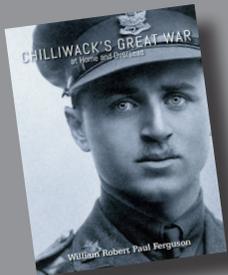
On Christmas day Jenny’s Christmas dinner party started at about 2:00 in the afternoon, and included around twenty-five family members. The Kipp table was described as having two great turkeys or geese carved simultaneously at either end of the table, with a whole ham and a chicken as “understudies”. Jenny remarked: “There were plenty of other good things elbowing each other along the length

of the table: bread and butter, vegetables, cranberry sauce, nuts and raisins, enormous mince pies, apples polished until they shone, English plum puddings, apple cider, and plenty of home-made doughnuts. Mother always made a great milk pail full of doughnuts the last thing before going to bed Christmas eve.” Doughnuts made by dropping cake or bread batter into hot fat were a rare treat of Dutch origin known as olykoek (oily cakes). Cranberries were either bought from or traded for with their Stó:lō neighbours. Cranberries, indigenous to the area, grew in the woodlands and marshy areas of the valley. Jenny commented that “they were smaller berries...but they had wonderful flavour”.

Jenny’s narrative describes the abundance and fertility of the Chilliwack Valley, the new Kipp family home, their English-Canadian traditions, and their trading relationships with their Stó:lō neighbours, as they celebrated Christmas in Chilliwack in the 1870’s.



[Jenny Kipp’s Christmas traditions are shared with school children from this cozy armchair in the Museum’s Chambers Gallery.]



**NEW BOOK!** - *Chilliwack's Great War at Home and Overseas* will be available soon. Please contact us to be kept up to date about availability.

## COMING UP IN THE MUSEUM'S CHAMBERS GALLERY...

**BRITISH COLUMBIA INSPIRATIONS, MAR 8- APR 17:** Marie McGill showcases her paintings, including abstracts and artworks of various media from her studio. Opening reception is March 8 from 12:00 - 2:00pm.

**BRILLIANT BLOSSOMS, APR 26 - JUN 12:** "The earth laughs in flowers", a quote from Ralph Waldo Emerson, provides a written parallel to Grazyna Wolski's striking exhibit of floral paintings in oils and acrylics.



[Photojournalist Jenna Hauck with her award-winning image at the Chilliwack Museum.]

## 14 GOLD - IMAGES FROM THE 2010 OLYMPICS

This winter, visitors to the Museum will have an opportunity to reflect on the 2010 Vancouver-Whistler Olympic Games while celebrating the 2014 Sochi Olympic Games taking place February 7-14. Chilliwack photojournalist Jenna Hauck will be showing her work from the 2010 Olympics at the Museum's Chambers Gallery from January 18 - February 27. In 2011, Hauck, a photojournalist with the *Chilliwack Progress*, earned a national second place award for her image of American cross-country skier, Torin Koos, in the *News Photographers Association of Canada 2010 National Pictures of the Year Awards*. All are welcome to attend the opening reception hosted at the Museum on Saturday, January 18 from 12:00 - 2:00pm.

## FREEDOM OF THE CITY

On Saturday, October 26, 2013, the Freedom of the City of Chilliwack was bestowed upon the 39 Combat Engineer Regiment, the Royal Westminster Regiment and the 39 Service Battalion. Gathering at the Chilliwack Museum, the Chilliwack City Hall National Historic Site, those in attendance witnessed representatives of each unit ceremonial striking the pommels of their swords three times against the brass door plate, to gain audience with Mayor Sharon Gaetz.

As the host site of the ceremony, the Museum was honoured to receive, for its permanent collections, the brass door plate symbolic of the ceremony. Ceremonies such as the *Freedom of the City* date back to Medieval and even Roman times, and in this case recognize the respectful relationship held between local military forces, and the people of Chilliwack and District.

[Far left: Freedom of the City military procession proceeds along Spadina Avenue, Oct. 26, 2013. Left: Paul Ferguson poses with the event's ceremonial door plate.



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Published by the Chilliwack Museum and Archives (c) 2013

The Chilliwack Museum and Archives are operated by the Chilliwack Museum and Historical Society.

