

The Almanac



CHILLiwack
museum & archives

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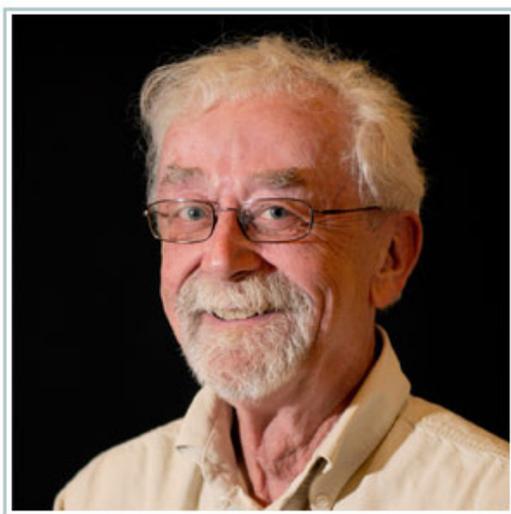
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Ron Denman, *Director*
Paul Ferguson, *Curator*
Brenda Paterson, *Education Coordinator*

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RON DENMAN RETIRES



[Ron Denman, Photo by Jenna Hauck, 2010]

After 28 years as the director of the museum and archives I plan to retire on June 30. It'll be hard to leave the best job in the world, one that I have thoroughly enjoyed over the years.

My first "office" was a small dark corner with a desk that was located in one corner of our Evergreen Hall Building. That remained my office until

1987 when the former City Hall building became the home for the museum. In that first year in the building and working with a shoe-string budget, we were able to assemble some exhibits about the history of Chilliwack. Those first exhibits gave way to dozens of additional exhibits. I like to joke that we were true experts that could put together an exhibit for \$200 or less. Oh, and that desk came with me to the City Hall building. I'm sitting behind it as I write this.

In my early days at the museum and archives, there was a host of community historians that I relied on (and still do). What a knowledgeable group who didn't mind sharing the information that they had. That propelled us to publish or assist with publishing histories about the "villages" that grew to become the City of Chilliwack. I haven't counted but there must be a dozen community histories that have been written thanks in large part to the (...continued...)

(...continued from pg 1...) resources that we have at the museum and archives. I am proud of the work that we did helping to publish these books.

I remember Dave Hampson, who was then the City Clerk, calling me sometime around 1986 asking if we were interested in collecting some City of Chilliwack records that were stored at the City works yard on Airport Road. Some of those records are now in our archives and are part of our core collection – records that are frequently consulted by researchers. Since then we have at least doubled the size of our archives collection and can legitimately claim that the Chilliwack Archives is the best community archives in the province. We were early adapters of electronic record keeping, and we continue to lead as we convert records into digital formats. Thousand of photographs and brief descriptions of our holdings can be searched on our web site. 100 years of the Chilliwack Progress will soon be added to this list. Similarly, our entire object collection can now be viewed on-line.

Our goal has always been to share the information that we have with our community. I have never lost sight of that goal.

Do I have any regrets? Yes, I have one. I wish that we were in a purpose-built museum and archives – one where the staff aren't separated by three blocks, one that has sweeping views of valley, a museum and archives that is a destination and features history, a great local food restaurant, a great gift shop, and ever-changing exhibits, both indoors and outdoors, that tell the stories of this amazing place that we call home.

As for what I will do post-retirement, I'll continue to indulge in my passion for dragon boating while tuning up my guitar in an effort to get beyond C, F and G chords. And after that, who knows.

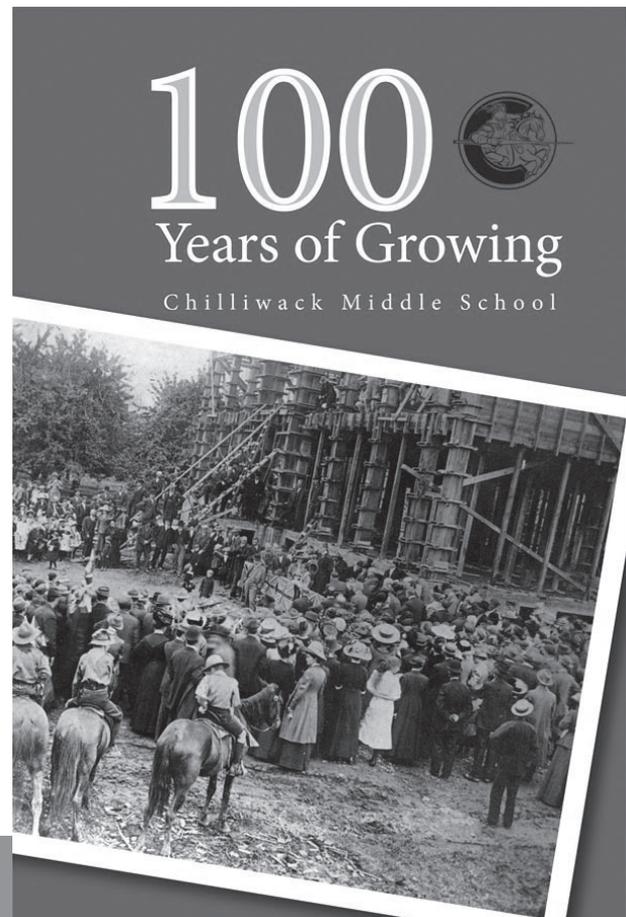
Thank you all for an enriching experience.

- Ron Denman

WELCOME DEBORAH HUDSON

New Director to Start in August

Deborah Hudson has been appointed as the new Director of the Chilliwack Museum and Archives. She will assume her new duties on August 1. Deborah brings a wealth of experience to the position. She has a graduate degree from the University of Toronto's Museum Studies program as well as an undergraduate degree from Trent University with majors in Anthropology and Psychology. Her work experience includes 13 years as Curator of Collections and acting Manager/Curator at the Oakville Museum in Ontario. The Oakville Museum is similar in size and scope to the Chilliwack Museum. Her most recent position was with the Land Conservancy of BC where she was Regional Manager and Heritage Conservation Advisor, overseeing heritage properties on Vancouver Island that are owned by that organization.



100 YEARS OF GROWING - CMS

On May 28th Chilliwack Middle School celebrated 100 years of education on Yale Road with an open house event which attracted current and former staff, teachers, parents and students. Teacher Janet Crawford joined forces with archivist Shannon Bettles to produce a memorial booklet (shown here) available for \$12.50.

SARDIS MEMORIES

It's been almost six months since a group of Sardis residents sat down to talk about a publication focussed on the history of Sardis. The group included Evelyn Armitage, Terry Bodman, Cecil C. Coutts, Shirley Dargatz, Ron Denman, Donna Dever, Cheryl Feistmann, Betty Ferguson, Paul Ferguson, Walter Goerzen, Art Hill, Joan Joiner, Lorna MacLaren, Bea Mazurenko, and Brenda Paterson.

The book's main articles talk about significant events that shaped the community, and includes memories of growing up in pre-1960 Sardis written by committee members. Photographs are used extensively throughout the book.

Shannon Bettles, our archivist, designed the book. It is expected that *Sardis Memories: The First 100 Years, 1860 – 1960* will be available by the fall.



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT - SARAH MALESKA

In May we welcomed Sarah Maleska to the Museum and Archives team for the summer. Sarah, a graduate of Sardis Secondary, will be working with Chilliwack's artifact and archival collections. Some of her duties include transcribing oral histories, assisting with an exhibit at Chilliwack Middle School, cataloguing the Paramount Theatre artifact collections, welcoming visitors at the Museum, and producing an introductory video on how to access the archives. Sarah will also be organizing the Museum's "Music and More" craft program taking place on August 14th at 12:00 at the Chilliwack Library.

Sarah is entering her third year at the University of Victoria where she is working towards a Bachelor of Science degree with a combined major in Earth and Ocean Sciences and Physical Geography and a minor in French. Because she is enthusiastic about meteorology and the environment, Sarah is the Museum and Archives very own weather analyst. Welcome Sarah!

IN THE CHAMBERS GALLERY

Penticton artist Peggy Stel's exhibit *Pieces Within* is on display from **June 8 - July 18** in the Museum's Chambers Gallery. Stel's work is influenced by artists such as Daphne Odjick, Bill Reid, and Vincent Van Gogh.

COMING UP IN THE CHAMBERS GALLERY...

WHEN THE CHIPS ARE DOWN, JULY 27 - SEPT 13: Six local wood turners show a wide variety of bowls, plates, vases and free forms in local and exotic woods. Opening reception is July 27 from 12:00 - 2:00pm.

LINDA PHELPS, CLASSIC TO MODERN, SEPT 21 - NOV 8: Working in porcelain, oil, watercolour, and jewelry, Linda's work is inspired by the world around her. Opening reception is September 21, 12:00 - 2:00pm.

HEALTH EXHIBIT A HIT!

Since opening in March, our exhibit about Chilliwack's medical history has proven to be popular with visitors. The display, focussing on the wheel of life, has inspired artifact and archival donations by several individuals. This is truly encouraging because collections are the heart and soul of museums and archives. Every item adds to the richness of our holdings and inspires connections when staff undertake research and put together exhibits. Our visitors, too, make connections when they are inspired to look for items in their own collections that can add value to the Museum and Archives.

Of the items donated to the Museum, not all of them were necessarily old. For example, one individual brought in their patient ticket from the B.C. Biomedical Laboratory on Mary Street because they happened to be there when the display was in development. Another family heard that Paul was in search of a rather common item that we did not have...a home health care thermometer, this one complete with its original package. One of the older items brought to us was a "Savory & Moore" one dram measure that belonged to Norman Richardson who arrived in Chilliwack in 1895. The Hart Block formerly at Five Corners, was home to medical practitioners and we received a photo of the Dr. Collier's office, whose practice was later taken over by Dr. W.G. Newby.

Larger collections were donated as well. A series of

X-ray slides that belonged to Dr. Choon Law of the Coqualeetza Tuberculosis Hospital arrived. The slides were part of Dr. Law's reference library and were used locally to assist in the treatment of patients. The largest collection though, was that of Chilliwack's first resident surgeon, Dr. Albert Phelps who was a long term member of our society and whose medical equipment features everything from forceps to scalpels, his doctor's bag and microscope, stethoscope and medical kits, medical specimens and so much more.

Dental history also managed to make its mark on our collections. We received a dental kit used by Chilliwack's first full-time dentist Dr. William V. Davies. Other dental items soon followed and although we were able to borrow some dental molds and casts for the exhibit, we soon found ourselves with a local collection of the same materials.

Whether large or small we are certainly appreciative of the time our donors took to look around and see what they may have. The last medical related donations included a small tin Aspirin container that many people used to carry together with a clove oil bottle from Hipwell's Drugstore, the store from which we took our exhibition title from. *May Peace, Health and Contentment* has surely been ours this time round with exhibits.

Certainly this is perhaps the greatest success we have had with donations to the collection and we wish to thank everyone who contributed.

