

MUSEUM MUSINGS FOR JUNE 2007

The big news item for this month has to be the celebrations planned for 30 June at Blubber Bay. I've been harping on this, but repetition is said to be effective so keep Saturday 30 June open and come down to Blubber Bay and celebrate with us.

All things being equal the museum will be opening that weekend for the summer on our usual schedule, Thursday through Sunday.

Those of you with long memories will remember that the old school in Blubber Bay once was crowned with a large bell. It is rumored that some of our current residents even climbed up to that bell and rang it at inconvenient times. That bell was the ship's bell from the Empress of Japan which sailed out of Vancouver for the Canadian Pacific Railway Steamship Lines many years ago. The ship was taken out of service in the 1920's and shortly thereafter, the bell made its way to Blubber Bay and was mounted on the school. There it stayed until the 1960's when it was deemed to have become a hazard and was taken down and stored locally. In the early seventies the bell was donated by Domtar Ltd, who then operated the quarry at Blubber Bay, to the Maritime Museum in Vancouver. To help us celebrate our Blubber Bay centennial we suggested to them that they might consider returning the bell to where it had served for approximately fifty years, longer it is to be noted than it had been aboard the Empress, but the suggestion was politely but firmly refused. Our picture today is of the school with the bell firmly in place. Thanks to Bill Williams for the picture. Bill is in there somewhere and we would appreciate any other identifications.

A number of members of the Ladies Auxiliary of the Canadian Legion from BC and the Yukon, gathered in Powell River for a conference, visited our museum on Monday 7 May before touring Texada Island.

I came across an interesting snippet of Texada history that I am researching. It seems that the SS Beaver, the Hudson's Bay ship that travelled this coast from 1835 to about 1885 made a visit to Texada in June of 1863 to "investigate limestone deposits". I am hoping that we can find out more from the ship's log if it exists and if we can find it.

That's all for this month. Until next time take care of each other and keep thinking green.

Norm MacLean

