

THE BEST LITTLE MUSEUM

It's refreshing to experience our island's history anew through the eyes of a child. Last month 15 excited pupils in Rhonda Gordon's primary class breezed into the museum to discover "treasures" from the past.

Everyone wanted to try out the old flip-up seat student desks in our new school history display area. Vintage textbooks and photos of Texada's pioneer schoolhouses accompany the tribute to Miss Emily Raper, Texada's first teacher (1898). One of her paintings and her autograph book from the 1890's are also on view.

The children were excited to enter "John Kee's (Chinese) Store" - a new gift shop idea designed and built by Brenda and Dave Rairie. The exotic items attracted interested eyes as the children recognized Chinese pots and bottles, silk embroidery, oriental art pieces and an abacus calculator.

Other artifacts were already familiar to the students having been introduced to them in their classroom during our weekly museum "show-and-tell" sessions this spring.

The beautiful blue and white pitcher and basin washstand set from the Windsor Hotel (circa 1900) was admired as was the wind-up gramophone and tiny toy piano (that really does make music!).

The children were reminded of how easy our lives are now when contemplating the laundry plunger, washboard and "sad irons" on the wood stove that made cleaning clothes hot, heavy work.

Don Pillat's enormous two-man chain saw impressed many of the boys while several others recognized the horse shoeing paraphernalia accompanying the reconstructed blacksmith's shed.

One exhibit drew a few gasps. Many kids were afraid to enter the spooky, dark mine shaft (still under construction) which tells us that this display will be a hit when it's completed!

Our museum is filled with many wonderful reminders of Texada's past. It sometimes takes the eyes of a child to enable us to see these things anew, to help us rediscover the significance of objects that we have taken for granted.

Many thanks to Brenda and Dave Rairie for their hours of dedication in creating our new displays.

Everyone is invited to bring their summer visitors to tour the "best little museum on the west coast".

