

GRAND OPENING - THE (NEW) LITTLE BILLY MINE

Saturday July 1 - 11 am - Texada Museum - Van Anda

Over a year of dedication, community involvement and overwhelming enthusiasm has resulted in our spectacular new Little Billy mine exhibit - all made possible through generous contributions from numerous citizens and local businesses alike.

One can now walk through the adit into the dark, mysterious mine on planks rescued from an old wharf ramp. Directly ahead is the ore chute, its rails welded and bent ready to dump ore into the waiting ore cart constructed on donated wheels and carriage. The ore cart glides on rail track salvaged from scrap piles, some half-buried and pulled from the dirt.

Overhead are pipes and electrical rigging gleaned from old mine dumps. The shaft ahead holds the cage made from donated mesh screening. The ore is loaded onto the skip fashioned from a discarded brake drum hammered into "oldness." Be sure to peer down the next drift as mirrors add to the illusion of distance.

Experienced advice was offered by many who viewed the construction in progress, helping to keep it real. We were lucky to find a rusty percussion drill which was cleaned up and made operational. Check out the typical round blasting pattern on the face of "Pete's Drift" nearby. Ladders were donated and cut down to fit our exhibit and a wheelbarrow was "stolen" from a High Road garden to add to the display.

Old wooden CIL blasting boxes (no dynamite!), a great bench vise and a plugger (jackhammer) complete the display of old equipment.

The overall ambience in the mine is due in large part to the movie-set construction techniques employed (hundreds of intricate wooden ceiling supports covered in mesh and splattered with coloured mortar). Very realistic! Thanks Lorrie and Doug for your hours of labour.



Thank-you to all who donated materials, artifacts, time and knowledge to help make the (new) Little Billy a wonderful experience. Thanks to Stan Beale Jr for his interest, advice and enthusiastic support for this project from the start. And a special thank-you to Lorrie Pirart for his vision, dedication and hard work in creating this unique Texada attraction.

Our student volunteer hosts look forward to seeing you and your summer visitors (11am to 3pm Thursdays through Sundays and holiday Mondays).

We are also grateful for future donations of interesting "old stuff" you may have languishing around your place. Displaying it could help give life to Texada's past!

Peter Lock

Texada Island Heritage Society