

HISTORIC SCHOOL EXHIBIT OPENS AT MUSEUM

Saturday, January 26 (10am - 2pm) All Welcome

If anyone has ever reminisced about the old one-room school house, our Texada Museum's newest display will bring those days to life! Thanks to Dave and Brenda Rairie, our former storage rooms have been transformed into a vintage classroom with attached teacherage.

Are you old enough to remember the flip-seat desks? coal oil lamps? pot-bellied heater? firewood box? the Union Jack? inkwells? Dick and Jane?

The first school built on Texada was in Van Anda (1904) at the end of Copper Queen Street (later, Elks Hall). The students were responsible for cleaning and maintaining the one-room school, hauling in firewood and bucketing pails of water up the trail from the creek below.

Winter mornings were often frigid with the inkwells freezing overnight. The entire class would huddle next to the woodstove for the first lesson.

In Blubber Bay the original one-room school burned down but was replaced by one of an even grander design, complete with bell tower! The brass bell, obtained from the Empress of Japan in 1922, summoned the students to class twice a day.

On Central (High) Road the McElroys provided land for the Gillies Bay District School (1910-1928). The community-built log cabin served the area's farm children. Many old-timers recall getting to school by horse and sleigh on snowbound days.



The Marshall School (see photo) at Paxton Road (1913-1924) opened with 7 children attending, mostly from the Paxton Mine community and farms nearby.

The first Gillies Bay (beach) school started as a one-room school for logging families at Davie Bay and was barged northward onto the present site in 1952. An attached teacherage provided accommodation.

In rural areas teachers were often single young women, sometimes in their first job, restricted by community expectations and severe school board rules. The new museum teacherage evokes the life of a rural teacher. We see her neatly-made bed, washbowl set, her books and diary at bedside.

Our new exhibit opens for inaugural viewing on January 26 (10am-2pm). Thanks again to Brenda and Dave for their creative efforts and hard work in bringing this era to life!

Peter Lock

Texada Island Heritage Society