



The Lamplighter

May 31, 2019

Oliver School Stories Entertain at AGM

Our recent AGM was a resounding success thanks to the excellent talk given by Oliver resident Yvonne Moore about her youthful school experiences. Mrs. Moore attended the Testalinda Creek School, a rural 2-room school where a pail and dipper functioned as the water fountain and where students walked long distances and went barefoot in the summer. After Testalinda closed, she attended Oliver Elementary School and then Southern Okanagan High School, graduating in 1952. A slideshow of photographs of Oliver schools was played during the presentation, and school-related artifacts and yearbooks were displayed. Mrs. Moore also brought her own photos, which she generously shared.

The stories of Mrs. Moore's teachers, her feelings about starting school in town, and her memories of swimming and dances evoked laughter and prompted many to share their own stories. At one point, some former classmates in the audience even broke out into their school song, delighting everybody. It was a special moment, and made it clear that many of our members have very fond memories of their school days in Oliver. Thank you to Yvonne for providing such an excellent presentation, and thanks to our volunteers and board members for their help with the set up and clean up after the event.



Yvonne Moore of Oliver regales her audience with stories from her childhood attending school at Testalinda Creek and other Oliver schools.

Youth photography exhibit comes to Museum June 7th

What does the nature, history and culture of Oliver look like in 2019? Local youth are here to answer that question with breathtaking photographs. On June 7th at 6:30 pm, "Oliver In Focus," an exhibit featuring pictures taken by 25 students in South Okanagan Secondary School's grade 11/12 Photography class, will open at the Oliver Museum. The →

Summer Hours Change

June 3rd to September 2nd, the Museum will be open Tuesday - Saturday: 10 am—4 pm.

Archives hours remain Tuesday—Friday: 10 am—1 pm.

Meet our Staff: Introducing our New Curator!

The Oliver & District Heritage Society has some new and returning faces this year. Julianna Weisgarber was selected as new Executive Director and began work on Jan. 2nd. And new to the ODHS this year is Veronica Parkes, who fills the new position of Curator. In this issue, we'll get to know Veronica!



Veronica Parkes

Hi everyone, I'm Veronica Parkes, the new curator. I started in my role on March 4th and I am very excited to get to know the collection better and get involved in the community. Originally, I am from Waterloo, Ontario and recently moved to the Okanagan. I am a trained conservator and graduate of the Cultural Heritage Conservation and Management program at Fleming College in Ontario. Before starting here I worked for the Kelowna Museums Society as a Conservation and Collections Intern and an Exhibit Designer. I completed my undergraduate degree in Ancient Mediterranean Studies and Medieval Studies at Wilfrid Laurier University in Ontario.

As part of my role here I will be maintaining the artifact and archival collections and developing programs, exhibits, and events that will increase the Heritage Society's interactions with other organizations and with the general public. I am passionate about history and museums and I cannot wait to bring a greater audience into the museum and to bring the museum into the community.

Visit us at www.oliverheritage.ca for the latest news, updates, and heritage resources!

Photo Exhibit cont'd.— exhibit will feature student photographers' own perspectives on Oliver and area, with guidance and technical support from photography teacher Lindsey McVicar. Photographs will be displayed in the museum's exhibit space as well as on the Heritage Society's Facebook page. The images will highlight what's unique about Oliver and the surrounding area and preserve it for the future.

As part of their preparation, student photographers took field trips- to Vaseux Lake, to Spotted Lake and S̓wìw̓s Provincial Park/Haynes Point with Indigenous Education Advocate Taylor Baptise, and to the Fairview area with local historian Larry Shannon. This helped them choose photographic subjects and enhanced their understanding of local heritage. The pictures were taken during several different seasons, and are both creative and visually striking.

The exhibit opening on June 7th runs from 6:30 – 7:30 pm at the museum, and many of the stu-



dent photographers will be present. Photographs will be on display for two weeks following the opening. So come meet our talented youth photographers, and enjoy some fresh perspectives on Oliver.

Deep Roots Exhibit Wows

The Deep Roots exhibit which opened May 16th last year has proved popular with locals and visitors alike. The exhibit, which was generously funded by a Canada 150 grant, has helped bring our museum displays into the modern era by incorporating better lighting, sound, and visual features such as films about Oliver, an old-time radio broadcast with local news, and the ever-popular Selfie Station photo booth. The new exhibit includes touchable items such as a beaver pelt, props and costumes, and drawers that house small natural history displays. It is both colorful and information-rich, with nearly every square inch of the displays telling part of Oliver's story, from gold mining to the Oliver International Horse Show, from the fur trade to the Osoyoos Indian Band's contributions to wine-making in this region. We've heard plenty of positive feedback from visitors and we plan to keep adding new content, with extra information in the

drawers and display cases and small temporary displays in the museum's second exhibit room. We hope you'll love the results.



Custom-built display cases and lighting elevate the displays in the new Deep Roots exhibit

Archives saving energy through solar, HVAC upgrades

A few improvements at the Oliver Archives are helping the building to "go green." Those projects are the installation of solar panels on the Archives roof and the replacement of its aging furnace and air conditioner.



Solar panels on the Archives roof absorb the sun

You may have noticed the solar panels as you drove by Fairview Road. The panels were installed February 1st by Argon Electrical and Solar.

Following a similar move by the Oliver Food Bank, the ODHS decided to go solar in 2018. We were approached by local solar advocates who evaluated the building and found it suitable based on orientation and surface area. The final determinant was cost-

savings. It is estimated that the panels will produce 90-95% of the building's total electricity use in a year at a fixed cost of 9 cents/kilowatt-hour. With an expected return of nearly 7% in the first year, the panels should pay themselves off in approximately 12 years and last for another 13.

The new furnace and air conditioner are also having an impact. The old HVAC system was almost 20 years old, and the board had been hoping to replace it for years. The new furnace is more energy efficient and will significantly reduce gas consumption and heating costs. The air conditioner more than doubles our cooling efficiency, taking it from 6 to 14 percent. Guardian Plumbing and Heating completed the installation of both units in February.

The new systems will help ensure the preservation of our archival materials by providing more stable environmental conditions during warm and cold months and improved control over temperature and humidity changes, which can damage records.

Both upgrades offer the benefit of enhanced sustainability, both for the environment and for the ODHS and its holdings. To us, that's a win-win.

Egg Hunting Full of Fun

The Museum hosted an Easter egg hunt April 22nd from 1-4 pm. This all-ages event featured a hunt for hollow plastic eggs that participants traded in for chocolate, lollipops, and toys. There was also an arts & crafts table with paper Easter basket-making and colouring sheets. We had an amazing turnout with an estimated 40 people stopping by, mostly children accompanied by their parents or guardians.

Some guests came solely to check out the new Deep Roots exhibit and the Fairview Jail, which were both open during the egg hunt. The Selfie Station, stocked with Easter props, was also a huge hit with kids and adults alike. We had extremely positive feedback from our guests and plan on making it an annual tradition.



Children and families enjoyed a hunt for eggs around the Museum grounds Easter Monday.

Grant Yields Technology Lending Library

By Intern Cassandra Colman

Recently we received a BC Family Day grant from the Province of British Columbia which helped us to start a long-awaited project—to offer a free oral history workshop for the public and to purchase equipment to start a recording technology lending library. The workshop was part of a free Family Day event with food, crafts and activities that celebrated families of

all kinds. As part of the workshop, we were able to purchase 4 voice recorders and 5 video cameras. These devices are now housed at the Museum and are free for anyone to borrow. It is our hope that people in Oliver will use our cameras and voice recorders to record and preserve their family histories.



A new camera & voice recorders

When it comes to recording oral history interviews, there can be a bit of a learning curve. This includes not only learning how to use the technology, but learning how to conduct an effective interview. People are often nervous in front of the camera and it can sometimes take a little effort to help them get comfortable and talking. Our workshop held February 15th helped participants work with the new equipment hands-on and practice conducting and recording interviews to enhance their skills. While the turnout was small, the workshop was well-received and will likely be offered again in future.

With the resource of our new technology lending library, the ODHS is in a better position to help Oliver residents record their family histories in the comfort of their own homes, thereby preserving them for the future.

If you would like to borrow a device, or would like more information about oral histories and how to record one, please contact the Museum at 778-439-3100 or email us at info@oliverheritage.ca. We are always happy to assist you.

Visit us at www.oliverheritage.ca for the latest news, updates, and heritage resources!

Off-site Storage Reorganization Complete

A multi-year reorganization of the off-site artifact storage building was completed in early 2019 thanks to the hard work of dedicated staff and volunteers. Newly-added artifact-safe shelving is keeping small and



Newly-filled shelving keeps artifacts organized and off the floor at the off-site storage building

medium-sized objects organized and off the floor, and non-artifact items and duplicate objects have been removed. Collections Manager Julianna Weisgarber and Interns Naomi Rath and Cassandra Colman filled shelves, catalogued and numbered the remaining artifacts, organized oversized objects by type, designed a system of hanging storage for our large collection of saws and farm implements, and gave the building a thorough cleaning. Our volunteers generously installed extra shelving and helped to move the larger and heavier objects, as well as replacing light bulbs to provide better illumination. Staff and volunteers also provided transportation for objects that didn't fit our collecting mandate, driving them to other community museums when necessary. The remaining space is clean, organized, and more spacious, allowing better access to the artifacts and ensuring their continued preservation for the future.

Hazardous Artifacts Becoming Safer

By Intern Cassandra Colman

At the Museum we receive a wide variety of different kinds of objects. Unfortunately, we sometimes end up with artifacts containing materials that can be harmful to staff or to other objects in our collection. Objects like bottles of ether or World War I or II – era ammunition may be explosive. Others, like vintage hospital equipment, may have been exposed to biohazardous material like bodily fluids or diseases. Still others may be flammable, toxic, or even radioactive.

When we find a potentially hazardous object, we isolate it from the rest of the collection. Next we research the hazard (expired medicine inside a bottle, exposed sharp edges, radioactivity, etc.). Over the last year, Intern Cassandra Colman completed a project to research all known hazards in our collection and create a list of recommendations to mitigate risk.

Some artifacts are safe to handle and display if they are treated to remove the hazard. For example antique ammunition can be brought to the police station to be disarmed, and artifacts that have been exposed to biohazards can often be disinfected. While

most artifacts can be made safe in one way or another, unfortunately some materials pose too much of a hazard to keep. For example radioactive material, aside from potentially posing a health hazard to staff, can also cause artifacts stored around it to deteriorate faster. Some objects, like old clocks with glow-in-the-dark faces, can potentially have radioactive material removed by someone who is trained to do it.

As a next step, our staff will follow through with making the necessary arrangements to reduce or remove any harm these objects could cause. The safety of visitors, staff, volunteers, and our collection are our top priorities.



Straight razor made with cellulose nitrate or French ivory, which is highly flammable when deteriorated.

What's Next?

We've been hard at work at the ODHS this year working on community outreach and engagement.

An interpretive plant guide for the museum's new Heritage Garden is close to completion. It features all 30 of the native plants in the garden along with their traditional uses. These guides will be available to all guests but are made specifically for garden tours, artistic studies, and educational programs. Veronica has given them beautiful graphics and they already look like works of art.

National Indigenous Peoples Day is on June 21st and the Museum will be housing a small display

about the day and its significance. Stop by and learn about this Canada-wide celebration.

It's the 100th anniversary of The Ditch this year! As such, an event and kids' day camp is in the works for this summer. The event and camp will focus on the importance of water to the Oliver area and the history and continued use of The Ditch.

It's also the International Year of Indigenous Languages. We are working with the Syilx Language House in Penticton to plan an event showcasing their incredible work revitalizing the endangered Okanagan language. Stay tuned for more details.

We'll also be at the Roots & Fruits Festival this August with a fully-staffed booth and display!

www.oliverheritage.ca

Museum



Location: 474 School Avenue

Mail: PO Box 847 Oliver BC

Email: curator@oliverheritage.ca

Phone: (778) 439-3100

Summer hours : Tues-Sat 10am-4pm

MEMBERSHIPS

You can become a member of the Oliver and District Heritage Society by purchasing an annual membership (\$10 per person) conveniently on our website (www.oliverheritage.ca) or in person at either the Museum or the Archives.

Members will be added to our mailing list, which will keep you updated on important local and regional heritage information. Members also enjoy discounts for archival services, copying, and special pricing in our gift shop.

Archives



Location: 430 Fairview Road

Mail: PO Box 847 Oliver BC

Email: info@oliverheritage.ca

Phone: (250) 498-4027

Hours year-round: Tues-Fri 10am-1pm

Looking for a MUSEUM TOUR or ARCHIVAL SERVICES? Please call ahead so we can serve you better!

Support for the Oliver and District Heritage Society generously provided by:

