

# Langley Heritage Society

{Summer 2022}

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[www.langleyheritage.ca](http://www.langleyheritage.ca)

 @LangleyHeritageSociety

 [langleyheritagesociety](https://www.instagram.com/langleyheritagesociety)

*"Providing the window into the past to preserve Langley's heritage for today and tomorrow"*

## President's Message

The very warm, dry summer has ended. We thank all our tenants and volunteers that worked so tirelessly to maintain our heritage sites so well.

Fortunately, some improvements were made last spring at the station that helped keep the site an attraction for residents and visitors. If you or someone you know likes meeting interesting residents and tourists' we welcome you to join our friendly group of volunteers at the station. You will find a volunteer form on the society website located at, [www.langleyheritage.ca](http://www.langleyheritage.ca).

The possibility of spreading illness has been the reason our usual Douglas Day dinner will not be held this year. Instead, we are offering an online event. (Please see the back page.)

The society supports Remembrance Day by laying wreaths at all four Langley cenotaphs.

The LHS annual general meeting and dinner will be held Friday, April 21, 2023 at the Fort Langley Community Hall. The executive and Helen wish everyone good health and a happy Christmas and New Year.

Fred Pepin  
*LHS President*

"The Langley Heritage Society is located on the traditional and unceded lands of the Kwantlen, Katzie, Matsqui, and Semiahmoo peoples. We respect this land and its original occupants."

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## Bone Dry Summer

Much of British Columbia experienced Level 5 drought conditions during the summer of 2022, adding stress to fish migration, farming, gardening, and even drinking water supplies. Smoke from forest fires in the United States and BC also filled the lower mainland's airshed, at times resulting in the worst air quality in the world which prompted multiple health advisories.

Climate change amplifies the extremes of weather incidents — like this year's drought and last fall's atmospheric river that triggered flooding and devastation in parts of the Fraser Valley, and beyond.

Individuals and communities can access resources to help reduce emissions, and ideas for adapting to climate change through "ReTooling for Climate Change". A project of the non-profit Fraser Basin Council and BC Ministry of the Environment, details can be found here: <https://retooling.ca/>.



Fog and smoke shrouds Glen Valley. Photo: Mark Forsythe

## BC Maritime History



The docks on River Road near McIvor's Landing. Photo: Mark Forsythe

Legendary BC boat builder Barrie Farrell died late this summer.

The fishing boat in the foreground of the photo is his design — one of hundreds on the coast. He was honoured with a maritime excellence award by the Maritime Museum of BC in 2017.

Barrie was among the first to build hulls from fibreglass and his story is told in the book "Boats in my Blood: A Life of Boat Building".

# Sold! BC Farm Museum Acquires Land

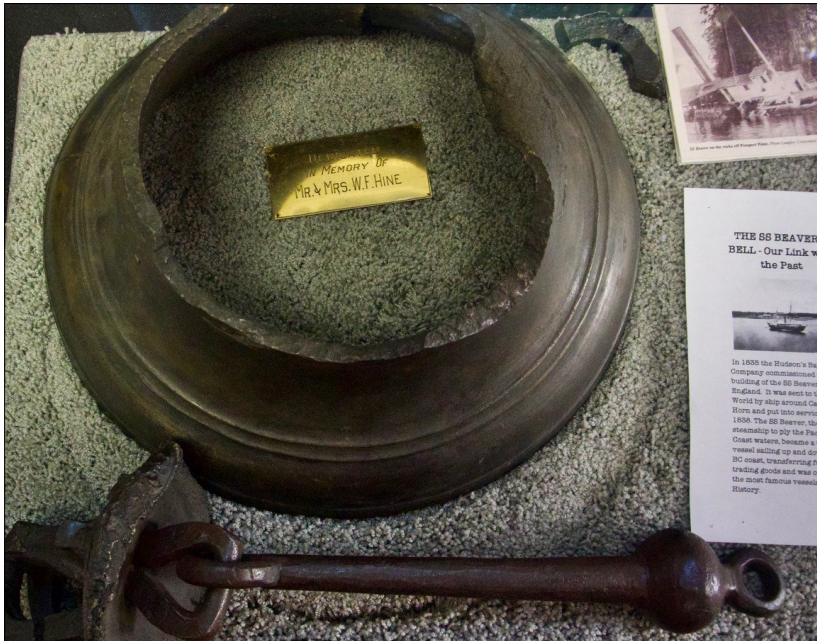
Congratulations to the BC Farm Museum for successfully acquiring land directly beside its facility. A special “Help Load the Wagon” campaign helped seal the deal. The hope is to eventually expand the Museum into a third building; plans for design, content and further fund-raising are underway. This will take some time, but the BC Farm Museum is pleased to have an important piece of the puzzle in place, and the museum heartily thanks all donors.

BCFM is a treasured friend of the Langley Heritage Society: their volunteers help maintain and restore our CNR heritage railway equipment and the museum cross-promotes the CNR Station to visitors.



BC Farm Museum volunteers celebrate acquiring land for future expansion. Photo: BC Farm Museum

## S.S. Beaver Bell



S.S. Beaver's bell inside St Andrew's United Church in Fort Langley.

The Hudson's Bay Company established a trading post at Derby Reach on the Fraser River in 1827; nine years later the London-built S.S. Beaver went into service. It carried furs, food, supplies, and people to forts along the coast for almost 40 years as "a floating HBC trading post".

The steam-driven paddle wheeler was eventually sold to a Victoria merchant who then converted it into a tug-boat; its bell was put into storage until Henry Wark (HBC factor and Fort Langley postmaster) spotted it and asked to have it for St Andrew's Church in Fort Langley.

It called parishioners from atop the bell tower until it came crashing down during a 1974 fire. It's been sitting inside a display case at the church since 2009, thanks to donations from the Langley Heritage Society and Jamie Robertson of Industrial Plastics.

S.S. Beaver ran onto the rocks near Prospect Point in 1888; its wreck site is still used to train divers in underwater archaeology techniques. (With information from “Tribute” a book about St. Andrew's United Church by Marjorie Rosberg).

# Packing Up



The Langley Centennial Museum was a BC Centennial Project that opened in 1958.

The Langley Centennial Museum closed its doors at the end of summer to prepare for a move to Salishan Place by the River planned for summer 2023. Staff are working behind the scenes, and access to the online museum collection remains at <https://museum.tol.ca>. You'll find archival photographs, links to oral history interviews, artifacts, and lots more.



Salishan Place By The River is under construction at the corner of King Street and Mavis Avenue in Fort Langley.  
Photos: Mark Forsythe.

Salishan Place by the River will include Indigenous and community galleries, program spaces, community archives, a reception hall, a 167-seat theatre, and a new home for the Fort Langley Community Library.

The complex is a Township of Langley collaboration with Katzie, Kwantlen, Matsqui, and Semiahmoo First Nations. Various community consultations wrapped up at the beginning of the summer which included participation by the Langley Heritage Society.

Our society will be sponsoring classroom spaces for the schools program.

# A Queen's Passing

1926—2022

A young Princess Elizabeth and Prince Phillip wave during their whistle stop through Fort Langley in the fall of 1951. She became Queen about four months later, and reigned for more than 70 years. This photo hangs in our passenger car at the heritage Fort Langley CNR Station.

## Heritage Lives Here

The Langley Heritage Society has restored homes, barns, churches and a train station over the last four decades. Directors of the Society visit the



Fred Pepin shares restoration details with LHS directors Tom Annandale, Shawn Feddes and Township of Langley's Stephen Mikicich, manager of Heritage Planning, at Wark/Dumais residence. Photo: Mark Forsythe

Learn more about these -- and other -- buildings restored by the Society at: <https://www.langleyheritage.ca/restored-buildings/>

tenants in these buildings every year, and we're always struck by how much care and attention is given to each property.

LHS president Fred Pepin has a renovation story for each one of these buildings too — his leadership over the years is nothing short of remarkable and his efforts have been recognized by the Township of Langley and British Columbia Historical Federation.

Here are a few comments we received after posting photos of our buildings on the LHS Facebook page:

“Thank you for keeping these amazing heritage homes and other heritage structures alive.”

“Mr. Pepin is one who we should all admire and respect.”

“Love them all, what a great job done by the Society.”

”



Adam Bouwman sits in the station agent's office greeting visitors. Rail enthusiast in his spare time, construction worker full-time, Adam returned to volunteer every other Sunday in the 2022 season. Photo: Lou Fasullo

## Volunteers Down By The Langley Station



Sandra Reams (above) explaining the running of the railway office while volunteer Juli-Anne Paterson (middle photo) stamps a young rail visitor's hand. Photos: Helen Williams



Station manager Helen Williams and new volunteer Kimberley (above) are making the society's entry for the Parks Canada Scarecrow Showcase. With help from other volunteers like Sandra and Morgan Wilks, a station agent complete with cap, uniform, and lantern (for flagging down the next train) was created.

## Heritage Home Spotlight: Wark/Dumais



The City of Langley bought the house and 87 acres of this historic dairy farm for \$2 million in 1976 with the intention of developing the land as a regional shopping centre. By 1980 it had been purchased by Douglas College and the Langley Heritage Society began lobbying for preservation. Photo: LHS

Two prominent Langley families lived in the elegant Wark/Dumais farmhouse on Glover Road. Robert James Wark was reeve (or mayor) from 1914 – 1918, and the Albert Dumais family operated an impressive dairy farm until 1963 (he bought the 160 acre property in 1925 for \$15,500). The house was built in three stages by the Warks, with the core constructed in 1890. The kitchen was added in 1900, the verandah in 1910. The Dumais family later dug a basement using horses, scraper ploughs and local help.

The house received a Municipal Heritage Designation in 1987, and Langley Heritage Society began a careful restoration, making almost \$300,000 worth of improvements.

Wark family roots go back to the origins of European settlement in Langley. Henry Wark was a nephew of John Wark who helped James McMillan locate the original site for Fort Langley at Derby in 1824. Henry became postmaster at Fort Langley and ran the HBC store. In 1868 he purchased the property on the eastern edge of the great Hudson's Bay Company farm at Milner, not far from the portage route his uncle used during the 1824 exploratory expedition.

After Henry's death in 1890 the property was inherited by his sixteen year old nephew, Robert James Wark. He arrived from Londonderry, Ireland (his family farmed at nearby Bridgend, County Donegal), and with the help of Daniel Carr, built a rudimentary house for his parents and brothers, who arrived with Mrs. Rose Ann Carr the following year.



Restored Wark/Dumais house on Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Langley campus. The exterior features gingerbread Gothic eave brackets, turned wooden posts and a decorative finial on the roof above the main entrance.

Photo: Mark Forsythe

Robert married Edith Kirkby, a music teacher from the Island of Jersey, and over the years the family developed Maple Wood Dairy farm. Robert was assisted by Tom Simonds as he expanded the house.

# Remembrance Day

Following the First World War, Canada honoured the horrific losses experienced by citizens and communities across the country. In Langley, that included the creation of cenotaphs at cemeteries in Fort Langley and Murrayville in 1921.



Granite cenotaph in Fort Langley cemetery. The resting place of many of the area pioneers. Photo: Mark Forsythe

The campaign to build these granite cenotaphs in the form of Celtic crosses was led by local veterans Archie Payne and Dr. Benjamin Marr. The names of men killed in the two World Wars and other conflicts are today etched on or below each monument.

Some veterans who survived the war returned home suffering from serious wounds or the effects of poison gas attacks, consequently many died before their time. Separate sections were established in Fort Langley and Murrayville to honour them; veterans of Allied Forces continue to be buried there.

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And each year, local Scouts clean the graves and grace them with small Canadian flags in preparation for Remembrance Day.

Langley Heritage Society will once again place wreaths at memorials in Murrayville, Aldergrove, Langley City, and Fort Langley. Lest we forget. (For more information see: *Frail Monuments: The Cemeteries of Langley* by Warren Sommer)

## Douglas Day Talk

James Douglas is regarded as one of the most important figures in the development of modern day British Columbia. His contributions as the first governor are acknowledged each year during Douglas Day, but his mixed Scottish/Barbadian-Creole heritage is often overlooked. Douglas married a Cree woman, forged relationships with Indigenous peoples, and invited Blacks in the US to join the 1858 Gold Rush.

Hear new insights into the man when we host a talk by Yasin Kirago Misago of the African Descent Society on Wednesday November 16th at 7 pm.

If you'd like to join this Zoom talk, contact [info@langleyheritage.ca](mailto:info@langleyheritage.ca).

## Supporters & Suppliers

Langley Heritage Society wishes to express our gratitude to all our volunteers and supporters who contribute to our projects.

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