

the TOWNSITE HERITAGE DIGESTER



Published by the Townsite Heritage Society of Powell River

FALL & WINTER 2019/2020

Coming soon to a theatre near you: CHANGE

By Ann Nelson

The Patricia's story should start in classic fairy tale style, with "Once upon a time, a long time ago..." to match its fairy tale interior and remarkable history. But it really starts in September 1913 when Bobby Scanlon, son of PR Company co-Founder Michael J Scanlon, acquired the newly constructed theatre building. Some say he won it in a card game, but however it came into his hands, its future was set forever by a naming contest won by Mrs Oliver who proposed "Patricia," in honour of Princess Patricia, the dashing daughter of Canada's new Governor General, the Duke of Connaught and Strathearn. In 1927, when the "talkies" were launched upon the world, Bobby and his young buddy, Myron McLeod, commissioned Henry Holdsby Simmonds of Vancouver to design a state-of-the-art, no expense spared movie palace up the hill from the old Patricia; our "new" building showed its first movie on November 6, 1928, and the old building showed its last on the same date, before being demolished to make room for the Cenotaph Park attached to Dwight Hall.

Through the thin years of the Depression and the thick years after the War, before television entranced everyone, the Patricia had just kept on doing what it was designed and built to do so well: movies; trunk shows of fashions arriving on the steamships; vaudeville acts on the circuit; local talent shows and Miss Powell River pageants... The Pat has seen it all. When Myron McLeod, who had bought out his partner Bobby's interest in the

30s, finally sold the Patricia to Bruce and Vi MacDonald in 1979, Powell River's vibrant movie scene that included two drive-ins and three theatres had dwindled to the one drive-in at Sliammon and the Patricia.



Ann Nelson: *See you at the movies.*

The MacDonalds and their son Bob and his family kept the place going on a shoestring and a prayer until 1999, when Michael Scott brought his dreams of total restoration and refurbishment to the table. Bruce had left his lovingly restored merry go round on the back lot, to the delight of the neighbourhood kids when he'd show up to offer rides, and it looked for a while like the new energy was going to turn the tide of neglect for the Pat. However, in 2002, Michael walked away from the Theatre and his dreams, and it was left to the Powell River Credit Union to find a way to prevent the loss of the only cinema in town, as well as a loss to its shareholders if it couldn't be kept operating as a legal, non-conforming property. Enter the Nelsons: Ann was already working as the coordinator for Townsite

Heritage, right across the street at the Postmaster's House, and had been living in Powell River Company's first planned suburb, Cranberry Lake, for 24 years; Brian had a picture framing business in Westview which could probably be relocated to Townsite, and it looked like the mother and son duo, with a lot of help from their friends in the community, could take on the foster-parenting of

See The Pat, p. 2

The Pat, from p. 1

the Pat and buy some time whilst wrestling with creating a future for this iconic heritage landmark.

What a ride it has been! Here we are, 106 years and four owners later, and the Patricia Theatre is the oldest continuously operating movie theatre company in Canada. It has been the subject of numerous documentaries and interviews, as well as having been patiently (and slowly) restored, repaired, refurbished and renewed... and it ain't over yet. Have you ever noticed how some stuff just doesn't stay done, like repainting the trim and replacing light fixtures and all the other stuff that looks so swell, until it doesn't?

It's time for the venerable Patricia to belong to the community and to be operated by an organization that can bring the diverse skillsets and interests of its members to the challenges of programming, continued restoration of the heritage building, and participation in the renaissance of the Townsite National Historic District. The Friends of the Historic Patricia Theatre Society has amalgamated with the Friends of the Film Society of Powell River to create the Powell River Film Society, which has taken on the agreement for sale with the Patricia Entertainment Company, and has undertaken the fundraising to actually buy the Theatre, the property and the equipment so our community will continue to have access to first run, art house and independent films; to be able to host concerts, weddings, conferences, film festivals and special events; and

to secure the future of our frontier Princess. The Film Society is a registered charity and can issue charitable tax receipts, unlike when the whole community rallied in 2012 to fund the forced conversion to digital exhibition, and it is hoped that will make it an easier decision for people to participate in the fundraising. Just think... Ann and Brian might be able to hand over the baton to the next relay before she turns 80, and while there's still time for another chapter in their Powell River adventures. The PR Film Society as owners could now qualify for what few capital repair grants are still available out there in the heritage preservation community and be able to do something permanent about the roof, increase the capacity of the electrical system, look at improving the seating, and complete the façade restoration with a replica of the original stained glass canopy, and ...!!

Then, in true story-book style, we could finally say: They lived happily ever after... The End.



The first Patricia Theatre, ca 1916

TOWNSITE TIDBIT

FALL/WINTER HOURS

Henderson House Museum & Townsite Heritage Society Office

OPEN

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Out with the “OLD...”

By Linda Nailer

The first time I laid eyes upon Henderson House Living Museum was in February of 2014, just a couple of days before my birthday. It was a jaw-dropping experience as I had never been inside the building before, but remembered how it looked years before, raised up on blocks and looking frightfully unloved and fragile. Back then, being literally clueless about the Townsite and its history, I had no idea that the Townsite Heritage Society was restoring the first house built in Townsite back to her 1911 grace as Dr Henderson’s (first Doctor in Powell River) home.

In the early winter of 2014 I had seen an ad in the paper for a part-time coordinator position for The Townsite Heritage Society, and something or somebody was telling me to apply for the job. Something inside told me that this was the part-time job I had been seeking for several years. I was captivated and compelled to apply, and when I received word that I was to be interviewed I could hardly contain myself. I set foot inside Dr Henderson’s home for the very first time for the interview, my jaw dropped to the floor and it was love at first sight. I could feel the love and warmth in this fine arts and crafts home, and the kindness of the Henderson family



that had graced her walls.

During the interview I was trembling and had trouble staying calm, as I realized how much I wanted to become the coordinator for the Townsite Heritage Society and to work at Henderson House Living Museum, so you can imagine how ecstatic I was to hear that I had been selected as the successful applicant.

I started my training right away with Peter Sansburn, who many of you will fondly remember, and he trained me thoroughly. At times no doubt his patience was tested as I painfully took notes, (and the notes were long, detailed and slow), but Peter never flinched! After I officially took Peter’s place he continued to be my helpline for weeks and weeks and would generously guide me through some of the twists and turns I encountered.

During my time as coordinator starting in 2014 I have enjoyed meeting Townsite residents, so many of you appreciating and supporting the historic arts and crafts design of your homes. I salute you all for your passion in restoring and maintaining your homes as you do!

But soon, it will be time for me to leave you all in good care as I hand the torch to a new coordinator at the end of March 2020.

No doubt many of you are familiar with Joëlle Sévigny, an “obsessed with heritage” student who moved here in the spring of 2018. Joëlle was hired as a summer student with Tourism Powell River’s Canada Heritage funding,

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See Young on p. 4

Young, from p. 3

and spent a great deal of her time working with Townsite Heritage Society during the summers of 2018 and 2019, as a docent at Henderson House Living Museum, Townsite Walking Tour guide, volunteer etc. and has more than earned her stripes as Townsite coordinator.

Henderson House Living Museum, Townsite walking tour guide, volunteer etc. and has more than earned her stripes as Townsite coordinator. During January through until the end of March 2020 Joëlle will be doing her practicum with Townsite Heritage Society, and will be spending her days at Henderson House. Upon completing her practicum/graduating at the end of March she will officially take over as coordinator.

Along with her energetic youth and passion for history, Joëlle will bring to the table her heritage credentials and professional abilities to apply and improve upon our continued success in sharing heritage and keeping the society moving along the heritage path.

And in with the “YOUNG”

By Joëlle Sévigny

I grew up in small town in northern Ontario called Hearst, which is actually very similar to Powell River in some ways. The nature that surrounds the town and the small community feel is probably why I felt so at home when I moved here. In April of 2018, after finishing undergraduate studies, I followed my family to the coast of British Columbia and have not looked back!

My love for history and heritage started off as a romantic notion when I was child: every weekend my family and I would go for excursions in the forest and my dad would make us “discover” different butterflies and flowers. Needless to say, discovering became something I really enjoyed. Then when I learned that you could discover artefacts and make a living out of it, I thought that sounded like a pretty good dream. Thus, for my

undergraduate studies, I completed a Bachelor of Arts in Archeology with a concentration in Physical Anthropology at the University of Calgary.

Throughout my studies my love and fascination for history only grew. I also became aware of the concept of heritage. By this time, it was clear to me that in life I wanted to make a difference in people’s lives, it didn’t have to be big, but I knew I wanted to pursue a career that allowed me to do so. Heritage enriches our lives — it is known to increase quality of life; this is because it is how many of us connect to our environment. In turn, this connection gives us a sense of identity. If done sustainably, heritage can also be passed on to future generations. To me, preserving what creates this phenomenon, such as heritage buildings, oral or written accounts — whichever form heritage takes — became an important crusade. Therefore, I decided to continue my studies and specialize further: I am now completing a Graduate Diploma in Heritage Resource Management.

When I moved to Powell River, I knew there was heritage in the area since I had applied for a student position working in heritage, but I wasn’t aware of its vastness. I remember visiting Henderson House for the first time and thinking it was so peaceful and beautiful. I just wanted to be part of it immediately! The community responded to that very well, I was welcomed with open arms and slowly (or quickly depending on how you see it) I became part of the family. I joined the Townsite Heritage Society’s Board of Directors in October 2018 as a Director and also became Secretary. In the last year and

a half, I have had a taste of all the volunteer events Henderson House puts on and have met some of you already. I am looking forward to meeting more of you!

Becoming Heritage Coordinator at Henderson House is truly a dream come true for me. I know I still have some training to do with Linda, who will kick my butt into shape during my practicum this winter! Nevertheless, I am excited to actively start making that difference in the everyday lives of locals, or in the visits of travellers.



Robert Dufour

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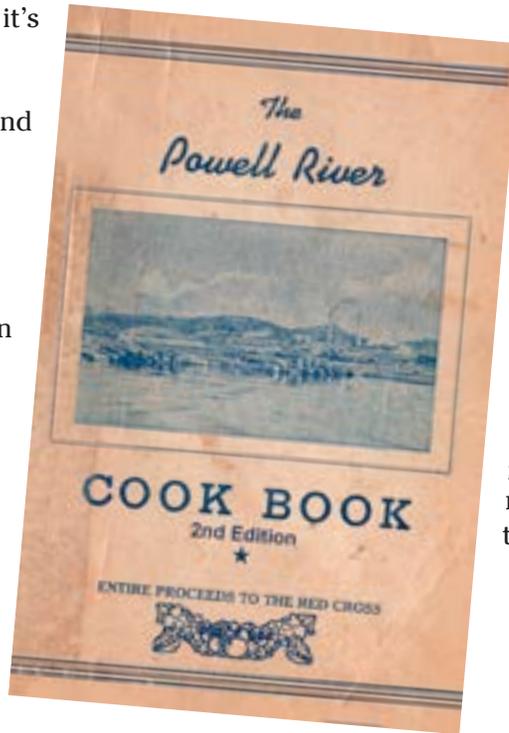
Thanks to the hard work of Doug and Wendy Mobley we are happy to offer this "2nd edition" 1941 cookbook of local recipes for sale. Priced at just \$14.95, it's just in time for the Christmas season!

Excerpts by Doug Mobley from the Foreword of 2nd edition:

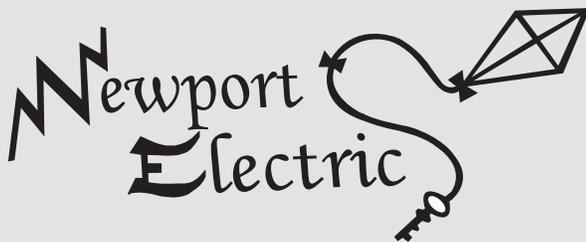
- The original cookbook was printed in 1941 as a means to raise money for the Red Cross and its war work. It is unknown who or what group produced the work, but ladies from Townsite, Westview and Cranberry have been identified so it was clearly a community effort.
- The Townsite Heritage Society has a copy of the original but it is in poor condition as can be seen in the cover of this book which is a scan of the original. The interior of

the book is printed on newsprint (appropriate for Powell River) but it has badly yellowed and the pages are deteriorating. However, the newsprint is 78 years old and newsprint was never manufactured for longevity.

- For anyone with a Powell River history going back before 1941, there is a good chance that your mom's, grandma's or great-grandmother's recipes might be in this book.



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TOWNSITE TIDBIT

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Rebecca Tejkl, *President*
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Susan Short, *Treasurer*
Joëlle Sévigny, *Secretary*
Directors: **Carol Regnier, Karen Andrews,**

These volunteers are among the many who diligently provide skills and time in support of our neighbourhood. Thank you for your contributions!



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Our 30th Birthday

Society planning big party in celebration

Townsite Heritage Society is approaching a b-i-i-i-i-g birthday in 2020, and we're starting to get our party on right now, and we need your help!

In 1989, a couple of key people at the Museum started muttering to themselves about the treasure that Townsite could represent and how it was being allowed to deteriorate. The Regional District had purchased the Assistant Manager's House on Bosses' Row in 1980 and had launched a commendable program of restoration of this grand build-

unofficial advocates and stewards of our company town, forming the Society and pursuing Charitable status. It is time, and past, to acknowledge and celebrate the achievements of this group and their successors, and what better time than on a 30th anniversary!

We are calling on all founders and past directors of Townsite Heritage Society to get in touch so we can contact them in the New Year with the plans for the celebration. It used to be that we all could find anyone we needed with the aid of the



ing with consultation from the Heritage Branch, but little else had been done about slowing Townsite's slide into becoming 'Dogpatch' to the rest of Town. By 1990, Karen Southern and several others had mustered a determined band who organized to become the

Townsite Heritage Society

at Henderson House Living Museum

Call **604.483.3901** Email thetownsite@shaw.ca

Write **6211 Walnut St, Powell River, BC V8A 4K2**

phone book and a network of neighbours, but it's not so easy anymore! So, we're giving ourselves and our neighbours plenty of time to help fill in the gaps on our contact list of founders and past directors: please spread the word where it will do the most good.

TOWNSITE TIDBIT

BLACKBERRY TREAT!

BLACKBERRY SHORTCAKE FUNDRAISER

Thank you to all our volunteers and supporters for another big success at the Blackberry Festival. This is a big fundraiser that takes a great deal of planning, time and volunteer teamwork. At the end of that big day, when everyone is exhausted, it is satisfying to know that your participation and donations made a big difference!

Cheers to **Quality Foods** for providing the whipping cream! Without THE CREAM, we couldn't call our Blackberry shortcake **BLACKBERRY SHORTCAKE!**



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Best Kitchen Garden

Keith & Michelle Donald
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Best Garden Structure

Jim & Carol Wyatt
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Best Containers (2)

Cathy MacDonald
5426 LABURNUM AVE

Best Border (3)

Ken & Lynn Palfrey
5483 MAPLE AVE

Spring Fling (4)

Donna Powell
6283 SYCAMORE ST

Best Garden Design (5)

Carol Ciup & Gordon Miller
5515 MAPLE AVE

Best Outdoor Living Space

Fred Stutt
5646 MARINE AVE

Birds, Bees & Butterfly Garden (6)

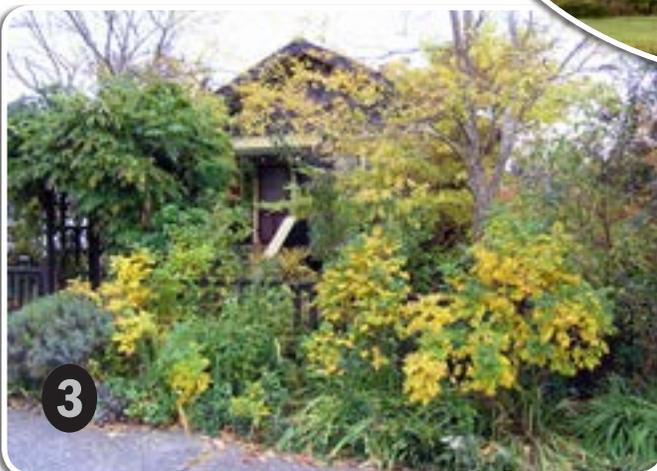
Brian & Liz McLaughlin
6289 POPLAR ST

Most Improved Garden

Georgia Glassford
6305 POPLAR ST

Best Commercial (7)

Julian Camire,
Bygone Barber Shop
5861 ASH AVE





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Grand Heritage
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Hudsons make 2019 Paint-Up a Success



This year the lucky winners of the Paint-Up Campaign were Doug and Pat Hudson at 5600 Marine Ave.. Well done folks! Your house looks amazing! Here's what they had to say about their painting project:

To Paint, or not to Paint?

For a while we had been thinking of changing the colour of our house. Then RONA awarded us 20 gallons of paint and materials and it was 'game on.'

By mid-July structural work (replacing beams and knees) was completed, and then the sanding had to be done. The next 6-1/2 weeks were devoted to the priming and final two coats of painting. It was encouraging to see the new colours taking shape. Then, with the final brush stroke on window trim we were done! The weather had cooperated throughout, the summer was over, and so was our project!

Scaffolding, ladders, paint sprayer, and safety harnesses... things of the past.

Thank you RONA and Townsite Heritage Society!

— Doug and Pat Hudson

HOUSE HISTORIES

Vol III • The New Town

Don't forget to buy your copy of Karen Southern's House Histories. Volume III is only \$39.95
Volumes I & II also available, and look for Vol IV to wrap up your set... coming soon.
Watch for the announcement.

The Hudsons received a package including 20 gallons of SICO exterior paint donated by PPG Paints. RONA Powell River provided all of the application products needed to do the job, along with advice and support. The Society thanks RONA and PPG Paints for partnering with us once again this year to support the beautification of the Townsite.

For Homeowners interested in applying for the annual Paint-Up program, watch for our announcement and applicant criteria in the spring 2020 Digester newsletter, or contact the society office.

RONA

Doing it right

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Make Your Own Period Clothing

A workshop with Ann Goodwin

By Ann Goodwin

I have been sewing since I was five years old. I remember making beautiful gowns to dress my dolls in. If I wasn't sewing I was knitting, or crocheting.

My mother, aunt and my grandmother were very good seamstresses. My grandmother was ALWAYS sewing, and she was an Alteration Hand in the best ladies clothing stores (Holt-Renfrew & Daillards), and was a dressmaker with her sisters at the turn of the 20th Century. At that time ladies dresses were still Victorian, with boning and "Leg o' Mutton" sleeves. She never stopped sewing all through her life. We came to Canada in 1956, and at that time she was 74. She lied about her age, and told everyone that she was 64 and she could get away with it. She sewed every day until she was around 85. When she lived with us I watched her sewing by hand every evening. When I became a teenager I made dresses of the 1950s–60s. My mom also made dresses for me, because that's what we did! When I was 20 I met a man, so I made lots more dresses. Next was my wedding dress. I made bridesmaids' dresses, first baby, baby clothes and then I was busy raising a family.

There was a lapse in my sewing as I was raising three sons, until I made the 70s hot pants when we went dancing. As my husband and I did a lot of Ballroom dancing, evening gowns and costumes came next, along with three more wedding dresses and the complimentary bridesmaids' dresses with them, using no pattern. In the in 2000s–2010s I went on stage in Old Time Music Hall, made most of the costumes. That same group started Pantomime, with our first being



Period Clothing Workshop

Learn to make your own 1920s clothing

We're offering a period clothing workshop with instructor Ann Goodwin who will guide you as you make a garment from a 1920s pattern. Learn about other early styles along the way.

Participants should have some experience in using a sewing machine. Limited space means first come, first served so reserve your spot early!

We will all be working from the same pattern (supplied) and we will have fabric for purchase, or bring your own. All supplies are available, but but if you have favourite scissors, pins... bring them with you.

Happy Sewing!

Date: Two Saturday sessions,
Nov 23 & 30

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Location: Fibre Space at
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Jack and the Beanstalk, followed by *Aladdin*, and I made most of the costumes for Jack and the Beanstalk and all of them for Aladdin. I even made a camel and a cow, and I played the rear end of both....

I joined the Light Opera Society in Penticton. I was in Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado*. The next thing was *My Fair Lady*. I made most of the costumes, including the ball gown for Eliza and all the black and white costumes for the Ascot scene.

The next play was Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. I made all but two of the costumes. These were all Elizabethan style, and if you recall what Queen Elizabeth 1st wore, they were extremely detailed and the skirt took up 10 yards of fabric.

I made lots more costumes as I worked in a Fancy Costume rental store owned by the Penticton Light Opera. None of the aforementioned costumes were made with any pattern. The only costume I made with a pattern was King Henry VIII.

It is interesting to follow the change in styles over the years. For example, there was a lady whose last name was Bloomer and Mrs Bloomer was a suffragette and reformer and she found a new style of clothing that suited her. It was a divided skirt invented by Lady Haberton which had not gained popularity until Mrs Bloomer found they were excellent for bike riding. So onto the fashion scene came a pair of Bloomers!

There were a lot of radical changes in women's clothing in the late 19th Century. Victorian women wore up to 14 lbs of underwear, and some even had ribs surgically removed to attain the wasp waist!

Moving into the 20th Century women became more assertive. With this early form of liberation came more changes in clothing. The corsets were now made without boning and following that they abandoned the corset altogether. Looser dresses were worn in the Edwardian era followed by the 20s Flapper dresses, a name inspired from when women danced the Charleston. If you have watched the whole series of *Downton Abbey* you can see how fashions were changing rapidly at that time.

The little black dress enters the scene, pastel colours become popular, hair is bobbed and headbands keep

it under control. Breasts are bound up tightly so as to look like a young boy. Underwear has gone from 14 lbs to almost nothing. Cami knickers became popular, and they were one piece camisole/knickers (briefs) made of silk. Here we are in the 1920s and simple dresses were embellished with beads, lace, embroidery, scarves, cut on the bias dresses floated, low waists, belts at the hip made of chiffon and draping down to the floor. Lots of draping from shoulders was in style. These dresses required very little fabric, meaning women could have lots of clothes in many colours. Hats called cloches hugged the head.

To learn about couturiers in the Roaring Twenties there is a wonderful series of two sisters who opened a business called The House of Elliot. You can find it all on YouTube. And now that *Downton Abbey* is finished you might try this wonderful series set in the early 1900s, with a marvelous display of elegant period fashion to appreciate.

A few more names associated with clothing that you might know:

- **Cardigan:** Invented by the 7th Earl of Cardigan who led the Charge of the Light Brigade, had the men's red jackets knitted with buttons up the front.
- **Raglan:** Lord Raglan had a coat made with the upper part the armhole slanted from underarm to neck. This made it easier for him to dress as he had lost an arm in the war.
- Earl Spencer one of Lady Diana Spencer's forebears invented the **Spencer Jacket** as short evening jacket.
- An **Eton jacket** is a jacket worn by the schoolboys who attend Eton (a preparatory school in England).
- **Wellington Boots** were invented by the Duke of Wellington. He was known as "The Iron Duke" in the Battle of Waterloo.

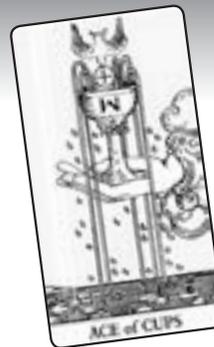
TOWNSITE TIDBIT

SPECIAL THANKS!

Thank you to the **Powell River Community Foundation** for their grant of \$1500 to assist in the completion of the House Histories Vol IV. We are very pleased to be so close to completion, and we couldn't have done it without their support.

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at Henderson House



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The Townsite Heritage Digester

The Digester is published by the Townsite Heritage Society of Powell River. It is distributed to every household and business in the Historic Townsite, current members of the Society who reside outside the Townsite, and to selected locations around Powell River. Submissions and suggestions should be sent to the attention of THS Coordinator.

Townsite Heritage Society

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We're here to help you!

Drop by the THS Office at 6211 Walnut Street, or get in touch with us at 604 483-3901 or thetownsite@shaw.ca. We have photo albums, reference books, maps, paint chips, suggestions, and a wealth of stories to share.

Fall/Winter Hours:

Tues to Fri • Noon–4 pm



Membership & Volunteer Form

Please complete and mail or drop off this form to the Townsite Heritage Society office at 6211 Walnut St, Powell River, BC V8A 4K2
E-mail us at <thetownsite@shaw.ca> or call 604.483.3901



Yes, I would like to be a member for 2020 \$10 MEMBERSHIP

Your donation of time as a volunteer, or a cash donation, both go far in helping us to engage in projects in support of our Townsite.

CASH DONATION \$20 \$30 \$40 \$50 \$100 Other \$ _____

Yes, I am willing to assist in volunteer efforts for the Townsite Heritage Society.

Please, sign me up to help with:

- Office Volunteer Digester Newsletter Delivery Blackberry Street Party
 Walking Tour Guide Henderson House Docent Gardening
 Or I can: _____

How to reach me:

Name _____

Address _____ Postal _____

Daytime Phone _____ Evening Phone _____

Email _____

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- PR Minor Hockey Assoc.
- Friends of the Patricia
- PR & District SPCA
- PR Minor Baseball
- PR Kings Junior A Hockey
- Townsite Jazz Festival
- Powell River Film Festival
- Pacific Salmon Foundation
- United Way of Powell River
- Royal Canadian Legion...



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