

# THE VILLAGE

CENTURY PARK MUSEUM ASSOCIATION

BURNABY, B. C.

OCTOBER 1974

According to reports from all sides 1974 has been a progressive and satisfying year at Heritage Village which has emerged from just an idea to a major tourist attraction and a recognized museum in the space of only three years.

Popularity of the Village has been due in the past, in great part, to word-of-mouth recommendations by those who have visited the site. This year, however, the Village was featured on almost all of the tourist maps of the Greater Vancouver area and in most of the guide books and package ticket services. Travel services have also been steering tour groups as well as individuals to the Village with the result that staff were able to host several groups of visitors from as far away as Japan. With all those cameras clicking we can be sure of some great pictorial publicity in the Orient.

As well as running the Village, staff members also found time to keep up-to-date with current trends in museum work. Tony Scott presents a "directorial diagnosis" about this:

"...Our Curator participated in the Canadian Museums Association annual meetings and seminars in St. John's, Newfoundland, last May. Three of us, together with Board Member Barbara Copan, attended the British Columbia Museums Association annual meetings and seminars in Vancouver in mid-September. Heritage Village hosted the annual "outing" for delegates to this latter event and drew plaudits for the quality of museum practice, development, planning and display presentation. To round out the year, two of us participated in the Western Canada Historic Sites Conference, this year in Edmonton, in early October.....Our sincere thanks are due to the committee workers, volunteers and project members for their support and contributions to our operations."

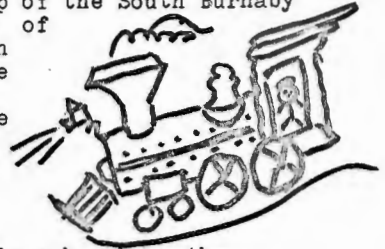


Summer attendance at the Village turned out to be about the same as last year with nearly 50,000 people passing through the toll house gates. However, school tours, booked to capacity during the spring and fall, bring the total attendance much higher and add another dimension to the function and worth of the Village. Giving the children experience in living history has been the aim of Margaret McInall, education coordinator, and her group of volunteer

docents. The student program, which is again about to get underway, has now been enlarged to include physical identification with life in the early 1900's. The children are able to feel what it was like to churn butter, write on a slate and carry water to be heated on a stove, etc. The volunteer docents are a very important part of the program which would not be possible without their assistance in guiding the youngsters to display areas, explaining the use of the selected items and answering questions. The fact that this is a worthwhile and rewarding activity is attested to by the fact that most of last season's docents have returned for the fall program. Training sessions for docents were held in September but additional volunteers are welcomed any time since the school program is limited by the number of docents available. Margaret would be delighted to hear from anyone interested in coming to the Village for a couple of hours on a regular weekly basis to work with children in a museum setting. (Phone: 291-8525)

One of the highlight activities in the Village this year was the Easter Sunday opening ceremony complete with music by the Burnaby Fireman's Band, a parade of vintage cars and an Easter egg hunt for the children. The Dominion Day celebration was successful beyond all expectations when such contests as foot races, pie eating, cake judging, sawing and spike driving became hilarious competition. An old-style rally staged by a number of local parliamentary candidates re-lived a political scene of yesteryear.

A sod-turning ceremony was held for the Village church which has been constructed under the sponsorship of the South Burnaby Men's Club. Numerous delays and shortages of materials held up completion of the church but a last minute spurt managed to get the building ready, complete with an instant garden, for the October 4 wedding of Elsie Blake, secretary to Mayor Tom Constable and volunteer secretary to the Board of the C.P.M.A. A very happy and fitting first entry in the little church's book of records.



Another happy event in the Village has been the progress made on the restoration of "Old Curly", that durable but sadly neglected little steam locomotive whose history seems to be rather obscure despite Curator John Adams' delving into the past. Curly's salvation came in the form of a Provincial Government's Student Temporary Employment Program grant which allowed for the hiring of six students and the purchase and rental of equipment and supplies needed for the engine's cosmetic surgery.



The Opportunities for Youth Program provided 10 young people who added life and colour to the Village by physical display of such activities as baking cookies in a wood-burning stove, churning butter, spinning, and splitting shakes. Volunteers also brought activities to the Village in the form of Sunday afternoon demonstrations of music, song, dance and needlework. They, along with those who manned the printshop, pharmacy and blacksmith shop, etc., were greatly appreciated by both the staff and the public.

Heritage Village's first authentic Burnaby shop was moved from Sixth Street and 13th Avenue in the small hours of August 16. Most people will remember this store as "Whitechurch's Hardware" but originally it was built as a drygoods shop.

It was through the efforts of John Adams that the Village obtained such fittings as Victorian mantels and the main staircase from the recently demolished Hill house, in New Westminster, known to be the first house designed by B.C.'s most renowned early architect, Samuel McClure. John is also on the lookout for old bank artifacts to use in a proposed Royal Bank which will be, in part, made possible through a recent generous donation from the Royal Bank of Canada. If you know of any suitable material please call him at the Village.

Since the start of the Village one of the busiest spots on the site has been the gift shop which, during the past season was staffed by Mrs. Daphne Carr and her group of volunteers who gave many hours of their time. A new postcard of the Village was added to the card selection and it will be available at a variety of locations on the Lower Mainland. Several interior slides will be ready for sale next year.

(Mrs.) Barbara Copan, gift shop committee chairperson, comments: "I was particularly pleased to hear the many compliments of the visiting members of the B.C. Museums Association last month about the uniqueness of our Gift Shop as it related to the overall concept being presented in the Village.... Many of the visitors were amazed at the variety and quality of items offered for sale, as well as the appropriateness of the decor and the costuming. It was with a sense of gratitude and appreciation to the many volunteers that I received these kind words of encouragement and pass them along to the rest of our Association's members."

Membership, reports (Mrs.) Isobel Varrick, membership committee chairperson, remained static in 1974 with 106 annual members and 15 life members being recorded. Some membership 'bonuses' were added to policy. Members are now able to take a guest into the Village for a visit in hopes that the guest will also become interested enough to take out a membership. New membership applications have been devised and a new category of

memberships is about to be proposed. A special program of events has been drawn up to stimulate member participation and communication in the form of regular newsletters will keep members abreast with Village progress and activities. Any further suggestions will be welcomed by Mrs. Varrick who can also be contacted for membership applications. (Phone:435-2700)

\*\*\*\*\*

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hi Folks,

The new season is here and we are off to a running start.

The South Burnaby Men's Club will be opening their village church and officially handing it over to Heritage Village on Sunday, October 20, at 2 p.m. You are all invited. Refreshments will be served in the Village Ice Cream Parlour.

Don't forget the general membership meeting, October 30. at 8 p.m. in the Ice Cream Parlour. After the business is over the programme will include a talk by Mr. Martin Segger of the B.C. Provincial Museum. His topic will be Preservation, Restoration and Re-creation of Old Buildings. Refreshments will be served.

At this time I would like to acknowledge all our members and friends who have contributed so much to the growth of Heritage Village. I particularly want to thank those with individual work assignments: the board and committee members who have to attend meetings and the education and docent programme volunteers. The Gift Shop, a valuable information center for our museum's visitors, has enjoyed success beyond expectations.

We have worked closely with the South Burnaby Men's Club and have assisted the Burnaby Jaycees with their locomotive project, "Curly".

This fall will also see a start on the B.C. Society of Model Engineer's working steam, passenger-carrying model railway.

Last, but not least, I would like to thank our staff for their loyal support, enthusiasm and hard work in operating and developing our Village.

John Thomson,  
President.

\*\*\*\*\*

COMING ATTRACTION.....BASIC QUILTING COURSE

Heritage Village will be entering the area of public programming this fall with a course on basic quilting. The course will be held on Tuesday evenings, 8-10 p.m. from October 22 to November 26, in the Ice Cream Parlour. If there is enough interest a second class may be held on Wednesdays, 1:30-3:30 p.m., October 23 to November 27. Registration fee will be \$5.00.

Further information may be obtained from Margaret McInall at the Village. (Phone: 291-8525)

\*\*\*\*\*

FROM THE EDITOR.....

Many thanks to all those who submitted material for this newsletter. We only wish that we could have printed each write-up word for word but space would not permit.

Pixie McGeachie.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.....

The public and members who visit Heritage Village are enamoured with the displays and the operations of the facility but often do they realise that even though they have paid a \$1.00 admission (50¢ for children) the citizens of Burnaby have subsidized their visit by approximately \$1.50.

Rather a startling revelation when we consider that the visitors to Heritage Village are mostly out-of-towners who attend during our opening season of mid-June to Labor Day. There is no actual count of the breakdown of resident to non-resident visitors, but it is generally agreed that the latter is in the majority. This means then, that the taxpayers of Burnaby are subsidizing an operation which doesn't even provide program for their own needs or citizens.

Heritage Village was conceived and brought into being by the Burnaby Centennial '71 Committee fully cognizant of the possibility of it becoming either a tremendous success or one of the biggest 'white elephants' ever built. Fortunately we have had good public response to our Village. We have also had good citizen acceptance; but little awareness of the costs of operation.

Back in 1971/72 the Board of Directors proposed an annual budget in the neighborhood of \$50,000.00 of which the municipality would have subsidized some \$33,000.00 which was then considered to be a maximum Operating Grant in view of the facility being the 'brainchild' of a committee of the municipal council and because of the need for greater assistance in our initial year.

For the current year 1974, it is anticipated that the municipal government will contribute in excess of \$80,000.00 to the operational budget for the Village. This amount will be required in spite of the increased revenues generated by raising the admission price, raising prices in the Ice Cream Parlor and having several sales outlets in the Village.

The Provisional Budget prepared for 1975 indicates that the municipal taxpayers will be asked to contribute even more disproportionately than in previous years. Your association is asking the municipal council to approve a contribution of \$117,412.00 to the operational budget of Heritage Village. True enough some \$40,000.00 of this amount is suggested as being for a capital building program, but it is contingent upon the Association raising the sum of \$80,000.00 by donations and grants from other sources.

Counting everyone that comes through the gate; there might be a grand total of 50,000 persons visiting the Village during our total opening days. When you consider that the Village is open to the visiting public only 110 days during the year; the cost to the municipality of operating Heritage Village is in need of careful scrutiny. There are few, if any, other programs in Burnaby that rely so heavily upon the municipal tax dollar for their operations. Maybe it is time we had a serious look at how we are meeting the criteria, as originally set forth when Heritage Village came into being as our Centennial '71 Project.

Signed,  
Don Copan,  
Past President,  
C.P.M.A.