

# LYTTON MUSEUM

## and ARCHIVES

November 2001

420 Fraser Street, Lytton, B.C.

Issue 2 Number 2



*The St. George's Industrial School and Chapel, founded in 1901.*

Welcome to another Museum Newsletter. As usual, we would like to start with the history of one of our institutions. This time we have selected an article written in 1938, about the St. Georges School. While not politically correct, this article has been taken directly from the original, and not edited:

### **ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL - IT'S INTRO- DUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT**

*by Rev. A.R. Lett,  
as told by Rev. A.F. Sheward at the meeting  
of the Fraser Canyon Historical Association,  
July 4, 1938.*

The very keen and sympathetic interest of the late Bishop Silitoe was responsible for the introduction of education to the Indians of the Thomson (sic) and Fraser Rivers Valleys. For some years the Bishop had been negotiating with the missionary society called the New England Company, which society had mission interest in many parts of the world, but mainly in Canada. With the aroused interest of the society the Bishop had only to find a man who would undertake the job of choosing and purchasing a site and who would be responsible for the oversight for the erection of a building. This man was found in the Rev. George Ditchum, who was an assisting priest in

Vancouver. This Rev. gentleman came to Lytton and found a possible site in a farm owned by Thomas Wm. Seward, and situated on the banks of the Fraser just three miles west and north of Lytton. On approaching Mr. Seward, Mr. Ditchum found him ready to sell his property to be used for school purposes, and in 1902 the building was finished, furnished and housed some 20 boys.

The New England Company had received a charter of organization in 1662 from Charles the Second for the purpose of propagating the Gospel of Jesus Christ "amongst the heathen natives in or near New England, and



*The new St. George's Industrial School (1927) and Chapel [ca 1927] taken from the front of the school.*

the parts adjacent, in America” and “to anowninge (sic) and professing of the Protestant religion”.

The Company, on becoming interested, sent out from England one Harry Moody, who did the business for the Co. in purchasing the property and also to make arrangements for the building. This done, Mr. Moody returned to England and Mr. Ditchum carried on. The purchase price of the property was about \$13,000.00. This, together with the erection of the building, made an expenditure of some \$23,000.00. The property acquired consisted of two pre-empted lots; one taken out by a Capt. Ball, about 1860, who evidently was a ship's Captain and who left ship at Victoria to follow the gold rush into the interior of the British Colony. Mr. Thomas Wm. Seward, owner in 1901, had been a pilot on the Thames and arrived in Victoria as a regular naval seaman in the early sixties and made two yearly trips into the Cariboo country. On his third trip Capt. Ball induced Seward to remain with him and a partnership was formed. This partnership was dissolved by Ball selling out to Seward for the modest sum of \$1,500.

The old original Seward home, built of whip sawn lumber, is still extant and in use.

Lots 11 and 12, which belonged to this original pre-emption, like so many other lots taken up in the early days, was simply staked out in the woods and do not run parallel with any survey lines. The holdings comprised an acreage of some 400, afterwards added to by Mr. Seward in taking up a lot in the Bootaine (sic) creek valley. This lot is commonly known as Lot 47. This, together with the Swartz property situated just north of this pre-emption and purchased by the New England Co., made a total acreage holding of 696 acres.

Correspondance subsequent to the building of the school in 1902 indicated that the Mission Society had in mind a Community Settlement of Indian boy graduates situated in the immediate vicinity of the School and on property situated at an altitude of 1900 ft., this community to be directed by the School management spiritually and materially alike.

Rev. George Ditchum began his work in 1901, and in 1902 took over the Principalship of the new school, a picture of which I have had framed in the Manual Training Shop, now a part of the School system of education. Rev. Ditcham saw the birth of the new venture and continued to direct it for some

years (10), during which I am sure this infant Educational Institution needed great care in administration and management. Mr. Ditcham is still alive, living retired in Victoria.

Following Mr. Ditcham, Rev. Leonard Dawson principaled the school for 7 years. During his time of office the school became a co-Educational Institution and a new wing was built to accommodate the Indian girls who were in residence in All Hallows at Yale, an institution managed by the Sisters of the Community of All Saints Ditchingham - the building at Yale being condemned at this time for further use as a girls' school.

In objection to the arrival of the girls, 21 of the 40 boys in residence were missing the next morning, and the Principal found himself confronted with the difficulty of conscientious objectors' minds in material action. Mr. Dawson returned to England after his 7 years' service and occupies a living in the church.

During the years 1918-1919-1920, the late Rev. Louis Laronde was Principal of the school, and during this period the school met with its greatest difficulty, that of Finance. Taxation had increased to such an

extent in the Old Country that the Missionary Society found itself no longer able to take care of the School, and was obliged to hand its ward of some 20 years to the Dominion Government. During this transition period many vicissitudes were experienced, and one would feel by what meagre information is available that the "downs" were very much in the majority. Mr. Laronde's resignation came before the Dept. of Indian Affairs at Ottawa in April 1921. During the following 8 months the Acting Principal was the late Ewen McLeod, who was also Constable for the Lytton Indian Agency. During that Autumn on December 10th the present Principal took over the reins of office and for the past 16 years has steered the Institutional ship through a complete change of life and service to the Indians and their children who live in the Thompson and Fraser Valleys.

In 1906, a beautiful stone Chapel was built. The masonry was roopie in design and building was fashioned after Gothic architecture. It presented a very pleasing addition the school buildings, and also in its setting was very much in keeping with the natural surroundings. The stones used were gathered from the farm and the immediate vicinity.

In 1921 the buildings were in great need of repair; but beyond the installation of a Delco lighting plant to replace the coat-oil lamps and 4 extra bath tubs - there being only 2 to accommodate 82 children - no further repairs were made, the Dept. of Indian Affairs wishing, as soon as funds would warrant, to build an entirely new building. Activity in building on the farm, however, was undertaken, and at New Year 1923 we moved the Dairy herd and the horses into a very fine new barn, modern in every way and conducive to the introduction of new cows and regular and intelligent breeding programs. This was immediately undertaken, and today the Holstein Friesian school Herd ranks fourth in the Province, preceded only in standing by Colony Farm Agassiz, and Tranquille Provincial and Dominion Institutional Herds.

In 1923-4 three new cottages were built for the use of farm hands. These comfortable bungalows replaced tumbling down shacks occupied by the blacksmith, handyman and dairyman. Again the following year piggery

and poultry houses were erected. These new buildings were erected on the proposed new site for the new school and were approximately one half mile from the school building and Chapel, the new site being chosen for its access to a good water supply and also for its position as being in the middle of farm operations.

In 1927 the present commodious and spacious building was erected and the old school was vacated on April 13th, 1928, and the following year demolished by the Indians, who did the work for the lumber they could salvage. One sees, travelling throughout this district, a reminiscence of the old school building in windows, doors and sheeting of the houses occupied by the Indians in the surrounding neighbourhood ".re-erected monuments of the results of a Bishop's interest in his Indian converts..".

This year, 1927, under the supervision of the Department's Inspector, a new horse barn was erected, and the part in the dairy barn occupied as a horse barn was reconstructed for use in dairy herd extension.

Machine sheds, root houses, repair and butcher shops were erected in 1930 by the boys under the supervision of a carpenter.

We had, visiting the school during its opening exercises, the President and Secretary of the Mission Society, which Society still has an interest in the school, and the noted immediate need was the moving of the Chapel which, at their instigation and with their financial help, was undertaken in 1929. The old Chapel was taken down stone by stone and re-built at the new site. This time the building has a full basement and is 17 feet longer than the old building, the stone in the foundation of the old school as well as that in the Chapel being used in the construction of this new and more beautiful building. The corner stone of this new building was laid by the Bishop of Cariboo on St. George's Day, April 23rd, the school's patronal Holy Day, and in the Autumn the bishop dedicated the new Chapel to the Glory of God.

Behind the cornerstone, contained in a galvanised iron box, are two daily newspapers, the "Daily Province" and "Sun", the Service of Dedication, a number of coins, and

the names of the children and staff, together with the names of the men who worked on the building, the Bishop and Visiting Clergy.

The chancel furnishings - the Altar, Ridel posts and carvings, Communion Rail and Rood Screen are a memorial to the late Canon Henry Jepson, Rector of Ayot St. Peter, Welwyn, England, Benefactor of the Indian school, Yale, and in thankful recognition of the work for many years among the Indian children of the Sisters of the Community of All Saints, Ditchingham, in the year 1929. The Altar Ridel Posts, Communion Rail and Screen were made in Vancouver, shipped in parts and erected by the same man who cut and pieced them in the Sash & Door Factory in the Collingwood District.

The Bishop's Chair & the Font are productions of the School Manual Training shop. The Chair has a brass tablet showing that it was put in the Chapel as a memorial to Alfred Hensley Batchaler who accidentally shot and killed himself while occupying the position of Vice-Principal & Manual Training Instructor. The deceased designed and partly built the Chair before his death. He purposed to present it to the Chapel in thanksgiving for his confirmation on April 23rd, 1932, by the Bishop of Cariboo. The young fellow's untimely death, three days before his 27th birthday, was deeply lamented alike by the Principal, staff and children. He was an outstanding character and had the courage of his convictions and the boys who loved him.

In 1929, with the re-building of the chapel, the Utility Building was erected. This building serves manly purposes, from refrigerator and storage on the ground floor, the 2nd floor housing the Manual Training Shop, Carpenter's repair shop and Boot & Shoe repairing shop, while on the top floor there is a 36' x 70' floor marked out for basket-ball and badminton. Only last year, 1937, an isolation barn was erected, also a small Cannery and a small Glass House.

The playgrounds are large and laid out for grass hockey and softball on the girls' side, and football and softball on the boys' side. A perfectly level 100 yds. track forms part of the boys' playground, and it is hoped that a fair oval will shortly be a reality. There are

*Continued on page 5...*



## All Hallow's School

The following article is a direct quote from the Bank of BC's Pioneer News, Feb/Mar 1986. Our museum has recently received, on loan, the beautiful sterling silver Chalice and Paten set donated to the All Hallow's Church in 1902.

## Young Ladies Go to Yale, B.C. for Refinement

By LEIGH GORDON

Yale, British Columbia, now a sleepy little village on the west bank of the Fraser River 165 km east of Vancouver, at the time of this event was probably the roughest, toughest and bawdiest on the Pacific Coast. For twenty years it had been the jumping off place for the Fraser and Cariboo gold rushes. At this time in 1883 it was host to thousands of hard working, hard gambling and hard drinking workers who were pushing the Canadian Pacific roadway through the Fraser Canyon, Yale was definitely not a place that ordinarily one would think of sending one's daughters to be trained in culture and refinement. Yet Yale became such a place.

It was paradoxical that a "finishing school" for young ladies, operated by nuns, was located on the same street as twelve saloons and several bawdy houses. This was All Hallow's West a boarding school for girls and it opened in 1884. All Hallow's recreational park in Yale still recalls the famous institution.

The need for a place in British Columbia where young women could be trained in culture and refinement and also receive the higher education necessary for admission into eastern universities was recognized by the Right Reverend Acton Sillitoe, the first Anglican Bishop of the Diocese of New Westminster. It is not known why he selected Yale but it may have been that it was the second largest city in the Province at that time, only Barkerville was larger. The bishop requested nuns from the very highly reputed All Hallow's School in Ditchingham, England. The nuns who were sent were the Maltese Princess Sister Superior Amy and Sisters Alice and Agatha.

The sisters were cultured, well educated women and came from a most proper environment. One wonders what must have went through their minds when they arrived in a place like Yale with thousands of coarse men, many drunk much of the time. Also how did they feel when, going to purchase groceries, they had to pass bars, gambling parlors, and houses with red curtains? Yale was so crowded that the nuns had to start their school in the vicarage adjacent to the Anglican Church. The same church of St. John the Divine, still stands and it is the oldest in British Columbia.

When the school opened the scarcity of students meant financial problems so the nuns took in washing. The next year enrollment increased, finances were better and the school was able to take over the CPR hospital which was being abandoned. They were also able to hire teachers while the nuns looked after administration and religious education. Prosperity came and the school expanded. It took over the palatial home of André Onderdonk the contractor who had built the railway through the canyon. They converted rooms to dormitories and classrooms, and the barn they made into a chapel.

They felt that the latter was suitable as Christ had started life in a barn. They also took over the home of BC's first Lieutenant-Governor, J.W. Trutch. Becoming more affluent, tennis and basketball courts, hockey and croquet greens were added. A dramatic group presented Shakespearean plays out on the lawn under the trees. The school's violin orchestra was much in demand and traveled extensively.

It was not as a status symbol but the quality of the higher education that made the school successful. Students came from other provinces and several American states. The fees were relatively high: admission \$3, board and room \$20 and special subjects \$5 per month.

Sometimes the young ladies in refinement training were recalcitrant. They would love to slide down the fine mahogany banister. If they were caught they would have to walk up and down a long flight of stairs twelve times, balancing a book on their heads. Sister Superior made a point of censoring all their outgoing mail. The girls circumvented this

with a secret mailbox in a hollow rock where a neighbor girl would pick up the letters and mail them.

It was an honor and a high point in the school's history when, in October 1901, it was visited by the Duke and Duchess of York (grandparents of the present Queen). The school closed in 1916. Today no trace of it can be found. All Hallow's West was a sparkling gem in a rough hewn, rustic setting in a primitive province.



---

## Museum Happenings

### Book Collection

Our library has 3 new books in our research section:

"Simon Fraser: Letters and Journals: 1806-1808"

"Artifacts" by Hilary Stewart

"Archaeology of the Lytton-Lillooet Area" By James Baker, our own former Lyttonite.

### Relief Map

We are the proud owners of a relief map of the Lytton area and surrounding mountains. Mr. George Bramhall builds these maps as a hobby and they require a tremendous amount of patience, knowledge, and time. Mr. Bramhall has kindly donated this map to our museum, at considerable cost to himself, and we are very grateful.

The construction required 1/16" Baltic Birch Plywood (\$400 worth), 4 government topographical maps, and 4 months of time and patience. It names the mountains to the west of us and has already settled several arguments! It covers the area from the Siska Bridges to 14 mile on Lillooet Rd., Botanie Valley, Stein Valley and up to Drynock in the Thompson Valley.

We have indeed been fortunate to have John Liivam offer to make up a protective cover for the map - Thanks John!

## Meeting Notice

There will be an important museum General Meeting in November which will include elections for various executive positions. This is your museum - we'd really like to see a good turnout.

*WATCH FOR THE POSTERS.*

## Teacher Orientation

Miss Gwendy Lamont and Mrs. Jennifer Murphy have kindly offered to set up a series of school programs to be presented at the museum.

It is our hope that teachers from our schools will bring their students to the museum to learn more about our local history.

A Teacher Orientation meeting was held at the museum on October 11<sup>th</sup>, from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m..

Anyone who wishes to help with this program is most welcome - phone Dorothy at 455-2254 or 455-2268.



## Did you know...

... we have binders of news clippings for the Lytton area from 1956 to 2001?

... we have "Browse Binders" of copies of our complete photograph collection - some 1300?

... our attendance from January to September 2001 is 1123?

... that we have the beautiful sterling silver Chalice and Paten from All Hallows' School?

... that we now have the fossil back from Ottawa and it is dated at 122 million years old?

... that the Canadian Pacific Railway's restored Hudson locomotive "Empress" came through Lytton? Many school children went to see the monster locomotive, and experience this historic return of what used to be a common sight.



*Continued from page 3...*

also 2 tennis courts on the girls' side of the building. The school stands in a wonderful setting on the banks of the Fraser and looking up the Stein Creek valley. The green lawns, flower beds, hedges and trees make pleasant surroundings, and tourists and others should not fail to visit the school and Chapel when in this locality.

1901: Procured Seward property and began building

1902: Building complete and occupied

1906: Chapel built

1916: Wing built to house Girls from All Hallows, Yale.

1927: New school building begun

1928: Occupation of new building

1929: Chapel moved and rebuilt, and Utility building erected

## Farm Buildings

1922: New Dairy barn erected

1923 through 1924:

Three cottages - Piggery and Poultry building erected

1927: New horse barn erected

1930: Machine shed, root cellar, repair and butcher shops erected

1937: Isolation barn, cannery and glass house erected



## The Fossil

It is called "Shastoceras", it's 122 million years old, and is the largest one found in this area.

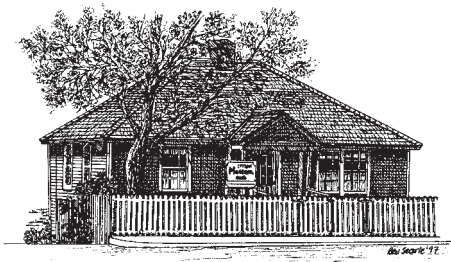
Actually, it looked like a HUGE prawn!

We also have the Paleontological Report from Ottawa which you are welcome to read.

While quite technical, the highlights are that it is better preserved than most found on the West Coast and they have been found in Northern California and the Queen Charlotte Islands.

This fossil indicates geological equivalence between strata in the Longarm Formation of the Charlottes and Jackass Mountain.





## Find Out What Happened!!!

(Check Out The MUSEUM)

By Gillian Curé

*Did you know that the Queen was actually in Lytton? AND people used to play games and race up and down Main Street on Canada Day and Labor Day? AND the new bridge is*

*the FOURTH Thompson River bridge?...*

Well, when I started my job at the Lytton Museum and Archives, I didn't know about any of these facts, but Dorothy Dodge took me under her wing and taught me everything I needed to know about Lytton and our history.

I also made many new friends (you know who you are).

I'd like to share, with all of you, my experience at the museum. I had no problem remembering the facts and events of our little Gold Rush town because it was so interesting to me. I have learned so much from reading stories and looking at pictures. I strongly recommend a visit to your museum, I know I'll be back as a visitor and as a volunteer.

In the time I spent at the museum, I learned about the Native Indian history, when the Chinese built the CP Rail, when the Gold Rush came through town, and I'm still learn-

ing today about everything that's going on because today is tomorrow's history.

I also spent time keeping things clean and tidy, doing newspaper clippings, and gardening.

You wouldn't imagine how many foreigners are interested in our little town; some people come here specifically to stay for a few days, see the museum, raft and just enjoy the mountains.

I think we all take Lytton for granted. So please go to the museum and learn at least one thing from **your** history while you're still here.

I did.

---

*Gillian Curé worked in the Museum during the summer. She was employed through student grants obtained by the Chamber of Commerce and during September by a generous grant through Siska Indian Band. Our thanks go out to both, and of course to Gillian for her excellent work.*

### LYTTON MUSEUM and ARCHIVES

420 Fraser Street, P.O. Box 640  
Lytton, B.C., V0K 1Z0

