



Newsletter of the **Friends of Ruckle Park Heritage Society**, a registered B.C. non-profit group. Its volunteers work to serve the Ruckle family's legacy, to inform, educate, and inspire all Salt Spring Island residents and visitors who benefit from their gifts, generosity, and wisdom.

FRPHS 2023 Fall - 2024 Spring

Changes and Renewal

When the Friends of Ruckle Park Heritage Society (FRPHS) incorporated in 2018, there was already a Friends of Ruckle Park Heritage entity.

The first started in 2016, with the signing of a BC Parks' Partnership Agreement. They have numerous "Friends of ..." official partnerships with volunteers in their parks throughout B.C. These volunteers provide an ear-to-the-community and do boots-on-the-ground work. All are covered by provincial-government insurance. "Friends of ..." partners each have a BC Parks Park Enhancement Fund (PEF) bank account. Donations to it are eligible for tax receipts, since the PEF initiative is a registered federal charity,

Most BC Parks volunteers do trail-building and maintenance, plus some other nature-appreciation enhancements. Ruckle is different, because it's the only provincial park with a working farm. That's where the "Heritage" part of the Friends of Ruckle Park Heritage name comes in, since it covers the human history of the farm and park, not the natural history, which would be a whole other vast undertaking.

The second FRPH group was needed to apply for certain grants that are only granted to registered non-profit societies. This branch of government is separate from BC Parks. The goals of the FRPH Partnership and the FRPH Society were similar: to enhance visitors'

experiences of the human history at Beaver Point (TESNOEN in SENĆOŦEN, the language of the WSÁNEĆ people, its primary rights holders), before and after it became Ruckle Provincial Park in 1974.

The FRPH Society received significant grants from the B.C. Heritage Branch and the Salt Spring Island Foundation, with several smaller important ones as well. Our website and previous newsletters have reports about these fundings.



This past June, the Partnership Agreement ended, a few years early, with BC Parks now offering individual volunteer insurance coverage for those gardening around the Henry Ruckle farmhouse and for museum work inside, liaising closely with BC Parks managers.

The PEF bank account continues, with its tax-receipt capability.

This frees the FRPH Society to focus on serving its members and donors by emphasizing the Ruckle family's diverse ways of community-building, which continue past their lifetimes, in perpetuity. This focus covers more area, literally and figuratively, than the treasured Henry Ruckle house and yard.

BC Parks Friends of Ruckle Park Heritage	Friends of Ruckle Park Heritage Society
volunteers working to forward BC Parks' goals	volunteer members serving the Ruckles' legacy
government insurance coverage	no insurance policy needed at present
Park Enhancement Fund (PEF) bank account	Island Savings bank account
federal government charity status	must operate as a non-profit
tax-receipt issuance	no tax-receipt capability

Dale Oakes, Lotus Ruckles' niece, is the new point person for the BC Parks volunteers. She and Gladys Patterson, also related through marriage to Ruckles, are curating the house collection and openings. Frances & Jan Havelaar head up the gardening group.

Brenda Guiled (rhymes with wild) remains chair of the society, which she founded. She's looking forward to working with others to showcase aspects of Beaver-Point area heritage, including many Ruckle and other significant contributions.

Proposed future FRPH Society volunteer work

2023 May 26, helping with the Beaver Point Hall bean-supper fundraiser, a tradition started by the Ruckles using their special bean, which still grow in island gardens.

Booklets (approximately 64-pages each), the first three from Brenda's Historical Society talks:

Ruckle Friends & Neighbours Fine Arts & Crafts, with a Library display of originals and copies;

Mary's Ghost & Other South End Tales about the Ruckles' neighbours, including the murder of a former next-door neighbour working on Alfred Ruckle's house in 1907;

Eleanor Point Neighbours & Friends about "Kanaka Bill", his Indigenous wife, daughters Mary and Maria, followed by the Monk family, close Ruckle friends.

Ella Ruckle's 1912 Diary: Art Tour of Europe, h the Chicago School of Art.

Brochures for historical walks in the park and nearby neighbourhood, using this rack to offer them on open-house days, otherwise perhaps at the Visitor Centre, and to share online:

- Indigenous history and traces
- original surveys and pre-emptions
- water sources for farming and gardening
- Beaver Point wharf and store, 1895-1951
- 1896 Ruckle gold mine
- history of Ruckle buildings
- Beaver Point School aka Little Red
- Cusheon Cove saw mill
- Asian farm and mill labourers
- vestiges of old cedar snake fencing
- Ruckle women's gardens
- and more!



Artwork curating, working with Ruckle heirs. Four Ruckle offspring were dedicated fine artists, with two (Agnes 1881-1905) and Gwen (1931-2006) producing a large collection of painting, drawings, and correspondence-school exercises that needs cataloguing. This could be done hands-on or digitally using photos taken of many pieces. As themes come clear, another great booklet could emerge, plus showings of select pieces could be arranged in the Henry Ruckle house by registered BC Parks volunteers.

Year-end wrap-up of BC Parks FRPH volunteers 2023 work



Full Name S Leckie
Location south
Cast Iron Garden Bench
The wood needs replacing but the cast iron legs and back are lovely.

Underneath the Spreading Chestnut Tree



Several years ago, Josie Fletcher, an occasional volunteer gardener, imagined how lovely a bench would be under the sweet-chestnut tree. Sandra Lecky's donation, restored by Jan Havelaar and placed by the gardening guys, now sits beautifully under the tree.



left: painting by Josephine Fletcher of the house corner now neatly housing the rainwater storage tank.



Jan Havellar

Water storage: For several summers, Alan Coombes lugged water from his property to the Henry Ruckle house garden. This year, he and Jan Havellaar masterminded the installation of a large plastic tank, cladding it with all the free materials as they could get. The result fits in perfectly, *and* the water is a godsend through the dry seasons.



Kitchen Work: The heart of the farm home was the kitchen, of course, where women's work never ended. Cooking, baking, serving, cleaning, canning, washing dishes and clothing, drying laundry in wet weather, ironing, putting away, mending, bathing the family in a big tub, all while minding the children and expecting the next one, or perhaps hoping not.

Diana Morris, a U.K. and Hollywood set designer for years, gathered antiques and modern equivalents to stock the Henry house kitchen, where Ella Anna (1841-1930) held sway from her marriage in 1877 to her dotage in the late 1920s. She lived her last frail years with son D. Henry and wife Polly in their house.

In 1930 July, new bride to Gordon Ruckle, Lotus Fraser, made the kitchen the hub of their home from 1930 - 67.



Special thanks to Diana for her dedicated work recreating the kitchen, bringing it back to life. Plans were afoot to have a demonstration of washing the old way, using a copper tub of scalding water, with handmade soap and a scrub board, a lot of work to keep the whites dazzling enough to meet the minister's wife's approval on occasional visits with her husband.

These plans may yet unfold, depending on open houses next year.

HENRY RUCKLE FARMHOUSE OPENING TO THE PUBLIC AT RUCKLE PARK

Henry and wife Ella Anna built their home in the 1870s-80s. It's the white farmhouse beyond the barn, heading toward Granny's Bay, named for Ella Anna. It will be open for viewing and meeting Friends of Ruckle Park Heritage volunteers, including some Ruckle kin.

PLEASE JOIN US ON SUNDAY,
JULY 02, 11 A.M. TO 3 P.M.
ALL ARE WELCOME, NO CHARGE.



We'll have our 64-page booklet,
*Meet the Ruckles: A Farm, a Family,
and a Spirit of Sharing*
for sale for \$10.



2023 Henry Ruckle House openings: Five were planned (for the Ruckle Farm Day in May, then Sunday of Canada Day, B.C. Day, Labour Day, and Apple Fest weekends), but alas, only the first two could be held. They were well-served by volunteers and appreciated by numerous visitors.

Mice easily find their way into the old house, leaving droppings galore, and the usual number of them, about 10 per cent, likely carry Hanta virus. Luckily, human infection rates are low, but immune-compromised and elderly people are at particular risk, it was thought best to cancel further open houses until the problem is solved. This will involve fixing some impressive holes in the structure. The question is, who should pay for this? BC Parks? Or, as

they suggested, donations to the Park Enhancement Fund? What do you think? Please send feedback using the contact information below.

Another successful gardening session done: Start time ~9 a.m. to early afternoon, then lunch together, and see you next week.

left to right: Shirley, Hope, Jan, Mark, Frances, Mary.



Thank you, Patrick Fraser of Heartwood Heritage Restoration (d. 2023 March, age 62, of emphysema from silicosis developed during years of stone masonry work on nearly every significant building in Ottawa). He put his fine wood craftsmanship into the Henry Ruckle house. The window frames and old glass he restored look like they did when new, 140+ years ago. He did the work to fit BC Parks' budget, a labour of love well beyond his earnings.

Brenda and husband hosted him while he worked at Ruckle, enjoying numerous evenings hearing about his storied life and touring his old stomping grounds via satellite and street views. He leaves a son, daughter, and three young grandchildren in Quebec.

We take PayPal and major credit cards for memberships & donations!

**Become a member of Friends of Ruckle Park Heritage Society for \$20,
which continues in perpetuity or until cancelled.**

**Members receive newsletters, other updates, and a members' price
for future publications, which membership helps to fund.**

Different methods of payment—PayPal, e-transfer, and cheque by mail—are explained on the "Support" page of our website.

Contact us via our website form, saltspringinfo@gmail.com, or 250-653-4722.

www.friendsruckleparkheritage.ca