

PG Heritage Commission Chair's Report June 19, 2024

Since the last meeting of the Commission on March 14, Commission members met with representatives of the PG Retired Teachers' Association Education Heritage Committee, Kris Nellis and Cheryl Mikulasik. They presented us with Tiiu Lucas' book, Local Schooling: A brief history of the first six decades of formal education in the Fraser-Fort George Region (Prince George, 2021). They also proposed that the Heritage Commission develop with them interpretive signs for several early schools in Prince George. The proposal is on the agenda for this meeting.

I was invited to co-present at a PGDTA "Spring Fling" PD day workshop on labour history with Wayne Axford on April 26. Wayne is a retired Surrey teacher now living in Victoria who has worked on labour history walking tours in the lower mainland and Victoria, and labour history lesson plans that are on the BCTF's Teach BC website and the BC Labour History Centre's website. We had an information table where I handed out a lot of Heritage Commission material. Amongst the attendees were several social studies teachers and a teacher/graphic designer, Evann Campbell, who has done signage work with the Simpcw First Nation and BC Parks in Mount Robson (see therockymountaingoat.com and Silky Hen on Facebook).

On May 10, Ayesha and I were judges at the Regional Heritage Fair at the Prince George Public Library. This event is the culmination of students' projects from grades 4 to 7 at local schools, and this year the best of them were presented in the Keith Gordon Room of the library. Judges were assigned 2 projects in each of three 45 minute periods, sometimes on our own and sometimes paired with another judge. Projects I was assigned to judge included one on the Reid Lake school, a history of Barkerville, the Babine salmon run, and Haida paddle making. None of the ones I saw was suitable for the Commission's Creative Spirit Award, so I left it to Krystal Leason, the Executive Director of the Huble Homestead/Giscome Portage Heritage Society and event coordinator, to find a suitable project, which she did. The award went to Kenna for her panel on the Beaverly Fire Department – she received a bag of Heritage Commission swag.

On May 23, I attended by Zoom a webinar put on by Heritage BC and Royal Roads University entitled "Diverse Views on Decolonizing and reimagining Heritage Policy in BC". It highlighted the need to recognize diversity as well as intangible culture. Report attached.

Finally, in April, I was elected Secretary-Treasurer of the BC Labour Heritage Centre and attend monthly executive meetings and bi-monthly Board meetings, the last one yesterday. The Prince George labour history walking tour app (on Apple and Google platforms) is now narrated. See

<https://www.labourheritagecentre.ca/projects/walkingtour/>

Working Group updates since March 14, 2024:

The Registry working group (Ayesha, Linda, and John) met three times at UNBC, March 24, April 28 and June 9. I was able to attend the second one. Ayesha has a PowerPoint report for this meeting.

The Heritage Signs working group (Ana, Mica, Larry, Imogene and I) met May 14. I invited Evann Campbell (see above), who is a great resource because of her work with the Simpcw. She gave us contact information for the company that makes graffiti and weatherproof metal signs(kalitec.com). I showed examples of heritage signs in Yreka, California from my spring break trip south: they had different signage, some wooden on heritage buildings, some newer, and some with QR codes in the window directing users to the city's heritage website (yrekahistory.blogspot.com). I suggested putting our heritage signs on the city website, and Imogene found all the original files that can be uploaded relatively soon. We can create a stick-on QR code for signs around town, directing interested parties to the PG Heritage Commission website. Many signs still need updating, but it's a start.

The sign group has also been working on a rubric for the Heritage Commission, basically laying out how members of the public or commission members develop signs or plaques from their inception through to installation. After discussion, we have a 3rd draft that we'll circulate for all commission members for feedback and bring it to the September meeting.

Google maps now has 47 signs & 78 photos of PG's heritage signs (Mr. PG has been viewed over 8000 times and the sign over 28,000)

Finally, the Outreach working group (Linda, Imogene and I) met on May 29. We talked about the disconnect in the city, with stuff going on but no-one knowing about it. Linda suggested setting up a Facebook page to be a focal point for heritage-related events, tying in things like Heritage Week, the heritage fair, Neil's Throwback Thursdays in the Citizen, and other material.

Imogene will connect Linda with the Comms dept. and explore whether this could be a Heritage Commission site, or a private one. Linda would moderate it.