

MUSEUM NEWS

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How to Find Us

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Hours of Operation

The Museum is open
Tuesday - Saturday
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Who We Are

Administrator – Jackie Pearase

Board of Directors 2024-2025

President: Sandra Farynuk

Vice-president: Sue Phillips

Secretary: Bob Cowan

Treasurer: Diana Inselberg

Directors: Judy Fischer, Ted Morrison

Joan Cowan, Desiree Roell

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today!**



History revisited

Lansdowne, seen here circa 1896, was the topic of a speech given by Joan Cowan at the AGM of the Armstrong-Enderby Branch of the Okanagan Historical Society held at the Enderby Museum April 13. She provided some interesting history on the community and its early connections and relationship with the burgeoning community of Belvidere, which would become Enderby. We recorded her presentation and once transcribed it will become part of the museum's Oral History Project, which includes speeches, presentations and interviews covering people, events, places, businesses and more. [Courtesy of BC Archives]

Volunteer recruitment event

The museum has experienced a lull in volunteers as of late. A couple of people passed away, sickness has kept others away, and vacations will create some lonely days at the museum for Jackie this summer. The few local youths who said they wanted to volunteer apparently found other things more interesting, as they did not last long at the museum. So, in an effort to drum up new volunteers, Jackie is hosting a Volunteer Introduction Day at the museum on Saturday, May 17. She will offer tours of the museum, showing how things operate, the extent of our collection, how the archives are used by researchers, and how volunteers are vital to the future of the museum. There will be no required commitment from people attending; the idea is to spark interest in the museum and the work we do so they might want to volunteer. Tours will be offered at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Museum notes

By Jackie Pearase



Summer picnic planned

We are working on tentative plans to host a summer picnic this year, possibly at Springbend Hall. The event would accomplish two things: it would serve as a time to remember long-time museum volunteer Gerrie Danforth and to celebrate the community and people of Springbend. Gerrie never liked being the centre of attention and would kibosh any attempt to host a tea in her honour. As such, we want to invite current and former Springbend residents to a tea where we would have a display on the community and invite people to share memories of Springbend and Gerrie, one of its former residents. The event is still in the planning stages, so anyone with suggestions or ideas is welcome to contact the museum.

Displays

Jackie will soon change the front display case from Original Artwork to St. Andrew's United Church. The church donated a number of items to the museum after it closed Dec. 31, 2024. These items and a few more already in our museum will be used to create the display.

We recently added a 1936 Singer sewing machine to our displays. The machine belonged to Linda Bexton, who passed away May 3, 2024. It is complemented by two photographs of Linda and her 4-H books, from which she learned to sew at a young age.

Park has beginnings as recreation grounds

Barnes Park is currently being transformed with the construction of a new outdoor pool, one of many changes in its lifetime.

Soon after the city was incorporated in March 1905, local citizens began looking for a new gathering place for celebrating May 24, Victoria Day.

Local residents began May 24 celebrations in 1891 with a baseball game, canoe races, foot races and athletic sports. The location of these early events is not clear, but research points to it likely being held on the Lambly ranch, which encompassed all of what is now Enderby plus some land north of the city.

According to Charles Holiday in *The Valley of the Youth*, the Lambly brothers constructed a race track on their ranch in 1890. It had a grandstand, judges' box and other amenities.

In 1905 a group of citizens explored options suitable for new recreation grounds and proposed purchasing land from H. Webster (Webb) Wright, who owned 50 acres about ½ mile from town (land previously owned by the Lamblys). This land is in the vicinity of where Malpass Lumber & Poles was from 1947-1970.

Mr. Wright was offering 20 acres of land at a cost of \$200 per acre, or \$4,000 in total. He also wanted a five-year commitment to using the land.

The offer was considered and almost taken until those on the committee determined it would cost another \$4,000 to add grandstands, racetrack and other amenities. The \$8,000 total cost was considered too steep.

Another offer of land came from Fred Barnes. He had four acres (on the corner of what is now George Street and King Avenue) he was willing to sell for \$1,200. He wanted \$200 down and \$200 annually until the cost was paid.

A committee of Messrs. Nairn, Harvey, Hancock, Taylor and English was put in charge of the purchase.

Once a deal was struck, Mr. Barnes promptly had the land surveyed and the committee quickly raised the necessary \$200 down payment so work could commence on upgrades to the site.

The committee held the site on behalf of the city until all conditions were met and ensured it was used only as a public recreation or sports grounds.

The site was rolled and by mid-May 1905 the committee was erecting a seven-foot tight-board fence, 10-tier grandstand with seating for 300, and a quarter-mile fenced track around the grounds. Much of the labour was volunteer.



Enderby's recreation grounds on May 24, 1912. [edms 2233]

“This week every man who can saw a board or drive a nail is working overtime on the fence, the grandstand and the grounds, and it is expected that by Saturday night the grounds will be in pretty good shape,” wrote The Edenograph editor on May 17, 1905.

The park improvements cost \$239, much less than the \$4,000 predicted when considering the Wright property.

Plans for May 24 celebrations included a football game between Kamloops and Enderby, Caledonian sports (track and field), a baseball game between Vernon and Enderby, horse races, canoe races, a tug-o-war and an evening ball. But the event was rained out and all sports cancelled.

A concert and dance in the evening raised \$96. With expenses of \$85 for the celebration, the committee was just able to break even.

In 1908, the grandstand was enlarged and several refreshment booths were added to the recreation grounds.

Trees were planted and more seats added to the grandstand in 1909.

The debt for the site was paid off in 1909 through annual subscriptions ranging from 50 cents to \$75.

In 1910 an ice rink was created by the A.R. Rogers Company with two lights and a waiting room with a stove and music. Frank Prince was given special thanks in the newspaper saying he was “entitled to all kinds of appreciation for the public spirit and unselfish labor put on it.”

The city did not hold the annual event during the war years and hay was grown in the field. Celebrations restarted in 1918 and there was a push for the site to be refurbished in 1919 as men returned from overseas.

The 1920 event was touted as a “Hospital Field Day” with proceeds going toward the erection of an isolation ward for the hospital. Almost \$400 was raised after expenses.

Thanks to...

We want to extend our thanks to Josh Baird of Baird Bros. for the donation of a load of gravel for the driveway at Springbend Hall and to Brian Bremer for bringing his tractor to spread out the gravel.

Thank you Steve Colgun for donating a roll of thick binder twine for rope making at the museum.

Thanks also go to Richard Finnson for repairing the door at Springbend Hall, which had resulted in some strong words from museum volunteers trying to gain access or lock the hall up. He did the work pro bono, which is always appreciated.

We cannot forget to also thank museum director Desiree Roell for getting these important tasks done at no cost to the museum.



Springbend Hall is looking fine with some new gravel on the driveway, a fixed door and superb grounds maintenance by volunteer and director Desiree Roell.

Lytton Chinese History Museum

When the town of Lytton burned down in 2021, the fire also claimed its museum on Chinese history. As such, its curator Lorna Fandrich reached out to BC museums to see if they had Chinese artifacts they were willing to donate to her museum. Our museum donated some Chinese bottles and an apothecary cabinet brought back from Hong Kong by a local resident after the Second World War. The Lytton museum is now rebuilt and Lorna was kind enough to send pictures of our items on display. She then extended an invitation to its grand re-opening on May 3 and Jackie attended on behalf of the Enderby Museum.

Museum outreach

Jackie has made monthly visits to Parkview Place since 2022, bringing along artifacts, photographs and music to share with residents. The idea is to spark memories and conversations with the residents, many of whom live with dementia. The response from residents and staff has been very positive and encouraging. The success of this outreach has now extended to people using Granville Getaway Adult Day Program, with Jackie also making a monthly visit there.

Games Night

The museum hosted an Old Fashioned Games Night at the Drill Hall Feb. 21 but attendance was disappointingly low. Poor weather may have been partly to blame. Those who did come had lots of fun. Jackie hopes to host another game night this summer so watch the local press for information.

The grandstands were deemed unsafe in 1921, the football game was not held and the grounds were poorly maintained, with the lacrosse players unsure if they were expected “to play the game or mow the hay.”

A 1922 newspaper article said Victoria Day was to be celebrated on the recreations grounds “where work is bring done to put the field in better shape to play than it has in years. Fences are being repaired, grandstand renovated and the hay crop kept short.”

In 1921 the city obtained lands in the area of what is now Kildonan Avenue from Sam Polson in exchange for owed taxes. In January 1922 the city passed a bylaw to establish a park on this land along the river (now Riverside Park).

In May 1923 the local citizenry was busy getting the city’s new auto and recreation park in shape for May 24 and the old recreation grounds fell into disuse.

There is little mention of the recreation grounds in the local newspaper after 1923 but city hall correspondence shows it was being rented annually by different farmers for hay into the late 1930s.

The site would become a community focal point once again, but not for over a decade.



The Monkeyville side show was part of the 1912 Victoria Day celebrations at Enderby’s recreation grounds. [edms 2232]

From recreation grounds to community park



About 500 people came out for the grand opening of the Lions Swimming Pool at Barnes Park on Aug. 23, 1953. [edms 5283]

The formation of the Enderby and District Lions Club in 1947 resulted in Enderby's unused recreation grounds becoming a true community park.

Local children were high on the priority list for the Enderby Lions, with some of their first projects being kids' parties, events and activities.

By early 1949 the Lions were making plans to build a playground on the old recreation grounds and soon had the support of city council.

"Enderby City Council approved unanimously the Lions Club proposal to make the Barnes Park into a children's playground and recreational center as presented to them at the meeting Monday night by H.E. Danforth and Ian Thompson," said an April 15, 1949 article in the *Okanagan Commoner*. "Mr. Danforth said the plan was to improve the tennis courts now at the northwest corner of the park, install a wading pool, swings, etc. south of the tennis courts and make the eastern part of the park into a softball diamond."

The Lions said the work would take a few years and the city provided them with a three-year lease on the park property to create the playground.

The Lions did have long-range plans to add a pool to the park but those plans were fast-tracked after the drowning death of seven-year-old Andrew Graham and near drowning of Gordon Nicholson on the Shuswap River Aug. 6, 1951. (This drowning followed that of nine-year-old Ronald Czepil and near drowning of Sharon McNair during the June 5, 1949 King's birthday celebrations at Riverside Park.)

The Aug. 10, 1951 Enderby *Commoner* has news reports on the drowning, a meeting of the Lions to form finance and building committees for a pool construction project, and that Harry Danforth was bringing his bulldoz-

ORL Summer Reading Club

The museum wants to be part of the Okanagan Regional Library's Summer Reading Club programming. This year's theme is Colour Your Summer! Jackie and Desiree hope to make a geology presentation, as one of the sub-themes is Outrageous Orange: Geology and all things rock related.

Barnes Park

With construction of the new pool now underway at Barnes Park, the Museum in the Park is looking quite worse for wear due to the dirt and grime being blown about. The usual spring clean will make things nice for a short while but not for long. With most of the park enclosed by construction fencing, events normally held at Barnes Park will be at Riverside Park this summer. As such, it is unlikely that the fire truck will come out for the parade, as getting it out and back into the gazebo could be a headache with construction at the park. Instead, Jackie has some hands-on activities she plans to bring to Canada Day celebrations instead of showing off the fire truck.



er to begin excavation of the new pool. (A subsequent article noted that Mr. Danforth was doing the work in conjunction with Baird Bros, who donated the equipment, and Mr. J. McAmmond, who donated his eight hours of work.)

The Lions held many fundraising events for the project including a community concert, variety show, old time dance, sports day and queen's contest. Community contributions took the form of funds and in-kind donations.

The pool was constructed by members of the Enderby Lions with help from local residents and contractors. At the same time, the Lions were erecting a health centre on Stanley Avenue that opened in December 1952.

Local citizens were out in force in early July 1953 to complete the cement pouring for the wading pool in time for it to open Sunday, July 26.

The little pool was originally open from 2-4 p.m. each day with six girls, including Shirley McAmmond and Marian Pritchard, volunteering to watch the kids until the pool opened with permanent staff.

The pool had a fence and a wooden walkway around it. A crowd of about 500 attended the grand opening of the Enderby and District Swimming Pool on Sunday, Aug. 23, 1953 including Lions Past District Governor Maurice MacNair of Penticton and Okanagan-Revelstoke MP-elect George McLeod, also an Enderby Lions past president.

The swimming pool had a wood sidewalk around it, that was to be replaced the following year with cement, and temporary booths for changing.

The park itself contained picnic tables, swings and tee-totters.

Lions President John Pritchard, elected to the position in 1951, was tireless in his efforts to get the pool completed. His reward was to be tossed into the new pool on opening day by "bathing beauties representing Enderby and district points" and Lion Art Lundman.

While already called Barnes Park by locals, the Lions decided to officially name it Barnes Playground in September 1953.

It was named after Fred Barnes, who donated the land for the park 45 years previous, served as mayor in 1914 and 1919-1921 and was an alderman in 1906, 1912 and 1918.

A gift of 2,000 feet of Grade 1 lumber in July 1954 allowed the Lions to complete the bathhouse in the park. A cooking shelter was added to the park in 1962.

The playground continued to grow in 1966 with the addition of a merry-go-round donated by Baird Bros. and a slide.

The merry-go-round was an Ocean Wave manufactured by the Toronto Specialty Manufacturing Co. Ltd. it featured a guard rail, bumper ring and a platform circle

for sitting. It had a Ocean Wave head that required annual filling of the pivot cup and was made of simple, sturdy construction for a long life.

The slide was dedicated to Harry Danforth in a ceremony Sunday, May 14, 1967. Forty trees were also planted in the park that year.

A trailer camp was added to the park in the 1970s. In 1977 the camping rate was \$3.50 per night for unserviced sites and \$5 per night for sites with sewer and water hookups. The rates went up in 1986 to \$7/night for sites with no hookups and \$9/night for sites with hookups.

The pool was repaired many times over the years, with new plaster and paint in the pool basin.

The wading pool was closed in 1973 by health authorities concerned that the water was not drained regularly. A cement sundeck replaced the wading pool in 1983 and the Nels Pada Spray Park was a new feature in that space in 1995.

As for the playground, the slide and merry-go-round were removed in 1995 due to safety concerns. A new playground structure was added at the north end of the pool, moving it away from the busy highway.



Members of the Enderby & District Lions Club plant trees at the Barnes Playground in 1967. [Enderby Lions photo]

A redevelopment project between the city, regional district and Lions Club was in the works in 1996, which led to the removal of many trees.

A skate park was added in 1998.

The city sought public input into redevelopment plans for the park in 2015, which sparked plans for a new spray park.

A circuit of gym equipment was added in 2016.

A new spray park was unveiled in 2017 and the second phase was opened in 2021.

And now, construction on a new outdoor pool is underway with its opening scheduled for May 2026.

To know her was to love her

We at the museum are very sad over the loss of one of our longest active volunteers and museum cheerleaders, Gerrie Danforth.

Gerrie passed away March 31 at her home in Memorial Tower surrounded by her family at the age of 100.

Involved with the museum since 1978, before it had a building or widespread community support, Gerrie was one of the early volunteers who helped create this incredible amenity we have in Enderby.

She started as a director (a position she held until 2006) and a weekly volunteer for 10 years who helped create the museum's cataloguing system, collections policy and reference collection.

One of her earliest tasks, from 1978-85, was to work with Joani Cowan to identify, clean and catalogue a collection of artifacts, clothing, newspapers and books for a school reunion display.

Gerrie was instrumental in creating one of the museum's most valuable resources, a property inventory for the city and rural area. She used her local knowledge to expand an inventory created by a summer student using assessment records, adding the names of pioneer families who lived on these properties.

She also helped sort, identify and appraise a large donation from the Rosoman family; published a community history book; worked with high school students on a project to interview long-time community residents and then continued to interview local people to record their memories for the museum; and clipped newspapers, a favourite task.

Gerrie was the queen of newspaper clippings. Her main job in her final years at the museum was to orga-



Gerrie Danforth on her 100th birthday Nov. 14, 2024.

nize and place clippings into historical reference and people files.

Up until December 2024, Gerri was still a volunteer, walking from her home four or five times weekly to spend a few hours at the museum. She said getting out to walk daily was crucial to her long life.

She became ill over the Christmas break and her subsequent health struggles put an end to her museum visits.

Our administrator Jackie Pearase feels her absence each morning without the pleasure of seeing Gerrie at the door, waiting for her arrival, and all at the museum are mourning a profound loss.

Gerrie was an important part of our museum and although she is gone, her legacy here is timeless.

Park feature a tribute to loyal Lion

A photograph of the old tower slide at Barnes Park is sure to spark memories for many who grew up in Enderby. For a local family and the Enderby and District Lions Club, it represented a man of conviction and dedication.

On May 14, 1967, the popular playground equipment was dedicated to the memory of Enderby Lions charter member and past president Harry Danforth (1891-1964).

The Enderby Commoner ran a photo and two stories about the event on the front page of its May 19, 1967 issue.

A report on the ceremony noted that it was attended by Harry's wife Goldie, their children and grandchildren, along with members of the Enderby Lions Club and their wives.

The grandchildren were the first down the slide and everyone enjoyed a picnic lunch after the dedication ceremony.

Harry was remembered as a "loyal worker" on many Lions Club projects.

Enderby Lion George Green read the following tribute to Harry Danforth:

"District Governor Bob Neil, Lady Lions, children, honored guests and friends, all of Harry Danforth.



The dedication ceremony at Barnes Park on Sunday, May 14, 1967: (rear, l-r) Enderby Lion John Pritchard, Frank Danforth, Gerrie Danforth, Goldie Danforth, Mona Danforth Ferguson, Norman Danforth, Hazel Danforth, Opal Danforth, (front) Joan Danforth, Carol Danforth, June Danforth, Ralph Danforth, Tommy Danforth, (to right) Lions District Governor Bob Neil and Enderby Lion George Green. [edms 2620]

"It is a real pleasure for me to welcome all those here today who came to honor the memory of our old friend Harry.

"I heard Rev. C.G. Mackenzie say, one time, that all you leave behind you when you depart this world is the happy memories that are left in the hearts of relatives and friends. The turnout here today certainly proves the esteem in which Harry was held by his neighbors and fellow citizens in this district.

"I can't seem to remember a time when there was a community event of any kind held in Enderby that Harry Danforth was not right in the middle of things, pulling his share of the load and usually a lot more. He was always in charge of the water sports on our sports days, children's Halloween and Christmas parties, and he was the type of man that you could call on to do a job and know that the job would be done, and done well.

"As a member of the Lions Club, of course, a charter-member, he had many years of perfect attendance, was a past president of the club, and he also held numerous other positions in the club. At the time, about 10 years ago when our membership had dwindled badly, and the future of Lionism looked dim in Enderby, he, perhaps more than anyone else, was instrumental in getting new members to join and he supplied the spark that got the club on the go again.

"I could go on and on about Harry's fine record but I think that if you didn't know all these things you wouldn't be here today.

"Our members felt that this slide would be the kind of memorial that Harry Danforth would like, as he loved this park and was one of the driving forces to get the swimming pool built. He was always the type of man who was never too busy to do things for children.

"Our club felt the loss very deeply when Harry was gone and wanted to put up some type of remembrance of this fine Lion and good citizen. That is the reason for this gathering today."

Harry Danforth died May 14, 1964 at age 73.

The slide dedicated in his memory and merry-go-round were removed from Barnes Park in 1995 after they were deemed unsafe by modern standards.

The plaque was retained by the Lions and donated to the Enderby Museum in 2002.