

29 YEARS
OF SERVICE

OAK BAY VOLUNTEER SERVICES



Newsletter

VOL. 27 NO.1

JANUARY 2007

PRE-VALENTINE'S FUNDRAISING DINNER

Thursday, February 8, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. at Blighty's Bistro
A Fantastic Dinner with the Wines of Oak Bay Village Wines

This year we have two ticket prices. The cost is \$125 to attend the dinner and a tax receipt will be issued for a portion of this. Everyone who attended last year had a great time! If you are not able to join us, there is a not-attending ticket at the cost of \$50 and a tax receipt will be issued for that full amount. Both types of tickets will enter your name into some exciting draws!!

Bids are now being accepted at our office for our auction items and there will be live bidding at the dinner. Back

by popular demand we have the Garden Spring Cleanup brought to you by Mayor Causton and Members of Council! The Mayor and the six Councillors will all give 2 hours each on a Saturday morning. The value is priceless. Watch those weeds disappear! Also up for auction, from Oak Bay Artist Victor Lotto is a Water Colour Portrait of Your Home! This portrait will have outer dimensions of 16"x 20" with an 11' x 14" image, matted, framed and painted "with the best paints in the world" as Victor says!

Be a Valentine to Your Community
and join us by supporting the above!



*The Year
in Pictures*

FUNDRAISING DINNER 2006: Richard Sparkes, Ann Herbert, Primrose Carson, John Herbert, Jean Sparkes, Frank Carson, Mayor Christopher Causton (photo by Ivan Watson)

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The Year in Pictures



MLA IDA CHONG PRESENTS CHEQUE: MLA Ida Chong, Barry Kelly, Joan Halvorsen, Jon Watson (photo by Ivan Watson)



VOLUNTEER DRIVING: Ame Sigurdson, Brain Crawley (photo by Peggy Murdoch)



CENTENNIAL CHILDREN'S ART AWARDS: Jessica Grundmann, Hillary Wickware, Mayor Christopher Causton, Aidan Harrison, Liam O'Flynn (photo by Ivan Watson)



OAK BAY 100th BIRTHDAY PARTY: Ivan Watson, Sharon Apsey (photo by Joan Halvorsen)

OAK BAY VOLUNTEER SERVICES

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Harley Schwartz, David Clinton-Baker

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The Year in Pictures



A.G.M. VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION: Barry Kelly (10 yrs), Elsa Dallin (15 yrs), Carin Gallie (5 yrs), Cindy Ayles (20 yrs), Hugh Quetton (5 yrs), Doris Dinsmore (20 yrs), Pam Nielsen (5 yrs), Mayor Christopher Causton (photo by Ivan Watson)



A.G.M. BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Sharon Apsey, Barry Kelly, Phebe Chartrand, Carin Gallie, Jon Watson, Joan Halvorsen (Executive Director), missing Jerry Rozalski (photo by Ivan Watson)



TEA PARTY PARADE: Marie Caton, Nancy Schwartz (photo by Harley Schwartz)



PHOTO CONTEST: SNOWBIRDS CROWD: Winning photo by David Clinton-Baker (photo by David Clinton-Baker)



VOLUNTEER CHRISTMAS PARTY



VOLUNTEER CHRISTMAS PARTY: OFFICE VOLUNTEERS: Sharon Apsey, Cathie Ballard (Office Coordinator), Cindy Ayles, Nancy Schwartz, Ann Herbert, Myrna Henley, Barbara Leonard, Doris Dinsmore, Pam Nielsen, Rae Alderton

VOLUNTEER PROFILE:

TOM CHATHAM

By Bronwyn Taylor

Tom was born in Shropshire, England into a family of five children – three brothers and one sister, all still living in the U.K. His father was a farmer and Tom claims to have hated living on a farm. Tom left England at the early age of twenty-one. The taxi-driver who drove him to the docks called him “another rat leaving a sinking ship”. Tom arrived in Mannville, Alberta in March, 1951, thinking he had landed “in the middle of winter”.

Do not get the wrong impression – Tom is anything but a negative person! He was impressed by the beauty of the green rolling foothills of Alberta and has not regretted his move for a minute. Ironically, his first job in Canada was on a farm, owned by the MLA for Vermillion, where he worked for the princely sum of \$75.00 per month.

Unfortunately, the next winter Tom contracted rheumatic fever and the only medication he received was disprin every two hours. As a consequence he sustained heart damage which prevented him from ever getting any sort of life insurance. Tom went back to England, but returned to Alberta in 1953, to suffer another bout of rheumatic fever. Therefore, in 1954, he (wisely) made the decision to move to the milder climate of the west coast settling in Victoria, B.C.

Tom performed a variety of jobs in the construction industry before joining the staff of Victoria Plywood in 1956, where he worked for the next twenty-five years. He retired at the age of 58 and took on various gardening jobs around the community to supplement his pension.

On Christmas Eve, 1958, Tom and Betty Lou were married and moved to Oak Bay in 1960. The couple had three children. David took a job in Japan to pay his student loan and is still there some twenty years later, teaching English at a university. Christopher lives in Victoria with his wife and three children and operates Casey's Store at the corner of Central Avenue and St. Patrick St. in Oak Bay. Nancy lives in Mexico with her husband and four children. They visited their parents for most of this past summer. Tom is a tireless caregiver for his wife, Betty Lou, who has Alzheimer's disease. This makes it nearly impossible for Tom to be out of the house for extended periods of time.

The Chathams loved to travel, which I speculate is why the children are scattered in such diverse directions. Tom and Betty Lou traveled extensively through much of Europe with



and without their family. Tom's special favorite is Spain. In fact, he has been there twelve times and plans to go again in March of this year. He does not go as a typical tourist but as a walker and hosteller. The “Camino de Santiago” is 750 km in length, which takes thirty days to complete, at a rate of walking twenty-five km per day. In 1998 Tom doubled that figure by doing two walks. After the “Camino” he bussed from Santiago to Seville and walked another 740 km from Seville to Astorga. He does this with only a 6 kg pack, including the weight of a sleeping bag and the pack itself. If such an adventure appeals to you, Tom is enthusiastic to share his experiences and offer advice. I have already made my enquires and have a friend who is also keen to go!

About five years ago, another of our volunteers persuaded Tom to join the ranks of our volunteer drivers. As an office volunteer, I can attest to his willingness to help whenever and however he can, including repair work. I met Tom and his conscriptor at a volunteer gathering during my first year as a volunteer. What impressed me were the senses of humour, camaraderie, and selflessness of these men.

Although life's circumstances may be curtailing Tom's availability at this time, he continues to do whatever he can to help members of our community, whatever their needs may be. Thank you for all your services!