

Newsletter



WHAT'S NEW

FAMILY LIFE

This issue features Sea Island families and highlights childhood memories held dear. Read about the HIGO family and life at the fishing village on the southwest shores of Sea Island, Grant THOMPSON's escapades in Burkeville and tales from the fields and corner stores. We end the newsletter in loving memory of those Sea Islanders who passed in 2022.

PROJECTS PAGE

We have added a projects page to our website, highlighting six projects: family stories, class photos, veterans' stories, pioneer families, teacher biographies and house histories. We invite you to visit the pages and join us in a project or two. Check them out at <https://seaislandhome.org/sea-island-projects.html>.

HERITAGE SIGNAGE

We are currently working on signage with the City of Richmond about six canneries and a cork mill, including stories from families that lived there. There will be a physical sign and an online story map. SIHS is providing the information and photos and the City is doing the rest. Want to help? Contact David ENGLAND at davidwengland911@gmail.com.

"Sea Island is located within the traditional territory of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-waututh Peoples."

President's Message

"A life not documented is a life that within a generation or two will largely be lost to memory."



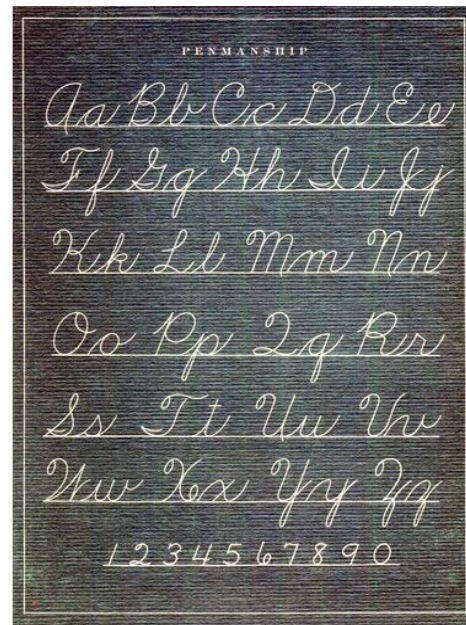
Memories are funny things! You might just be sitting enjoying a moment of peace and quiet and a memory will pop into your mind. You sit and savor that memory, mull it over a bit and then go on with your day.

But those memories from our childhood are 'keepers.' Sharing them with your kids - telling them we had to walk to school - and it was all uphill! Well in my case it was going on the school bus (but I'm sure it was all uphill, wasn't it?!).

Last week, I was talking with a few friends about "cursive writing." Remember those infamous letters of the alphabet that were in every classroom? And the hours we would spend perfecting those letters? We all had stories of some aspect of learning to write that brought smiles to our faces. Oh, and remember when we started to use those pens with the nibs and bottles of ink! And the blotters?

These are the kinds of memories the Sea Island Heritage Society would like to record. We hope that when you read our Newsletter, you will be reminded of those bygone days, and jot down a few notes. Then contact us and let's write your family story.

Till next time,



Cursive writing (Marcia Graves)

Eunice Robinson



President

Sea Island Heritage Society

UPCOMING EVENTS



COFFEE CHAT

Every 3rd Thursday of the month, up to and including June, from 10 a.m. to noon - on Zoom. Some in-person meetings may be scheduled at the Sea Island Community Centre.

Join us for the next Zoom Coffee Chat on Thursday, February 16, 2023, as we learn more about airport expansion on Sea Island (Part 2). Note that our scheduled themes were altered a bit to allow for Part 2.

The March Coffee Chat will be about the corner stores on Sea Island. Bring your memories.

Contact Marilyn for the Zoom link at seaisland20@gmail.com

2023 SIHS INVITATIONAL REUNION

Join us May 27, 2023, in Richmond, B.C., for our second annual reunion.

Reconnect with childhood friends and neighbours, learn more about the legacy of Sea Island and consider participating in any of our numerous projects. More information to come.

Contact Eunice to be part of the planning team at eunice@genbug.ca.

Sea Island Reunion

2023

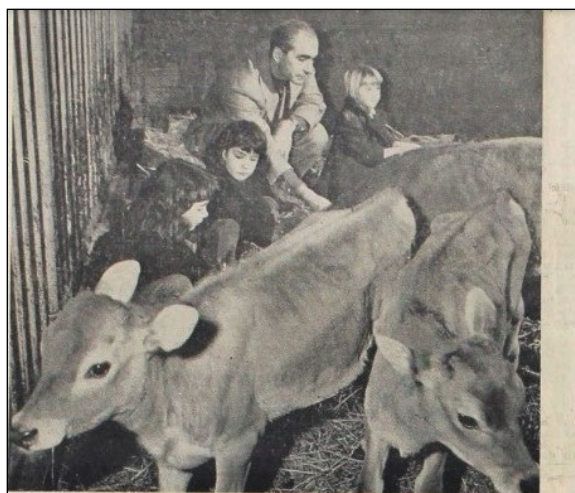
DO YOU REMEMBER...

[Taking shortcuts through the fields](#)

Carol Gordon shares:

This picture brought back some good memories for me. My parents rented the old white Grauer house which was next door to the farm. I used to go next door to the farm and see the animals as

well. The workers would let me touch the cows and watch the milking machine. However, I was frightened of the cows when they were loose in the field.



Marpole-Richmond Review
May 8 1946 pg 6

<http://archives.richmond.ca/archives/inmagicimages/pdfs/2015-0018-00905.pdf>

SIHS Pix #215

Sherry, 7, (left) and Romilly, 5, daughters of A. E. "Dai" Grauer, new president of the B. C. Electric, find feeding the skittish, deer-like Jersey calves at Frasea Farms on Sea Island a serious and fascinating business, with their daddy on hand to show them how. Blonde Pauline, extreme right, feeds the calves and look nonchalantly around at the same time, showing her city cousins how veteran farmers handle such matters. Visits once or twice a week to the farm with their father are red-letter days for Sherry and Romilly whose grandfather homesteaded in the district before Vancouver's Great Fire.

Frasea Farms

(City of Richmond Archives 2015 0018 0090 5)

One time when I was crossing the field as a shortcut to the school yard to play with my friends, who were already at the school baseball field, a cow sauntered over to me. I was young and out there crying my eyes out when a farmhand came out in a tractor and collected me from the field and brought me back home so I could get my bike and ride over the 'long way.' I never tried crossing the field again, however tempting it was.

What memories do you have of taking shortcuts through the fields? I'm pretty sure we all did it at some point in our childhood on Sea Island.

Going to the corner store

David ENGLAND's parents purchased the corner store at Miller and Airport Roads in 1965 and named it the *Sea Island Confectionary* (also known as the Oasis).

David tells us: One of my jobs was making sure that the chocolate bar section was fully stocked and maintained. Also, it was an area that was difficult to guess. How many Mars bars today? Is O'Henry outselling Turkish Delight this week? How many Smarties do we have in the back as the section is completely empty! I could never, ever get this right! Why are we out of Kit Kat?



Frances, Eric (Joe), and David England at their corner store (David England)

We also had a candy counter that contained all types of penny candy. These candy delights were in a glass counter; the customer would point at the items they wanted, and we would provide them with their choices by picking them up with our hands, putting them into a small paper bag and then taking their money. The names of many of these candies escape me but I do recall.... bananas, worms, liquorice, jujubes and Likomaid.... Can you imagine someone giving you candy in this way today? Not in your life! It was a different world then! Germs didn't exist!

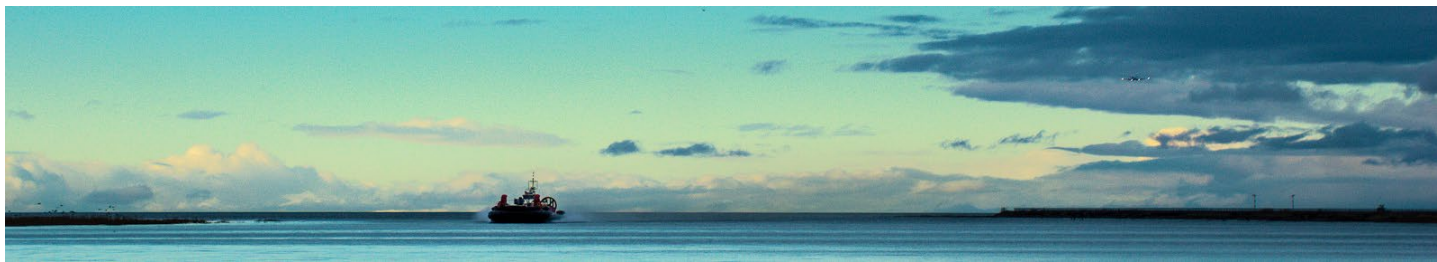
From around 1966 forward, it was expected that I would work in the store in the evenings after dinner. This meant that any homework that I had to do was usually done behind the counter, at work, if I couldn't get it done before we had dinner.

This was a bit awkward, but I managed. What I missed out on was a lot of TV viewing kids my age we're busy doing. For instance, a show I missed seeing, from its introduction, was Star Trek. When this was first launched, I remember going to school the next day and having all my friends talk about it. I was unable to participate in those conversations as I hadn't seen it, and nobody cared that I hadn't seen it! And since VCR's and PVR's didn't exist there was no way I was going to see it until it went into reruns. There were many other shows that fell into that same "unseen" category.... But again, I managed to survive. And I had a ton of candy I could eat to soothe my soul!

Carol GORDON remembers Scardina's store was for the local homes in Burkeville and maybe an airport worker doing a convenient stop for cigarettes or milk. She says, "As kids we all ate fries and drank pop at the corner store, and the boys either worked at Arnold's Gas Station or they were fixing their cars there as Arnold was good at letting them do that. He was also good at letting them run a 'gas tab' for their cars. They were regular customers, as they paid off their bill and then started a new tab. So, it stands to reason, that if the boys were there, so were the girls!

The men in Burkeville had cars but the women had to walk everywhere. We would walk to the store, toddlers in hand, pushing the buggy and purchase our groceries almost on a day-to-day basis. We were hoping that maybe someone would be going into Brighthouse so we could go to the 'big store' there sometime during the week. The Meat Market was good to us moms that walked up to this store. They did not charge us for soup bones and they still had meat on the bone so we could truly still make a good soup!"

SEA ISLAND HERITAGE SOCIETY MEETS THE COAST GUARD



Sijay comes home (David England)

On January 18, 2023, David ENGLAND and Eunice ROBINSON paid a visit to Paul TOBIN, the Officer in Charge of the Canadian Coast Guard base located on Sea Island. They spent a very pleasant time with Paul as he told them the story of the Coast Guard and the Hovercraft unit on Sea Island.

Stay tuned to future issues where we will share more photos, what we've learned about the Canadian Coast Guard on Sea Island, and the reason for our visit with them.

SEA ISLAND FAMILIES

THE SAICHIRO NAGATA HIGO FAMILY STORY

Life at a fishing village on the southwest shores of Sea Island

Saichiro HIGO was born to Mankichi and Kama NAGATA in Kagoshima prefecture, Japan, on June 17, 1876. The NAGATA siblings include oldest brother Yonesuke, Saichiro, sister Miyo and youngest brother Sanshiro. Saichiro, the second son, was adopted by Yotaro and Tetsu HIGO who were childless. To continue one's family line, adoption was often the solution. As a result, Saichiro's last name became HIGO.



*Saichiro's parents, Mankichi and Kama NAGATA, Kagoshima prefecture, Japan, 1876.
(Higo Family Collection)*

In 1905, at the age of 29, Saichiro immigrated to Canada and travelled throughout the west coast of North America as far south as San Francisco and as far north as Vancouver Island. He worked in the Newcastle Island coal mine in Nanaimo for a while. Then he went to McLeod, Alberta, on the recommendation of friends looking for work. Oftentimes friends and acquaintances from the same prefecture would help each other out. While at McLeod, Saichiro received his British subject citizenship papers in 1913.

Saichiro returned to Japan to marry Yui HIGO in 1912. Yui was born September 30, 1886, and was the first daughter of Dennosuke and Kesa HIGO. In Japan on November 13, 1912, Yoshie, the first of ten children were born. Soon thereafter, Saichiro returned to the west coast of Canada by himself, with Yui arriving shortly thereafter accompanied by her brother Mankichi HIGO and daughter Yoshie. They came by ship, disembarked in Victoria, then proceeded to Vancouver. They were met by a family friend who wanted to hear news of the homeland, but also provided information on the happenings in Vancouver.

Arriving in Vancouver, they walked the streets, much to the discomfort of Yui, for she was wearing unfamiliar western clothing, was burdened down with a purse and umbrella and had Yoshie in her arms. In addition, the shoes she was unaccustomed to wearing hurt her feet. She asked whether she could take off her shoes but was told that it wasn't appropriate to go shoeless. They took the streetcar to Marpole where Saichiro was waiting for them. One version of this story had them walk all the way to Marpole! They then crossed the North Arm of the Fraser River to Eburne on Sea Island where Saichiro had a home at Acme Cannery. He had settled on Sea Island through recommendations from friends that were already residing there.

Saichiro was a fisherman, starting with a sailboat then graduating to a gas-powered vessel. The Japanese fishermen had license restrictions imposed on them. During this turmoil, Saichiro was elected to go from Sea Island to Steveston for frequent meetings. In 1927, licenses were restricted to certain areas. Yui worked in the adjacent cannery packing salmon by hand. She also worked with other women in a neighbouring farmer's field where they were paid 10 cents/hour. There was a community in Delta, located at Canoe Pass, composed of those who came from Kagoshima prefecture. Yui travelled there to provide midwifery services on occasion. With all this work, she still managed to work a vegetable garden of her own and raise 10 children during their time at Acme Cannery. While Yoshie, the oldest, was born in Japan, birth registration of the other nine children names place of birth as Eburne, Sea Island. They include Terue "Betty," Sadaichi (dob 1916, died 1921 Ibusuki, Japan), Yukio "Frank," Hideko "Mary," Yukinori



*Frank and Ted Higo
(Higo Family Collection)*

"Ted," Shizuno (died at age 10 months in 1922), Hatsue "Pat," Kuniko "Barb" and Yoshiharu who died at birth, 1931.

Saichiro remained close to his younger brother Sanshiro NAGATA. We are not sure when the NAGATA family arrived on Sea Island, but as with other immigrants, one member of the extended family is usually the person who arrives in the new country and then encourages others to join them. We think this was the case with Saichiro and Sanshiro.

Sanshiro NAGATA married Saye in Japan. Their children include Fumiko "Fumi," Yukiye "Yuki," Masatoshi "Jerry," Hisako, Reiko and Masahiro "Roy." Fumi and Yuki were born in Japan and remained there for fifteen years before emigrating to Canada. The other siblings were all born before the war and lived at Vancouver Cannery in the fishing village on Sea Island's southwest shoreline.

The rural environment offered lots of adventures for the HIGO and NAGATA children and others. Roy NAGATA remembers playing on the sandbars at low tide, building sandcastles or digging a bucket of surf clams further downstream using a rowboat. At high tide, they would go to the docks and dive off the diving board that was built by the community. He recalled that a friendly game of box lacrosse was always a great way to warm up before a swim. He shared that fall and winter sports were limited to basketball and skating whenever the high tide overflow of the dikes froze long and safe enough to skate on. It was a carefree life to grow up in.

The HIGO and NAGATA children attended *Sea Island School*, the second and only school operating on Sea Island at the time. It consisted of three rooms in two buildings on the wharf outside of the dike. It was established by the Japanese community for the Japanese children who lived in the cannery houses and Japanese cabins. Saichiro's daughter Patricia, now 97, remembers Miss Mary Leona THOMPSON as her teacher. She recalls they were taught the standard school subjects, such as English and math, as were taught in other public schools in Richmond.

They then attended Japanese language classes after their normal school hours. She remembers that they only attended school until the 8th Grade as they were then removed from the Coast during the internment of the Japanese Canadians.



Ted, Pat, and Barb Higo (siblings), and Kathy Kawaguchi (Yoshie's daughter) (Higo Family Collection)



*Sea Island School (Japanese), Division 2, 1929
(City of Richmond Archives photo 1985 39 65)*

The class picture is of Division 2 at *Sea Island School* in 1929. Miss THOMPSON is the teacher. Betty HIGO is second row from the top, third from the right. Ted HIGO is in the third row, third from the right.

Barb HIGO, now 94, shared, "I remember a teacher named Miss EBERT and a teacher named Mr. THOMAS. I went to Richmond High after I graduated from grade 8, but only for two months or so because of the War. We had a Japanese Language School which we attended after our regular

English classes. I think the name of our teacher was Hidetaro NISHI."

There is not much written history that references this school on Sea Island. Initially each school was governed by their own school board and then these were amalgamated to become the Richmond School Board in 1906. Only property owners could send their children to the public school and, as most Japanese Canadians lived in houses owned by the canneries, they were not allowed to go to public schools.

There was also a Sea Island Pentecostal Sunday School set up at the canneries. Mr. and Mrs.

TREVOR were the leaders of this group. Barbara HIGO is in the front row far left and Patricia HIGO is in the second row second from the left in the plaid jacket.

Jerry NAGATA is in the third row, second from the left. He's wearing the fedora hat. Roy NAGATA is in the same row in the middle. The Sunday School attendees would have lived at either Acme Cannery or Vancouver Cannery.



*Pentecostal Sunday School Class, 1942
(Higo Family Collection)*

In 1939, this close community of young people formed the Sea Island Young People's Society.



*Sea Island Young People's Society on New Year's Day 1939
(City of Richmond Archives photo 2013 8 1)*

Ted HIGO is in the top row furthest right and Frank HIGO is in the middle row fourth from the right. Mary HIGO is in the front row fourth from the right. Jerry NAGATA is in the middle row second from the

left. Their support of each other through the activities of the Society is testament to the vibrant community that existed pre-war on Sea Island.

When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour on December 7, 1941, this resulted in repercussions on the Japanese Canadian community. Over 22,000 Japanese Canadians were removed a minimum of 100 miles from the West Coast.

Saichiro and his family decided to relocate to Alberta to keep the family together. They travelled by train to Welling, Alberta where they were selected by the Don WILDE family to work on their sugar beet farm. They worked on this farm until 1947 when they relocated to Winnipeg to join up with the rest of the married relatives who had gone to Manitoba to work.



*Saichiro and Yui Higo on Sea Island
(Higo Family Collection)*

In April 1949, Japanese Canadians were finally allowed to return to the West Coast and as well received the right to vote. Roy NAGATA remained in Alberta where he received numerous achievement and humanitarian awards, including an Emperor's Award presented to Roy in Japan by Emperor Akihito in 2005 and Calgary's Outstanding Senior Citizen of the Year in 2007.

Frank Higo married Suzy in 1944. Frank returned first to the West Coast in 1949 to “test the waters.” The remainder of the family, led by his wife, Suzy HIGO, included grandparents Saichiro and Yui HIGO, children Ron, Karen and Kelvin, who travelled by train eventually returning to Richmond and residing in cannery houses at the Pacific Coast Camp in Steveston. Members of this legacy family continue to reside in Richmond.

The Sea Island Heritage Society would like to thank Kelvin HIGO (grandson of Saichiro HIGO and son of Frank HIGO) for sharing their family story. We also thank Kelvin’s aunts (sisters of Frank), Pat, Barb and their late cousin Roy NAGATA, for memories of life at the fishing village established at the Acme and Vancouver Canneries on Sea Island, Richmond, B.C.



*Frank and Suzy Higo's wedding day
(Higo Family Collection)*

GRANT CASPER MILTON THOMPSON

A Sea Island childhood



*Grant, Faye, and Fred Vancouver 1946
(Thompson Family Collection)*

Grant Casper Milton, the first child of Casper and Etta THOMPSON, was born in Smeaton, Saskatchewan. Casper, Grant’s father, was a carpenter and had moved to Vancouver in 1940 to build houses. His wife, Etta, brought Grant (b. November 11, 1936) and sister, Faye (b. August 5, 1939), to a house on Keefer Street in Vancouver in 1941. Grant’s aunt and uncle, Lillian and Joe LINDAL and their three children Fred, Ruth, and Teddy briefly shared the house with the THOMPSONS before Joe, an Air Force veteran, was offered an opportunity to rent or buy in Burkeville in 1946. They first rented on Anson, then on Douglas Crescent.

Grant, ten years old by now, missed his cousins and decided to ride his bike from Keefer Street to Victory Square and follow the streetcar tracks to Marpole, where he then crossed the bridge and rode to Burkeville to the Lindal’s house. Grant’s mother, Etta, and Lillian were sisters. Lillian called Etta

when Grant arrived to let her know he was safe. The bike ride became a frequent event with Grant, returning on the same route he came and being home in time for dinner. While spending the days in Burkeville, Grant quickly made new friends, including his life-long friends Jack ALEXANDER and Bob MARTIN. In 1946/47, Etta and Lillian came up with a plan to purchase a duplex at 59 and 63 Catalina Crescent. Grant didn't know, but by the summer of 1948 the Thompson family would be moving to Burkeville! When his family shared the news, he thought he "had died and gone to heaven." Thus began Grant and his family's life in Burkeville at 59 Catalina Crescent, right next door to his cousins.

A third child, Gail, was born May 28, 1945. A foster brother, Rob DALE (b. May 19, 1946), joined the family in the early 1950s when the THOMPSONS moved across Airport Road, a road that divided Burkeville, to 128 Lancaster Crescent.

When asked how his sister Faye spells her name, Grant replied, "Faye spells her name with an 'e.' I have, ever since I can remember, spelled it without the "e" just to bug her. You know how brothers are." Being born on November 11th, Grant also quipped that he never had to go to school on his birthday!

Grant shared with us that his legal given names were Milton Casper Grant. He doesn't know why 'Milton,' but because he was known to everyone as Grant, later in life he legally reversed his given names to Grant Casper Milton.

Whenever in conversation with Grant, friends of Sea Island Heritage Society felt the need to document and record the memories he has shared with us. We have done so diligently over the years, and as a result, the following story about Grant's childhood on Sea Island is told *in his own words* and with his approval.

Grant Tells of Growing Up on Sea Island

We moved to the community of Burkeville on Sea Island when the roads were still gravel. There were only about three phone kiosks or booths there at the time. When I was about 11, I remember a boy in Burkeville that ran away from home and hid out for several weeks. Some of the kids knew where he was and made sure that he had food and water. The police became involved and several of them, including me, were pressured by the police to reveal his hideout. Due to this intervention, I think the RCMP, which were new to Richmond, solved some of the home problems.

I was in Mr. A.S.G. SCOTT's grade six class in 1948/49 and his grade seven class in 1949/50. I remember Mr. SCOTT was the principal. I knew it was a school day when the flag was up. Starting in 1948, Jack ALEXANDER and I used to raise and lower the flag for Mr. BOWMAN, the school custodian. In those days, the flag was at the highest point of the building. We used to climb the inside ladder attached to a wall that gave access through a hatch that opened to the roof of the second floor. Mr. BOWMAN was happy that we took on that task!



*Sea Island Elementary School, Grade 6, 1948-49
(Grant Thompson, Ray Gibbs & Bob Martin)*

Sea Island Elementary School was built in two phases. From the front doors towards Miller Road was the first phase and to the left of the door was the second phase. My dad was a carpenter and worked on the addition to the south side that started in September 1949. These structures became two classrooms to the left of the front doors.

I spent much time on the old Dinsmore Island bridge where I learned to swim (also how to smoke, play poker and other things that kids learn). I don't recall

anyone using swim trunks when swimming here. It was easy to see if anyone was approaching and

get dressed before they got to that part of the bridge between Pheasant and Dinsmore Islands on the Middle Arm of the Fraser River. The only other place to swim was Oak Pool which was new in the 1948-49 era and was an hour walk across the Marpole bridge to 57th and Oak. It cost money to get in and was always crowded, so most of the Burkeville kids swam at Dinsmore. There were some industrious older boys that would scrounge up a plank and some spikes and make a pretty good diving board that was probably 15 feet or more above the water at low tide.



*Grant THOMPSON and Jack Alexander
at Sea Island Elementary School
(Thompson Family Collection)*

The big sand pile at the south end of Dinsmore island is where Burkeville kids spent many summer nights camped out with a fire going, slept over the weekend and went home Sunday. Sometimes these were sort of organized scout outings, but they were mostly a cookout, and everyone went home at dark. I was in the Burkeville Scout Troop, under

Scoutmaster, Norm EASTMAN and Norm was one of the Scouters

that was usually involved in these cookouts. There were the remains of an old cannery at this end of the Island. There were old pilings rotted off and lots of big, old chunks of rusted sheet metal at

the river's edge, so one had to be careful around this area when barefoot which we usually were. There was a good trail up the center of the island from the bridge to that end of the sandy end of the island and there was an equally good walking trail along the west dike, in fact the dike trail was good right around the whole Island. The only thing was once you started on the dike trail there was a huge water-filled ditch or canal 20 to 40 feet wide, and you were unable to cross except at the bridge and down at the sandy end. In the winter, these ditches froze solid for a couple weeks most years and you could skate around the whole Island if you wanted to.

At the north end of the island, the ditch or canal was wide enough to play hockey on and there was usually a fire going to get warmed up if you got cold. Of course, we built rafts of one kind or another both on these ditches and many rafts on the ditch that ran behind Lancaster Crescent.

There were several guys that used to pick sides and have "B-B" gun fights much the same as they do with paintball nowadays. I recall Ruben GREENLAY had the only pump style gun and could out-fire the rest of the kids as most could only afford single shot type rifles. About the only equipment that they had were goggles and a heavy coat. Sometimes one had a few sore spots but nothing serious. This was usually on a Sunday if it wasn't raining. There was also always a soccer game, baseball game or street hockey game going on somewhere that you were involved in. About the only thing that was a must is that everyone had to be home for supper. If there was any daylight left, you were back out playing whatever game you were involved in after supper time.

I was also one of the Sea Island paperboys and a sub-manager. I don't recall any papergirls during my time. I was involved in many routes and was sub manager for the *Vancouver Province Newspaper*. Jonny CAMPBELL was with the *News Herald*, which was the morning paper. All the rest were afternoon papers. The Sun used the bus stop on the west side of the Airport Highway at Hudson Street as their drop off spot for papers. Almost every kid in Burkeville during the 1940s and 1950s was involved at one time or another. Glen CUNNINGHAM was still a carrier there when I left.

Due to wartime rationing, no house in Burkeville could be more than 1,000 square feet in size - so that is why they are that size. But the utility room, being ground level, was not considered part of the house, so the square footage of the utility room was not included. I recall that the cupboards in the original kitchens had no door fronts, the ladies made curtains for the cupboard fronts until plywood became available to make door fronts after the war. I recall the women of that era disliked the kitchen sinks. They were in fact a deep laundry tub type sink. These were changed out as soon as plumbing became available after the war. The houses were the bare minimum when it came to



Grant Thompson in Scout uniform
(Thompson Family Collection)

frills. Yet, they made do. My mom used to help with costumes and stage settings for plays the school put on. In 1952, she even received a thank you letter from Mr. Scott.

One thing that used to amuse me was that there were no nylons available almost anywhere during the war. The women used to paint their legs with a kind of tan lotion (to me it looked like coloured calamine lotion) to look like nylons and then they would paint a black line up the back with a special pencil to make it look like a seam. It was quite a struggle trying get the line straight on each other's legs. If you were a guy that had access to soap, perfume, nylons or tailormade cigarettes the world was yours, money didn't get you anywhere, but nylons and stuff sure did.



*Etta Thompson in front of 128 Lancaster Crescent
(Thompson Family Collection)*

The mothers and wives, that stayed home and worried about their men over there, were the war's unsung heroes. I don't know how they did it, but they managed to feed us kids when almost everything was rationed, unavailable or in short supply. I do remember that it was quite an art the way they used to trade ration coupons back and forth (tea for coffee, gas, liquor, and clothes coupons for whatever they needed).

Most of the women had projects that they used their pay for, for example, refrigerators that were starting to replace the ice boxes, oil stoves that were starting to replace the wood or sawdust burning stoves and electric washing machines and the like. There weren't any electric stoves or clothes driers yet because all the houses only had a 30-amp, 110-volt service.

No freezers yet, most of the produce was canned when in season or bought from the Chinese vegetable truck that went by twice a week. Some families had a frozen food locker at Ridley Ice and Cold Storage in Marpole. This was located where the Scottish Hall now is near 72nd and Hudson.

Shopping was usually done once a week at the Red & White store or the Safeway store in Marpole, except for meat which was bought as required to get it fresh (no refrigeration). There was hardly a day that went by that you didn't go into Marpole for something or other. It was only a one mile walk or bike ride or a short bus ride there and back.

Those were the modern days, when we got there, the only phones were the pay phones at the end of the lane. Later there was a long waiting list to get a phone and when you got it was a six party-line phone with the exchange switchboard located in Marpole. TV didn't get there until about 1951 or 52 and not very many families had one as they were very expensive and only had two channels, Channel 2, CBC and Channel 12, Bellingham. 45 RPM records hadn't been invented yet. The old 78 RPM with automatic record changers were new on the market. Most of the industry was still in the process of changing over from war-time production to peace-time production.

Everyone had either a wood stove or sawdust burner. There were a few wick burner type oil stoves with a day tank that you had to take out to the 45-gallon oil drum and pump full a couple times per day. There was also the coal burning heater in the front room. A lot of people took them out over the summer to make more room. Most of the family activity took place at the kitchen table because that's where the heat was.

Entertainment included a few serial types of radio shows around supper time and the Saturday matinée at the Marpole theater. Everyone walked to and from the show to save money so you could buy popcorn and a pop drink, otherwise you made your own entertainment outdoors with your neighbourhood friends. Boy Scouts, Cubs, Girl Guides and Brownies occupied a lot of our time, and everyone joined. The various church Sunday schools put on lantern slide shows at various places. There were always baseball games or football (soccer) on the school grounds in the good weather. You were either building tree forts up on the dike or building rafts to float on the big ditches. We sometimes were lucky enough to get a couple of weeks of skating out on Grauer's fields across from the Community Hall. There were a lot of after school activities both organized and unorganized back then.

Bert LAVOIE, Jack ANDERSON, and I worked part time for Arnold WOLFSON pumping gas. The station was located right at the intersection of the Airport Highway and Miller Road directly across the street from what was the Delta River Inn.

It was a great time growing up and an even greater place to do it. It seemed that there was never a dull moment, always something to do and someone to do it with. In fact, there was little time for school homework, chores or for that matter there wasn't enough time to get in trouble. Growing up in Burkeville gave me life-long friends and taught me many life-long lessons.



*Grant and Marg in front of car
(Thompson Family Collection)*

Note: Grant lives in Richmond with his wife Marg, married 63 years. They have three adult children and many grandchildren for Grant to share his stories with. For those of you who know Grant, I'm sure you will agree that he is an amazing storyteller and story keeper. We are grateful he shared many of his childhood stories with us so we could share them with you.

Are you a story keeper? Do you have a story to tell? Contact us about your memories growing up on Sea Island: eunice@genbug.ca; barbaralynnielsen@gmail.com; dougjeastman@gmail.com.

NAV CANADA PUBLIC ONLINE MEETING - JANUARY 26, 2023

Sea Island Heritage Society Vice-President David ENGLAND attended the NAV Canada meeting on January 26, 2023. The purpose of the meeting was to explain the effects of implementing a Continuous Descent change to "aircraft arrivals" would have on certain areas within the Lower Mainland. NAV Canada is part of the ongoing VAMP project (Vancouver Airspace Modernization Project). The continuous descent procedure is referred to as RNP AR (Required Navigation Procedure Authorization Required).

NAV Canada, like YVR, is a non-profit organization. They control the airspace above Canada and on the ground at all Canadian airports. But they are not YVR. All aircraft operating in Canada and flying over Canada must communicate with NAV Canada during their operation.

With a change to the continuous descent approach, the aircraft start their approach further away, meaning less airspace time is spent getting into position to land. This not only saves fuel, but also creates safer situations in the air.

It was stated that the arrival noise and traffic footprint over Richmond does not change.

Here's a link to the recording of the presentation: <https://bit.ly/3Rwa7Mz>.

NAV Canada website: <https://www.navcanada.ca/en>.

Downsizing, de-cluttering or looking for a good home for Sea Island memorabilia? Please consider the Sea Island Heritage Society. We have received these latest additions to our Collection, thanks to the estate of Michael CUNNINGHAM.

- B.C. Hotelmen's Association Challenge Trophy for Best Play, 1946, 1947 and 1948 (Sea Island won in 1948 and is noted on the trophy)
- Kiwanis Club of Richmond Drama Competition Awards Plaque. 1946 to 1951. Sea Island Players winning in 1949, 1950 and 1951
- Three Cambian Yearbooks (1968 to 1970) and two Richmond High Yearbooks (1971 and 1972).

If you have something you would like to donate, please contact seaislandbc@gmail.com.

IN LOVING MEMORY

Sadly, several Sea Islanders passed away in 2022. Our sympathies to their families and friends.

Charlene BOURDON, Don CLARK, Michael CUNNINGHAM, Dave EASTMAN, David EDINGER, Lynne FARQUHARSON, Robert (Bob) FRENCH, Ricki HOSHOWSKI, Cheryl MOORE.

Should we have inadvertently missed someone, please let us know at seaislandbc@gmail.com.

CONTACT US

If you have questions, comments, or want to share your memories and photos, we would love to hear from you.

To submit a letter, documents, photos, or a cheque for your membership or donation via snail mail:

Sea Island Heritage Society

Box 94444

Richmond, BC V6X 8A8

To be added to our e-Newsletter, or send us an email: seaislandbc@gmail.com

To join, renew your membership or donate by e-Transfer: seaisland20@gmail.com

Website: <https://seaislandhome.org>

Follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/seaislandheritagesociety>