

THE SQUAMISH HISTORIAN

The Newsletter of the Squamish Historical Society

Volume No. 5 Issue No. 3 Fall 2011

COMMUNITY NEWS

Some exciting developments are underway at the Squamish Public Library. The Library manages a digital collection of hundreds of historical photographs, newspapers and audio recordings. Last year two Quest University students, Jesse Horn and Kayli Wilkinson, started an inventory list and begin organizing the archival collection(s) in the storage room, as well as creating a digitization management plan for the project.

Following their preliminary work, Sanfu Chen, has taken over the project. Sanfu, who holds a masters degree in Library and Information Studies (MLIS) from the University of Alberta and a B.A. in Art History from UBC has worked as a volunteer at various museums and archives. Her project is supported by a generous Service Canada Grant, designed to help new grads get work experience in their chosen fields. She is using a platform called Digital Collection Builder, an open-source software tool that makes it easy for libraries, archives, and other heritage organizations to provide access to their unique digitized collections; it also brings their collections together with other Canadian online resources. When completed, this will be a ground-breaking



accomplishment. It speaks volumes about this community's dedication to preserving its heritage in a period of dramatic changes. For long-time Squamish residents some of the individuals and events depicted in the photo

collection are familiar but for many newcomers they are fresh and valuable introductions to the community's past. Some of the photos have short descriptions or biographies associated with them. One example is a classic story about

Squamish Nation Chief Jimmy Jimmy, as recalled by Ta Kaya (Lone Wolf):

"No one knew his age. When asked his age, he always said 'seventy snows', meaning seventy years. He must have been nearly a hundred years old when he passed away. When his eyes started to fail, he had to hang up his rifle and use his shotgun loaded with buckshot to get a deer. After a few years, I really felt sorry for Jimmy. He came and told me that his eyes had failed him completely and that he couldn't see a deer more than forty feet so had to quit hunting. A few of us always shared our meat with



him. He never had any children of his own to carry on his skills. He was noted as the best canoe man that we ever had on the Squamish River. He had a large thirty-three foot dugout canoe that he made himself. He charged ten dollars a day for himself and the canoe to carry

freight on the river and charged extra for any help he needed. A day then was from daylight until dark.”

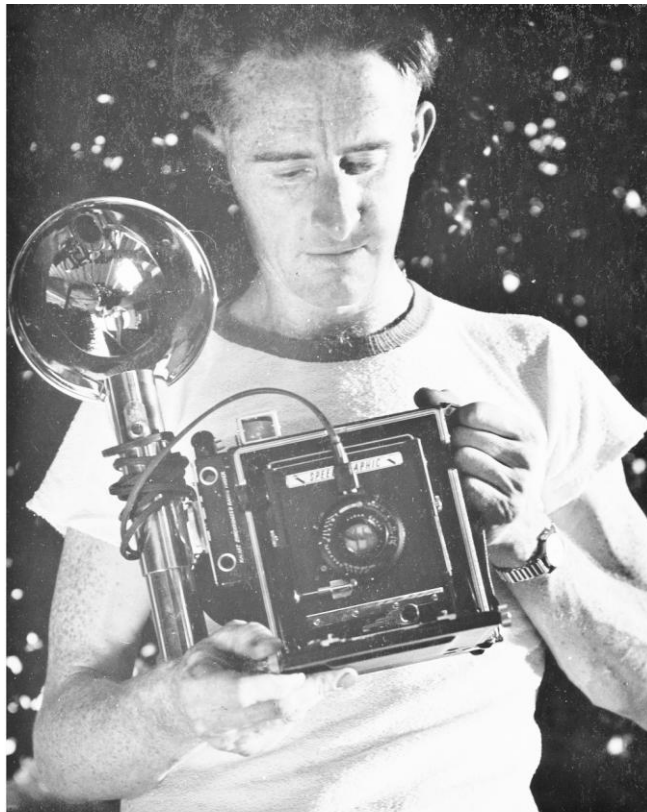
SHS NEWS AND NOTES

The Kingswood Group, a local residential developer, is planning a major project on Scott Crescent, adjacent to Highway 99. At the heart of the complex will be the National Climbing Centre. According to their prospectus, Kingswood has ambitious plans to develop and implement programs to promote public awareness of rock climbing and bouldering; provide instruction, seminars and workshops in the field of rock climbing and bouldering; maintain a library and conduct research and operate a display dedicated to the history of climbing. Kingswood’s Director of Community Relations, Andrew Pottinger, has invited the SHS to join the project “in a leadership role to determine how best this recognition of climbing and outdoor recreation would be designed and produced, as well as the content itself.”

On Saturday Nov. 12 the Squamish Historical Society was honoured to host Don Grant, archivist of the Holly-burn Heritage Society, who presented his film "Hugh Aikens: Mountain Photographer" at the Brackendale Art Gallery. The event was

well received, with Don fielding questions after the showing. Hugh “Torchy” Aikens, who got that moniker because of his red hair, spent much of his free time in the mountains and was rarely seen without a camera, capturing both still-life and moving images of his travels. Garibaldi Provincial Park, Hollyburn Mountain, Mt. Seymour, Mt. Hood, and the Canadian Rockies were among his favourite destinations. He has left us with a lasting legacy of the mountains and the people who inhabited them.

This past September it was our privilege to set up the customary SHS exhibit at the Brackendale Fall Fair, including Lefty Goldsmith’s tool collection, an assortment of various large photos of old Squamish landmark buildings and a video display. Founded in 1915, the focus of the Squamish Farmers Institute (as it was then known) was to educate local residents about agriculture and to host yearly exhibits of local produce and products. This annual event brings to mind the insightful reflection of one of Canada’s most noted living historians, Desmond Morton of McGill University. He advises us that we spend “too much time remembering conflicts, crises, and failures” and we seem to forget “the great, quiet continuity of life in a vast and



Hugh ‘Torchy’ Aikens c. 1945

generous land.”

If you are not a member of the SHS yet, come to one of our meetings to learn more about our organization and feel free to provide input about keeping local history alive in Squamish.

THE SQUAMISH HISTORIAN is published by the Squamish Historical Society. Our purpose is to collect, preserve, and showcase the history and artefacts of the community of Squamish and surrounding areas. Our Email address is: info@squamishhistory.ca

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Helmut Manzl hfmanzl@hotmail.com