

ASBC NANAIMO BRANCH UPDATE

Greetings from the Nanaimo Branch of the ASBC. I am proud to report in this update that the Nanaimo Site Survey, spearheaded by Nicole Oakes and conducted by ASBC-NB members, has been submitted to the Archaeology Branch and is now complete. At this time I would like to thank Nicole for her diligence and thoroughness throughout this project. I would also like to recognize Dorothy Young, who served as coordinator, advisor, field personnel, and basically the heart of this project. Without her this project would not have been as successful.

A surprise offshoot from this project was realized in November when Bastion Group Heritage Consultants Ltd. of Duncan invited members of ASBC-NB to answer questions about two sites in the Dodds Narrows that had been previously recorded by ASBC-NB members during the Nanaimo Site Survey. A development in the area had been proposed and Bastion has been working to define the boundaries of the previously recorded sites and identify any new ones. ASBC members and representatives of the Snuney-muxw First Nation and Chemainus First Nation volunteered and all enjoyed the experience. Thanks to Bjorn Simonsen and John Simogyi for the wonderful learning opportunity and the hilarious conversation.

In true ASBC-NB form, we have been busy on the letter-writing front. For those of you who are following the development and the construction of the New Nanaimo Centre (NNC) in downtown Nanaimo, recently your executive sent a letter to the Archaeology Branch with concerns about the high probability of archaeological sites at or in the vicinity of the New Nanaimo

Centre. We recently received a letter in response. The Branch has decided that a professional archaeologist should be retained to review the area and look at core soil samples taken from the area where there was previous geo-technical work. This may or may not indicate the presence of archaeological material. Also, they recommended monitoring of the site throughout the project. If any material is found, a more in-depth archaeological impact assessment will be conducted.

A response like this from the Branch is *very* encouraging and shows that grass roots groups like the ASBC-NB can make a difference in our community, protecting our archaeological resources through diligence and educating the public (and occasionally our local and provincial governments) about archaeological issues. As a society we can make a difference.

On a related note, our Vice President Colleen Parsley currently sent a response to the local newspaper, the *Nanaimo News Bulletin*, in response to some bad reporting about the Foundry site. The paper is covering the archaeological assessment being done at the Foundry and the reporter was somewhat "confused" about some points. Colleen has set the record straight with a well crafted "Letter to the Editor" and proves that sometimes we need to challenge the media on their dissemination of the facts.

Here in Nanaimo we are looking forward to the second half of the lecture season, crossing our fingers that both e-mail and the weather cooperate. Thanks to those members who consistently brave the elements to join us!

See you in 2006!

Julie Cowie
Acting President
ASBC Nanaimo Branch