

Dear Editor Bill:

Can it really be 40 years since I laboriously typed on my manual Underwood the words,

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But I guess it really is so.
So, are you celebrating????

Who would think that that little 6-page rag, run off on a Gestetner machine (which you've probably only ever seen in a museum!), would have lasted this long?

(Who would have thought that WE would have lasted this long?)

The A.S.B.C. had a fine and adventurous Board in those days, led by Ron Sutherland and V-P Bill Lane. It included Sheila Neville, Val Wilson, Ken Campbell, Alex Ennenberg, Stephanie Bowes, Harold Cliffe, Hilary Stewart, Art Davies and Gladys Groves. The society was only two years old at that point, having emerged out of an extension class given by Dr. Roy Carlson in the summer of '66. And the professionals continued to be hugely supportive: That first issue opened with an SFU summer report by Dr. Carlson, and included notice of upcoming lectures by Dr. Malcolm McGregor, Dr. Hanna Kassis, Wilson Duff, and Dr. Carl Borden: We were blessed: Such names to conjure with!

Ten issues later, the *Newsletter* had grown to a dozen pages per issue, five times per year—and it was time for a name change. Many names were considered. I wonder if it would have survived if it had been baptized *Strata Data*, or *Detritus*, as some suggested. Or *Want Adze*.... The editor celebrated the new name with "an occasional and unofficial editorial," called "The Barbed Point." And in that first column, he (I) noted the importance of middens to BC history, predicting establishment one day of a Marpole Museum of Man, or an Alberni Anthropological Museum, or the City of Whonnock Diorama of History. (Hope you weren't holding your breath!)

Subsequent issues benefitted hugely from Hilary Stewart's meticulous drawings. Sixty pages a year soon adds up, and by December 1974 *The Midden* published its first cumulative index—an epic 42 pages, compiled by librarian Sharon Russell!

And the rest is history? How many *Middens*? How many pages?

So that's how it all began. When's the party?

When the ArchSoc marked its 40th anniversary in 2006, the president kindly called me, and promised me an ASBC T-shirt. I'm still waiting for that, too!

Cheers, Nick

Nick Russell, PhD
Victoria

Nick Russell holds the record for editorship of *The Midden* at eight years, since its founding as a newsletter in 1966 through 1983. He has recently co-edited the book, *Victoria Underfoot: Excavating a City's Secret* (with Brenda Clark and Nicole Kilburn, Harbour Publishing).

