

Be the CHANGE

Celebrating 15 years of People Protecting Places

This year marks TLC's 15th anniversary! To commemorate the occasion this edition of the LANDmark is dedicated to the individuals that helped pave the way for our success. Each story highlights individuals taking action for B.C.'s special places. It's the people, places, and stories that have made TLC what it is today: B.C.'s leading trust. To start, we would like to pay tribute to two inspiring ladies: Jessie Binning and Winnie Bennie.

A Champion of West Coast Modernism: Jessie Binning (1906-2007)

By Tamsin Baker
Regional Manager, Lower Mainland

While many may have heard of Bertram Charles (B.C.) Binning, fewer know the story of the woman behind this internationally-acclaimed artist. Jessie Isabel Binning (nee Wyllie) was an important figure in the protection of TLC's Binning House and the emerging culture of West Coast modernism.

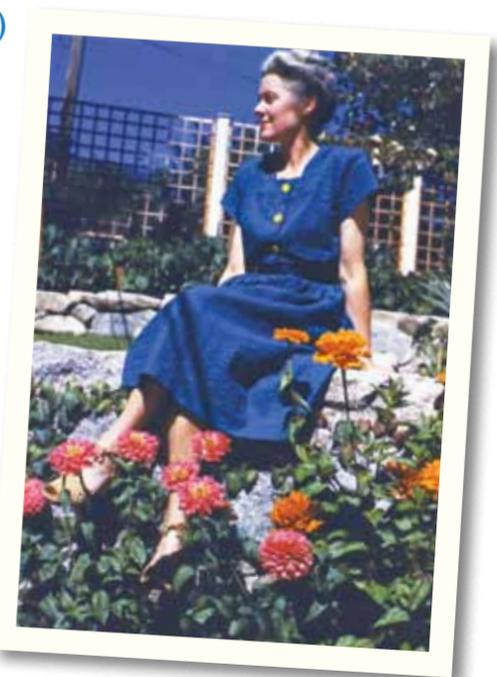
She was born in 1906 and raised in one of the fine stately homes in the West End of Vancouver. Her father was a prosperous businessman. When Jessie was just 19-years old he took her on a trip to Japan, where she developed a lifelong appreciation for Japanese culture.

In 1935 she married Bert and, by 1941, they settled in West Vancouver, moving into a modernist house designed by her husband. During its design and construction, Jessie provided advice on the practicalities for living there, even insisting that Bert change the placement of the kitchen.

Bert was not only an artist, but also an educator who invited many scholars, artists and students to visit the house. Jessie is remembered by visitors, such as Arthur Erickson, as a patient and charming hostess during dinners and fireside chats. Her personality has been described as unpretentious, despite her upper class upbringing. Friends considered her style elegant and remember her enjoyment of fashionable attire.

Even after Bert's untimely death in

1976, she continued to stay active and was always eager for new adventures, or to talk with guests about books and memories. Jessie could have easily sold the house and lived in a more conventionally luxurious abode, but she truly loved the house. She recognized the importance and responsibility of keeping the house as a living showpiece of modernism, and she continued to welcome visitors of all sorts. She felt so strongly about its preservation that she made provisions in her Will to bequest the house to a conservation group. Jessie managed to live at the house until her passing at the age of 101. TLC became the owner of the Binning House in September 2008 and is honoured to fulfill Jessie's vision of having it appreciated as a National Historic Site for future generations. ■



Thanks to Adele Weder and Hugh Hamilton for their insights into the life of Jessie Binning.

The Nimpo Lake Cabin: Preserving the Vision of Naturalist Winnie Bennie (1927-2007)

By Barry Booth
Regional Manager, North Region

In 2002, long-time Williams Lake resident and avid naturalist, Winnie Bennie, made a generous gift to nature lovers when she donated her

cabin to TLC. Winnie's Nimpo Lake Cabin is situated on one of B.C.'s premier fishing lakes, 300 km west of Williams Lake, and is now a TLC rental cottage. This rustic one-room cabin has a long and cherished past.

Winnie and her husband Fred lived in Williams Lake for most of their adult lives. After travelling extensively throughout the Cariboo-Chilcotin area in the early 1950s, they purchased the Nimpo Lake property. Fred, with the help of friends, built the cabin in Williams Lake and then had it moved to Nimpo Lake.

By the early 1960s they were regular summer visitors spending their time canoeing, fishing, and in particular, viewing wildlife.

Throughout her life, Winnie found solace in the outdoors. She was a keen bird watcher. Over the decades she amassed an impressive amount of information about the nesting of loons on Nimpo Lake, so much so that she became known by the locals as "The Loon Lady".

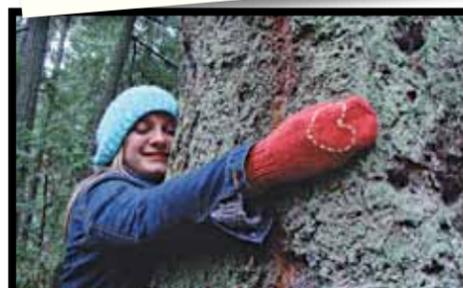
Those who stay at the cabin experience the best of B.C.'s remote wilderness. When you arrive you are humbled by the sheer size of the lake, the sound and spectacle of hundreds of jumping fish, and the majesty of the snow-capped Coast Mountains that loom in the distance. It is hard to imagine what the journey to this small and secluded

cabin must have been like for this couple who began enjoying this area some 50 years ago.

Due to her passion for wildlife and sense of place, Winnie's wish was for the property to remain undeveloped and to be enjoyed by others. Today, adventurous members and donors make their way to this very special place, to the rugged beauty that surrounds Nimpo Lake. Book your stay at Nimpo Lake Cabin by calling 1-888-738-0533. ■



Photo Nick Morley



Embrace the passions that define your life. Please consider a bequest to The Land Conservancy and help protect special places in B.C.
Call: 1-877-485-2422

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Double Your Impact on
Abkhazi Garden

with the W. Garfield Weston Foundation
Matching Grant. Please donate today.

Photo Paul McNeil

Message from the Executive Director

On May 1, 2012, TLC celebrates its 15th birthday! It's amazing to think how far we have come together. As we lead up to the big day, I find myself reflecting on the many people who have contributed to TLC's growth and accomplishments. Whether it's those who came before us or those stepping up at present, it's people like you, who make a difference – it's People Protecting Places.

The notion of bringing people together to achieve goals far greater than any individual could alone has always been the cornerstone of TLC. It was with this idea in mind that five B.C. residents came together with just \$100 each to

form the organization in 1997.

Over the years, some of the most fulfilling moments have been seeing the different communities rally together to save special places. A community can be the change they want to see in the world and I have seen it time and time again. There is power in numbers and that's why our membership is such an integral part of our success.

TLC has grown into B.C.'s leading trust with a strong and engaged support base of over 8,000 members and 25,000 donors. To date more than 125,000 acres (on 300 projects) of fast disappearing natural, cultural, and agricultural lands have been protected.

The impacts of TLC's work reach far and wide. Protecting special places creates a vehicle that builds community and social capital while providing healthy experiences for millions of people. Last year, in the Capital Regional District Parks alone there were nearly 2.5 million visits to properties that TLC has helped to save. What an achievement!

When I visit places like Sandcut Beach with my grandson, I wonder how many generations before me have appreciated this special place and how many had a part to play in protecting it up until now. I feel proud knowing that my great grandchildren will be able to stand in the very spot where I have stood and enjoy these places, too.

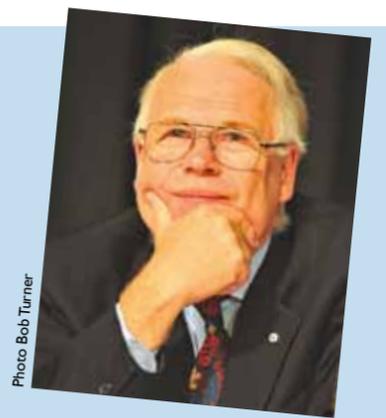


Photo Bob Turner

Thank you - we couldn't have done it without you!

Sincerely,

P.S. To celebrate our 15th year, please check out the Explore B.C. Guide included in this issue. The insert highlights events to attend and sites to visit– so get out there and discover the places you have saved! ■

Poet's Cove Resort & Spa Beckons Chocolate Lily Enthusiasts

TLC's Latest Business Advantage Program Member

Within walking distance of Brooks Point Regional Park on Pender Island, Poet's Cove Resort & Spa is helping to protect the pristine shoreline, thick stands of chocolate lilies, endless opportunities for recreation, and one of the best vantage points on the island for viewing orcas and Mount Baker.

meadow, one of the rarest and most threatened ecosystems in Canada.

For every package purchased, TLC will receive a donation to the Brooks Point Regional Park Campaign. Please book your stay at poetscove.com or 1-888-512-7638 today.



From local artists creating colorful t-shirts to a bocce tournament and a gala dinner, it has been truly a community effort when it comes to the protection of Brooks Point. Even the Pender Island youth have contributed through the sale of hand drawn nature cards. Thanks to a generous donor, dubbed the Pender Angel, donations up to \$50,000 were matched - bringing the total amount raised up to \$130,000. TLC requires an additional \$620,000 to safeguard this treasure. Help protect the point forever, for everyone! Photo Bill Turner; inset Susan Kangasniemi

Through their special Chocolate Lily Package, the resort is supporting TLC's campaign to save three acres of private land wedged between Brooks Point and Gowlland Point.

Boasting rare grasslands and unique coastal woodlands, this new connection will not only increase the ecological diversity along the three portions, but complete the regional park. The display of delicate chocolate lilies in spring is strikingly beautiful and is a classic example of the wildflowers found in a Garry oak

Chocolate Lily Package

\$438.00 (not incl. taxes & gratuities)

- Two night stay in an ocean view lodge room
- One dinner for two in the Aurora dining room
- One breakfast for two
- A limited edition Chocolate Lily Bar from Purdy's
- Complimentary eucalyptus steam cave
- Complimentary use of bikes and canoes
- 15% off spa treatments

*Every 10th booking receives an extra night free. ■

Plant Community Corner

By Jessica Hobden
Stewardship Officer, SOS Stewardship Program

Have you ever wondered what fluffy white seeds in late spring, making it look like snow? That's just one of the identifying features of the Black cottonwood tree (*Populus trichocarpa*), a species of great importance in the Okanagan.

These deciduous trees can grow up to 50m in height, have grey bark with dark cracks appearing with age, and heart-shaped glossy leaves. Black cottonwoods alone are spectacular, but when paired with other types of vegetation, they become essential plant communities that support specific ecological functions and provide habitat to many species.

One such species is the endangered Western screech owl (*Megascops kennicottii*) which depends on woodlands of mature, riparian deciduous trees, especially black cottonwoods, for nesting.

Without this habitat, the Western screech owl populations will not survive, and sadly, approximately 75% of riparian habitat, including the cottonwood-dogwood-wild rose plant community, has been destroyed by human disturbances in the Okanagan Valley. But there is hope.

This plant community, along with the Western screech owl, can be found within some of Okanagan's protected areas, private stewardship properties, and on TLC's 72-acre lease, in partnership with the En'owkin Centre of ECommunity Place in Penticton, which is an initiative to protect the last remnant of the cottonwood forests and wet lowland habitats that once stretched from Okanagan Lake to Skaha Lake.

TLC properties are home to many important plants and animals. Learn to identify a unique plant or animal, why they are important, and where you can see them on a TLC site at conservancy.bc.ca. ■



The Black cottonwood riparian ecosystem in the South Okanagan Valley is home to over 50 different species of birds, including the Western screech owl. These owls form pairs and begin to breed in January and February making this the ideal time to listen to their call. Eggs are laid between mid-March and the end of May. Photo Lucy Reiss; inset A. Michael Bezener

Get out and play

TLC's Sooke Potholes Campground opens May 18, 2012.
Reservations starting April 2nd

1-888-738-0533 conservancy.bc.ca

Photo: International Independent Imaging

The Land Conservancy Steps Up to Support Nanaimo River Film Project

Nanaimo filmmaker Paul Manly is offering a unique way for the local community to be involved in the conservation of the Nanaimo River watershed. Paul and his company Manly Media, are producing the film, "Voices of the River", to raise awareness about the values and threats to the river and the need for an overall stewardship and protection plan.



Paul Manly, accompanied by his daughter and friend, interviews Christina Metherall from the Regional District of Nanaimo for the upcoming film, "Voices of the River". Photo courtesy Manly Media.

In the fall of 2011, a rough-cut version of the film was well received at the Nanaimo River Stewardship Symposium, facilitated by the Nanaimo and Area Land Trust. "We're now in the final stretch to finish the film, but still need to raise the funds to complete the remaining work – a final edit, sound-track, audio mix, graphics work, and mastering," says Paul.

TLC stepped forward to help with the fundraising effort, and donations

are accepted at TLC's website conservancy.bc.ca. With a gift of \$50 or more, donors will be listing in the credits, and a DVD copy of the finished film.

TLC has had a long running interest in the Nanaimo River – in 2001, it purchased the land for the Nanaimo River Regional Park, the only public park on the river.

"We have several hundred members in the mid-island area who are deeply interested in the future of the Nanaimo River," says TLC Executive Director Bill Turner. "Our goal over time is to increase the protected area along the river, and we've already got a good start on what could be a magnificent regional park or protected area that could rival the protections on the Cowichan River."

For more information about the project "Voices of the River", please e-mail paul@manlymedia.com. ■

Cultivating Skills and Conservation – Heritage Style

By Deborah Hudson
Heritage Conservation Advisor

"They don't make things like they used to"...so the saying goes. Who do you go to then, when you need to restore things back to the way they used to be?

Following the fire at Craigflower Manor in 2009, one of the most challenging tasks was to identify highly skilled and heritage-sensitive professionals. Owned by the Province of B.C., TLC manages the site including the restoration of the Manor to its 1850s appearance.

Luckily for Craigflower Manor, Kate Richardson found TLC. Kate stumbled upon a TLC ad for volunteers while she was searching the internet for a job posting. She applied and was accepted as Volunteer Conservation Assistant. Soon after she began a training program to teach methods to safely remove soot from artifacts.

It wasn't long before Kate's knowledge of woodworking and finishing came to light. Kate had received a Diploma of Professional Studies in Cabinetmaking from Rosemount Technology Centre in Montreal and an Honours B.A. in History from the University of Victoria. Her skills in traditional woodworking methods dovetailed well with her interest in history.

Kate notes that restoration work is a very specialized field. Her approach to restoration is shared by another group of TLC Volunteers working at Ross Bay Villa, and soon Kate was volunteering her time there as well.

When the time came to restore the interior wood finishing at Craigflower Manor, Kate's knowledge of traditional shellac



TLC volunteer and heritage contractor, Kate Richardson (above) works on restoring the interior wood finishing at Craigflower Manor. Volunteers are the lifeblood of TLC. Without their enthusiasm and many talents, we simply could not function. If you would like to volunteer, call 1-877-485-2422.

Photo Deborah Hudson

finishes and their application won her the contract. Kate joined the list of other heritage professionals whose restoration talents were used for volunteering at Ross Bay Villa and working at Craigflower Manor. "It's great to be part of an organization that brings together a lot of things I feel passionate about, such as the conservation of natural spaces and also historic buildings and objects."

Through TLC's volunteer programs at properties like Craigflower Manor and Ross Bay Villa, the organization has helped to develop a culture of conservation for local professionals and heritage enthusiasts. By working with each other, they are able to nurture the skills required in the restoration of historic buildings. It is perhaps not surprising that in searching for skilled professionals to undertake the restoration of Craigflower Manor, TLC found a number of the strongest candidates already working, quite literally, in its own backyard. ■

*Tours of this site are currently available by appointment. Call 250-386-1606.



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Watch Restoration in Action

Come see the Ross Bay Villa volunteers working on their oilcloth project for the front entrance hall of this 1860s historic house.

Saturdays 10 a.m.-12 p.m.
at the Gonzales Observatory,
Denison Road, Victoria. Entry by
donation. Sponsor a square of
oilcloth for \$10.



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Photo Jill Patterson

Beers for Beaches

Vivid performances by Georgia Murray, Ashleigh Eymann, Kytami, and The Ghostbirds drew many, despite the weather, for this year's Beers for Beaches event at Felicitas Campus Pub in Victoria on January 14, 2012. This 2nd annual event was in support of TLC's Wild Hills & Beaches Campaign to protect valuable habitat and community lands along the West Coast of Vancouver Island. With a deadline of August 15, 2012 fast approaching, this cause needs your support more than ever. For more information on how you can be a part of protecting this special property, visit our website conservancy.bc.ca ■

Lichen Auction Honours a Life and Benefits Nature

By Jill Patterson
Community Outreach Coordinator

On January 14, 2011, Randy Sulyma, an avid outdoorsman and a passionate researcher, lost his life in a tragic car accident. He left behind a mourning community, a wife, and two children. Randy was well known and well liked. He was often found at the soccer field or at the ice rink where he coached in the town of Fort St. John.

With a forestry degree from the University of British Columbia and a masters in biology, Randy spent much of his time in the woods. His area of expertise was caribou with lichen being a important part of their diet. He loved the Clearwater area and camped there often.

When Randy's aunt came across an article about lichenologist Trevor Goward's discovery of two new lichen species and his plans to donate one of the naming rights to TLC, it seemed a natural fit. Soon after, the family launched a fundraising campaign to

win the rights to name TLC's lichen in honour of Randy. The funds from the auction would go towards TLC's Clearwater Wetlands and Wildlife Corridor project near Wells Gray Provincial Park.

B.C. boasts incredible biodiversity and species that remain undiscovered are thought to be in the millions. The usual protocol for uncovering new species is that the naming rights go to the person who has made the discovery. This means there is a potential for millions of new names to be assigned.

In a tense final day of bidding, Randy Sulyma's mom Sylvia, wife Sandra, and fellow campaigners anxiously awaited a counter bid to their final \$17,900 but it never came. They won on December 15.

"To win this auction for the naming of the lichen is amazing. For all who knew Randy, this is such a fitting legacy. The whole family is excited and overwhelmed," says Sylvia.

Randy's family and friends will carry on the love and memories but science



Randy Sulyma (1967-2011) "Knowing Randy's love of the Wells Gray/Clearwater Valley area, his passion for the outdoors, and his professional association with lichens makes a wonderful connection. TLC's lichen auction is a great legacy for Randy and his family and friends," says TLC's Northern Regional Manager, Barry Booth. Photo Sulyma Family

will lock his legacy in place forever as *Parmelia sulymae*!

TLC would like to thank all those who made this auction such a success with special thanks to Trevor for his generous donation of the lichen naming rights. ■

Pony up for the Point

By Wendy Innes
Member Care Manager

TLC Member and Cowichan Valley Resident, Jim Wisnia, has decided that it's time to "Pony Up for the Point". To help raise funds for Sansum Point, Jim has pledged to cut off his ponytail once he has raised \$5,000.

Jim first began growing his hair a little longer when he found it kept his neck warm while working outside at the North Vancouver Outdoor School. His current ponytail, which is about 12 inches long, has been in the works for the last couple of years. In the back of his mind he always thought he might be able to use it for a fundraiser.

"Sansum Point is a special property and is a wonderful addition to the Stoney Hill Area," says Jim. "From diverse marine shore fauna to skyline rocky outcrop plant communities,

there are many reasons the property is worth protecting. It's important that we continue to help raise the funds required to encourage more partnerships with local government in the future. It will also free up TLC to focus on other important projects."

Jim and his wife Lyn were happy to donate to help save Sansum Point when the opportunity first arose in early 2011. As long-time TLC Members, they have a deep appreciation for the important natural and cultural values of Sansum Point.

Through his endless enthusiasm, Jim hopes to inspire his friends and many others to Pony Up for the Point. The highest donation will even have the option to be the one to cut off the ponytail!

To support Jim's efforts, please visit conservancy.bc.ca. ■

Editor's note: When Sansum Point came up for sale in 2011, TLC secured an option to purchase the site, valued at \$1.85 Million, and partnered with the Cowichan Valley



TLC is forever grateful for Community Action Heroes like Jim. The inspiration, awareness, and funds raised through their efforts are making a lasting difference to B.C.'s special places. Photo Wendy Innes

Regional District and the Cowichan Land Trust. After an intense five month fundraising campaign, the property became a Cowichan Valley Regional District Park in early September. TLC and the Cowichan Land Trust continue to carry on with fundraising to fulfill their financial commitment. Only \$380,000 remains to be raised.

Did you know that TLC Members are part of a network of National Trusts around the world? In addition to TLC sites, members can also access properties of the National Trust of Australia, Cayman Island National Trust, Heritage Canada Foundation and Ontario Heritage Foundation for free or discounted entry.

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- Visa Mastercard Cheque. *Please make payable to The Land Conservancy.*

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