

MUSEUM MUSINGS FOR THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 2010

As the summer comes to an end we are preparing to close the museums again after a summer of very satisfactory attendance figures. We are gratified that both island residents and summer visitors continue to find our history interesting as represented by the artifacts on display. We continue to hear from people who have discovered us from our web site or simply by word of mouth. Our web site is www.texadaheritagesociety.com and is well worth a look. A recent inquiry was from some of the descendants of Captain John Cockle who was in command of the Union Steamship Cheslakee when she sank beside the Van Anda wharf in the early hours of January 7, 1913. These folk live in Australia and were interested in acquiring a copy of the video made by Bob and Bev Blackmore of this tragic event. The museum was able to meet that need.

This story is well told in an article that appeared in the Texada Lines Spring 1987 written by Ben Nicholas. The story is also to be found in the history "Texada" by Bill Thompson a copy of which is in the museum.

Our photo today is of the Cheslakee lying beside the Van Anda wharf. She had been outbound from Van Anda to Powell River and was only one and one half miles from Van Anda when a heavy wave struck her broadside which caused the ship to list heavily to port and begin to take on water. Through excellent seamanship the ship was turned about and just made it back to the wharf where it was docked with its starboard side touching. Within minutes the boat sank where it was and again due to excellent seamanship and discipline 83 passengers and crew were able to get safely ashore. Sadly six passengers and one member of the crew failed to survive. The Cheslakee was salvaged and after some modification was renamed the Cheakamus. She continued to serve Union Steamships for another 30 years.

Until next time take care of each other and remember to think and act green.

Norm MacLean

