

From Texada Daze to Sandcastle

The Texada Daze celebration of 1973 reflected what had become a traditional affair since its origin a decade earlier. The Trailriders proudly led the parade with the flag. Saturday featured children's races, a talent show, logging competitions and a dance. The Sunday horseshow was capped by the familiar barbecue at Shelter Point.

Through the 1970's Texada Daze changed as it began to reflect a different lifestyle and culture of less-traditional values. Booths at Shelter Point sold handicrafts, handmade jewelry and tie-dye fashions. At one of the last festivals Manfrog Circus from Denman Island entertained with the raspy-voiced "Bizzarro the Bearded Baby". A piper gathered children for puppet shows. At the Gillies Bay Hall the dynamic Texada High Road band, Touchstone, played lively dance music. Women in long skirts twirled while small children slept on blankets in corners.

In 1985 the spirit of Texada Daze came back to life when the Recreation Commission organized a new Sandcastle festival to encourage public use of the Gillies Bay tidal flats. Bill Nyvall, Josee Meunier and Harvey Johnson and Gina Ducharme (Gillies Bay Store) led the charge a year later with trophies, prize money, children's games and a dance. The idea had caught fire!

The third Sandcastle (1987) featured a lipsync and dance with "Dusty's Tapes" at the Gillies Bay Hall with the firemen running the bar. The Gillies Bay ballpark was the site of a ball tournament, food and craft booths, beer garden and roast pork barbecue. The beautiful Moon Bag ceremony at Shelter Point (inspired by the "Moon Lady" Beverly Safronek) was a welcome addition just before the fireworks boomed close overhead.



Sandcastle this summer celebrated its 29th weekend with a parade, bedraces, lipsync, laser light show, live music, skimboarding, moon bags, quarry tours, games, beer garden, booths, softball, etc. (oh yes, sand sculptures too!). Hundreds of residents and visitors have been entertained over the decades. The same enthusiastic spirit that initiated Texada Days fifty years ago has lived on in our many island summer events that we've all enjoyed.

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