

## TEXADA'S POST OFFICES

In times past the active hub of coastal towns was the Post Office. Union Steamships brought eagerly-awaited mail from Vancouver and citizens would congregate on the wharf on "boat nights" to help cart the packages back for sorting.

The doctor's wife, Annie Forbes, opened Van Anda's first Post Office on June 1, 1897 to serve the growing mining community (location unknown).

In 1906 Edwin Pooke built a general store which also housed the Post Office. He was succeeded by Walter Planta until Al Deighton purchased the building.

Next a Mrs. Barnes and Fred Lowther converted the Treats' "Honeymoon Cottage" into a "tea room" with Post Office. The large pool table and Punch Boards (old-fashioned lottery) attracted patrons.

In 1928 Fred Lowther had Pete Staaf build "Lowther and Young's" store and Post Office. It also housed Bill Young's water taxi service. When Fred retired in 1948 Joe Kempe bought the building and moved it uphill to become Kempe's "Vananda Store".

The Post Office next relocated to a small cafe until 1951 when Tony Bakker bought the land where the present PO is situated and hauled the cookhouse from the Little Billy mine onto it (see photo). In 1960 the Federal Government bought the property and erected our current building.



The location of Texada's second Post Office (Blubber Bay, 1911) is also a mystery. By the 1940's it was housed in a lean-to attached to the company store. When the building was demolished in 1979 it was relocated to a small cabin until closure in 2004. The Texada Museum has its signage and many postal artifacts on display.

The "Gillies Bay Post Office" was located at McElroy's farm on the "High Road" from 1914 to 1931 when the rural delivery service was developed.

Gillies Bay mail was delivered from Van Anda by truck for distribution at Texada Mines until a Post Office was opened in 1954 in the commissary building.

The 1970's saw its location shift to the Seaview Inn (1974), the old bunkhouse (1975), then finally to the Gillies Bay Store (1982).

Although not as central to our lives in technology-laden 2016, the local post office remains a focus of the community.