

REMEMBERING DOUG PATON (1949 - 2023)

Doug Paton was the beating heart of the Texada Island Museum. As Archivist then Curator, Doug had a handle on the story behind every display, artifact, photo, file, map, transcript and contact in our collection. All questions about ANYTHING usually ended with the reply, "Ask Doug. He'll know."

On Wednesday mornings one would encounter Doug bustling down the hall on his way to help with some construction project or to check on a display item that a visitor had asked about. He became an expert at multi-tasking, happily researching a photo or a date or an article on the computer while talking on the phone.

He could as easily be on his way to pick up an historical item donated by a community member or, perhaps, rushing to make the ferry to attend a Regional District Heritage meeting in Powell River.

From the beginning Doug was instrumental in imagining and creating the "best little museum on the coast." First at Blubber Bay then the move into Van Anda, Doug co-ordinated it all, making use of his organizational abilities learned from years of mine management and service as Chief of the Gillies Bay Volunteer Fire Department.

Doug spent more than a few weekends helping mount displays, vacuuming carpets, fixing plumbing and cleaning washrooms - in fact, anything that needed to be done. Doug was always willing to drop personal plans and drive in from Gillies Bay in off-hours to conduct a museum tour at a visitor's request.

That's what he loved the most - welcoming visitors and honouring them with a tour of our beloved Texada museum. His warm, humorous, easy manner were appreciated by all.

Having grown up here, Doug's familiarity with many elders, his detailed knowledge of island history and first-hand experience with the mining and logging industries lent credibility to his presentations.

Visitors to the museum saw Texada history through his eyes and were captivated by his stories. They left feeling that they had been treated to a really unique experience.

All of us at the museum were sorry to hear that Doug passed away suddenly last month leaving his wife, Huguette, his daughters Laurie Anne and Wendy and their families. Our sympathies and heartfelt condolences go out to them.

Doug's passing has left an emptiness that will be impossible to fill. We all loved Doug and will miss him greatly.

