

SOME TEXADA HISTORICAL FUN FACTS

DID YOU KNOW...

Texada has been given a few different names. The Tla'amin called it Sah-yeh-yeen. Spanish Captain Narvarz named it San Felix as the island was sighted on July 12, 1791 (Saint Felix's festival day).

In the early 1900's Emily (Turtle) Lake was a beehive of activity with Cornell mine operations, a railroad, two Chinese work camps and a rumoured "red light" district.

Our popular Sandcastle festivities had their origin in 1963 when the Chamber of Commerce proposed a community celebration (Texada Days) for the July 1st weekend.

In 1963 Rock Island Players' first production (*Kempy*) stopped abruptly when the power quit just before intermission. "The show must go on!" Audience members brought gas lanterns into the community hall to resume the performance.

Shelter Point Park was the site of a First Nations village over 3000 years ago. House depressions can be seen today. Bones, shells and other artifacts have been discovered in the middens. Today's "group site" was once a lagoon joined to the sea by a channel at the base of the hill, affording a protected harbour for canoes.

Texada's first newspaper, the *Coast Miner*, lasted one year (1900) until its editor, John Lawson, provoked community disquiet with an editorial criticizing social snobbery. The outraged party mentioned in the article stormed into Lawson's office, a fist fight ensued, the paper shut down and Lawson left the island (accompanied by his new wife, school teacher Emily Raper).

Texada's first car ferry *Atrevida* (1955-1969) was able to transport only 5 cars on a run. Residents would often park in the lineup overnight to secure a spot the next day.

Texada's first airstrip (1953) was roughed in at the south end near Anderson Bay to serve the loggers working in that area. In the early 1960's a site was chosen near Cranby Lake (above Gillies Bay) for a runway which has been improved over the years to become "Texada International".

The famed Van Anda "opera house" turned its back on dances and concerts to become the town hospital in 1900. In 1907 it was donated to the Columbia Coast Mission to serve patients from up and down the coast.

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