

## HALLOWE'EN IN OLD BLUBBER BAY

Hallowe'en on Texada has been an occasion for fun and trickery through many years.

Recently, Betty Zaikow (nee Kucharsky) who grew up in Blubber Bay shared her Hallowe'en memories from the 1950/60's.

Life was more relaxed in the company town then. "We [children] were left to our own devices ... and lots of [unsupervised] fireworks," Betty said.

Kids were excited to wear their hand-made costumes going door-to-door amongst friends and neighbours. Pillow cases were filled with candy kisses but homemade treats were best. Caramel apples, fresh donuts, popcorn balls were favourites.

Some houses were to be avoided, however. Betty remembers Gibby Gibson who made kids stand on a chair and sing her two songs in trade for candy.

One Hallowe'en when she was around eleven, Betty and friends decided to trick-or-treat at the Chinese bunkhouse - a place normally out of bounds.

It took courage to venture there in the dark, walking under the Pacific Lime conveyor belts "dripping with water and mud," the plant emitting an "eerie sound ... like some sort of beast."

After a timid "trick-or-treat" the door opened to the "smell of incense, smoke and cooking odours wafting over us."

The kids were warmly welcomed and returned home with Chinese candies, ginger cookies, Chinese peanuts, strange coins with a square hole in them and - for the boys - firecrackers!

The Blubber Bay ball field hosted the community fireworks display which helped to keep older kids "out of trouble."

In some cases it didn't work. Trickery reigned! The PO/store's massive steps were moved across the road. Citizens awoke to discover their garbage cans (and anything not nailed down) now lived on the other side of town (if they could find them!).

Soaping windows, egging and toilet papering trees seem harmless in contrast to the actions of some teens one year who chopped mostly through a roadside tree only to wait and drop it across the road as the distinctive sound of the intended victim's car approached!

Despite some extreme behaviour in the past Texada's community spirit has insured that Hallowe'en continues to be a magical time for children.

Thank-you, Betty, for your memories.

Peter Lock

Texada Island Heritage Society