

**Comox Seniors' Centre Association  
An Overview and Timeline  
1997 to 2012**

**Compiled by Phyllis Long, Archivist  
Comox, B.C.  
November, 2013**



Leave For All to Enjoy!  
d'Esterre Senior Centre  
DO NOT REMOVE

## **d'Esterre**

There's a Town in BC known as Comox  
On the edge of the shimmering sea.  
There's a house called d'Esterre  
Where the Seniors all go  
For muffins and a nice cup of tea.

It opens at eight in the morning  
For the Men to put the world right,  
If we did what they said that we ought to.  
We would be in a terrible plight.

We have woodwork, painting and singing,  
Bridge, dancing and pool,  
Exercises, bowling and cribbage  
Fun band, whist, sew and tell,  
Of course there are one or two others -  
To make the time go by fast,  
Like looking at movies, playing bingo  
Or working with Rock and with Glass.

A Committee of people elected each year,  
Look after us all with love and with care.  
There's Eileen and Bunny, there's June  
and there's Lil, Dorothy, Hyda, Alan  
and Bill, Marion, Eva, Agnes and Jan,  
Of course, to avoid someone making a fuss,  
We'll have to remember to mention our Russ.

So if you are lonely, miserable, sad  
Just come to d'Esterre, we're sure  
you'll be glad,

This month is our birthday, we'll  
have a good "Do".

And celebrate this event with friends  
Old and new.

But we must remember those who in the past  
Worked ever so hard, so our good name would last.  
So let us ensure that folk everywhere  
Know we're so proud of the name of d'Esterre.

*This poem was written by one of our members, Norman Chandler,  
to celebrate one of our birthdays.*

*(reprinted from the d'Esterre House Senior Centre Association Brochure, 1976 to 1996  
and the framed original of this poem can be found hanging on the sunroom wall)*

**Life Members  
1997 to 2012**

Peggy Bradley

Babs Bullen

Blanche and Jack Campbell

Yvonne Carroll\*

Bunny Crosby\*

Allan Edwards\*

Fred Fester\*

Flo Hammond

Tony Hermes

Cliff Johnson\*

Betty Kilgour

Marion Knisely\*

Edith McNish\*

Darlene Petzinger

David Robinson

Irene Smith

Eva Szmek

Ted Wallis

(\*deceased)

## Introduction

This is the continuation of our Centre's history; the first edition covered the period 1976 to 1996 and was compiled by Eileen Turnbull. This booklet continues our history from 1997 to 2012.

It was a daunting task that our then Archivist, Phyllis Long, took on and she produced this wonderful document. It is an overview of significant events of our Centre over this timeline.

The Board of Directors and Members of the Centre would like to thank Phyllis for her dedication in producing this document and to Celia Poulson for her invaluable editing skills.

It will become a part of our Centre's history.



**TIMELINE**

1997.....2012

**Comox Seniors' Centre Association**

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**An Overview of The Comox Seniors' Centre Association**

We continue the history of the Comox Seniors' Centre Association (the Centre) with much appreciation for the past founder, Eileen Turnbull. We are fortunate to have in our archives Eileen's detailed and interesting chronicle of the first twenty years of Comox Seniors, also known originally as d'Esterre Marina Park Seniors, then d'Esterre Seniors, Comox.

We are now in the waning months of 2013, still a flourishing organization, in the midst of the technological age of smart phones, Wi-Fi, amazing computers, social media and the texting phenomenon which is changing the language of communication. To keep up with today's preoccupation of "branding", our Board of Directors chose recently to officially establish our updated logo to reflect the official name of our organization and that is "Comox Seniors' Centre Association" and will gradually change all documents to reflect the revised logo.

Much has changed from the early 1970s initial planning and formation of a Seniors' Centre for Comox seniors. Those intrepid founders, Erica Aubrey, Jean Lust, Dorothy McKerrall, "Trot" Radford, Eileen Turnbull et al, all of whom have passed away, worked diligently and did not give up until they secured this prestigious location for the new fine building at 1801 Beaufort Avenue, Comox, B.C., for the express use by the senior population of the Comox area for ever and ever.

The founders and members of those early years were a thrifty, talented and dedicated working group. They volunteered their labour by preparing teas, dinners, lunches and carrying out maintenance work. They supplied their talents of singing, dancing and acting. Many were British ex-pats with British music hall memories. Eileen Turnbull outlined in her history, and also in our precious collection of newsletters that are archived and digitized for members, the stories of these hardworking, fun-loving folks whose constant goal was finding the perfect balance between the Centre's activities and the members' needs and requests.

The affairs of the Centre have changed over the 36 years from a rather independent but very responsible form of governance by the Boards of those in the 1970s and 1980s, to a

**.....and in closing**

This pamphlet is a tribute to everyone who has played a part in founding and supporting the Centre, starting with our dedicated group of trailblazers.....people who had a vision for our Centre and made it happen. Without their talents and goals, we wouldn't have the best Seniors' Centre in B.C.

Today, our Centre is still run by volunteers with the same enthusiasm and vision as our original founding members.

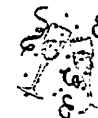
We are changing, yes, ever-changing so that we continue to attract a vibrant membership and provide programs and activities to meet the social and leisure needs of Seniors with busy lives in the 21st century. I bet the founders never thought they'd see "*Maitri in Motion*" as an activity!

This is also a tribute to our Club and Activity Coordinators, to the Newsletter Editors and all the many contributors, to our Card Ladies, to our Librarians, to our Archivists, and to those admirable members who make time in their busy lives to be on our Board of Directors.....every one a volunteer willing to share their skills and interests with like-minded Seniors.

Finally, we cannot overlook our past and current members.....without these wonderful people, there wouldn't be a Comox Seniors' Centre Association.

Here's to the next 20 years!

CP



## 2012

- Regina Land is the new Special Events Coordinator as well as being a Director on the Board.
- Voting for Board members at the AGM was a different experience than in the past. Ballot Box and attendants were set up in the Library from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm in hopes voter turnout would increase. The AGM began as voting closed. As our bylaws do not allow nominations from the floor, this appears to be the solution to the voting problems.
- Al Tippet conducted Mac computer tutorials.
- Twenty-three Seniors' Centre members sailed on The Volendam on May 2 for a 7-day cruise to Alaska. Weather inclement; Seniors happy!
- Peggy Bradley and Irene Smith were awarded Life Memberships at the annual volunteer Appreciation Luncheon for their outstanding contributions over the years.
- After soliciting donations to the Building Fund since last September, donors were satisfied to see work begin on June 20 on renovations in the dining room, Library/Lounge and lower level concrete floor, including low energy lighting on both levels. The painting of the whole dining room and lounge area matched the gold and white theme of the Main Hall. Coat closets gained doors and new carpeting was installed throughout the Lounge. The Centre was closed from mid-July to August 7. Photos of all stages of the make-over were taken by Ken Long and are now filed in the Archives.
- The Town of Comox and the Comox Rotary Club partnered again with the Seniors' Centre Association to share labour and costs. The Centre's share was \$10,000.00.
- Two new clubs began this year; Celtic Set Dancing, a social, fun class and "Breakfast Club" where members meet each Wednesday morning at "Chances Casino", Courtenay to enjoy a breakfast of eggs, bacon, toast and coffee for \$2.99.
- A Fashion and Comedy Show which was staged by the Seniors was a sell-out and enjoyed by all. Fashions were provided by the Salvation Army Thrift Store in Comox and the male and female models were from our Seniors' Centre.
- A Farewell Tea for Marion Knisely took place in the Centre's dining room on November 8. Marion left to be with her family in Alberta and leaves a legacy of many years of good deeds and devotion to the Comox Seniors' Centre.

**Membership: 907**

growing structured model beginning in the 1990s and to the very structured governance of today's Board of Directors. The goals remain the same and they are to provide fun and relaxation in an attractive venue. However, many more rules and regulations by governments, local, provincial and federal, all requiring compliance, are shaping the management of the Centre towards a true business model.

Perhaps it is the expectations of the prospective members that have changed; many appear younger and fitter. They seem to be most anxious to maintain alert minds and fit bodies and show much appreciation for our enjoyable, attractive venue.

Unfortunately, it does take more than paying for our coffees and lunches, etc., or our membership fees and activity fees to maintain an economically viable Seniors' Centre. The ONLY thing that has NOT changed over 36 years is the endless appeal for volunteers to help in the office, the kitchen, for special events and more participation in the actual functioning of the Centre. We cherish many of our present members who realize the real value of D.I.Y in maintaining a smooth-operating Centre for ALL Happy Seniors.

Members continue to enjoy activities or clubs that began in 1976: carpet bowling; the monthly newsletter by many dedicated editors; the Ceramics Club still produce some items for sale in our Gift Shop; the library has expanded from a few books and magazines to a room of its own with as many DVDs as it has books. The Flower Lady, begun over 20 years ago by Yvonne Carroll, carried on with Tina Ogden and presently, Sydney Hall.

Bridge has the largest membership and presently enjoys the newly-installed air conditioning in their recently updated space in the lower lounge. Exercise classes have grown from a general keep-fit class to several varieties of fitness such as weights, aerobics, chair fit, T'ai Chi and belly dancing. "Something for Everyone" remains the Centre's goal!

In 2008, new member Arabella Benson convinced the Board that a liaison with Brain Boosters Programme would be most beneficial for our Seniors. She introduced many activities and gained many new and enthusiastic members for the Centre: Nia; Ballroom Dancing; Popular Dancing; Yoga; Zumba; Meditations and Health Issues are just some of the Brain Booster activities our members have experienced.

The following timeline will introduce people and events from 1997 to 2012.

*Phyllis Long*

*N.B.:*

*I would like to thank the "unsung heroes" of the Centre; all of the Secretaries of the Executive, and particularly, the Newsletter Editors. By recording the words and actions of our leaders, the social events and activities of our members, our Newsletter Editors are capturing living history. Because of their dedication in recording people and events, I have been able to look back into past years with much admiration and appreciation.*

*PL*



*Where it all began: November 1, 1975 Sod Turning Ceremony  
(Erica Aubrey (Comox Seniors) and Archie Dick (Rotary Club of Comox))*

**2012**

## **Executive:**

**President:** Charlie Richardson

**Vice President:** David Grant

**Past President:** Tony Hermes

**Secretary:** Pat Joyce

**Treasurer:** Jacqueline Moore

**Directors:** Jeannette Baron, John Barrett, Mike Corkish, Bill Georgeson, Regina Land, John Marinus, Dave Robinson, Ted Wallis

**Newsletter Editor:** Celia Poulson

## **Events/Achievements**

- Birthday parties will now occur twice year in March and October.
- Sunday Tea Dances were cancelled due to low attendance. Arabella Benson will compensate with more dances through Brain Boosters.
- John Marinus was again honoured. This time, it is the Royal Canadian Air Force bestowing him with the rank of Honorary Colonel.
- In keeping with the fresh, uncluttered décor of the Main Hall and the new matching décor of the dining area, the Rotary Club removed the president's photos and worldwide clubs' banners from the Main Hall. A clear plexiglass plaque with all the president's names and dates they served was attached to the south wall.
- The Seniors' Centre Association Board followed suit and voted to remove past presidents framed photos from the dining room wall and charged the archivist with the task of storage. These 8" x 10" portraits were placed in acid-free sleeves and albums and stored in the archives. The Board purchased a plaque similar to Rotary's with all the past presidents names and dates. The plaque is attached to the east wall of the Main Hall and plexiglass name labels can be attached as each succeeding president leaves her/his post.
- North Island Student Nurses conducted three blood pressure clinics over their three-month practicum (one day per week) at the Centre.

## 2011

35-year collection of newsletters. These newsletters are available on the two computers in the Library/Lounge area. Recent newsletters are available on our website: <http://comoxseniors.ca/news.html>.

- Maintenance work on the Seniors' Centre by the Town of Comox included air conditioning for the lower level and washroom upgrades.
- The carved wood sign located beside the walkway was designed by John Barrett and produced by Little City Signs in Courtenay.

Membership: 1013

### Ballroom Before and After the Renos



January 5, 2011



March 10, 2011

## 1997

### Executive:

**President:** Eva Szmek

**Vice President:** Fred Christie

**Past President:** Ray Scott

**Secretary:** Don Burns

**Treasurer:** Shirley Ross

**Directors:** Bob James, Bill Robbins, Yvonne Carroll, Isobel McKinley, Betty Maddison, John Stewart, Harry Pruden, Harvey Morris

**Newsletter Editor:** Betty Gilchrist

### Events/Achievements:

- Celebration of holiday events: Veteran's Luncheon, Robbie Burns Dinner with haggis, Valentine's Day Tea honouring all our age 80 and over members, pancake breakfasts, "new to you" sales, birthday parties, harvest dinner and Christmas dinner
- New kitchen cupboard doors, shelving and drawers were constructed by members of the Carpentry Shop



**Sidney W. B. d'Esterre**

*Also known as "Dusty", a benefactor and tireless community-minded man. He donated the land on which our Seniors' Centre was built in 1976.*

## 1998

### Executive:

**President:** Eva Szmek

**Vice President:** Fred Christie and Bill Ledlin  
(as of April 14)

**Past President:** Ray Scott

**Secretary:** Pam Wiltshire

**Treasurer:** Evadine McKenzie

**Directors:** Don Burns, Lorne Vanetta,  
Isobel McKinley, Hylde Conrad, Mary  
Mayes, Alan Edwards, Bert Linder,  
Yvonne Carroll

**Newsletter Editor:** Betty Gilchrist

### Events/Achievements:

- Unfortunately, none of the newsletters for this year are available. The members participated and enjoyed regular activities and celebrated special days with dinners, teas and luncheons. However, this pleasant way of life was disturbed for many members on learning of the following event:
- Quoted from *Comox Valley Record, Friday, February 26, 1999, p A4*):  
"....on November 30<sup>th</sup>, thieves broke into d'Esterre House by pulling the main entrance door hard enough to spring the lock. Once inside they smashed several doors, stole \$580.00 from a deposit box and walked away with the Seniors large-screen TV, the VCR and other items...."

This excerpt was one of the front page stories in both local newspapers, *Comox Valley Record* and *Comox Valley Echo*. However, the theft was not publicized, it was not even recorded in Board minutes or the newsletter until the thief's trial date on February 24, 1999, almost three months after the theft.

## 2011

"thank you" to Vera, his wife.

- A special award was presented to Arabella Benson for her work in coordinating the Brain Boosters Programs now in its second year.
- Installation of new ventilation and fire suppression system over the kitchen stove. The Town of Comox absorbed the costs.
- Work began on January 17, 2010, on the Main Hall renovations with members of the Rotary Club removing existing wood lathe wall prior to the renovator's arrival. Work was completed in mid-March, resulting in a bright, elegant Hall with its white and gold colour scheme. Despite the Hall's lovely appearance, there was a little lingering nostalgia for the cozy-looking wood design that covered our walls for the past 25 years.
- All classes and activities affected by the eight-week closure of the Hall were relocated elsewhere; some to the Centre's lower level, some to the Comox Canadian Legion Hall and one to the Corker Hall at St. Peter's Anglican Church. Some, like Carpet Bowling, had to be cancelled.
- The Official opening and ribbon cutting of the Main Hall took place on June 19, 2011. Mayor Paul Ives cut the ribbon; Rotary President Tim Cowan spoke briefly, as did Comox Seniors' Vice President David Grant. This Open House event was attended by many seniors.
- Community Adult Literacy and Learning Society (CALLS) initiated a program to collect stories (history) from residents living in the Comox Valley prior to 1960. Six seniors and six secondary school students paired up and digitally recorded the story tellers. Material transcribed to Story Boards with photos and a visual and oral presentation given at the Comox Seniors' Centre. Subsequently, the storyboards were donated to the Comox Archives and Museum.
- After much ongoing discussion on naming the renovated Hall, the Board voted against attaching a commemorative name to the Hall. Instead, they preferred a dedication "to the parties that made the renovations possible". The members also voted in favour of the dedication.
- Photos of each stage of the renovations were taken by Ken Long. These photos are now in the Centre's archives.
- Celia Poulson, our newsletter editor, volunteered and completed the herculean task of scanning and digitizing our

## 2010

help in obtaining materials; the Seniors' Centre will supply the engineering and architectural drawings (John Barrett), construction materials including new wall treatment, new ceiling tiles and window coverings. The Town of Comox will absorb the cost of the relocation of emergency exit doors, stairs, new windows, heating and ventilation work, new lighting and refinishing of the floor. \$35,000.00 has been set aside for our share.

- Final details were available to the General Meeting in November for members to cast a vote for or against the Plan. The vote was a majority in favour of this major project.
- The Richardsons, Charlie and Marjory, are representatives for four different clubs – Line Dancing, Crib, T'ai Chi Gong and Bid Euchre, in addition to Charlie's role as Director.

Membership: 970

## 2011

### Executive:

**President:** Charlie Richardson

**Vice President:** David Grant

**Past President:** Tony Hermes

**Secretary:** Pat Joyce

**Treasurer:** Ted Wallis

**Directors:** Mary Ann Aikman, John Barrett, Betty Liddle, John Marinus, John Patrick, David Robinson, Joan Scales, Eva Szmek

**Newsletter Editor:** Celia Poulson

### Events/Achievements:

- Life memberships were awarded to Dave Robinson and Tony Hermes in recognition for present and past valuable contributions to the Centre.
- A special award was presented to John Barrett for his contribution towards the renovations to the Centre and for excellence as Special Event Coordinator, with a special

## 1999

### Executive:

**President:** Fred Christie

**Vice President:** Marion Knisely

**Past President:** Eva Szmek

**Secretary:** Isobel McKinley (as of April, 1999)

**Treasurer:** June James (as of April, 1999)

**Directors:** Peggy Bradley, Don Burns, Hylde Conrad, Alan Edwards, Ernie Exner, Russ Hammond, Bob James, Mary Mayes

**Newsletter Editor:** Marion Best

### Events/Achievements:

- President Christie worked diligently in restoring calm and seeking justice for the theft. Excerpts from his impact statement are as follows:

"The Centre serves as a second home to many members. As a result of the break-in, some of our members have been traumatized to the extent they no longer feel safe - either in the Centre or in their own home....The TV, VCR, and Karaoke machine that were stolen are used to provide regular programs....their loss has caused upset and dislocation for people in the 70s and 80s, many with limited resources and options..."

- The trial for the thief, William Thomas Gagnon, took place on February 24, 1999 in Courtenay and was widely publicized.
- President Christie encouraged all the Comox Senior Centre members to attend the trial with him and this generated the following newspaper headlines "SENIORS HIT BY THEFT FILL COURT TO SHOW JUDGE THEIR ANGER" and "SENIORS HIT BY BREAK-IN ARTIST WANTED A MUCH LONGER SENTENCE". (Gagnon was sentenced to 30 months in prison). Insurance carried by the Town of Comox covered replacements costs of the TV, VCR and Karaoke, leaving Seniors to pay the \$2,080.00 deductible.

## 1999

- Elder College:  
Part of North Island College opened its doors "to provide learning opportunities to people 55 years and older....with non-credit courses and no exams." Comox Seniors were invited to tour the NIC.
- Members of the various activities and clubs demonstrated their talents at the Comox Centre Mall. This was a way of advertising the Comox Seniors' Centre and gaining members.
- Friday night and Sunday afternoon movies were very popular and current.
- The Carpentry Shop constructed the Float for Seniors' Members. They entered the float in all three communities - Cumberland, Courtenay and Comox and won. Alan Edwards and Norm Chandler were commended for their costumes.
- Mona Turnbull celebrated her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- Jean Lust original vice-president and founder, aged 95, passed away, She was the artist that created the two ceramic framed pictures of poppies which she donated to the Centre.
- Expansion of the Centre was often discussed and various models proposed. Guided by Town of Comox guidelines: "Visual access as much as possible towards the Marina. No further expansion toward the water (bay). Already on the building line on east side. The Executive speculated the only avenue for expansion could be about twenty-five feet "across the front of the full building"....or towards Dusty's Den but the walkway would have to provide the "visual access" to the water. Also, part of the discussion was the incorporation of Dusty's Den if the Town of Comox Seniors projected population for year 2020 of 19,179 is realized.
- Award-winning floats were entered in Cumberland's Maytime parade and Comox's Nautical Days parade.
- Other 1999 events were:
  - Supporting "THE YEAR OF OLD PEOPLE" (I.Y.O.P.), a steering committee of seniors worked with the Town of Comox on planning events around the theme of "A SOCIETY FOR ALL AGES". Many Seniors' Centre club members held demonstrations of their activities at the Comox Centre Mall.
  - A "Salute to Seniors" show with talented locals was held at the Florence Filberg Centre.
  - A pie sale on the lawn held on Nautical Days was very profitable.

## 2010

### Executive:

**President:** Tony Hermes

**Vice President:** David Grant

**Past President:** David Robinson

**Secretary:** Pat Joyce

**Treasurer:** Ted Wallis

**Directors:** John Barrett, Babs Bullen, John Marinus, John Patrick, Charlie Richardson, Joan Scales, David Robinson

**Newsletter Editor:** Celia Poulson

### Events/Achievements:

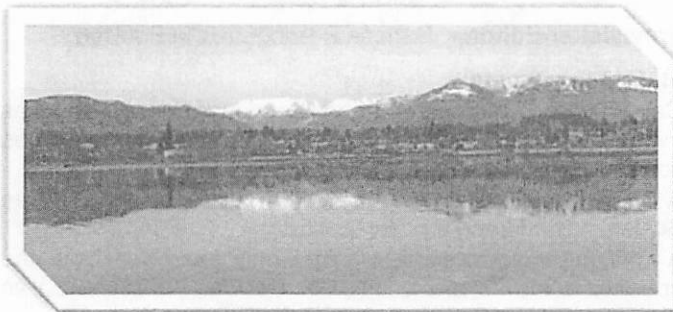
- A Christmas Lights bus tour of Comox and Courtenay was provided by the Kiwanis Club of Courtenay as a good-will gesture. The bus tour is now in its 20<sup>th</sup> year.
- John Marinus, a Seniors' Centre Director and retired Town of Comox Councillor, was honoured with the 2010 Citizen of the Year award by the Comox Valley Chamber of Commerce. Congratulations, John!
- A new Quilting Club was organized. They share space in the Art Room with the Painters, with Vera Barrett as the coordinator.
- New Travel Club Coordinator John Barrett organized a bus trip to Chemainus Theatre to see "Guys and Dolls".
- A policy regarding any member becoming ill or having an accident while on the Centre's premises states "first responder 911 will automatically be contacted and costs paid by the stricken member's personal insurance".
- The Kitchen was declared "out-of-bounds" to all but Chef Deidre Lafond's kitchen staff and qualified others.
- Preliminary planning meetings occurred periodically over several months with the Comox Rotary Club and Town of Comox personnel. Attending from the Centre were Dave Robinson and John Barrett to discuss plans for the renovation of the storage areas and complete upgrade of the Main Hall and cost sharing plan: Rotary will contribute the labour and

## 2009

Board-sponsored activity with Arabella Benson and Babs Bullen working with Mr. Georgeson.

- Comox Seniors member Fred Fester donated \$10,000.00 to the Centre.
- A bequest of \$20,000.00 was received by the Centre from the estate of long-time member Gordon Pritchard.
- B.C. Seniors Living Association donated a cheque for \$1,000.00 to the Centre to be used as needed.
- A grant of \$10,000.00 from the New Horizons Capital Program to purchase a new commercial-grade stove for the kitchen. Chef Dei was delighted!
- A defibrillator was presented to VP Tony Hermes from the Cumberland Rotary Club. It is now located by the kitchen/dining room door. Assistant Fire Chief Lariviere conducted a training session with Seniors' members; a valuable tool for cardiac emergencies.
- Life memberships were awarded to Jack and Blanche Campbell, Fred Fester, Babs Bullen and Darlene Petzinger.
- John and Vera Barrett became facilitators for upcoming Special Events.
- Centre members interested in acquiring computer skills were fortunate to have free lessons conducted by Dave Robinson each Monday morning.
- Bert Linder, founding member past president and a talented entertainer, passed away on December 27, 2008.
- Mayor Ives and Rotary President Brian Mathers were special guests at the 33<sup>rd</sup> Seniors' Centre anniversary party.

Membership: 831



*(a reminder of why we live here)*

## 2000

**2000 Y2K:** Contrary to most alarming global predictions, the world kept on revolving "as it should". We did not evaporate into the ether and all the world's computers did not crash.

### Executive:

**President:** Marion Knisely

**Vice President:** Russ Hammond

**Past President:** Fred Christie

**Secretary:** Isobel McKinley

**Treasurer:** Don Burns (resigned: Loretta Edwards)

**Directors:** Peggy Bradley, Norman Chandler, Bob James, Alan Edwards, Ernest Exner, Hylda Conrad, Barbara Thompson, Evadne McKenzie

**Newsletter Editor:** Marion Best

### Events/Achievements:

- One-hundred copies of Eileen Turnbull's "History of Comox Seniors' Centre Association" booklet were reprinted by Alan Edwards and were sold for \$1.00 each.
- The dumb waiter (from the dining area to the lower level) was removed. It had ceased functioning and could not be repaired. The Carpentry Club members created a cupboard in the space.
- A work party canned approximately 400 pounds of salmon for use by the kitchen staff to make sandwiches throughout the year.
- Another work party, mainly Lil Linder and Eva Szmek, produced some 80 pies for a fundraiser during Nautical Days.
- On February 28, 2000, the B.C. Representation Agreement became law. A copy of a review of the Agreement was attached to the November newsletter. Lawyer Andrea Rowe spoke to the Seniors on the Agreement.

## 2000

- Mr. Bill Georgeson addressed the Seniors on the Beauty and Value of the Anderton Therapeutic Gardens and invited the Comox Seniors to partake in allotment gardening there.
- A Swing Time Band was formed by Bill Scott.
- Norm Chandler, Travel Club President, and Ray Scott, former 1996 Comox Seniors' President, passed away.

## 2001

### Executive:

**President:** Marion Knisely

**Vice President:** Russ Hammond

**Past President:** Fred Christie

**Secretary:** Isobel McKinley

**Treasurer:** Don Burns

**Directors:** Peggy Bradley, David Campbell, William Davis, Jean Hall, Neil Williams, Evadne McKenzie, Ernest Exner, Eva Szmek

**Newsletter Editor:** Marion Best/Jeanie Manness

### Events/Achievements:

- Bunny Crosby and Edith McNish were both awarded Life Memberships for long-time volunteering.
- The Main Hall floor refinished at a cost of \$4,000.00.
- Ernie Exner, a very valued member, passed away suddenly.
- Helen Dale, Town of Comox administrator and a warm support of the Centre passed away suddenly.
- Ernest "Gib" Gibson, long-time member and among the few remaining members of the N.W. Mounted Police, celebrated his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- Hall rental costs were raised from \$37.50 to \$40.00 per hour.
- A grant of \$15,000.00 was received to repair the balcony railing and the Art Room. A report by a director states, "They built the balcony first, then we filled in the bottom and apparently this was not done properly. We all know this leaks

## 2008

- The 32<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary Tea on June 25 was a great success. Guests included several Councillors from the Town of Comox and Rotary Club's president-elect, Brian Malther. Keynote speaker was Michael Pontus, CEO of St. Joseph's Hospital. Mr. Pontus gave a very informative presentation of the hospital's operation, expenses and future needs.
- Two computer stations with furniture, software and high-speed internet connections were set up in the Library/Lounge area for use by members.

**Membership:** 786

## 2009

### Executive:

**President:** Tony Hermes

**Vice President:** David Grant

**Past President:** David Robinson

**Secretary:** Pat Joyce

**Treasurer:** Ted Wallis

**Directors:** Cathy Bell, Babs Bullen, Jane Jenssen, Christine Lynch, John Marinus, John Patrick, Charlie Richardson, Betty Wishart; Town of Comox Rep: Tom Grant

**Newsletter Editor:** Darlene Petzinger/Celia Poulson

### Events/Achievements:

- Celia Poulson volunteered to be Newsletter Editor. She takes over the job from outgoing Editor Darlene Petzinger who has done a very fine job for the last five years.
- A Supper club, initiated by the Craft Club ladies led by Joan Scales, has become a popular activity.
- A "Wii Fit" machine that requires only interaction with the operator is the newest addition to Seniors' Fitness and was demonstrated by Coordinator Arabella Benson.
- Healthy Aging Support Group, headed by Bill Georgeson, is a

## 2008

### Executive:

**President:** David Robinson

**Vice President:** Tony Hermes

**Past President:** John Petzinger

**Secretary:** Pat Joyce

**Treasurer:** Ted Wallis

**Directors:** Arabella Benson, Babs Bullen, Bill Georgeson, David Grant, Jane Jenssen, Marion Knisely, John Patrick, Alice Thomas

**Newsletter Editor:** Darlene Petzinger

### Events/Achievements:

- First-year Student Nurses from North Island College, Courtenay Campus, arrived at the Centre early in the year one-day per week for their practicum rotation on geriatric studies. They are here to meet and mingle with our seniors and to observe and assist, to conduct blood pressure sessions and to give talks on hand washing, etc. It is a pleasure for all to have these fresh young faces in our midst. They were at the Centre each Tuesday for 12 weeks.
- Healthy Aging Initiative is a series of programs initiated through dedicated planning of Director Bill Georgeson and his wife, Joy. They introduced the members to many worthwhile and informative programs pertaining to our health and well-being: Green thumb program; Walking Club; Golfing at Longlands; Country Dancing; Nautical Days Parade; Osteoporosis Seminar; Chronic Pain; Foot Hygiene; Nutritional Seminar.
- Arabella Benson introduced the Brain Boosters activities program. A grant of \$7,500 was received to facilitate the Brain Booster program from the Federal Government's "New Horizons for Seniors Program". She began the year-long schedule of events with "Weave a Little Magic with Stories". Many dancing (ballroom) programs followed.
- Edith McNish, our eldest member at 100 years and 9 months passed away.

## 2001

downstairs and this is what they are going to fix."

- Ongoing differences between the Comox Seniors, the Comox Rotary Club and the Town of Comox regarding the use of d'Esterre House (Comox Seniors' Centre) and payment for same resulted in yet another impasse for the year 2001.
- An elevator was installed and operational by October 1, 2001.

## 2002

### Executive:

**President:** Russ Hammond

**Vice President:** Alan Edwards

**Past President:** Marion Knisely

**Secretary:** Isobel McKinley

**Treasurer:** Jack Candlish

**Directors:** Bill Brown, David Campbell, Fred Christie, Jean Hall, Tony Hermes, June James, Bob James, Lillian Whitehead

**Newsletter Editor:** Jeanie Manness

### Events/Achievements:

- Treasurer Don Burns reported that "the Seniors have a new name – COMOX SENIORS CENTRE ASSOCIATION and have a certificate to prove it" (January 15, 2002).
- A grant of \$15,000.00 from the Vancouver Foundation for the elevator was received.
- The Treasurer reported the cost of building and installation of the elevator was \$43,432.00, with a cost to the Seniors' Association of \$28,432.00.
- The membership voted that 8:30 am would be the official opening time for the Comox Seniors' Centre.
- Cost for a cup of coffee and tea was set at \$0.50, with refills at \$0.25 a cup.
- The Kiwanis Club continues to give tours of Christmas lights.

**Executive:**

<b>President:</b>	Alan Edwards
<b>Vice President:</b>	John Petzinger
<b>Past President:</b>	Russ Hammond
<b>Secretary:</b>	Isobel McKinlay/Dorothy Carmichael
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Jack Candlish
<b>Directors:</b>	David Campbell, Fred Christie, Eva Szmek, Tony Hermes, Lillian Whitehead, Bob James, Carson Ferguson, Sonia Lehrle
<b>Newsletter Editor:</b>	Jeanie Manness

**Events/Achievements:**

- Yvonne Carroll and Alan Edwards were given life memberships.
- A safe that was installed in 1999 from a Korean War Veteran's donation of \$500.00 finally received a plaque to honour the donor.
- Bunny Crosby, Lorna Osmond and Joan Charie, all long-time, hard-working members, passed away.
- A cook to work fulltime and provide lunches and suppers for
- The members garnered much discussion for several months until September 3 when a vote by ballot was taken at an Extraordinary General Meeting. Motion to hire a cook on a 90-day trial basis was carried. The trial period began in October.
- General Meetings will be held bi-monthly in January, March, May, July, September and November.
- Bob James, "Mr. tipp" for many years resigned as convener of House and Grounds.



*d'Esterre House's entry in a 1990s Nautical Day's parade*

**Executive:**

<b>President:</b>	David Robinson
<b>Vice President:</b>	Tony Hermes
<b>Past President:</b>	John Petzinger
<b>Secretary:</b>	Pat Joyce
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Ted Wallis
<b>Directors:</b>	Babs Bullen, Dorothy Gardner, Bill Georgeson, David Grant, Marion Knisely, John Patrick, Alice Thomas
<b>Newsletter Editor:</b>	Darlene Petzinger

**Events/Achievements:**

- Final costs of the new balcony enclosure addition were \$52,914.34, well under the \$60,000.00 that had been committed for the project's budget.
- A new phone system was installed with a 5.8 GHz Base Station, an answering machine and voice mail service.
- The Comox Valley Community Foundation awarded \$4,800.00 to purchase and install carpeting in the dining room that matches the carpet in the new Library/Lounge.
- A Suggestion/Comments Box, constructed by Dave Derkson, was installed in the foyer area.
- Sunday Tea Dances continue to be well-attended.
- Saturday morning breakfasts were discontinued as they were not viable.
- The Craft Club Gift Shop carries ceramic ware, knitted wear, toys, fabric items and now jewellery for sale.
- Board members staff the office 10:00 am to 1:00 pm daily Monday to Friday, with each member taking duty turns.
- A review of the Constitution and Bylaws required much time from the Board members as the last official registration of our Constitution and Bylaws occurred in 1995. Several amendments were necessary, such as proxy voting which had been unofficially reinstated, and the current Bylaws disallowed proxy votes. The proposed amendments were presented to the November General Meeting for a vote which passed with a 97% majority. The final document was sent to the Registrar in Victoria for official registration.

**Membership:** 680

## 2006

Planning, distributed reports from Peninsula Construction and Technical Services for the Balcony Enclosure Project. The Town of Comox has issued a permit. Harry Whitfield, architect, presented his report. Members voted in favour to proceed. "Footing of Balcony/Art Room have been assessed and passed by an engineer as being capable of supporting a new addition."

- Building start was August 15 and the project was on time and on budget. The Grand Opening of the building expansion number 3 was held on November 17. Councillor and Centre member John Marinus cut the ribbon. Special guests were Rotary president Tom Grant and his wife Holly, architect Harry Whitfield and his wife, and carpenter Andy Williamson and his wife. It was a fine evening.
- The Comox Seniors were strongly opposed to the proposed hotel project to be built on the Marina waterfront.
- Throughout the whole process of the building expansion, Dave Robinson is to be commended for his monthly updates appearing in the newsletter and at all general meetings during 2006. All members whether active, passive, shut-ins, etc., appreciated being able to keep up with news of the project from planning to completion.
- At the end of three terms as Chair, President John Petzinger stated 2006 "was a banner year in cooperation and understanding" . . . between the three stakeholders in the Comox Seniors' Centre: The Town of Comox as owners of the building; the Comox Rotary Club as major contributors by contracting major work projects; and the Comox Seniors' Centre Association as managers and caretakers.

Membership: 745



## 2004

### Executive:

<b>President:</b>	John Petzinger
<b>Vice President:</b>	David Campbell
<b>Past President:</b>	Alan Edwards
<b>Secretary:</b>	Dorothy Carmichael
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Jack Candlish
<b>Directors:</b>	Bill Brown, Ed Erhart, Carson Ferguson, Tony Hermes, David Robinson, Betty Wishart, Grace Exner, Isobel McKinlay
<b>Newsletter Editor:</b>	Jeanie Manness/Darlene Petzinger

### Events/Achievements:

- The Board approved the voluntary position of Archivist. Volunteers are May Slemin and Phyllis Long.
- Discussions and planning began for Expansion Number 3: Balcony Enclosure to create a Library/Lounge area off of the dining area. A plan was presented to members at the June General Meeting. Members voted in favour of commencing work on this \$42,000.00 major project.
- The Kitchen Chef/Cook's position was made permanent by the Board after the 90-day trial period was completed at the beginning of 2004. Most members are pleased and enjoy hot lunches.
- Lena Forsyth, the Painters' Group convenor and long-time member passed away.
- Grace Exner, Board member as Director, Craft Club convenor and long-time member passed away suddenly.
- Membership fee increased to \$15.00 per year for 2005. Life memberships were discontinued. Any member achieving 90 years of age will automatically become a Life Member.
- Bill Brown resigned his Board position and is taking on the position of Janitor.
- Librarians Anna and Carson Ferguson have resigned. Phyllis Long will take on the Librarian's duties.
- Ernie "Gib" Gibson passed away on February 25' aged 102 years and 9 months.

Membership: 600+

## 2005

### Executive:

**President:** John Petzinger

**Vice President:** Tony Hermes

**Past President:** Alan Edwards

**Secretary:** Dorothy Carmichael

**Treasurer:** Jack Candlish

**Directors:** Ed Erhart, Chuck Hodson, Pat Joyce,  
Sonia Lehrle, Connie Pigeau,  
Tom Thompson, Barb Thompson,  
David Robinson

**Newsletter Editor:** Darlene Petzinger

### Events/Achievements:

- Tim Cowan, pharmacist of *The Medicine Shoppe* gave a talk on "Seniors and Medication".
- The Balcony Enclosure/Library Lounge project costs have escalated since the project began in 2003 and 2004 from \$42,000.00 to the present estimate of \$60,000.00 due to architects and structural fees. Board members are very concerned.
- Amendments to Bylaws approved by the Membership included: (i) Permanent membership will automatically be granted to all members on their 90<sup>th</sup> birthday (no longer referred to as "Life Membership") and (ii) The Board will inform a General Meeting of what capital expenditures have been made.
- Beverages (tea, coffee) costs increased to \$0.75 per cup with refills at \$0.50 each.
- Winter hours changed to 8:00 am to 3:00 pm for the Seniors' Centre.
- Membership fees to increase to \$20.00 commencing in 2006.
- Travel Club formed with 15 members.
- A dinner with Marco Costa as guest speaker was a success. Mr. Costa spoke on Old Age Security.
- Paid help for part-time assistants for the kitchen and administrative duties began on an "on trial" basis.
- Ventilator for the carpentry shop was installed.

## 2005

- A dishwasher for the kitchen was installed at a cost of \$6,000.00.
- User fees by the 15+ activity clubs within the centre was often discussed but dismissed by members.

**Membership:** 700+

## 2006

### Executive:

**President:** John Petzinger

**Vice President:** Tony Hermes

**Past President:** Alan Edwards

**Secretary:** Dorothy Carmichael

**Treasurer:** Jack Candlish

**Directors:** Babs Bullen, Ed Erhart, Dorothy  
Gardner, David Grant, Pat Joyce,  
Sonia Lehrle, David Robinson,  
Ted Wallis

**Newsletter Editor:** Darlene Petzinger

### Events/Achievements:

- For the past 10 years, parking is a problem but still no solution arises.
- Three major members passed away: Eileen Turnbull, founder; Russ Hammond, respected president for seven different terms; Fred Christie, 1998-1999 president.
- Flo Hammond was presented with a Life Membership by her husband, President Russ Hammond, at the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary party.
- Edith McNish, long-time member celebrated her 99<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- Frances (Frankie) Mitchell, a long-time member of the Painters' Group, passed away. Frankie painted the portrait of "Trot" Radford, founder, which hangs in the Centre.
- On June 25, members celebrated the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Comox Seniors' Centre Association at a gala dinner.
- Dave Robinson, Building Committee and Long-range