

SOAR

Inflight
Magazine for
Pacific Coastal
Airlines

Pack your bags!

Autumn in the
Comox Valley has it all

SAVOUR THE FLAVOUR

Thompson Valley
wine region

HIDDEN TREASURES

A Powell River artist hides a
trail of raku pottery

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Zeballos, Vancouver Island: 14 room motel with commercial kitchen, restaurant space, one bedroom owner/manager's suite and management office. Separate laundry facilities. Guest rooms each have a 3 piece bathroom and come furnished with two beds, microwave and mini-fridge. High demand for long-term and short-term rental accommodations in the area, or use for commercial crews. **\$629,000**



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Published by Black Press | www.blackpress.ca • 818 Broughton Street, Victoria, BC V8W 1E4



SOAR magazine is published six times per year and is distributed on all Pacific Coastal Airlines flights. The points of view or opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the publisher or Pacific Coastal Airlines. The contents of SOAR magazine are protected by copyright, including the designed advertising. Reproduction is prohibited without written consent of the publisher.

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LOOKING AHEAD

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



New service, flexible tickets—and continued patience! As we head into fall and look back on the summer months, we are excited to see that travel is slowly coming back and that our flights are filling up with more passengers every day.


After a 503-day hiatus, we relaunched scheduled service to the community of Bella Bella (ZEL) on August 10. The response has certainly been stronger than anticipated. We are currently offering Sunday to Friday service between Vancouver and Bella Bella on our Beechcraft 1900, and with the high demand for this service, we will begin to operate flights on Monday, Wednesday and Friday using our Saab 340, starting the week of September 26.

Although we experienced an increase in travel demand, we were able to respond operationally and are proud to be recognized as North America's most punctual airline in July (on-time arrival means landing at the destination within 15 minutes of the scheduled time).

As much as there have been many positive steps forward in the recovery from the

impact of COVID-19, we are still only operating at approximately 60 to 65 per cent of our previous levels. You have only to note the re-introduction of COVID-19 protocols to appreciate that this is not over, nor is the powerful effect that it has had and continues to have on businesses and the aviation industry.

We remain committed to our customers and we will continue to offer a schedule that supports the communities that we serve. At the peak of our 2021 fall and winter schedule, we plan to be offering 282 flights throughout our network each week. We continue to offer our flexible change policy to provide our customers the freedom to make unlimited changes to new reservations. For more details, please visit our website pacificcoastal.com/unlimited-ticket-changes/.

Thank you again to our customers, partners and staff for your continued patience and understanding as we continue to navigate the challenges of COVID-19. We appreciate your support and for choosing to fly with Pacific Coastal Airlines. 


Quentin Smith

PCA service between Vancouver and Bella Bella returns



➔ **RICHMOND:** Pacific Coastal Airlines resumed its non-stop service between Vancouver International Airport South Terminal (YVR) and Bella Bella Airport (ZEL) on August 10.

"Over the past 16 months we have been working closely with the Heiltsuk Nation operating charter flights to support their essential service travel requirements," said Quentin Smith, president of Pacific Coastal Airlines. "I am excited that we have received approval from the Heiltsuk Nation to resume our scheduled flight service and we are looking forward to supporting the community of Bella Bella again."

"The pandemic has seen many travel restrictions in place for our health and safety. We are pleased to see commercial flight services back to our community, now that it is safe," said Chief Marilyn Slett, Heiltsuk Nation.

Non-stop flight service will operate on a Beechcraft 1900D between Vancouver and Bella Bella six days a week. The 1900D offers comfortable seating, six-foot cabin height, and generous cargo capacity.

Also, in PCA news, a schedule change slated for September 26 will add non-stop service between Vancouver and Comox. Currently all

of our flights between these two airports run as "triangles," where the route runs between Vancouver, Campbell River, Comox and then back to Vancouver. PCA notes that having the non-stop flights will be an improved service offering to customers.

151 acres of biodiverse South Okanagan land donated to Nature Trust of BC

*By Monique Tamminga,
westcoasttraveller.com*

➔ **SOUTH OKANAGAN:** Nature Trust of BC has announced that—through the generosity of donors—151 acres (61 hectares) of land, known as the Park Rill Floodplain, will be added to the White Lake Basin Biodiversity Ranch complex in the South Okanagan.

The native grasslands of the South Okanagan are a hot-spot for biodiversity, hosting numerous at-risk species.

Grasslands are also one of the rarest land cover types in BC, covering less than one per cent of the province's land base,

with few intact swaths of open plains remaining.

Located some three kilometres north-west of the community of Willowbrook within the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen, the Park Rill Floodplain property supports many species of conservation concern and provides critical habitat for federally listed species at risk, including Lewis's woodpeckers, peregrine falcons and western screech-owls.

"The diversity of species and habitats protected by this project exemplifies the importance of the native grasslands within the South Okanagan," said Dan Buffett, CEO of the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation. "The Nature Trust of BC has a sterling track record for protecting, managing and restoring these and other critical habitat types in BC."

He added: "For that reason, the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation is a proud funding partner of the Nature Trust and of our shared goals of conserving fish, wildlife and their habitats through the protection and conservation of BC's natural landscapes."

The Nature Trust expressed its thanks to landowners and conservationists Ray and Jennifer Stewart, who have cared for the land for 33 years.

The project was undertaken with the financial support of Environment and Climate Change Canada, Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation, George Galbraith and Family, Val and Dick Bradshaw and many individual donors.



Wildflowers, rare grasslands and at-risk species are part of the rich landscape of the Park Rill Floodplain. (Graham Osborne photo)

MEET A PACIFIC COASTAL EMPLOYEE: DEENA



Position: Customer Service Agent

Location: Cranbrook
Vancouver Airport Operations

Time with PASCO: 3.5 years

Job description:

I am a Customer Service Agent working in Cranbrook BC. In Cranbrook we are a dual base, offering flights to YVR via Pacific Coastal Airlines and to both YVR and YYC via Westjet Link. I am also the base trainer for both Westjet Link and Pacific Coastal Airlines.

Where were you born and where did you grow up?

I was born in Penticton, but was raised all over BC. I spent 25 years in Williams Lake, before moving to Kimberley five years ago.

Who is your family?

My husband Glen and I celebrated our 25th wedding anniversary in February 2021. Our daughter, Kyleigh, lives in Kelowna and our son, Rylan, lives in Calgary. We also have a new addition, Shyla, our six-month-old puppy.

What path did you take to get to this job?

My very dear friend Monica worked for PCA in Williams Lake and loved her Pacific Coastal family. When I relocated to Kimberley and a job opening came up at the Cranbrook airport, I knew immediately the job was for me. Sadly, Monica passed away that same year.

What do you like best about this job?

I love that every day is different. There is always something to learn.

Hobbies?

I am an avid downhill skier, enjoy both cross-country skiing and snowshoeing, as well as summer hiking, running, paddle boarding, kayaking and golf. I had my first Eagle this year! I also learned how to knit socks during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Vancouver Aquarium reopens after near year-long closure

By Katya Slepian, westcoastraveller.com

➔ **VANCOUVER:** The Vancouver Aquarium has reopened after a COVID-related closure shuttered its doors for nearly a year.

The aquarium said in a release that it is also launching a Marine Mammal Rescue Exhibit to showcase the facility's work in rehabilitating marine mammals.

The 65-year-old aquarium was sold by Ocean Wise Conservation Association to Herschend Enterprises in a deal announced last April. At the time, the aquarium said the only way for it survive was to be taken over by Herschend, a US-based theme park company that owns properties like Dollywood, multiple resorts and two aquariums.

"We are very delighted to be reopening. The Vancouver Aquarium has been one of the top attractions in this region and a leader in marine mammal rescue for over 60 years," said aquarium executive director Clint Wright. "Everyone at the aquarium has been working hard to prepare for this reopening after 17 months of partial or complete closure."

Along with the new exhibit, the aquarium will be showing Octopus from the BBC series Blue Planet II.

Existing memberships will be extended to make up for the months when the aquarium was closed. Due to COVID-19 safety measures, capacity will be limited and tickets and reservations can be made online at vanaqua.org. Masks are recommended for everyone ages 12 and up who has not yet been fully vaccinated.

Victoria leads Canadian cities in restaurants, pubs, bars per capita

➔ **VICTORIA:** Victoria is the Canadian city with the most restaurants, eateries, pubs and bars per person, according to Destination Greater Victoria.



Destination Greater Victoria has used Stats Canada data to confirm Victoria as the Canadian city with the most restaurants, eateries, pubs and bars per capita. (Black Press Media file photo)

Statistics Canada data shows the city of Victoria to have 4.6 restaurants, eateries, pubs and bars for every 1,000 residents, with Vancouver and Niagara Falls next in line at 3.6 and 3.4, respectively. All other Canadian cities measured have less than 2.8 such businesses per 1,000 residents.

"It is a claim to fame and we are proud of it, but it's also great being able to back up our claims," Destination Greater Victoria CEO Paul Nurse told Black Press Media.

Data on restaurants, eateries, pubs and bars comes from Stats Canada's June 2020 Canadian Business Counts, while population numbers come from 2016 Census data.

Nurse, who has a background in economics, said he spent the "dark days of the pandemic" fact-checking claims with a pair of researchers to verify the assertion that Victoria is Canada's leader in food and drink destinations per capita.

Mayor Lisa Helps wasn't surprised that Victoria leads the country in restaurants per capita, she said, considering not just the quantity of restaurants but also the quality, variety and diversity offered.

"The food and drink options in Victoria are endless," added BC Restaurant and Food Services Association chair Peter de Bruyn in a statement. "There is always something new on the menu and a reason to try a new establishment."

For more information on Victoria's food and drink scene, visit tourismvictoria.com/eat-drink. 🍷



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Pack your bags!

**Autumn in
the Comox Valley
has it all**

Photos by Jordan Dyck, courtesy
Discover Comox Valley and Tourism
Vancouver Island.



Planning a trip during the crisp, less-crowded season of fall unveils one of the best times for hiking, biking and other outdoor pursuits, including all the flavours of the fall harvest.

As the heat of the summer season subsides and the crowds decrease, it's the perfect time to visit the Comox Valley.

Here's our guide to enjoying the fall season before winter sets in.

Hike

Whether you choose to head up to Mount Washington or to flock to nearby parks and waterfront pathways, you'll be a short drive from some of the best trails that the Comox Valley has to offer.

The temperature is perfect, the leaves are changing and the views of the majestic mountains and tree-lined paths are clear.

From intense multi-day hikes to leisurely walks, there is something for all skill levels.

Some of our favourites include: Paradise Meadows in Strathcona Provincial Park, Seal Bay Regional Nature Park, Nymph Falls Nature Park, Cumberland Community Forest and the Courtenay Airpark.

Bike

Make the most of this transitional season from your bike! Whether you're a road cyclist, a gravel rider, a mountain biker or all of the above, you'll be well covered here.

Nestled in the foothills of the Beaufort Mountains, Cumberland is the epicentre of mountain biking on Vancouver Island. With more than 80 kilometres of the island's most legendary singletrack, it's a great place for seasoned riders and newcomers to the sport.

Opt for a guided tour with Island Joy Rides, where you can cruise the scenic coastal routes that take you through communities, near waterfalls and even to nearby islands.

Or choose a self-guided adventure in farm country along the One Spot Trail. This trail has three separate completed sections, taking you along the former railway grade of the Comox Logging & Railway Company.



As the heat of the summer season subsides and the crowds decrease, it's the perfect time to visit the Comox Valley.

Comox Valley Kayaks & Canoes carries various kayaks, canoes, stand-up paddle boards and gear to rent, or you can sign up for a guided tour.

Fish

Enjoy spectacular freshwater and saltwater fishing paired with incredible scenery!

Hire a professional, fully certified guide to help you throw in a line for various fish species, as well as shellfish like crab and prawns.

Expect to encounter views of coastal mountains, wildlife, sweeping seascapes and a tug on the line during your time on the water.

Family fun

The fall is a great time to travel with the kids: autumn-themed activities, fewer crowds and a chill in the air make the season magical.

Enjoy a hayride, visit barnyard animals, find your way out of corn and hay bale mazes, play fall games and pick a pumpkin from the 20 acres of fields at Coastal Black's 9th Annual Pumpkin Fall Fest.

Shamrock Farm has a vast assortment of pumpkins to pick off the vine, or collect one that's already picked and waiting in the barn for carving and cooking.

Don't leave without picking up Comox's own Benino Gelato's pumpkin pie gelato made with Shamrock Farm's pumpkins!

Fall is also a glorious time of year for horseback riding. Bear Creek

Golf

Don't put away your clubs just because summer's gone!

The Comox Valley and surrounding areas have nine golf courses, six of which are open year-round.

Play a round at the award-winning, platinum-rated golf course at Crown Isle Resort; extend your visit by staying on site in one of their villas located along the fairway.

The Comox Golf Club is a championship nine-hole golf course located in the heart of Comox and is open year-round with beautifully maintained greens, offering both chal-

lenge and reward for all levels.

Mulligans Golf Course is in superb condition year-round, and the course, which provides a challenge for golfers of all calibres, is known as "The Friendliest Little Course In The Valley."

Paddle

Some of the most serene paddling conditions can be found throughout the fall in the Comox Valley.

If you're a passionate sea kayaker, a complete beginner or if you're looking for a unique, multi-day adventure, discover the range of water trails with a friend or go with a guide!



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Ranch offers rides to suit all needs, from half-hour excursions to full days on nearby trails, which lead to the area's hills, rivers and lakes.

Disc golf (also known as frisbee golf) is an outdoor sport involving throwing plastic discs into metal baskets along an outdoor course, and it is a great way to include the family on a walk through the forest.

There are four disc golf courses to choose from, including Village Park Disc Golf Course in Comox and the Coal Creek Historic Park in Cumberland.

Farmers' market

The Comox Valley Farmers' Market is a year-round gathering place that supports a community of growers.

What better season for home cooks to perfect those hearty seasonal dishes?

At the market, you can pick up everything from fresh farm produce to

locally produced food items and a variety of meats.

Arrive hungry: treats like fresh baked goods and warm drinks await you.

The vendors move indoors to the Native Sons Hall at 360 Cliffe Avenue in Courtenay between October and April.

Where to stay

During autumn, you can often find lower travel rates than during the peak season.

Consider a stay in a glamping tent on the 90-acre lakefront property at Smith Lake Farm.

Or, pamper yourself with a visit to the Kingfisher Oceanside Resort and Spa, where luxury and relaxation are top priorities.

The Old House Hotel & Spa could possibly be Vancouver Island's best-kept secret; the all-suite hotel located just blocks from downtown Courtenay has quick access to the airport.

Find rustic charm at The Alders Beach Resort; it's an ideal spot for couples or families looking for a remote beach-front escape.

Where to eat and drink

Savour the selection of the valley's many great food offerings, available everywhere from food trucks to fine-dining restaurants.

Warm up with a bowl of authentic Japanese ramen at Nikkei Ramen-ya, feast on superb ingredients at Il Falcone, which is a favourite among locals and visitors, taste bold wines at 40 Knots Winery or savour award-winning dishes at the Tidal Cafe.

Still have room on your "to-do" list? Pick up a famous cronut at Cumberland's 100-plus-year-old Village Bakery; treat yourself to a spa treatment paired with a Pacific Mist Hydropath at Kingfisher Oceanside Resort & Spa; get a head start on your holiday shopping by strolling the main streets in Cumberland, Courtenay and Comox to find the perfect gifts; or relax at the European-style sauna house at The Lost Faucet.

The Comox Valley hits all of the highlights with outdoor activities, wineries, shopping and mouthwatering cuisine—all that's left to do is pack your bags! 🎒





TUMBLE INTO FALL

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experiencecomoxvalley.ca/fall

HOPE MEETS ACTION



Royal British Columbia Museum's pocket gallery exhibit examines BC Black history

At a time when many British Columbians are already re-examining the province's history and who gets to write it, the BC Black History Awareness Society and Royal BC Museum have partnered to produce a new pocket gallery exhibition that reclaims and retells the complicated history of Black British Columbians.

Hope Meets Action: Echoes Through the Black Continuum, which opened in mid-August and runs to March 2022, traces an unbroken line of strength and resistance from the distant past to the present and into the future by highlighting the contributions of Black leaders, whose actions echo across the centuries.

"With this exhibition, we not only want people to learn about the history of Black settlers and their legacy, but we want people to know that contemporary Blacks in BC are very proud of this legacy," explains Silvia Mangué Alene, president of the BC Black History Awareness Society.

"We will extend and grow this legacy through resilience, hard work, creativity and leadership, with the humbling acknowledgment that we are not Indigenous of these lands."

The exhibition follows the seldom-told stories of Black women such as Sylvia Stark, who was born an enslaved person in Missouri, taught herself to read by secretly listening to her master's children's lessons and eventually became a pillar of the Black pioneer community on Salt Spring Island. Her daughter Emma Stark would later become the first Black teacher on Vancouver Island.

It also features audio recordings of Black British Columbians calling in from around the province to lend their voices to this history, and—with a focus on decolonization—artwork by young Black artists speaking to the history of the Hogan's Alley community in Vancouver, BC.

"This pocket gallery marks an important moment in time for BC," says

Dr. Daniel Muzyka, acting CEO of the Royal BC Museum. "Right now, many British Columbians are re-examining the province's history and challenging its longstanding bias toward European settler history. We're indebted to the BC Black History Awareness Society for leading the way on this long-overdue retelling of Black history in BC."

Hope Meets Action was curated and written by Josh Robertson and designed by Rodney Hazard.

Access to the Royal BC Museum's Pocket Gallery, located in Clifford Carl Hall on the main floor, is always free.

Visit rbcm.ca/pocketgallery to learn more.

The BC Black History Awareness Society has worked diligently for more than 25 years to keep BC's Black history from being erased. This exhibit is an important step to recognize the role Black history has played in the province by highlighting the past and present contributions of BC's Black communities. 

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Savour the flavour



The Terrace Restaurant at Monte Creek Winery.

Thompson Valley wine region serves up its own unique tastes

By Susan Lundy / Photos courtesy Tourism Kamloops

We are sitting at a picnic table in a lush, grassy setting at Monte Creek Winery near Kamloops. Rows of vines climb the hill at our backs and, looking forward, we can see the South Thompson River weaving its path through the valley.

We have tasted a wealth of

wines, from a crisp, sparkling rosé to the creamy Hands Up white and the winery's signature blueberry wine. Like the wines at Harper's Trail winery—our first stop in this Kamloops-area wine tour—the reds are delicious, but it's the whites that truly show off the region's unique flavours.

Recognized as an official wine

region in 2018, the Thompson Valley is home to one of the northernmost vinifera growing areas. The most commonly planted grapes in this region are Riesling, Marquette, Maréchal Foch and Chardonnay.

In this wine region—nestled amid the North and South Thompson rivers—well-drained soils rich in mineral

“[In this area], the rain shadow of the high coastal mountains, the semi-arid conditions and diverse microclimates provide many creative options for our winemakers to shine.”

content have resulted in white wines that are bright, crisp and aromatic, as well as fruit-forward reds. The flavours are unique to this region and it's easy to see the difference between wines here and those in the nearby Okanagan region.

According to the Wines of BC website: “On the edge of cool climate viticulture, Thompson Valley wineries are pioneering an exciting new region and expanding the boundaries of quality BC winemaking. [In this area], the rain shadow of the high coastal mountains, the semi-arid conditions and diverse microclimates provide many creative options for our winemakers to shine.”

With four wineries covering six vineyards and 120 acres under vine, the growing wine industry in the Thompson Valley is winning provincial, national and international awards.

At Harper's Trail, located right on the banks of the South Thompson River, we tasted the vintages of the area's first winery (established in 2012), seated on the patio, with hoodoos and rolling hills of sage and antelope brush behind us. The wines were all excellent, and we couldn't resist purchasing bottles of the sparkling Chardonnay and pinot noir.

Back at Monte Creek, it was time to tuck into dinner. In addition to its excellent wine, Monte Creek—Ka-

mloops' largest winery—features seasonal al fresco patio dining at The Terrace Restaurant or at the (pet-friendly) picnic tables where we sat. The menu is extensive and we savoured the cuisine along with the selection of wine samples. Ultimately, we bought bottles of red and white, the blueberry wine and a haskap berry liquor.

More purchases occurred the next day, after sampling the vintages at Privato Vineyard & Winery, which has a to-die-for selection of pinot noir and premium-quality, single-vineyard Burgundy wines. This boutique winery, which crafts wine in small batches and distributes to a small selection of restaurants and wine aficionados, is set on an eight-acre Christmas tree farm, and the patio—where we enjoyed a generously portioned charcuterie plate—is set amid a lush garden setting. A stop here should include a walk through the gardens and vines.

The fourth and final winery in the Thompson Valley wine region is Sagewood, a family-owned-and-operated boutique vineyard. While we ran out of time to visit

Sagewood on this tour, it's high on our to-do list for when we return.

On our wine tour, we were able to split our winery visits up and enjoy sipping and savouring over a few days. But those who wish to do a one-day tour have the opportunity of embarking on the journey with DiVine Tours. Specializing in groups of two to 22, the tour company is based out of Kamloops, but also provides wine and brew tours in the Shuswap, Lake Country, Kelowna, Summerland and Naramata regions.

Cheers! 🍷

The patio at Privato Vineyard & Winery.



Monte Creek Winery.



Which BC brewery offers the best overall experience?

Just a few days left to vote

By Joe Wiebe, the BC Ale Trail

British Columbia's craft breweries have built an incredible reputation for their ability to create an amazing experience for visitors—award-winning beers in infinite varieties alongside delicious food, served by proud staff who are the backbone of this warm community. Combined with the unique, modern, classic and eclectic designs of tap rooms across the province, they provide customers with a lasting impression.

Three years ago, the BC Ale Trail launched the Best Brewery Experience Award. There are many ways that breweries provide an exceptional experience besides just making great beer. For instance, the inaugural winner, Townsite Brewing in Powell River, installed an artisanal museum space called an Économusée within its brewery, which itself is located in a gorgeous historic building.

The 2019 winner, Land & Sea Brewing in Comox, was lauded for its open-concept tasting room, where customers can see the brewer in action while they sample the beers and enjoy delicious food featuring local ingredients prominently.

Last year, it was Port Alberni's Twin City Brewing that won the award both for the quality of its beer and food, and for the way it adapted to the pandemic with an eye to both its employees and its customers.

Which brewery do you think should win the 2021 Best Brewery Experience Award?

This year the BC Ale Trail has teamed up with West Coast Traveller to encourage BC residents to think about what they love about their local breweries, what makes them special, and to place a vote for their favourite.

Everyone who votes gets entered



Townsite Brewing in Powell River was the inaugural winner of the Best Brewery Experience award

into a prize draw. Two lucky voters will win a Grand Prize Weekend in Victoria, including round-trip transportation from Vancouver via Helijet, overnight accommodation, a \$100 gift certificate to the brewery of their choice and a BC Ale Trail swag pack valued at \$200. Plus, five additional lucky voters will win a \$100 gift certificate to the BC brewery of their choice and a BC Ale Trail deluxe swag pack.

To vote for the brewery you think should win the award, visit the West Coast Traveller website at westcoast-traveller.com and look for Craft Beer Enthusiasts under Contests.

What is the BC Ale Trail?

The BC Ale Trail is a series of self-guided itineraries highlighting local craft brewery destinations and the super, natural landscapes that surround them. Within each Ale Trail, you will find recommended itineraries to explore the respective destination—this includes an array of craft breweries, pubs, restaurants, cafes, liquor stores, outdoor activities, sight-seeing, accommodations and more. Ale Trail itineraries are not gospel; we recommend you venture off the grid and explore points of interest wherever you choose to visit. New experiences are brewing nearby. 🍺



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WELCOME to Williams Lake



A nurse's adventures in the 1960s Cariboo

Author Marion McKinnon Crook was just 22 years old when she arrived in the small community of Williams Lake in BC's Cariboo region as a newly qualified nurse. Always Pack a Candle: A Nurse in the Cariboo-Chilcotin is the true story of this adventurous young nurse who provided much-needed health care to these rural communities in the 1960s. Here is an excerpt:

When I was training to become a nurse, I had no intention of working within the four walls of a hospital and no interest in working in a city or suburban community. So when the Cariboo Health Unit advertised for a public health nurse, I grabbed the job.

As my bus had laboured around the winding corners on its twelve-hour trip north from the Coast, I gazed at the Thompson River dashing dangerously close to the canyon road. This was the Cariboo: blue skies, a wide

valley, and brown grass on the hills rolling into conifers at the skyline. It was a land of sunshine—a land of logging and ranching, remote from urban centres, and I was going to be part of it. Perhaps I'd read too much Zane Grey. Too late for second thoughts now; I was committed. Whatever was coming my way, I was not going to return home where my mother would immediately find a job for me, a safe and boring job, close by. I would manage.

I scanned the bus depot and the parking lot. Williams Lake, Cariboo District, the sign said. Why "Cariboo"? Why not "Caribou"? Had there been caribou here in the past? I didn't think there were any around now. Then I saw a tall, thin woman standing by a farm truck, piled high with feed sacks. She beckoned to me. I waved. She called across the lot, "Welcome to the

Cariboo." It could only be my nursing supervisor, Rita Browning. "Good trip?" she asked.

I climbed into the truck and slammed the door.

"It was long and hot, but I'm glad to be here." I wasn't going to start this job by complaining about the heat and the winding road that had made me nauseous. I was still influenced by the conventions of the Second World War era, even though that was two decades ago. "Don't complain, we'll get through it," my dad would say. My mother's adage was "If you can't say something nice, say nothing at all." My mother valued conformity. We were all pressured to conform and endure, but women were leaned on to be quiet and self-effacing as well. As a rule, I wasn't good at being quiet or self-effacing.

"We're delighted to have you,

Marion. Welcome to Williams Lake." Her British accent was still strong, although she told me she'd been here for years. I knew the Cariboo-Chilcotin District in this most western province of Canada was 104,000 square miles, the size of New Zealand or the United Kingdom. I'd looked it up in Encyclopedia Britannica. I wasn't prepared for the openness, the vast expanse of rolling hills and grass-

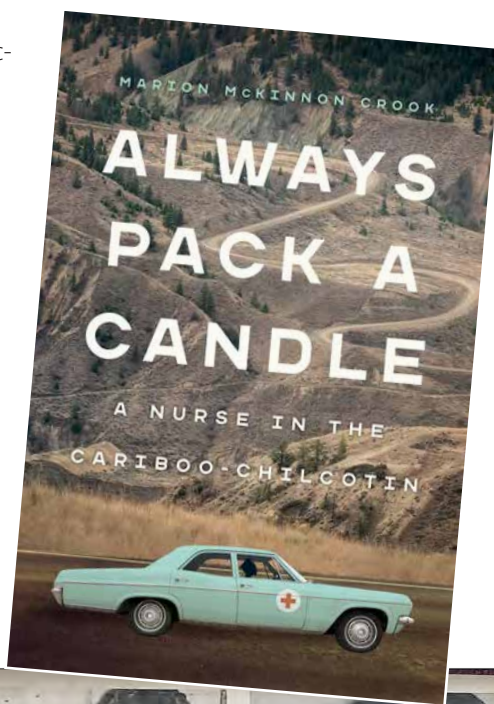
I would be alone out there in the far reaches of the district. There would be no one to check to see if I was correct about a diagnosis or the dosage of a medication.

lands, the miles of hillsides covered in evergreens. Were they fir? Or pine? The sparkling air fresh, dry, invigorating. The description on the printed page somehow hadn't translated to the almost overwhelming awe of the landscape. The Cariboo was huge. I was fascinated and eager to explore. This was where I wanted to be. Would there be moose, bear, coyotes, deer, mountain lions? Probably not caribou. I asked Rita about that.

"No, no caribou." She yanked on the steering wheel, piloting us much too fast for comfort through the almost empty streets. Williams Lake was a small town, serving the ranchers, loggers, and sawmill operators and their families, she'd told me on the phone when she'd offered me the job. She'd said I'd be responsible for the area east of Williams Lake and, at times, the vast ranching country to the west. It looked immense when we stopped for a moment at one of the road's high points. Hills sloped out for miles. I could see the faint blue of mountains.

I swallowed. I was a newly graduated public health nurse. I had the theory: anatomy, physiology, biology, chemistry, organic chemistry, mathematics, microbiology, sociol-

ogy, psychology, ethics, and even philosophy . . . but not much practice. Public Health Nurses were expected to cover vast amounts of territory, so much of my work would be focused on getting to those remote areas. I would be alone out there in the far reaches of the district. There would be no one to check to see if I was correct about a diagnosis or the dosage of a medication. No books to get more information. No doctor. No other nurses. Probably no phone for miles. What had seemed like an adventure when I first applied for the job was beginning to look overwhelming.



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AT THE CLINIC: (From top left) Marion McKinnon is given her "share" of diphtheria, whooping cough, and tetanus vaccine by nurse McKinnon, while her mother, Mrs. Cyril Jackson of 150 Mile House, and small daughter look on with interest. This clinic at the Riverside Health Centre took a full two hours of the nurse's day.



AT THE HOME of Mr. and Mrs. (bottom left) Marion McKinnon, who is giving her "share" of diphtheria, whooping cough, and tetanus vaccine by nurse McKinnon, while her mother, Mrs. Cyril Jackson of 150 Mile House, and small daughter look on with interest. This clinic at the Riverside Health Centre took a full two hours of the nurse's day.



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AT THE SCHOOL: Marion McKinnon checks over the teeth of Richard Pitts, 12, and gives him advice on brushing, flossing, and using a toothbrush. The 12-year-old boy is one of 17 children in the class who are being examined for dental problems.



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THE WILLIAMS LAKE TRIBUNE

Williams Lake, B.C., Wednesday, November 20, 1963

SECOND FRONT

HER DAY
 During her morning shift, Marion McKinnon, 32, started her work as a public health nurse at the Williams Lake Health Centre at 8:30 a.m. She was the only nurse on duty at the time. She was the only nurse on duty at the time. She was the only nurse on duty at the time.



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ALSTON THEATRE

10:00 PM, 8:00 PM, 7:00 PM

WED. 20	THUR. 21	FRI. 22	SAT. 23
IN THE DOGHOUSE A hilarious comedy about two teenagers who find themselves in a hilarious situation. LINDA PHILLIPS BARRY ALLEN FRANK CUNNINGHAM JAMES DOUGHERTY		POSSE FROM HELL A great Western of law and order with a twist. BOB HOPE BOB HOPE BOB HOPE BOB HOPE	
COUNTERFEIT TRAITOR The exciting, gripping, suspenseful and thrilling story of a man's experience as an agent in the Soviet Union. WILLIAM HOLDEN JOHN CRAWFORD		COUNTERFEIT TRAITOR The exciting, gripping, suspenseful and thrilling story of a man's experience as an agent in the Soviet Union. WILLIAM HOLDEN JOHN CRAWFORD	

SECOND SHOW STARTS 7:30 PM

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Hard-working birds of prey can be seen at The Raptors visitor centre

Birds of prey have always inspired awe—they are silent predators of the sky, swooping down with precision speed and deadly intent. Not only are raptors' natural skills fascinating to see, but some can also play an important role in working to save human lives and millions of dollars.

Bird strike risk at airports is a very real threat to human safety. Many airports provide attractive habitats for bird species, and may be built on migratory flyways or estuaries. The presence of birds and the risk they pose can be mitigated by many wildlife management strategies, including trained raptors.

Raptors can be an effective solution for controlling a variety of species,

including gulls, starlings, crows, robins, geese and other birds. As natural predators, the use of hawks, falcons and eagles at airports offers an alternative to shooting, poisoning or trapping.

Using traditional falconry techniques, The Raptors, a birds-of-prey wildlife organization based in the Cowichan Valley, helps control these species at a variety of industrial sites like airports, landfills and others areas.

Working with trained birds of prey at airports and other industrial sites is effective, quiet and natural, and the birds love their jobs. It's a win-win-win for wildlife management, animal welfare and environmental conservation.

The Raptors organization works across Canada at various sites, provid-

ing services that include falconry-based wildlife management, but also traditional techniques, including pyrotechnics, distress calls, chasing, habitat and management recommendations. In addition to this highly specific and unique work, The Raptors also works hard to engage people about wildlife conservation and the immediate need to protect our planet before it is too late.

The Raptors' Cowichan Valley visitor centre on Vancouver Island offers a variety of opportunities to learn about and connect with birds of prey. Throughout the day, flying demonstrations highlight the birds' unique flying skills. Visitors can also get closer to these remarkable birds by participat-



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ing in hands-on learning encounters.

A hawk walk experience engages visitors by encouraging a hawk to fly directly onto their outstretched arm. A close encounter introduces visitors to several different raptor species on their gloved hand as well as participating in a hawk walk. Other opportunities offer more chances for in-depth learning.

Rarely do people connect with nature and birds of prey in such an intimate way. The Raptors' goal is to bring their amazing birds closer to people with the intent of inspiring visitors to want to make changes that will help protect natural spaces. The best way to understand nature and the importance of raptors is to see and engage with them up close. Visit The Raptors centre today. 🇨🇦

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Hidden Treasures



Ceramic artist Ed Oldfield kneels next to his current raku pottery display at the Qualicum Art Supply and Gallery, July 5, 2021. (Mandy Moraes photo)

Artist leaves raku pottery to be discovered across Vancouver Island, Powell River

By Mandy Moraes, westcoasttraveller.com

A Powell River artist who fell in love with raku-fired ceramics more than three decades ago has hidden pieces of his work on Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast for people to take home.

Ed Oldfield said he was first introduced to raku pottery while attending a British Columbia Art Teachers' Association workshop in 1989.

"It was just absolutely stunning," he says. "And I thought, 'I have to figure out how to do this.'"

Raku firing is an ancient Japanese ceramics technique that has been used for centuries to create a unique finish to wares. In this technique, glazed ceramics are taken

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from the kiln while still red hot and placed on a combustible material such as sawdust or newspaper. This starves the piece of oxygen, ultimately creating a range of colours within the glaze: the colour of the finish is determined by the minerals in the glaze, the temperature of the clay piece, the type of humidity of the combustibles and how fast the oxygen burns off.

"When working with raku, the magic is that by the end of the day I don't know what I'm going to get," Oldfield says.

To show his love for the process, Oldfield has an ongoing art project where he creates raku sea stars and hides them on public beaches on Vancouver Island, Powell River and the Lower Mainland.

On the bottom of each sea star, he sketches his website's address, edsraku.com, so people can contact him once they have found his work in the wild. The project first started years ago, Oldfield said, at a year-end beach party for his Grade Seven class.

Wanting to give each student a unique parting gift, he thought to create raku sea stars and hide them among driftwood and sand for the youngsters to find. Since he wanted to make sure everyone found a piece, he created more ceramics than there were students, leaving several sea stars undiscovered.

The beginning of the current project started that summer when strangers reached out to him once they had found an unclaimed sea star.

To this day, Oldfield says, he keeps the project going as a fun way to put his work into the world for people to enjoy.

"Sometimes months will go by before someone emails me. And then sometimes, I'll get multiple emails a week!"


Since July 1, 2021, however, Oldfield has started a new similar project, involving orange maple leaves instead of sea stars.

He calls it his 215 Project, where each maple leaf commemorates and honours the remains of the 215 Indigenous children uncovered earlier this year at a former BC residential school in Kamloops.

He anticipates the project will take

To this day, Oldfield says, he keeps the project going as a fun way to put his work into the world for people to enjoy.

a year to complete, both to create all 215 leaves and to hide them along beaches and hiking trails on Vancouver Island and in Powell River.

Oldfield's work is currently on display at the Qualicum Art Supply and Gallery, as well as at galleries in Oak Bay, Duncan, Bowser and Tofino. 

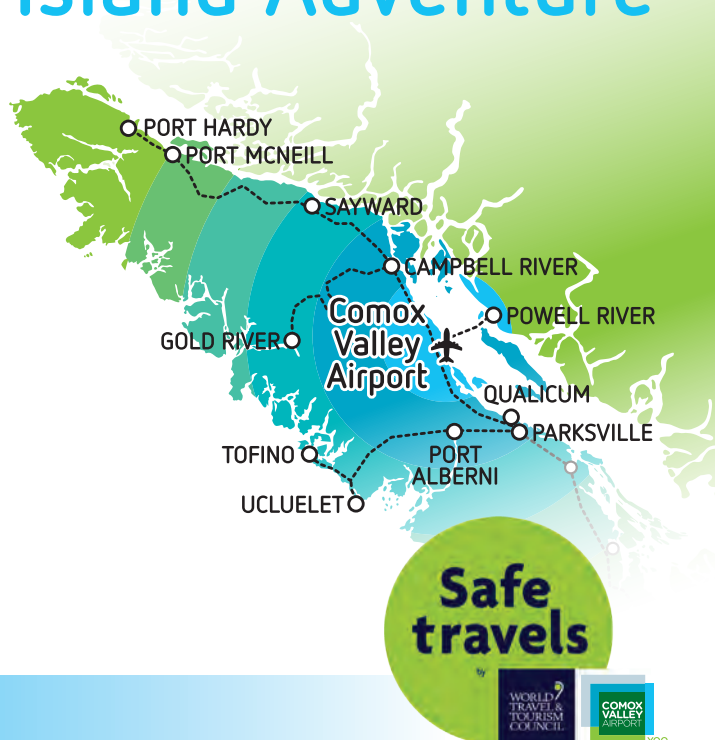
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