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EAGLE

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Issue #1 Volume #10

February 13, 2026

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What A Friggon Vew

Photo — Kathy O'Reilly

Alice Lake is now visible from Highway 30 thanks to a new cut block that has added a beautiful viewpoint and will let sun shine on an area that is traditionally icy.

Thieves steal copper

By Kathy O'Reilly

Thieves have just robbed the citizens of Port Alice.

The Quatsino Chalet Annex has been broken into several times recently and copper pipe and electrical wiring have been removed causing considerable damage which will cost tens of thousands of dollars to repair.

The Annex belongs to the Village of Port Alice since the former owners failed to redeem it in the annual tax sale.

"The thieves who broke in have not just stolen from the Village, they have also stolen from every property owner who pays taxes in the Village," said Chief Administrative Officer Bonnie Danyk.

The Village is in the process of deciding if they want to sell the building at market value or renovate it and use it for housing.

Continued on Page 2

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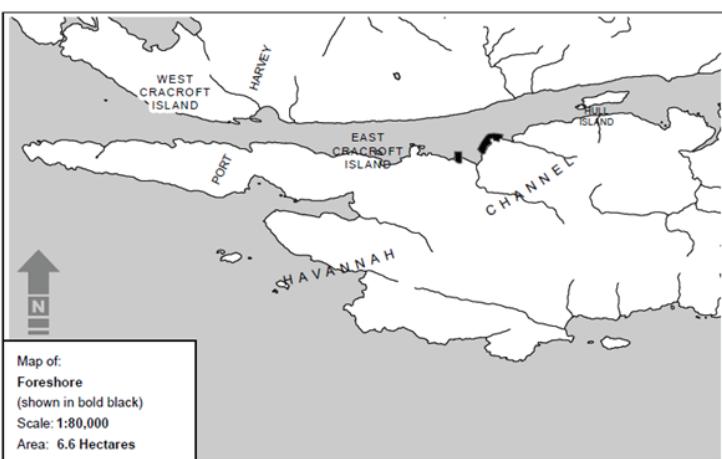
LANDS FILE #1413644

BC Timber Sales, Seaward (tlasta) Business Area in Port McNeill hereby gives notice that the successful bidder for timber sale license TSL TA2735 will make an application to the Ministry of Water, Land, and Resource Stewardship for a License of Occupation for industrial log handling, dumping, booming, storage, and a barge camp. The site is situated on Provincial Crown land located on West Cracroft Island.

The Lands File Number that has been established for this application is **1413644**.

Comments will be accepted by BCTS up to **March 13, 2026** (30 days after publication date). BCTS may not be able to consider comments received after this date.

Comments regarding the disposition of Crown land may be sent to the BCTS Forest Technician Steven Bowker or Woodlands Supervisor Shauna Cryer by mail at **PO Box 7000, 2217 Mine Road, Port McNeill, B.C., V0N 2R0** or by email to Steven.Bowker@gov.bc.ca or Shauna.Cryer@gov.bc.ca. Please be sure to cite the applicant's name and the location of the proposed activity and reference Lands File Number #1413644.



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Photo — Vancouver Island North Film Commission
Kelsey Bay wharf in Sayward is featured in scenes for the movie 'Exchange'.

Kelsey Bay features in film production

A feature film began shooting at Sayward's Kelsey Bay this month.

The production, titled Exchange, is being filmed in Sayward, Campbell River and nearby locations from

Feb. 1 to 14. Exchange is described as a character-focused drama with strong thriller elements. The story follows an 18-year-old Thai exchange student who vanishes while studying in

Canada. Her mother travels overseas to search for her, confronting cultural challenges, isolation and unsettling clues as she navigates an unfamiliar country. During her search, she forms a connection with a Thai teenager living in Canada, and together they work to uncover what happened. As the investigation deepens, tensions surrounding the exchange program and the student's host family begin to surface.

Written and directed by Chatchai Hongsirikun, the film is being produced as a non union feature.

The production is expected to bring economic benefits to Northern Vancouver Island, including increased demand for accommodations, local services and short-term employment. Community participation is also a key priority, helping highlight the region's landscapes and small-town character on screen.

Robbers rip off thousands of copper

Continued from Page 1

One of the first tasks to be done is a condition assessment on the building.

"This will give us a baseline of what will need to be repaired immediately as well as an understanding of what services are shared with the Quatsino Hotel (heating, hydro) and what the process would be to sever them," Danyk said previously.

Residents are being asked to report any suspicious activity they may have observed to the RCMP.

This may include any camera footage in the areas surrounding the Chalet or any neighbours who suddenly have a pile of copper pipe or wiring in their carport, back yard or storage areas.

The non-emergency phone number for the RCMP is 250-949-6335.

Residents are also advised to keep their vehicles locked, their belongings secure and to check on any neighbouring properties that may be currently unoccupied.

McNeill celebrates 60th anniversary of incorporation

By Kathy O'Reilly

Port McNeill's 60th birthday celebrations kick off Wednesday, Feb. 18 at the Chilton Regional Arena from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The party will include free skating, hotdogs and hot chocolate as well as music, festivities, birthday cake, and goodie bags.

"We would love to see everyone come out, join in the festivities and share some memories," said Town of Port McNeill Chief Administrative Officer Brenda Johnson.

"We are also planning a bigger, outdoor party closer to the end of May. Details to follow," Johnson said.

According to Brenda McCorquodale's Undiscovered Coast blog, the Kwakiutl traditionally used the area at the head of the bay called Pulkukglalis (meaning thin beach at hind end) as a village site and fishing station.

In the late 1830s this location was an important strategic trading place between the Hudson's Bay Company and local First Nations. In 1837 and 1838 the Steamship Beaver obtained over 500 beaver pelts from First Nations in McNeill Harbour. It is also believed that while anchored in the harbour the crew went ashore to cut firewood.

McNeill Harbour and Port McNeill are named for Captain William Henry McNeill, who was the captain of the Beaver, and who served for a time as Chief Factor at Fort Rupert.

The harbour was surveyed by the Royal Navy's ship Plumper in 1860.

During the latter part of the 1800s and early 1900s McNeill Harbour was used by local people as a prime location to hunt deer and fowl. By the 1920s a number of small loggers were operating in the area.

In the 1930s McNeill Harbour began to attract the attention of larger forestry interests. By 1936 a camp had

been set up on the beach by three partners: Storey, Hoy, and Chisnall.

In 1937 Pioneer Timber Company established a logging camp near the present site of the Port McNeill waterfront. Pioneer Timber had started on Malcolm Island in 1933 and logged at Rough Bay. The camp was floated to McNeill from Malcolm Island and included

bunk houses for 250 single men and a few families, a washhouse and a cookhouse. About the time Pioneer Timber was moving to Port McNeill, the N.S. McNeil Trading Company, a subsidiary of a Japanese firm, bought up private land to the West of Port McNeill and began to log.

By 1939 this company had contracted its logging operations to C&A Logging (owned by Phelan Cyr and Bob Allan). Situated on the southwest side of the bay, C&A Logging established a camp for about 60 loggers and other associated staff. In 1941 the Canadian Government's Custodian of Alien Property seized the assets of the N.S. McNeil Trading Company, and the rights to the local timber changed hands.

As the camp grew, so did its services: a poker shack, pool hall and barber shop, community hall (which also served as a library and for a time a coffee shop), and Guide/Scout Hall were all constructed. By the 1950s the community was transformed from a camp housing mostly transient single men to one which was more family oriented.

In 1961 local businesses that served the 400 residents

An initial one-room school served the community until 1954 when a larger facility was constructed in which

began to work together on issues of common community interest. They formed the Port McNeill Chamber of Commerce in 1963 which eventually led to the incorporation of the Town of Port McNeill on February 18, 1966.

In its early days, the town fathers had the foresight to set aside 25 acres of land in the centre of town for the development of municipal facilities.

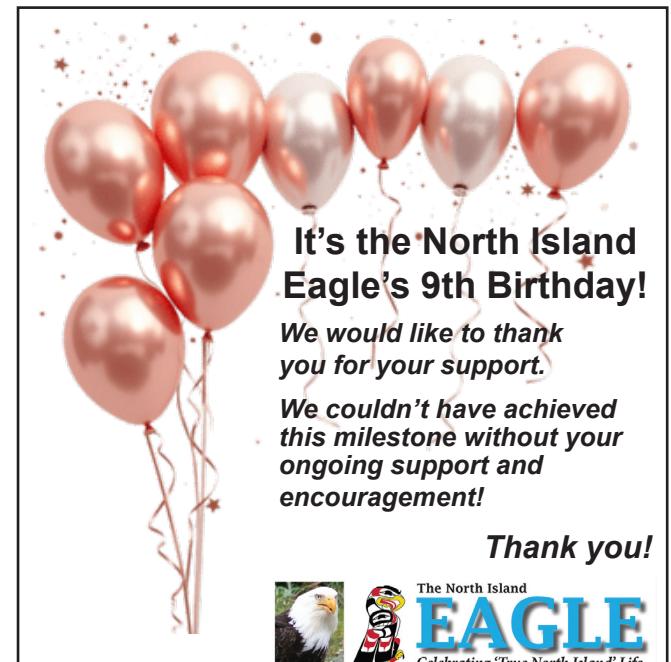
As the town expanded up the hill this municipal land was developed, and now houses a park, high school, track, curling rink, and swimming pool. A local hospital was constructed even further up the hill in 1979.

Port McNeill has continued

to grow and diversify. In addition to logging and mining, the community today houses a number of government offices and plays an important

role in the tourism and aquaculture industries.

It is also an important transportation hub for the North Island.



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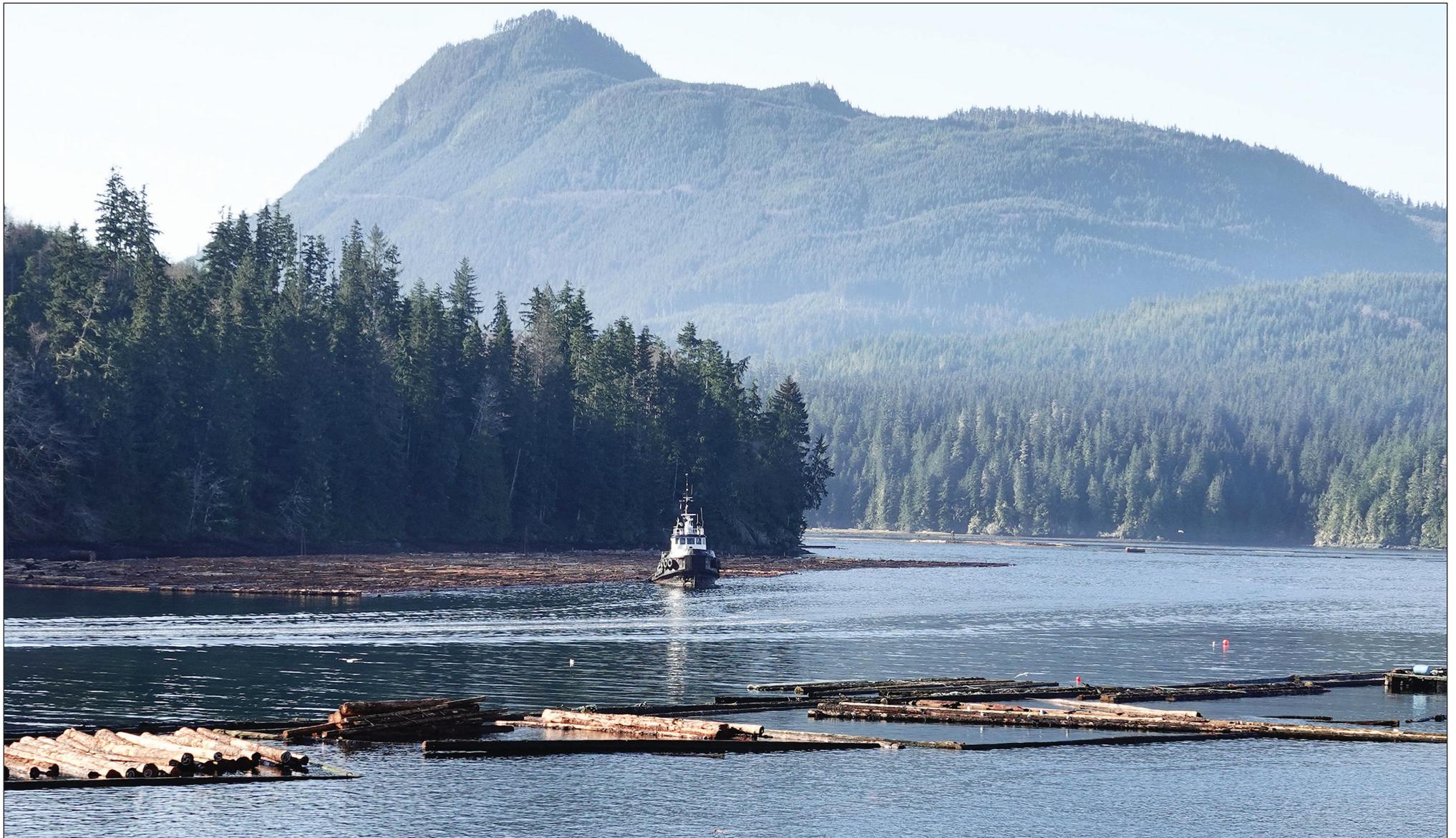


Photo — Robin Quirk, Robin's Eye Photography

Beaver Cove on the way to Telegraph Cove.



The North Island
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— Our beautiful First Nation's eagle (kwíkw) courtesy Nakwaxda'xw artist Davis Henderson
 Cover eagle photo James O'Reilly
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The return of the big house a cultural milestone

British Columbia and Northern Vancouver Island are home to generations of remarkable peoples and cultures, with a history stretching back millennia.

The First Peoples, along with settlers and more recent newcomers, have shaped a land rooted in tradition... a place where the Pacific Northwest's unique heritage is forever tied to both land and sea. The province itself is home to over two hundred Indigenous Nations, each with its own customs, traditions, and amounting to thirty-six distinct languages. This ongoing evolution reflects a vibrant people where centuries and cultures intersect, sharing values through art, totem poles, ceremonies, and a collective connection to humanity that celebrates the Island's extraordinary diversity.

Recently Chris and I had the privilege of touring the newly built "Big House"... a significant and meaningful milestone in Port Hardy for two Nations, Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw people of Northern Vancouver Island.

In 2025, these two Nations celebrated the return of this cultural space after more than fifty years without one! In the 1960s, government authorities forcibly relocated the Gwa'sala and 'Nakwaxda'xw from their ancestral lands along Smith and Seymour Inlets (including Takush, Blunden Harbour, and Ba'sas) to the Tsulquate reserve in Port Hardy. Although they were provided



european-style single-family homes, the indigenous community was not given a "Big House;" an essential space of profound cultural and spiritual significance. The absence of this traditional gathering place severed a vital link to their identity and heritage.

The Big House, or Long House, has always been central to Indigenous community life. Traditionally, these impressive cedar structures sheltered extended families or entire clans, providing warmth, comfort, and a tangible sense of belonging. Under one roof, multiple families shared daily life, responsibilities, and resources. The Big House functioned as a hub for governance, education, storytelling, ceremonial gatherings, feasts, potlatches, support, and the vital passing down of traditions, kinship, and social status. It was, and remains, the heart of social organization and cultural continuity of a proud people; a powerful cultural theatre of learning, belonging, and symbol of unity.

As we entered the Big

House, we were immediately struck by the beauty of its cedar interior.

The walls, rafters, and ceiling all crafted from red and yellow cedar.... Wonderfully enveloping a sand-covered floor, with a central fire pit and raised benches along the sides.

At each end stood cedar doors flanked by four elaborately carved totem poles, stretching from floor to ceiling. These poles, sourced from Belize Inlet and Nahwitti Lake, were transformed into representations of dzunukwa (the woman of the woods), beavers, thunderbirds, and a kolas (little thunderbird).... all symbols of the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw. Master carver Junior Henderson, with the assistance of Walter Brown, Jeremy Wamiss, Alex Heuman, and Talon George, brought these forms to life.

Carving techniques have been passed from elder to mentee for generations. The crests were chosen by elders and designed by Bill Henderson Jr.'s uncle, who also passed down his expertise.



Photo — Chris Patterson

At each end of the new big house on the Gwa'sala-Nakwaxda'xw Nations are wood cedar doors flanked by four elaborately carved totem poles, stretching from floor to ceiling.

Relatives Jonathan and Greg Henderson, master carvers, contributed to this important collaborative project.

As we viewed the architecture and artistry of the Big House, from its immense cedar beams to its carved house posts, it spoke to us of stories of ancestors, community laws, and the sacred relationship between people and the land... a respect we are called to honour. The historical significance of the structure made us even more prideful of our North Island, its forested naturalness, mountains, and rugged

coastal marine environment.

We both saw in the Big House's artistry proof of the enduring spirit and heritage of the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw.

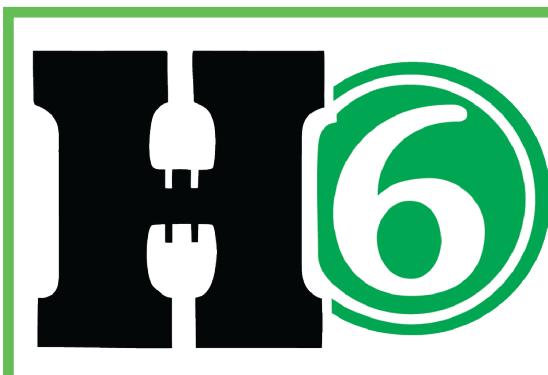
The gukwdzi (Big House) is more than a wooden structure; it is a living legacy that will nurture community, culture, and identity for generations of young people to come, as well as the broader multicultural populations of Port Hardy.

The air was thick with the scent of cedar, and sunlight filtered through the ceiling, casting patterns across the

painted totem designs. These poles symbolizing clans and history, served as a tangible link of a people to the land and sea.

The massive yellow cedar logs centuries old supporting the roof, were carefully chosen from the ancestral forests of the Nations. Each log, gathered from Smith Inlet, Seymour Inlet, and neighbouring islands, carries the spirit and story of its homeland, reinforcing the Big House's role as a living symbol of a People's connection to the land.

Continued on Page 6



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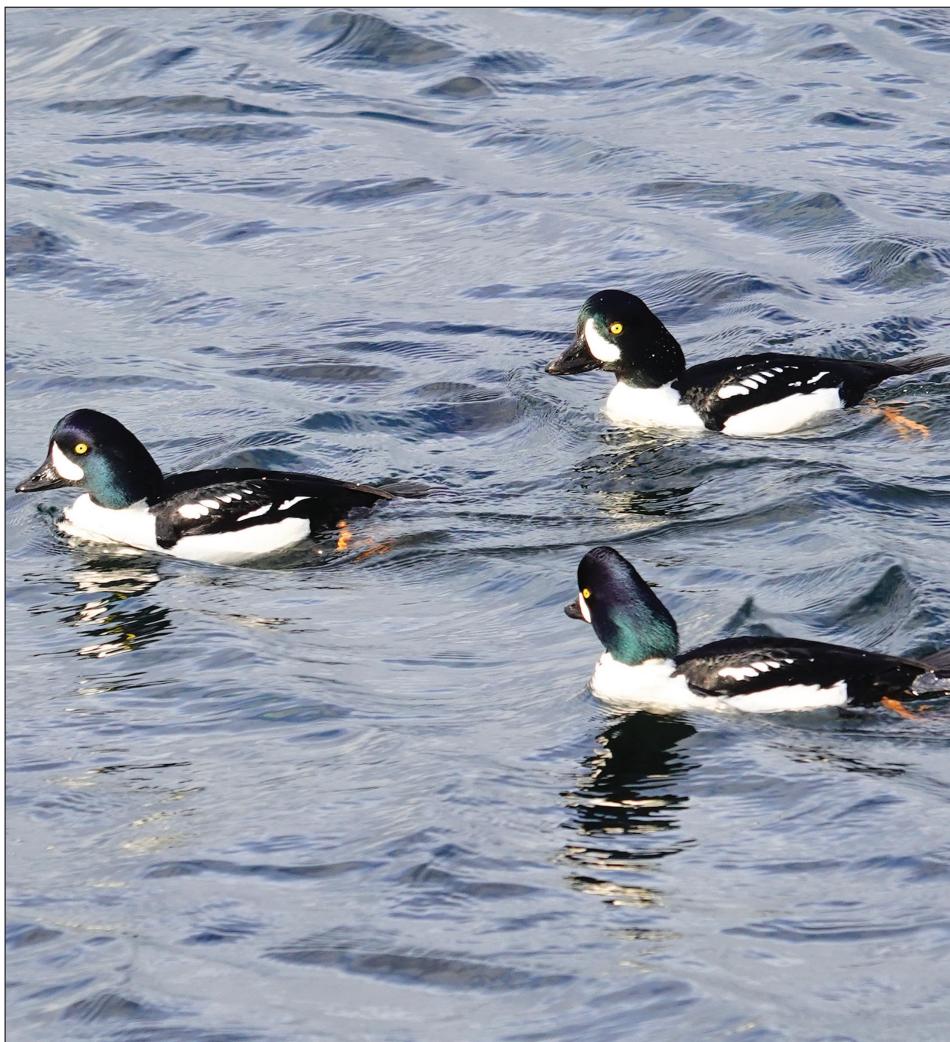
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North Island **Reflections**—



Barrow's Goldeneye males court females using elaborate displays that include twisting and pumping their heads. Ducklings are very independent. They leave the nest just a day or two after hatching to follow their mother to the water. They also feed on their own and fly after about eight weeks. Photo by Robin Quirk, Robin's Eye Photography. If you have a photo you would like to share with our readers please email publisher@northislandeagle.com.

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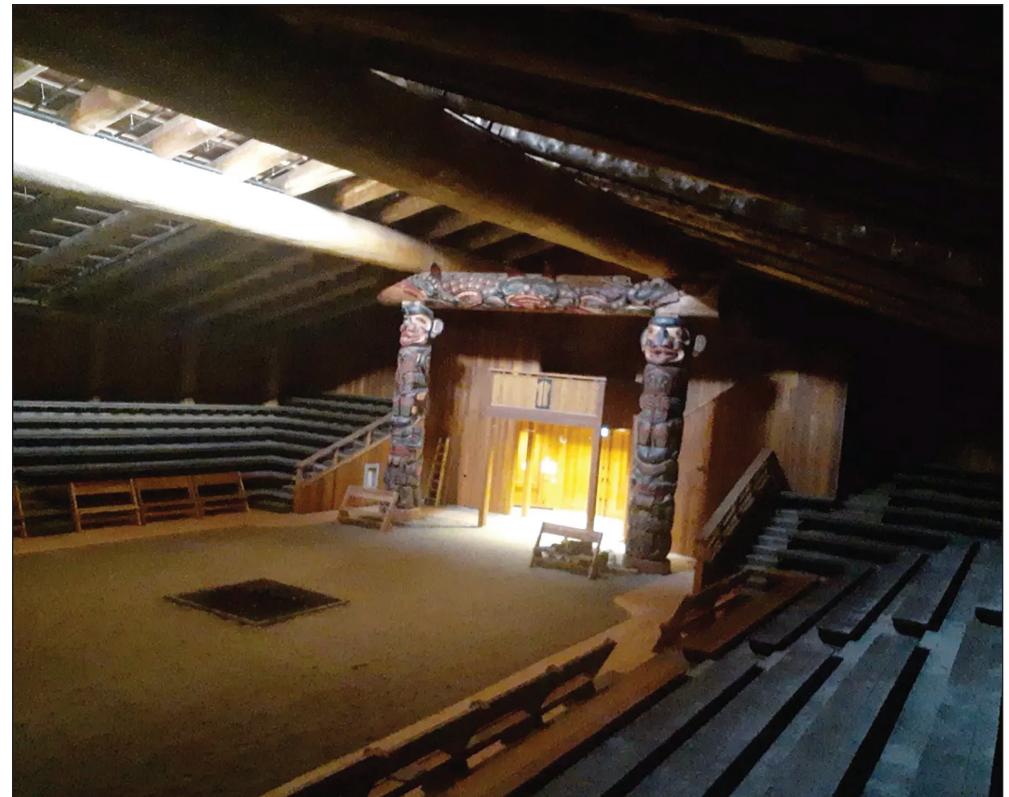


Photo — Christine Patterson

The new big house, capable of hosting 1,000 people, includes a sand-covered floor, with a central fire pit and raised benches along the sides

Gukwdzi, big house, a symbol of past, present and future

Continued from Page 6

In this space, I felt the presence of generations past.... imagining the beat of drums, dancers in traditional regalia celebrating life's milestones, and elders sharing stories of legendary beings and life lessons.

I felt the Big House not only as a restored cultural symbol but also a vital place for affirming identity and connecting the past with the future.

It is destined to serve as the heart of the community's spiritual and social life, hosting gatherings, ceremonies, and decision-making. The resurgence of this sacred space brings hope and healing and fosters reconciliation with the past, ensuring the survival and renewal of the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw culture for those yet to come.

Our hosts generously shared insights into the building process, the obstacles they overcame, and the deep significance the Big House holds for the community at large.

The pride of the construction team was evident as they described how the gukwdzi

will once again be a site for potlatches, feasts, and teachings for youth and elders alike.

We felt both welcomed and humbled, enveloped by the warmth of community, and the weight of history lessened at every turn. Standing within the vast, cedar-filled space, surrounded by symbols of clan and history.

We were moved by feelings of hope and renewal in the new Big House.

Christine and I were sincerely grateful for the invitation to experience the new gukwdzi firsthand. The sheer scale of the interior, capable of hosting over a thousand people, was matched only by the beauty of the hand-carved totem poles and beams that tell the stories of the ancestors and the living Nation.

We are thankful for the opportunity to witness this monument to past, present, and future, to share in the Big House spirit, and all that it brings to the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw Nations.

*Safe travels,
Gord*

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lifestyles & leisure

Shilling's contribution to street soccer earns award

By Kathy O'Reilly

The Social Planning and Research Council of British Columbia hosted a community recognition event on Feb. 4, at the Port Hardy Museum to honour long-time community advocate Grant Shilling as the recipient of the Deryck Thomson Award.

Shilling was recognized for his impactful work supporting community members through Canadian Street Soccer Association programming and outreach initiatives in the North

Island region. Through his leadership and mentorship, Shilling has helped create safe, inclusive recreational opportunities for individuals experiencing homelessness, poverty, mental health challenges, and social isolation. His work extends beyond sport, fostering connection, confidence, teamwork, and community belonging for participants. Street Soccer programs are internationally recognized as powerful tools for engagement, bringing individuals together through accessible recreation while also connecting participants with support services and social networks. Shilling has played a vital role in sustaining and growing these programs locally, helping participants build confidence, improve well-being, and strengthen their connection to the community. The recognition event brought together community members, service providers, and local leaders to celebrate Shilling's contributions and highlight the importance of in-



Photo — Kathy O'Reilly

Port Hardy Mayor Pat Corbett-Labatt, recipient of the Deryck Thomson Award Grant Shilling, and Social Planning and Research Council of British Columbia President Wes Hewitt at a community recognition event on Feb. 4.

clusive recreation and community engagement in improving quality of life for vulnerable populations. "It has been a big success story for our community. We've been able to give our loved ones an opportunity to play soccer - something that has really resonated throughout the community of Port Hardy," said Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw Councillor Darryl Coon.

"I just want to say thank you Grant for the commitment that you've bestowed upon our loved ones," Coon said.

"Honestly, the privilege is all mine. I'd really like to give a shout out to Darryl and Davis (Henderson) for being so

welcoming," said Shilling in response to the recognition. "I get as much out of it as anybody else. I probably get sorcer joints than everybody else, too," Shilling joked. "It's been really special. We've tried to tie in some of the culture into what we are doing," including a Kwak'wala team song and logo for jerseys. "We're hoping to bring at least four or five players to the national tourney in Montreal," and an international tournament in Mexico City in October, he said. "People say 'Well I'm not good at soccer', and I always say 'I suck at soccer' but my whole approach and motto is if you are playing, you are winning and that's really what it is all about. The only goal is fun, inclusion, community, health, feeling a sense of belonging, and underlying all of that, is love." The award recognizes individuals who demonstrate exceptional dedication to community inclusion, social connection, and improving opportunities for individuals experiencing marginalization. The award is named in honour of Thomson, a passionate advocate for social inclusion and community building whose legacy continues to inspire grassroots leadership across British Columbia.



Photo — Kathy O'Reilly

Washing For The Woos

Port McNeill Fire Rescue hosted a community fund-raiser for Chris Woo and his family. The event, Feb. 7, included a car wash, barbecue, bake sale as well as a silent auction, and raised \$6,550. Woo is Community Development and Engagement Manager for the Town of Port McNeill and a volunteer firefighter.

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Annual General Meetings

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of The Owners' Strata Plan No. 349, Cedar Heights Mobile Home Park, will be held on Sunday, February 22, 2026 at 11:00 am. Please refer to the contents of AGM mailout for more information of this meeting.

Coming Events



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Obituary

Rick Davidge - Nov. 1, 1954 - Feb. 2, 2026

"I read of a man who stood to speak
At the funeral of a friend
He referred to the dates on the tombstone
From the beginning - to the end
He noted that first came the date of birth
Then spoke the following date with tears
But he said that what mattered most of all
Was the dash between the years
For that dash represents all the time
That they spent alive on earth
And now only those who loved him
Know what that line was worth
If we treat each other with respect
And more often wear a smile
Remember that this special dash
Might only last a little while"



Excerpt from the poem The Dash by Linda Ellis

After a short and very hard fought battle with cancer Rick left us.

Rick worked for the District of Port Hardy for many years and held a variety of positions. He always said that being the Wharfinger was his favourite job because he was around the water and boats. He was also Recreation Director and at the end of his DOPH career he was the Chief Administrative Officer for the municipality of Port Hardy.

However that is not who Rick was. This is the important part of Rick...

Rick was a loving son and brother. He was an uncle, a cousin, a nephew and a friend. Most of all he was a Dad and a husband. He was a Grandpa of 7 children who loved him dearly. He recently became a Great Grandpa of a little boy who won't remember meeting him but will learn all about his GG through stories and pictures.

In his youth Rick swam almost every day, biking across the City of Victoria before and after school to swim at the Crystal Pool. This led him into competitive swimming and he won many awards and medals. To watch him in the water was a thing of beauty.

Rick loved the North Island and everything that nature afforded us here. Like many of his Davidge cousins he was an avid outdoorsman who loved camping and fishing and hunting. He knew the logging roads like the back of his hand and we spent many hours road running. He lived on the North Island for most of his adult life, in Port Alice, Port Hardy and finally for the last 18 years in Coal Harbour where he retired with the boat moored close by, our gardens and a beautiful view of the ocean and mountains right out front.

On February 1st, with the counselling of our doctor and the support of family members, Rick made his final decision. He was tired of the fight and he said he was ready. We were fortunate that we had all the precious time we needed to say our goodbyes, to tell him how important he was to his family, to tell him he was loved, and to reassure him that we would be ok. That we were ready to let him go.

We want to acknowledge the entire medical community who took care of Rick. Dr. Una Conradi and Dr. Tom McKeough who took such excellent care of Rick at the end of his life. We thank you for your skill and compassion.

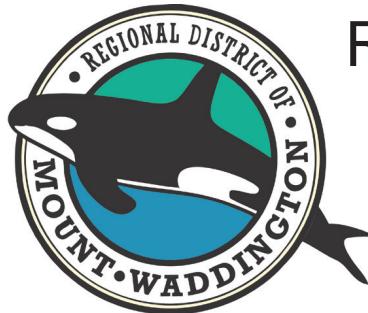
We want to acknowledge Rick's nurses, who looked after everything Rick needed and made sure his pain was constantly managed. Nurses and Care Aides who not only cared for Rick with empathy and kindness but who cared for all of us as we moved through the grief of saying goodbye. Nurses who were so invested in treating him with dignity and respect. Who helped and made sure I was ok when I slept in his room. Your unlimited capacity for sympathy and kindness will stay with me forever. The words thank you do not begin to come close to expressing the gratitude our family feels for all of you.

We would also like to thank the emergency room staff lab techs at the Port McNeill Hospital Thank you

Hardy Bay Pharmacy and everyone who works there, always available whether filling a prescription quickly, giving us advice or even just a hug. Small town business who makes a point of knowing and caring about our community. Thank you.

Rick's passing has been a profound experience for all of our family and in moments of darkness you all gave us light.

We love you Rick



REGIONAL DISTRICT OF MOUNT WADDINGTON

CHIEF ELECTIONS OFFICER

(Temporary Contract Position)

The RDMW is a Regional Local Government that serves approximately 11,000 residents across Northern Vancouver Island and parts of BC's Central Coast. Our jurisdiction includes the municipalities of Alert Bay, Port Alice, Port Hardy, Port McNeill, and unincorporated communities such as Coal Harbour, Holberg, Hyde Creek, Sointula, Winter Harbour, Woss and others.

The Regional District is seeking an experienced and qualified individual who will assume the role of Chief Elections Officer for the 2026 Local Government Election. Reporting directly to the Chief Administrative Officer, the Chief Election Officer will oversee and coordinate all aspects of the election process including:

- Ensuring all required election proceedings are observed and enforced
- Hiring and training of election day staff
- Securing and coordinating the polling locations
- Ordering and preparing supplies for the polling locations
- Preparing all statutory notices, declarations, forms and nomination packages
- Preparing the Voters List
- Preparing statistics and reports for the Regional District and Elections BC
- Coordinating the School Trustee election with School District No. 85

The ideal Candidate will:

- Have prior experience administering a local government election as a Chief Election Officer or Deputy
- Have knowledge of and be able to interpret legislation pertaining to elections
- Be extremely organized and detail oriented
- Possess strong interpersonal and communication skills
- Be proficient with Microsoft Office and familiar with web based applications
- Be a self starter requiring little to no direction
- Have a positive and energetic approach to work
- Possess a valid class 5 BC Driver's license and vehicle

Please apply to cao@rdmw.bc.ca by **February 19, 2026 at 4:00 pm.**

Please ensure that your cover letter is addressed to David Kim, Chief Administrative Officer.
Commitment to Inclusion

The RDMW is an equal opportunity employer. We welcome applications from all qualified individuals, including indigenous peoples, visible minorities, persons with disabilities, and others who reflect the diversity of the communities we serve.

We acknowledge with respect and gratitude that the RDMW operates on the traditional territory of the Kwakwaka'wakw People. We are committed to building respectful relationships with indigenous communities and upholding reconciliation in both policy and practice.

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Royal LePage Advance Realty
4-7035 Market Street, Port Hardy, BC**250-949-7231****Melanie McRann**
Cell: 778-886-5219**FEATURE HOMES OF THE WEEK****403-7450 Rupert Street, Port Hardy \$142,000**

MLS® # 1023576

New price!

This top-floor, west facing 2-bedroom, 1-bath condo is move-in ready. Perfect starter or retirement home or great for rental income. The galley kitchen opens to a dining area, which is open to the living room with direct access to your private balcony. The primary features a walk-in closet. Large in-unit storage closet. Recent exterior updates, including siding, windows, patio doors and upgraded elevator. Inside, the building is continuing to get updates with paint and flooring. A great offering at a great price.

925 Haida Avenue, Port Alice \$375,000

MLS® # 987976



Wonderful 3+ bed, 3 bath home. Ocean and mountain views. Pass-through into the kitchen adds character and extra counter/sitting space. Primary has 2-piece ensuite. 2 more bedrooms and full bath finish off the main floor. Downstairs is a large rec room space with attached den or extra bedroom area, full bath, laundry room, and converted carport area - could be used as extra living space, workshop or home business space. Central vacuum system. The lot size is just under 1/4 acre and has bountiful established garden beds.

92 McKay Crescent, Port Alice \$149,000

MLS® # 1014521



Welcome to this cozy, affordable 2 bedroom and 2 bath townhouse in picturesque Port Alice! Enter from your covered carport to find a spacious living room/dining room, galley style kitchen, good size master bedroom and 4 pc bathroom. Living room opens up to a sunny, yet very private south facing deck. Downstairs is another bedroom, a 2 pc bathroom and a spacious basement area/ laundry room that offers up many possibilities. This home is move in ready.

Ronnie (Veronica) Sam
Cell: 250-527-0036**Johan Olsen**
Cell: 250-209-9667**Sandra Masales**
Cell: 250-902-9271To view all our listings go to porthardyrealestate.net