

HISTORIC SCHOOLS OF THE COWICHAN VALLEY

Below are 31 former schools of our heritage school remembrance project to date (2017). Some of the buildings are still standing while others have been moved, burned or dismantled. We invite you to visit these sites on a self-directed tour starting and finishing in Duncan. Look for the gold school-bell shaped signs!

1 . Alderlea School Two-room wooden schoolhouse built 1891 on one acre of land. Richard John Hawkey taught first four months after this public school opened and Miss Alice M. Haldon completed the year. Closed 1912 as Duncan Public School. Property owned by the City of Duncan since 1920. Used again as public school in the 1950's under the name, Zenith School. Now leased to Arcadian Day Care. Location: 5650 Club Road, Duncan (behind the Round Building).

2 . Second Somenos School Pioneer William Drinkwater donated half acre of land for a public school. Opened 1885 with Edward Stuart Wood as first teacher. Closed 1914. Property sold. Now private residence. No structure remains. Location Drinkwater Road opposite Mountain View Cemetery, just east of the Drinkwater & Somenos Roads' traffic circle.

3 . Duncan High School First public high school in Cowichan Valley built 1911 by Henry English for \$4875 on the same property where current Duncan Elementary School located. First principal Victor Woodworth. Based on plans by architect, Douglas James, enlarged 1937 for \$15,550. Burned to the ground March 24, 1946. No structure remains. Location: Corner, Cairnsmore & Nagle Streets, Duncan.

4 . Duncan Grammar School Opened 1926 by Robert Honour as private school for boys. Former student, Charles Ferguson Hoey, awarded Victoria Cross in 1944. Closed 1950. No structure remains. Location:

West side of Cowichan District Hospital, public parking lot area, 3045 Gibbins Road, Duncan.

5 . Gibbins Road School Opened 1962 as three-room annex of Duncan Elementary School for students in grades 1-7. Later used for grade 4 only. Closed permanently 1983. Property now owned by the Royal Canadian Air Cadets, Squadron 744. Location: 3790 Gibbins Road, Duncan.

6 . Mt. Prevost Hillcrest School Public school built 1932 by Hillcrest Lumber Company owner, Carlton Stone. Opened with 37 students, all nationalities. First teacher James Edward Somerled MacDonald. Closed 1943 due to dwindling enrollment with move of lumber company to Mesachie Lake. No structure remains. Property sold. Now private residence. Location: 4350 Pollock Road, Duncan.

7 . Mayo/Paldi Schools Public school built 1920 by the Mayo Siding Company. First teacher Margaret Winifred Evans (later Bishop). Replaced 1937 with two room school. Students of all nationalities in attendance. Last used as a school about 1986. Burnt to the ground August 16, 1997 by unknown arsonist. No structure remains. Property sold. Now private residence. Location: 5972 Paldi Road, Duncan.

8 . First Yount School Public school opened 1925 at Mile 65 on CNR line between Duncan and Youbou in converted loggers' bunkhouse with classroom at one end and dance hall at the other! First teacher Eleanor Redhead. Replaced 1935. No structure remains. Property sold. Now private residential strata. Location: Adeline Road (west side, lower end), Youbou.

9 . Nitinat School First called Camp 3 School, built 1937 with three classrooms. Former long-time teacher was Mrs. Emily Garnett. School dismantled 1976. No structure remains. Location: Kissinger Lake Campsite, west of Youbou.

10 . Caycuse School Opened as public school 1927 in converted logging company bunkhouse. First called Camp 6 School, then Nixon Creek School. First teacher Mabel Estelle Jones. New one-room school built 1928 with 28 students. Closed 1989 after school population dwindled to 8 students. School building dismantled. No

structure remains. Sign location: Inside Community Hall, Caycuse.

11 . Honeymoon Bay School Opened 1956 as public school in busy mill town. Closed 2002 and site sold. Schoolhouse now integral part of Honeymoon Bay Lodge and Retreat on original school grounds. Location: 10028 Park Drive, Honeymoon Bay.

12 . Lake Cowichan School Two room public school built 1937, grades 7-12. First teachers John Ferdinand Tupper Saywell and Charles Henry Robinson Pillar. First high school graduation 1940. Last used as school in 1969. Then became administration offices of School District #66 (Lake Cowichan). Today home of Lisa's Fit Stop. Location: 29 Renfrew Road, Lake Cowichan.

13 . Third Somenos School Public school opened January 1914 as Somenos Station School with Arthur Henry Thomas as teacher. Used as a community hall in the 1930's and '40's but brought back to use as a school in 1947 after Duncan High School burned to the ground. Closed as a school July 1960 and returned to use as a community hall which it continues to be today. Location: 3248 Cowichan Valley Highway, Duncan.

14 . Chemainus Superior School Opened 1911 as two-room public school, grades 2 -10, on Lots 93-95 & 99-101 in Chemainus. First called Chemainus Landing School. Dismantled 1938 and lots sold for residential housing. Last principal, Percy Edward Wilkinson. No structure remains. Sign location: Corner Cedar & Pine Streets, Chemainus.

15 . First Crofton School One room public school built 1905. First teacher, Mr. Rhynois Offerhaus, died three months after the school opened. Miss Olive Randle taught remainder of that school year. Closed 1950. Schoolhouse later moved to east end of Joan Street where it now serves as Crofton Schoolhouse Museum. Sign at original location: 1658 Roberts Street, Crofton.

16 . Westholme Schools Public school first built 1909 as one-room schoolhouse on land donated by pioneer Alfred Richards. Burnt to the ground September 1, 1918. Second school erected 1923 with addition in 1956. Became an annex of Crofton Elementary in 1970.

Closed 1973. Now under care of Westholme School Society. Location: 2558 Mt. Sicker Road, Westholme.

17 . First Maple Bay School First public school in Cowichan Valley built 1870. Opened as North Cowichan School. Later renamed Maple Bay School. Closed 1918. No structure remains. Property sold. Now private residence. Location: Directly opposite the north end of Lakes Road at 1959 Herd Road, Duncan.

18 . Second Maple Bay School Four-room public school opened 1961 with 161 students in grades 1-7. Two classrooms and gymnasium added in 1963. Closed 2000. Property sold. Now privately owned. Location: 6759 Considine Road in Maple Bay.

19 . Genoa School Also called Genoa Bay School. Tiny one room public school operated intermittently 1891- 1928 for children in the vicinity. Former student Ethel May Weismillar (later McKelvie) made Provincial Roll of Honour and went on to become a long time and well respected teacher in the Cowichan Valley. Property sold. Schoolhouse remains on private residential lot. Location: 689 Saltspring Road, Genoa Bay.

20 . Quamichan School Mrs. Annie Monk was first teacher at this public one room school built 1885 on land purchased by the Bishop of British Columbia with money donated by Baroness Angela Burdett-Coutts. Closed 1918. Purchased by Quamichan Boy Scouts in 1950. Burned to the ground October 8, 1980. No structure remains. Property sold. Now private residence. Location: 5847 Indian Road, Duncan.

21 . York Road Primary One room structure built as public school 1914 on former York Road as primary annex to Duncan Elementary School. Closed 1971. Property sold. Schoolhouse moved 1972 to west side of MacAdam Park on Wharncliffe Road where it now serves as day care facility. Sign at original location: Log house structure, 460 TransCanada Highway, Duncan.

22 . Third Bench School Mr. and Mrs. John Nelson donated land for third Bench School built 1885 with Eli Joseph Campbell as first teacher. Closed 1950 when current Bench School replaced it on same property. Used as community hall for short time then dismantled. No structure remains. Location: Playground area, 1501 Cowichan Bay Road, Cowichan Bay.

23 . Cobble Hill High School First public high school at south end of Cowichan Valley opened 1931 as extension of Cobble Hill Elementary. 1914 schoolhouse renovated for grades 9-12 with Miss Iola Worthington as first principal. Closed as high school 1950. Carried on as elementary school until replaced. Property sold 2008. Now Evergreen Independent School. Location: 3515 Watson Avenue, Cobble Hill.

24 . Fourth Mill Bay School Built 1914 for \$2975 on land donated by pioneer Barry family. Two previous public schools on same site. First called Shawnigan School until 1918 when provincial decree changed name. Additions made 1958, 1969 and 1980's. Closed as public school 2013 after 99 years. School buildings remain. Location: 2175 Cobble Hill Road, Mill Bay.

25 . Bayview School Opened 1950 as one room public school, grades 1-6. First teacher Mrs. Alexandra Jessie Embree. Second room added 1961. Closed 1991. Property sold. No structure remains. Location: Behind Tim Hortons, 825 Deloume Road, Mill Bay.

26 . Bamberton School Miss Irma Glyde Trowsse taught children of the employees of the BC Cement Company from 1924 until this public school closed in 1961. Schoolhouse, built 1927, sold and moved off site 1977 to private farm in Cobble Hill. Original location: Top of main street of former Bamberton townsite. No public access at this time. Sign location: Inside South Cowichan Museum in former Mill Bay United Church.

27 . Sylvania School Two-room public school built 1919 on land donated by Franklin Albert Judson Copley. School named after Copley family Sylvania Dairy and Sylvania Logging Works. Closed 1961. Property sold. Now home of Mill Bay Lions Club and Cobble Hill Boy Scouts. Location: Corner, Cameron-Taggart and Shawnigan Lake Roads, Shawnigan Lake.

28 . Shawnigan School Public school built 1893 by Arthur Rogers of Cobble Hill for \$620. Addition added 1914. First called Malahat School until 1918 when name changed by provincial decree. Closed 1950. Property sold 1951 and renovated to become Our Lady Queen of the World Catholic Church. Old schoolhouse still discernable. Sold again 2015 to private ownership. Location: 2900 Shawnigan Lake Road, Cobble Hill.

29 . Fourth Cowichan Station School Two room public school built 1914 for \$5746 on one acre of land. Described at the time as one of the finest rural school buildings in BC. First principal George Bowyer. Gym added 1964. Closed 2007. Now under care of Cowichan Station Area Association and known as "The Hub". Location: 2375 Koksilah Road, Cowichan Station.

30 . Glenora Schools Four public schools on same site, first one built 1910; second burned to the ground September 1930. Third school completed November 1930. New two room school built 1950. Closed 1982. Property sold. No structure remains. Now private residence. Location: 5020 Elliot Road, Duncan.

31 . Fourth Koksilah School Built summer 1914 to replace three-year-old public schoolhouse that burnt to the ground on same site January 21, 1914. First teacher Mona Favoretta Macdonald (later East). Closed 1972 when replaced by new school on other side of highway. Now under care of Koksilah School Museum Society. Location: Corner, Chaster & Charlotte Roads, Duncan.

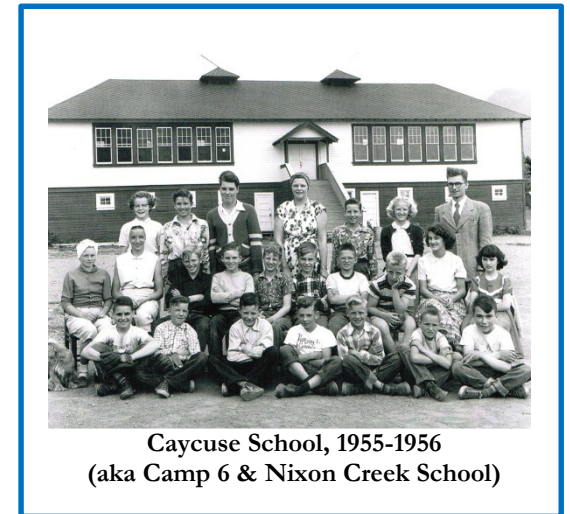


Chemainus Superior School, c. 1937

Thank you:
 Bay Film Studio
 British Columbia Retired Teachers' Association
 City of Duncan
 Cowichan District Hospital
 Cowichan District Teachers' Association
 Cowichan Historical Society
 Cowichan Station Area Association
 Cowichan Valley Regional District
 Cowichan Valley Retired Teachers' Association
 Denika & Mark Osmond, Shawnigan
 Evergreen Independent School
 Gord & Barbara Robertson
 Honeymoon Bay Lodge & Retreat
 Josh & Keely Handysides
 Kaatza Historical Society
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 Youbou Strata Group

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Cowichan Valley Historic Schools Project Phases 1 (2012) & 2 (2017)



**Caycuse School, 1955-1956
 (aka Camp 6 & Nixon Creek School)**

*Cowichan Valley Schools
 Heritage Society*