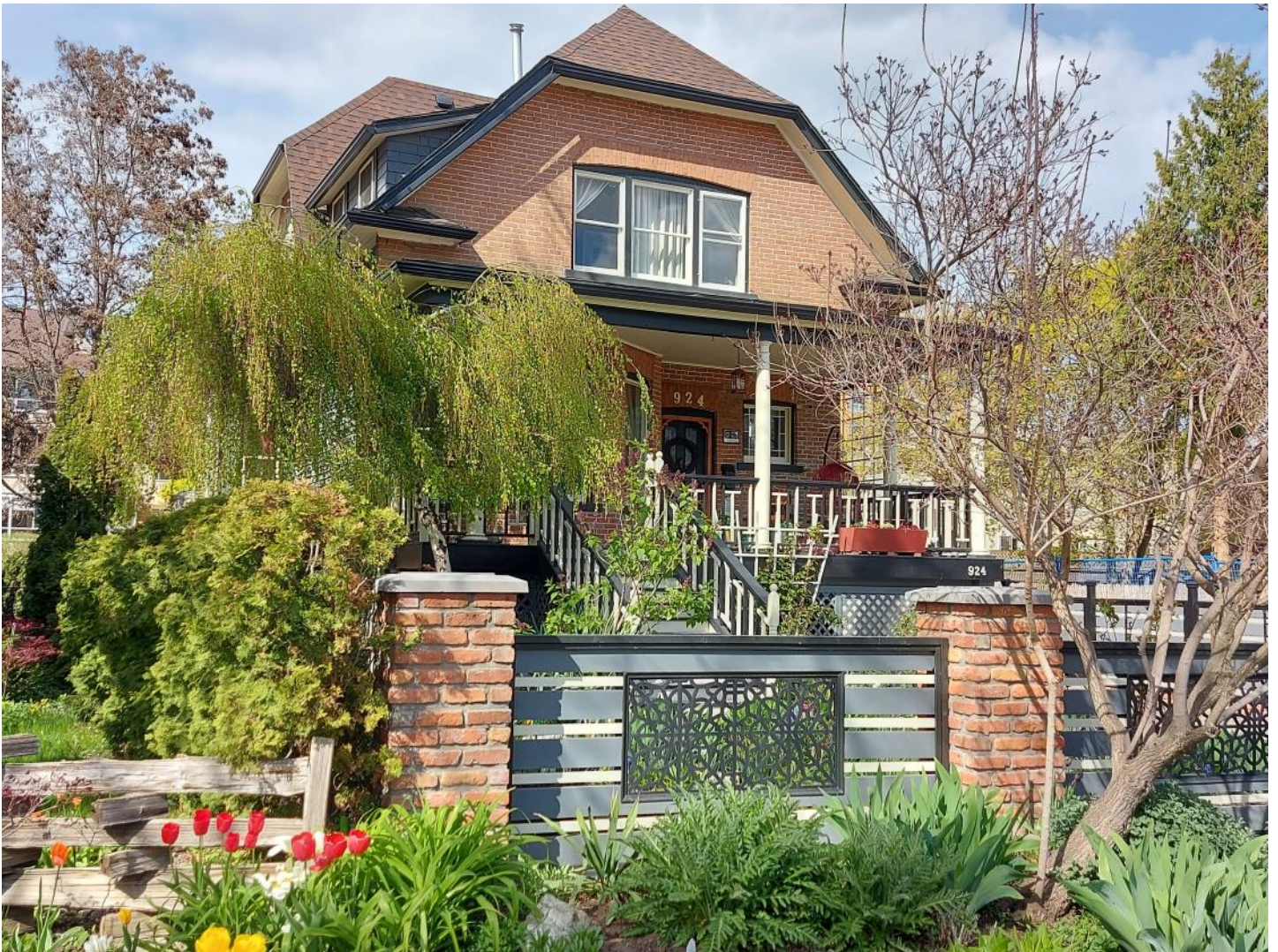




## CENTRAL OKANAGAN HERITAGE SOCIETY

# HERITAGE NEWS

Spring/Summer 2022



KINCAID HOUSE—924 LAURIER AVENUE

## 924 Laurier Avenue—The Kincaid House



Electrical engineer, watchmaker, Psychiatrist, City councilor, soldier, musician, nurse, home economics teacher, carpenter...Kincaid House has seen them all. Named after James Kincaid, the house at 924 Laurier Avenue is one of the oldest homes on the street; possibly *the* oldest. The parade of former and current owners and residents is a ‘who’s who’ of folks who have all contributed to our town, and the house itself.

According to lifelong Kelowna resident Charlie Adam, 924 Laurier Avenue first belonged to Henry Herbert and Carrie Millie who came to Kelowna in 1905. In the January 28th 1909 edition of the “Kelowna Courier and Okanagan Orchardist” there is a listing of local buildings constructed in the previous year; it states that H.H.Millie had a telephone office and house constructed at a cost of \$3,000; the address was not stated but it is assumed to be 924 Laurier. Henry was an entrepreneur! An electrical engineer by trade he also opened a watch makers business, started a telephone system and served on Kelowna City Council beginning in 1912. His Kelowna Telephone Exchange consisted of eight telephones; he was also the agent for the government telephone and telegraph system which eventually became part of BC Tel and then Telus. Henry passed away in Kelowna in 1917.

The connection with the James Kincaid family is not firmly established. James Kincaid came to Kelowna with his wife Jane “Jean” in 1905. James was a carpenter by trade and may have built the house at 924 Laurier Avenue for the Millie family. James and Jean’s son John “Jack” Kincaid, a local schoolteacher and talented musician, enlisted in WW1 and was killed on September 11, 1918, at the age of 28 years. His name appears on the cenotaph in Kelowna City Park.

Subsequent owners were Josiah Adam Shier and his wife Matilda Kirk who came to Kelowna in 1920 and purchased the property at 924 Laurier Avenue. Josiah Shier became a member of Kelowna City Council in 1926 and worked for the Irrigation District. For many years the family, including daughter Arabella Alice “Belle” ran the home as a boarding house. In 1940, Belle obtained a building permit in order to alter the second floor into suites, adding dormer windows to the west and east roof.

In 1945 William Wilson and Miss A.P. Wilson rented out 6 rooms in the house for which they obtained a trade license from City Hall.

In 1950 George Arnold was running a rooming house with 6 rooms available for occupancy.

In 1957 Estelle Irene Richmond had 5 rooms for rent.

In 1959 Robert J. Richmond added another room for rent on the main floor. The external stairs on the back east side of the house were relocated to the north side.

In 1984 Soloduko Holdings LTD sold the property to Wenngatz Construction. The rental suites in the house now consisted of two rooms at the north end of the main floor, two suites of two rooms each and a one-room suite on the second floor.

In 1987 Nick Augustino owned the house. He upgraded the heating system and in 1989 a fire escape was added to the second-floor bathroom window.

In 1990 the large lot was subdivided into two lots and the house moved to its current location with a new foundation and full basement.

Bob Groholski owned the house in 1990 and did further renovations.

In 1994 Rudy Kraft was the owner. He added a three-room suite in the basement.

In 2004 the property was purchased by Aaron and Tanya McGoran who changed the front exterior stairs and railing from the east end of the front porch to its current west end position. The original front porch prior to the house being moved had a wraparound extension along part of the west side of the house. This can be seen in the old photos.

Lidia Schuster was a Psychiatrist and bought the house in 2011 with the intention of using the main floor rear suite as her medical office. This did not come about and she continued the trend of renting suites/rooms in the house.

At some point a commercial fridge was installed in the kitchen by one of the owners who was a Home Economics teacher at Kelowna Secondary School.

Kincaid has seen seventeen different Canadian Prime Ministers come and go; quite a history! There is a lot of Kelowna legacy represented by 924 Laurier and if only the walls could talk. This home is another great example of the long life, and many lives, of some of our heritage homes. Think of the waste and cost to the environment if this house had been torn down and replaced several times over the last one hundred and ten plus years. Congratulations to those who lovingly maintained and repurposed this house over the decades.

### ***Anniversary Celebrations.***

***This year the COHS celebrated it's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary; and the Benvoulin Heritage Church will celebrate turning 130!***

***We are working on some appropriate celebrations and will keep you posted.***

Architecturally speaking the house style is considered ‘Dutch Colonial’ with a truncated gable roof and two charming dormers. A cozy covered porch graces the front of the house along with a large wooden deck off the back. There are also two small decks off the second floor on the west and north sides of the house. The west balcony sits on the roof of the dining room projection which in turn is the roof over the stairs to the basement suite. The house is built of old Kelowna brick on the south side with what appears to be cedar siding on the other three sides. There are no other houses on Laurier Avenue built of old Kelowna brick.

The current owners, Michael Morrow and Margot Pridham purchased the house in July 2015. To date, they have completely renovated the kitchen as well as changed the basement suite from a bachelor to a one bedroom and rented as a legal suite.

Michael and Margot have also undertaken many other projects, big and small; the windows are the original sash and most of these have now been restored to their original function by Robin Digby, Kelowna’s local heritage window restoration expert. Three of the windows are glazed with a unique border of green and pink stained glass.

There are several garden beds surrounding the house and several black locust and maple trees are on the perimeters of the back garden. An old style low metal rod and chain link fencing, enclose the west back garden and a new wooden fence has been built along the full length of the property on the east and north sides.

The overgrown weed-filled garden beds have been planted with perennials and is a work in progress. The roof, gutters and some windows have all been replaced and the exterior paint has been redone in heritage colours of grey, black and cream. Fencing on the north side of the property has been replaced and the dead cedar hedge has been removed and replaced by brick pillars and wood fencing. The latest project was the total replacement of the rear deck; in progress now is the addition of balusters and spindles to the front porch in the original heritage style.

Margot and Michael won a Heritage Award in 2020, reflecting the amazing restoration of this timeless home; in 2021 the Kelowna South-Central Association of Neighbourhoods (KSAN) placed a heritage building identification sign in the front boulevard garden.

No doubt Margot and Michael will have no lack of other projects over the coming years as 924 Laurier lives on!



**For Central Okanagan Heritage Society**

Contributed by Margot Pridham—Central Okanagan Heritage Society

## Introducing Irina Bakumenko



Last year our office received a call from Irina Bakumenko who introduced herself as a relative newcomer to Kelowna with an interest in painting ‘portraits’ of Heritage homes in Kelowna. Irina was born in the Amur Region of Russia and this is part of her story; ‘It was two years ago when I decided to paint pictures of Heritage houses in Kelowna. I was impressed with the interesting styles and beauty of the old homes when we moved here. I appreciated that people cared and kept those houses beautiful over several generations. Each one of them has an interesting heritage story behind it.

I was so delighted when I was invited to display my paintings in the Atrium at Kelowna’s Rotary Centre for the Arts during the summer of 2021. To paint fifteen pictures for the exhibition was a challenging project for me. I eventually painted homes from Abbott Street, Marshall Street, Belgo Road, Water Street, Bernard Avenue, Benvoulin Road and Beach Avenue. I selected homes for their varying colors and styles and from a range of ages from the late 1800’s to the early 1900’s.

I delivered letters to every owner of the selected homes to ask their permission to paint; several times I met the owners as I was taking photos. I explained the reason for using the photos for my watercolor paintings. Also, I told them about my plans to use the paintings for my future exhibitions and greeting cards; they could also purchase finished paintings of their homes if they wished. I had the privilege of meeting so many incredibly nice and complementary people.’



Figure 1 Fumerton House



Figure 2 Burnham House



Figure 3 Cookson House

Irina is a member of the Federation of Canadian Artists and the International Watercolor Society. You can follow Irina on Instagram; [@beeblagoart](https://www.instagram.com/beeblagoart) or reach her at [beeblago@gmail.com](mailto:beeblago@gmail.com).

Thank you for your unique contribution to Kelowna’s heritage Irina!

## Heritage, Beyond a Building:

Figure 1 Four Food Chiefs representation



Contributed by Coralee Miller, Sncewips Heritage Museum Assistant

The **Sncewips Heritage Museum** is located on Highway 97 just before the bridge on the way from Westbank into Kelowna. Sncewips began as a small repository in 2006; in 2014 it became a public museum space with the mission of ‘claiming space for and increasing awareness of Syilx/Okanagan culture and heritage.’

Our collections include both organic and inorganic materials. As part of our organic collections we house a variety of birch bark, cedar root, and pine needle baskets, traditional fishing and hunting tools and clothing such as moccasins and embroidered gauntlets. Our inorganic collections include our lithic and archival materials, like recordings, photos, and books.

We are a traditional museum when it comes to the things that are conserved within our four walls; however, we like to refer to our space as a living museum, meaning that everything within our space is still used by our people today and are not just relics of the past. Being a living museum also means that our heritage and our culture are not limited to tangible things. Language and ceremony certainly fit that category but when we look further at what shaped our heritage and culture we find that it is ‘story, our people, and the land itself’.

Today our oral stories are available to everyone through books and story tellers. One of the stories that many people have heard is the story of the four food chiefs. The story starts with Creator pulling a human from the ground and then asking the animals and plants to contribute something to help this creature, the human baby, survive. That is the story in a nutshell, but what we are getting at is that the land shaped our language, our customs, our ceremonies and the resources that we return to. Our heritage is the land, the land that we travelled through, the many trails created through thousands of years of prescribed burns, burns that helped us to develop hunting grounds where we utilized everything and wasted nothing. Our heritage is the dormant volcanoes that provided flint deposits to create our tools and the various berry bushes that many generations have returned to year after year, if they haven’t been destroyed.

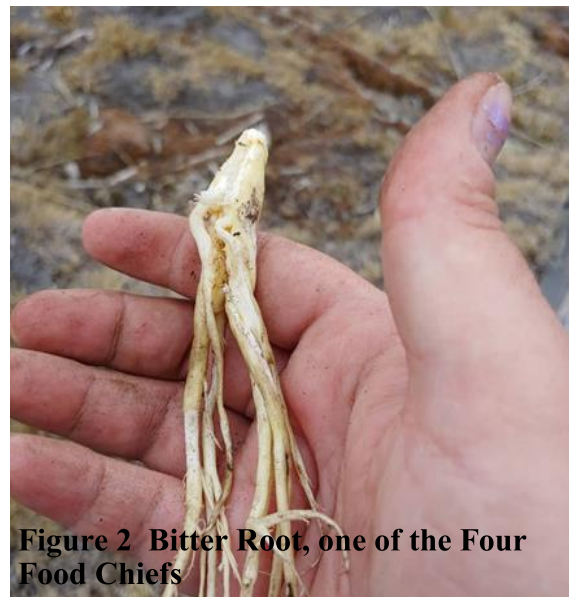


Figure 2 Bitter Root, one of the Four Food Chiefs

**Figure 3 Sncewips Heritage Museum 2021**

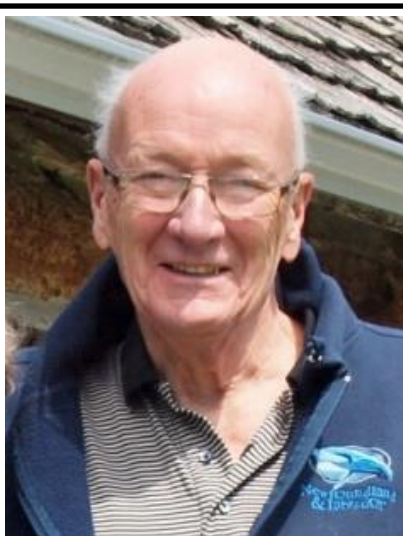


It is more than hiking trails that we find on the land, the land is where we find ourselves.

We do our best at the Sncewips Heritage Museum to interpret those cultural values and encourage visitors to take a closer look at the land and realize that we are so incredibly interconnected with our environment; physically, spiritually and culturally. I believe that we need to look at, and value, the land as much as we would any heritage site, to maintain, to learn, and to enjoy what has been here since time immemorial.

The Sncewips Heritage Museum is open Monday to Friday between 10 am to 4pm. Come on by!

**Figure 4 Sncewips team; ask Coralee about the story behind Mountain Goat Rock!**



### **In Memoriam**

**Ken Waldon** – passed February 8, 2022. Ken was a much-appreciated supporter of ‘heritage’. With his wife Jan he was a founder of the Friends of Fintry Provincial Park Society and became the curator of Fintry Manor in 2002. Ken put his energy into MANY Okanagan heritage and community projects for which he won numerous awards. He was awarded the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2012, the Governor General’s Sovereign’s Medal for volunteerism in 2020 and a COHS Heritage award in 2008.

## DID YOU KNOW; 2022 has been proclaimed 'The Year of the Garden' in Canada!



*Michel Gauthier, Director of the Canadian Garden Council writes "On March 23, 2022, our politicians, representing all the different parties, came together in the garden via the House of Commons and unanimously adopted a motion to officially make 2022 the Year of the Garden in Canada; the first country in the world to proclaim a Year of the Garden. It's amazing how gardens and gardening can bring the country together. This is welcomed good news so let's celebrate and invite all Canadians to Live the Garden Life."*

At Benvoulin Heritage Park we are taking advantage of this momentum to redo much of the garden areas surrounding the church and McIver House. Mary Browne-Clayton, one of our COHS Directors, has been working overtime with a great group of volunteers from the Okanagan Master Gardeners to take out old, tired flower beds and replanting them, focusing on 'heritage' plants that would have been common in the late 1800's, early 1900's. New irrigation lines and lighting will enhance the appeal of the gardens, already a favourite with wedding parties and visitors.

*The government motion in part reads:*

*"Gardens and gardening contribute to the development of our country, our cities and the lives of people in terms of health, quality of life, reconciliation, inclusion and environmental challenges. The Year of the Garden will engage gardeners, families, students, and tourists with our garden culture and history, the importance of public and private gardens and our urban landscapes."*







## In Memoriam

In 2019 Ursula Surtees won the COHS' **Distinguished Service Award**. At that time we wrote about Ursula '...(her) drive and vision has shaped the cultural heritage of Kelowna and beyond.

You'd think a young war bride, who married at age 17 and came to a new country with a baby in tow, would be a little shy and receding; not Ursula! She accompanied her husband John Surtees, as he traveled to a series of work placements around British Columbia.

Ursula first worked in Kelowna at the reception desk at the Capri Hotel. At the same time they bought John's old family home in Lower Mission and set to work restoring it. They rented the creamery building out to some local potters and rented the barn to two notable artists, Bob Kingsmill and Gwen Lamont. Some pits were discovered in the back of the property which they recognized as First Nations' pit houses. Ursula reconstructed a walk-through pit house as an educational tool.

It was this work and interest in heritage that prompted the local museum in 1969 to ask Ursula if she would like to curate the new museum under construction. Thus began her long career of bringing both built and cultural heritage to the people of Kelowna.

Working with a local Native elder, Mary Thomas and other local First Nations leaders, Ursula put together a grade 4 native studies program which was a first in the province and a huge success. Ursula also worked with the local Chinese community to establish their role in the development of the city. At the same time, she embarked on a writing career to bring stories on all manner of things heritage and environmental to children of all ages. Her books are available in the local libraries.

Behind the scenes Ursula worked hard to secure grants and find creative ways to get things done. She pushed for a museum expansion and in 1976 a second floor was added providing space for an art gallery and the Conservation Laboratory which is named in her honour.

Six years later when the Laurel Packing House was slated for demolition Ursula stepped in to save the day. She told city council to give her the \$10,000 that was designated to demolish the building, and she would save it. And she did!

Through her leadership, hard work and tenacity, the heritage of Kelowna is the vibrant, multi-cultural, living history that it is today. The many hats that Ursula has worn over the decades and the many awards she has earned, including the City of Kelowna's Citizen of the Year, attest to her importance in preserving and educating the community about our heritage. Ursula passed away January 22nd, 2022 at the age of 94.

Thank-you for all you did Ursula!



## The City of Kelowna Heritage Grants Program

The City of Kelowna Heritage Grants Program provides financial support to buildings on the Kelowna Heritage Register. Grants assist with a portion of the costs in maintaining and conserving the building's exterior, including foundations.

This year the heritage grants application process moved to an online platform on the City of Kelowna's website. More information on the program and how to apply can be found on the Central Okanagan Heritage Society's website. [www.okheritagesociety.com/heritage-grants](http://www.okheritagesociety.com/heritage-grants)

### 2127 Pandosy Street:

Built in 1912, this heritage house is a one-and-one-half-storey Gabled Vernacular style building. This modest and simple house style was found throughout British Columbia prior to the First World War.

Characteristics of the Gabled Vernacular style seen in this heritage house include: its distinctive front-gable roof; its full-width front porch with the front door set on one side in line with the front stairs; its side gabled dormers; its horizontal shiplap and shingle siding; its double hung windows; and its simplicity with few decorative elements.

The house, first owned by Thomas Forest, had numerous occupants over the years. Subsequent occupants included John Loxterkamp in 1944. W.J. Thomson, a sergeant in the Provincial Police and his wife Nancy, rented the house in 1948. Earl M. Swayze, a salesman with Victory Motors, owned it in 1956.



The house, located in the *Abbott Street Heritage Conservation Area*, received a heritage grant in 2021 for the prep and painting of the exterior of the house, using the *Benjamin Moore Historical True Colours for Western Canada* palette. Painting the exterior was part of a larger project to conserve the house. Other conservation work included repairs of the front porch and the siding.

All granting decisions are made by a committee of community volunteers with heritage expertise. The Kelowna Heritage Register can be accessed at: [www.kelowna.ca/our-community/arts-culture-heritage/heritage/heritage-register](http://www.kelowna.ca/our-community/arts-culture-heritage/heritage/heritage-register) For more information on the program contact Lorri Dauncey at [ldauncey.cohs@telus.net](mailto:ldauncey.cohs@telus.net)

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**City of Kelowna, Heritage Grants Program**

Lorri Dauncey

Please contact Kathy at 250-861-7188 or kathyh.cohs@telus.net if you would like future copies of this Newsletter post-mailed to you.

**COHS acknowledges that we operate on the unceded territory of the Sylix/Okanagan People**

**COHS AGM**

Our Annual General Meeting was held on April 20th, 2022 at Benvoulin Heritage Church. Thank you Zoom, but in-person is much better! Don Knox and Jim Burkinshaw shared a combined ‘President’s/Managing Director’s Report reviewing the events and projects of the past year. Don Burnett was our guest speaker and gave us a history of Kelowna through the eyes of his family. A long-time friend of Don’s, Gerry Deshayes, presented a unique animation video that he had created, portraying Kelowna in 1965. So many memories! The 2021 slate of officers was re-elected for 2022 by acclamation with the exception of Carol Millar who retired from the Board (see the separate article in this Newsletter). The position of Secretary is currently vacant; if you know a capable and willing candidate please let us know.



**Carol Millar** is leaving the COHS Board after many years of dedicated service. Carol was our Board Secretary and the very capable leader of the annual Heritage Week and Heritage Awards events. Carol, you contributed so much to the work of the Heritage Society; Kelowna heritage is better for your time spent with us. All the best!

**McDougall House** in Guisachan Park received some loving attention this past year. With the help of Alistair Smith, oiling of the exterior was completed, weather stripping was replaced, the kitchen counter was replaced, electrical work was completed and the fireplace was repaired. Funny what needs doing in a house that is over 135 years old!



Special Thank You for the continued financial support of the City of Kelowna’s Arts & Culture department; the Central Okanagan Foundation and the Community Gaming branch of the Provincial government.





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