

A Brief History of the North Shuswap

For centuries, the First Nations traveled the lake and pathways of the North Shuswap hunting, fishing and collecting berries. Many artifacts have been found along the lakeshore. During the later half of the eighteen hundreds, there were gold seekers (many Chinese) up Scotch Creek as well as crews cutting ties for the Canadian Pacific Railway and wood for the steamers. Harry Fowler is considered the first white settler to move into the North Shuswap. He drove a herd of cattle up to Meadow Creek, a natural meadow, where he homesteaded. The Bischoffs, the first white family moved into Scotch Creek in 1895. Their home is still standing today. Between 1907 and 1913 many families squatted on land in this area and finally around 1913 they were granted the right to have a homestead. Almost everyone was logging, cutting ties for the railroad as well as subsistence farming. Many farms developed fruit orchards, especially apples. Shuswap Lake continued to be a vital link with several paddle wheelers and steamships plying the waters over the years. A ferry ran between Sorrento and Scotch Creek from 1914 until 1956. During the forties and fifties there were several large strawberry farms. With improved roads and transportation the five small schools in the various communities amalgamated into one school the North Shuswap School in 1950, which eventually grew into North Shuswap Elementary Secondary School. It has since returned to an Elementary School.

Seymour Arm has a long and interesting history dating back to when it was called Ogden City in the 1850's. It's history includes a community of over 500 people at one point.

History of The North Shuswap Historical Society

The first meeting of the Historical Society was held in the clubroom of the Community Hall on April 17th 1985 where Mary Zoretich was elected President. The first two years the main activities were tours of the old houses built before 1940. The group began gathering photographs and memorabilia and started collecting material for an Archive. The first "Shuswap Chronicles" was published in 1988. Since then the Society has successfully published eight Volumes of the Shuswap Chronicles and two Calendars. Although they have developed quite an extensive photograph collection and Archives they continue their work in these areas. Recently, they are trying to interview and tape pioneers as well as create a register of various historic sites in the North Shuswap. Presentations to the public as well as the school help to preserve our local history. If you have any information or photographs which would add to our history please contact us.

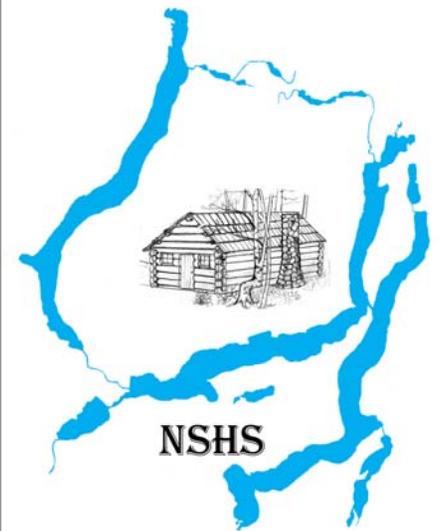
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North Shuswap
Historical Society

Self - Guided Driving Tour of Historic Sites in Celista



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#1 North Shuswap Community Hall, Cemetery, St. David's Church, Celista Park or Pioneer Park

Frank Bagshaw was the first person buried in the North Shuswap Cemetery in 1911. Construction on the Community Hall began in 1929 and was completed in 1934 with totally volunteer labour. This was also the location of the first Celista School from 1919 until 1950. This area was granted to the North Shuswap as the downtown of Celista in 1914 at which time Celista Park (Pioneer Park) came into being. The first Church was replaced by this present Church in 1962. This area has been the heart of the community for close to 100 years.

#2 John Riley Sr. Home

The First Celista Post Office was located in a log home on this property with John Riley Sr. being the Postmaster from 1908—1922.

#3 Orser Home

The Alexander (Sandy) & Hannah Orsers homesteaded this quarter section and built this house in 1910.



#4 Garland's Homestead

Dave Garland's family first lived in the tiny cabin hidden in the trees. Later they hand built their new home across the creek which seemed like a palace when in 1923, the family moved in.



#5 Begulin's Home

Albert & Germaine Begulin built this home around 1938.



#6 Ruckle's Homestead

Jack Ruckle homesteaded this quarter section in 1913. After Jack & Catherine's first home burnt down in 1934—35, they always kept a ladder handy to protect their second home, which was built from timber off the homestead.



#7 Nelson's Homestead

Walter & Eleanor Nelson built this home around 1934.



#8 Hlina Homestead—Speed Farm

John Hlina homesteaded this quarter section in 1913. The Speeds moved in around 1943 and have farmed it ever since.



#9 Brown Home

Thomas & Jane Brown built this home in 1912. The first store in the North Shuswap was run out of this home before the store was built right across the road. It also held a Post Office for a short period of time. It has been the home of many families since then. It has changed in its appearance from a cottage style roof to its present shape. Although for the past sixty years the shape has remained the same.

