

GCPS Progress Report
February, 2019
By Diane Sterne

- The Annual Service Report (Schedule F) and Annual Operating Plan (Schedule G) as discussed at the January meeting, were emailed to Evelyn Riechert at the RDOS. These reports must be submitted annually as per our Agreement with the RDOS regarding the signage project with was completed in 2018. Evelyn said she will get back to us as soon as she finds the original contract.
- A thank you card was sent to John Bartlett and Rika Ruebsaat for inviting the GCPS to their Annual Christmas Party. It was a fabulous get-together and we greatly appreciate being included in the annual event!
- 50 Membership cards were printed with the new wording: "Membership Expires December 31, _____. This reflects the change that was passed at the January meeting changing all Memberships to run January 1 to December 31 of a given year.

- On January 19 I submitted a nomination for the Granite Creek town site and cemetery to be included in the BC Historical Federation's list of top BC sites. Below is what I said in the email:

My name is Diane Sterne and I am Vice-Chair of the Granite Creek Preservation Society. On behalf of our Society, we would like to nominate the Town Site and Cemetery of Granite Creek as one of the top BC sites to visit.

In 2018 our Society completed a self-guided walking tour of the town and cemetery with a BC|Canada 150 Grant. Since its opening, over 800 visitors have enjoyed the site.

Below is a description of the site taken from our printed Tourist Brochure:

On July 5, 1885, while resting by the river's edge, John Chance discovered gold in Granite Creek. A goldrush ensued and by 1886 the Town Site of Granite Creek was the third largest centre of population in British Columbia. Men, and a few women, travelled from far and wide hoping to make their fortunes. They constructed stores, hotels, saloons, a post office, and even a jail to turn the wilderness into something that resembled the homes they had left behind.

A fire in 1907 destroyed most of the town. A smaller version was rebuilt but Granite was not the same as in its glory days. By 1918 the town had died. After the fire, one prospector lamented "with the passing of Granite Creek, the last monument of the golden age of placer mining in the Similkameen has passed away and the miner of the future will not be able to see even a remnant of what was once a town sporting 17 saloons, a government office, a temple of justice and a large number of miners' cabins with the latch string hanging on the outside to notify the traveller that high-souled hospitality awaited him on the inside."

In 2013 the Granite Creek Preservation Society was formed to rekindle the memory of Granite Creek. With assistance from the Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen and the Province of British Columbia a walking tour with interpretive signs was created. You are invited to visit the Ghost Town of Granite Creek and learn about its importance in the development of the Similkameen Valley.

Directions to the Site: From Princeton proceed west to Coalmont (19 km.). In Coalmont turn left at the stop sign onto Main St. Take the first right onto Bettes Ave. Cross the bridge over the Tulameen River; turn left and proceed 3/4 km. At the intersection of Blakeburn Rd. and Rice Rd. bear right between them into the Granite Creek Town Site. The Walking Tour begins at the Cairn.

It should be noted that both the town and cemetery recognize the presence of Chinese prospectors who made Granite home during the years of the rush.

Attached are some photographs of the town and cemetery. We hope you will agree that the ghost town of Granite Creek should be included in the list of important British Columbia sites to visit. The area is easily accessible by car and there are two massive picnic tables at the town, and benches both in the town and at the cemetery.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I also sent 5 photos with the nomination.

- I received an email from Mark Forsythe of the BC Historical Foundation as a response to our nomination. He said: *Thanks so much, Diane. You are the first to get a nomination to us. We will now begin to collect and work on sharing examples like this.*
- After receiving an email from Anissa Paulsen, Dawn Gardner thought it would be a good idea if the GCPS submitted an application for a small grant to host an event during the Family Day weekend. It was decided we would provide a matinee showing of "The Gold Rush" a Charlie Chaplin silent film from 1925, at the Museum. We were successful in getting a grant for the event. The movie was shown on Saturday, February 16. Free popcorn, hot chocolate and marshmallows were provided and approximately 40 attended.
- Thank you to Dawn Gardner, Bob Sterne, Jon Bartlett, Rika Ruebsaat and Ernie Rice who helped set up and take down the event. Special thanks to the Museum and Terry Malanchuk for allowing us to use their facilities for the movie. A thank you card has been sent to the Museum. Thanks to Andrea DeMeer of the Similkameen Spotlight for her support advertising the show. Thank you Todd Lester for posting about the movie on various Facebook pages. Thank you Ole Juul for sending out the email blast to the Area H residents. Thank you to the Province of British Columbia for the grant which allowed it all to happen. As part of the agreement for the Grant, I have submitted our final report (and two photos) for the event.
- The week before the film, I sent an invitation to the movie and a thank you for the funding to Linda Larson, MLA. She did not attend the event and I did not hear back from her.
- We welcomed two new GCPS members at the Chaplin movie. Welcome Lynn Wells and Bill Day! Thank you for supporting the GCPS!
- I asked Todd Lester how the Granite Creek Facebook page was doing. He said there are about 20 followers but he is hopeful it will pick up steam. Anyone who does Facebook should check it out. Perhaps we can get some interesting discussions going on it. Thank you Todd for doing this for us!
- Todd Lester collected \$9.20 from the last bag of recyclables he took in the fall. He will give Bob the money when we see him in the spring. Thank you again, Todd for this valuable job you do for the GCPS!
- While googling the GCPS, I came across a very good piece about our walking tour on the Similkameen Valley website. You can find it at:
<https://similkameenvalley.com/play/attractions/granite-creek-ghost-town/>
- On February 11, Bob Sterne, Ernie Rice and Bert Rice met in Coalmont to discuss the Bromley Trail. Murv Baker sent his regrets. The men had a successful discussion, looked at old maps and read old reports about the trail. They have a

rough idea where it might have been. Bert suggested that in the summer perhaps he and Ernie could tramp through the bush to see what they could find. They said Bob could drop them off at one point and then pick them up lower down. It would be great if they could do this as Bert and Ernie are both very experienced in the woods and know what trails look like. If they find the trail, they will flag it with tape. One question that no one could answer for certain is “where was the Bromley Ranch”? It is suspected it might be where the Maynard Ranch is today. Perhaps we should put a letter to the editor in the Princeton paper and see if anyone can help us with both the location of the Ranch and the trail. Thoughts?

- Bob spoke with Ben Sampogna on Feb. 20 regarding our Cemetery Lease. The file is on his desk. He hasn't had a chance to look at it. He will look at it on the 20th to make sure the First Nations groups have been notified and asked for a response. If any of them were missed, they will have 45 days to respond. He is meeting with his boss on the 20th to set priorities for the files on his desk, so unless there is something else pressing, he hopes to begin work on our file asap. He will give us an update before noon on the 21st.
- **REMINDER: Thursday, March 21 - 1:00 pm at the Princeton Museum will be our AGM.** If you want to run for any of the positions on the Executive please let me know (Diane) so that we can begin a list. The positions are: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and 6 Directors. If you wish to run for a position but can't attend the AGM, please let me know in writing (email) as it will be necessary for the nomination process. We really need some more Directors. Thanks!