

SUNSHINE COAST

COASTAL VIBE

SUMMER 2022

A WALK IN
THE PARK

THE BIRDS AND
THE BEES

THE MAKING
OF PERSEPHONE

WALKING
BAREFOOT

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Letter from the Editor

"If we wait until we're ready, we'll be waiting for the rest of our lives"

In this summer issue, it's another opportunity to get out and explore the Sunshine Coast. Whether you try a new way of refreshing your life in nature with or without shoes, our beautiful parks will leave you in awe and what is being missed.

Sometimes in life we get so caught up in the everyday pull, the endless "to do" lists of chores, duties, responsibilities and forget to take care of "us". We get so busy working and rushing from here to there that we lose track of what life is really about.

Life is about taking opportunities, but it can only be done by making "me" time. Our parks offer serenity with nature and views that are breathtaking. They get you unplugged from the day-to-day rat race of endless lists, calls and emails. In today's world there is so many demands on our bodies and stresses that can push us past our limits.

I hope you'll be inspired to get out, re-look, re-check and re-lax and that your summer be one full of finding the new you that lies within. Life was given to us as a gift. You are here to live it to the fullest. To explore your talents and breath in the life of nature and the wildlife that surrounds us.

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A Walk in the Park

“I took a walk in the woods, and came out taller than the trees.”

~ Henry David Thoreau

There is a great stillness beneath the great shaggy cedars – where birdsong erupts and is magnified by the silence it breaks. To walk along any portion of the hundreds of kilometers of Coastal trails is to experience hundreds of tiny miracles.

Children are particularly adept at seeing the wonder in a series of turkey-tail fungi clinging to a moss-upholstered log, or discovering a stand of ripe salmonberries along a well-worn trail. Even that pile of bear scat that indicates Bruin has already made a meal here holds a weird fascination – especially if it is being cleaned up by nature’s janitors, the woodland slugs.



Many of the Provincial and Regional Parks feature well-marked, well-worn and accessible trails for a variety of abilities. Dogs are welcome at **Soames Park in Gibsons**, where there is a large open semi-fenced “dog park” with its own small trail network (enter off Chamberlin Road) before a gate to the general-use trail network, where dogs are expected to be leashed or at least under the owner’s control. Trails connect to the playing fields, golf Frisbee course, children’s playground and waterpark of Shirley Macey Park. Trails are well marked and signs indicate which trail will take you up to “Knob Hill” and its incredible outlook. There are several entrances to the park trail network from Chamberlin Road and also from Marine Drive (but Chamberlin is easier access). There is no way the trail up the knob is easy – be prepared for a stiff, steep climb and lots of stairs. The trails through the lower level are fairly level with some rocky outcroppings and exposed tree roots, so not appropriate for persons needing wheeled support.

Photo Credit Nawel Allam, Smugglers Cove



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CLIFF GILKER PARK

Adjacent to the Sunshine Coast Golf and Country Club off Highway 101, **Cliff Gilker Park** offers a series of trails radiating out from the playing fields and parking area, centering on a spectacular waterfall. Some of the trails and two of the bridges washed out during the floods in December, 2021 and those trails have been roped off as closed. The waterfall, located just a quick walk up one of the trails near the parking area, is very easy to access but watch for slippery sections on the trail! Elsewhere in “the Creek,” Roberts Creek Provincial Park – a picnic area at the foot of Flume Road with access to the beach – has no walking trails. Lots of beach though, especially when the tide’s out. The campground portion of the park is a separate and distant entity accessed from Sunshine Coast Highway and is open seasonally.



Photo Credit Stephanie Taylor, Cliff Gilker Park



SMUGGLER COVE MARINE PROVINCIAL PARK

Just north of Halfmoon Bay, turn left at Brooks Road off the highway, and follow its length to the entrance to **Smuggler Cove Marine Provincial Park**. A 4 km trailwalk from the parking area to the waterfront, past a fairly impressive beaver pond, passes through a sensitive ecological area. Oh, and “go” before you go – the pit toilet is currently out of commission. It may be a bit of a journey to portage a kayak through the bush to the water’s edge; kayaks can be launched further up the Coast at Buccaneer Bay. but the coastline is interesting and sheltered by South Thormanby Island, half of which is set aside as Simson Provincial Park. Accessible only by boat, this rocky outcrop has a few trails leading to the stone foundations of a long-gone homesite. After portaging the canoe or kayak, might as well paddle over and have a look. Don’t bother dropping your line here though – it’s a rockfish protected area. Check with DFO for maps ** before baiting that hook. Or go scuba diving instead, as this is a popular site for it. **<https://waves-vagues.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/Library/chs-shc-tct-tmc-vol5-2022-41052547.pdf>



Photo Credit Stephanie Taylor, Cliff Gilker Park



MT. ELPHINSTONE PARK

At 139 ha (hectares) spread over three parcels, **Mt. Elphinstone Provincial Park** is most easily accessed via the Sprockids Bike Park, at the top of the Langdale Bypass in Gibsons. The summit trail is as rewarding as it is challenging, with jaw-dropping views and photo ops along the way. The park’s huge network of trails began as logging roads and much – but not all! – of the forest is second or third growth. In recent years, activists have worked successfully to halt logging in the area by identifying old-growth stands of trees and the protected species of plants and animals which rely on old-growth for habitat. Volunteers from these groups and the local mountain bike clubs maintain existing trails and occasionally cut new ones and lobbied successfully to have the area set aside as parkland. After the first significant rainfalls in September / October, Mt. Elphi fosters a wealth of edible mushrooms. Knowledgeable pickers harvest a wide variety of exotic fungi for sale to local restaurants and wholesalers who send the bounty to waiting markets overseas. Inexperienced mushroom hunters are strongly urged to take one of the classes in mushroom identification offered in early fall, as many non-edible varieties like to masquerade as more user-friendly fungi.



Photo Credit Stephanie Taylor, Hidden Grove Park

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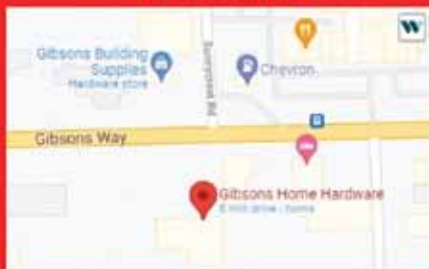
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Kinnickinnick Park, in West Sechelt (opposite the Blue Waters Golf Club entrance), is also dog friendly with a nice variety of trails which are fairly easy to navigate but not well-suited to anyone not wearing gumboots. The trails are not as well mapped or signposted as Hidden Grove. In fact, there are only a few maps at some of the park entrances and some trails have been washed out in past heavy rainfalls. Stick to the Pink Trail that circumnavigates the park for a good long walk and avoid the Green Trail and the Yellow Trail, which are probably underwater unless it's August and we've had a four-month drought. There is a very rudimentary trail map available from the scrd.ca/recreation website, but the best guidance system for this and most other trailwalks is the downloadable TrailForks app.

Mt. Richardson Provincial Park is also backcountry and access is much more difficult than for "the Tet." (Tetrahedron) It does require four-wheel-drive to reach it along a very rough road and the last section of road is described as having a very steep, difficult section. Access from East Porpoise Bay / Sechelt Inlet Road, turning right onto the Sechelt-Dakota Forest Service Road Branch 9. Follow this for 5.2 km, then turn left on Branch 300 and travel another 7 km to the park boundary.

Yes, there are lovely views of Sechelt Inlet and so on from up on Mt. Richardson but really... Why not view the water from a more accessible spot that doesn't require 4WD? After all, Porpoise Bay Provincial Campground (and park) is right there on Sechelt Inlet Road, has some nice short easily-accessible walking trails, a great sandy beach at the head of Sechelt Inlet, a playground for the kids, kayak rentals and lessons for all ages, and outdoor entertainment in the summer months at the amphitheater.

The TrailForks maps are very current and very useful particularly when attempting some of the backcountry routes, such as those accessed through the Provincial Parks.



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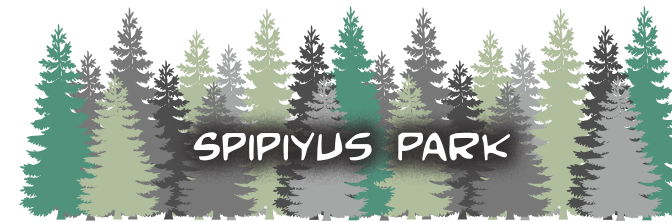
Photo Credit Natalia Kouznetsova, Tetrahedron Peak from Mt. Steel



Photo Credit Leah Smoliak, Smugglers Cove



Photo Credit Leah Smoliak, Cliff Gilker Park




Spipyus Provincial Park is similarly an area protecting old-growth forest as habitat for the marbled murrelet, an endangered species of birdlife. Hiking along the area's various deactivated logging roads through the 3,000ha park and up to Mount Hallowell can provide rewarding and spectacular views of Pender Harbour and the mountains of Vancouver Island. Cyclists may share the roads, but e-bikes are expressly forbidden in this park. While up there, take a look at the recently-restored fire tower atop the mountain, as it may be the last one standing in BC. Established in 1999, Spipyus was formerly referred to as the Caren Range.




Tetrahedron Provincial Park is a true backcountry, created in 1995 to protect the headwaters of the Chapman / Grey Creek watershed, where most of the SCRD drinking water is stored. Getting there is half the fun. Drive up East Porpoise Bay Road (turns into Sechelt Inlet Road) to Tuwanek and turn right at the Grey Creek Forest Service Road. Follow it to the park entrance. Three peaks – Tetrahedron Peak, Panther Peak and Mt. Steele – range in elevation from 900 MASL to 1800 MASL (miles above sea level) The park is used for cross-country skiing in winter and hiking in summer, and like all backcountry presents some real challenges for users. GPS and cell phones may not work in all areas of the park so bring a compass, water, and appropriate footwear for a summer hike. Streams may be dangerous after a heavy rainfall and some trails may be near-impassable due to mud. BC Parks warns that the bridge at Steele Creek is washed out and people traveling that route should use extreme caution crossing the creek. There are cabins situated along the trails and these have recently been re-opened for overnight use.


Photo Credit Diane Hill, Skookumchuk Trails

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HIDDEN GROVE PARK

Not all parks feature “you are here” trail maps. **Hidden Grove Park**, in Sechelt’s East Porpoise Bay area, is very helpful in this regard. At many (not all!) trail connection points, a map showing the various trails (denoted by colours), elevations, and pointing out “north”, provides a guide for the newcomer and the directionally challenged. Hidden Grove is adjacent to the Sechelt Community Forest and a walk in these woods can take a full afternoon or just a few minutes depending on which trail is chosen. The Blue Trail, for example – accessed from the wheelchair-accessible parking stall at the north side of the parking area – is wide, groomed, and easy for all abilities to stroll along. It’s ideal for those using other wheeled devices to enjoy the forest experience. Maps show which trails traverse steep terrain and pose more of a challenge. Hidden Grove is dog friendly; leashes optional.



SECHULT INLETS MARINE PROVINCIAL PARK

Porpoise Bay is also a jumping-off point for **Sechelt Inlets Marine Provincial Park**. Accessible only by water (kayak rentals and guided tours available at Porpoise Bay Park), the Marine Park is actually six separate sites along the Sechelt, Narrows and Salmon Inlets. All have trails, but the real attraction at this park are the sheltered fjords and sandy beaches, ideal for kayaking, camping and swimming. At Xenechin (or Kunechin) Point, the Chaudiere Artificial Reef is a popular spot for scuba divers.

A significant portion of the Coast’s shoreline is protected as part of the BC Provincial Park system and important conservation areas.



SKOOKUMCHUCK NARROWS PROVINCIAL PARK

Spectacular views from Mt. Daniel can’t hold a candle to the rips and eddies at Sechelt Narrows during one of the extra-high or extra-low tides. And the outlooks are so much easier and faster to access, along a wide, mostly-level trail through **Skookumchuck Narrows Provincial Park** in Egmont. There are two outstanding viewpoints for this natural wonder at the far northern tip of the Sunshine Coast. Head for Earl’s Cove and just before the access to the ferry terminal turn right and head for Egmont. There is usually ample parking at the park entrance, located right across from the Egmont Heritage Centre. Expect an easy 40-minute forest stroll to the first lookout on a rocky outcrop above swirling rips seething through the rocky entrance to Sechelt Inlet. Continue on for another 20 minutes to Roland Point. This is where photographers like to capture kayakers riding the “standing wave” that occurs as the tides surge through the narrows. Check the tide tables before planning the trip, to ensure arriving no earlier or later than an hour before or after the peak tides. Watch for dates with XL tides**, and of course keep dogs on leash and children safely behind the fences. **<https://sunshinecoastcanada.com/app/uploads/2021/12/2022-Skookumchuck-Schedule.pdf>

Whether you plan a short walk or a long, vigorous hike, your feet will thank you for donning appropriate footwear. Take water and a communication device and prepare to come out taller in spirit for time spent in the forest and the blessings the Sunshine Coast has for us to explore and enjoy.



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Pender Harbour Photo Credit Douglas Campbell



MT. DANIEL

Back to the highway and northward bound again, go straight past the turnoff for Madeira Park and head for the Garden Bay turnoff at the PetroCan station. Follow the road, keeping left at Garden Bay Lake until Claydon Road and access to the shoreline portion of the park. The hiking trail is actually accessed from Garden Bay Road and is a challenging 4 km due to the steep grade as you climb **Mt. Daniel**. For those who can make the 90 minute hike, there is a great view – and then the challenge of making the steep descent, using a whole different set of muscles.



**FRANCIS POINT
PROVINCIAL PARK**

Continue north on the highway, past the “misery mile” to Pender Harbour. Turn left at Francis Peninsula Road and follow it to Warnock, left on Warnock, right onto Francis Pen Road again, then left on Rondevue and the first right is the access road to **Francis Point Provincial Park**. A mostly-level 3 km trail leads to the waterfront. Part of the trail is rocky and can be slippery. The trail ends at an outcrop with a view of Texada Island and the lighthouse.



**SARGEANT BAY
PROVINCIAL PARK**

Sargeant Bay Provincial Park (on Redrooffs Road in Halfmoon Bay) is a case in point. The bay itself is picturesque, but the interesting area faces inland to a great reedy marsh, home to beavers and a wide array of waterfowl. The fish ladder to a spawning creek that accesses Colvin Lake has recently been rebuilt after being washed out in the Great Rains of 2021. The level seawalk is an easy, short stroll. There are connecting trails to Welcome Woods and (for the ambitious) all the way to Triangle and Trout lakes, or even up to Halfmoon Bay pier near the north end of Redrooffs.



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*The S.S. *Comox* regularly served the Sunshine Coast from 1890 to 1917. (Courtesy of the Vancouver Maritime Museum.)

UNION STEAMSHIP COMPANY: THE KEY TO OPENING UP THE SUNSHINE COAST

by Gary Little

In 1889, the Union Steamship Company of British Columbia Ltd. (USSCo) was formed to provide maritime transportation services for the benefit of the two or three thousand First Nations, loggers, fisherman, farmers, and other hardy residents of the Sunshine Coast and dozens of other small communities scattered along the British Columbia north coast. Its ships carried passengers, freight, and mail to and from the Union Dock located at the foot of Carrall Street in the Gastown area of the then three-year-old city of Vancouver.

USSCo was the catalyst for the growth and development of the Sunshine Coast in the first half of the 20th century, allowing rural families to survive and even flourish despite the isolation and the lack of modern conveniences found only in the big city.

USSCo also promoted the area as an idyllic tourist destination: it was referred to as the Gulf Coast Riviera in colourful travel brochures and thousands of people visited over the years to enjoy a wide range of outdoor recreational activities.

The *Comox* was the first USSCo vessel to regularly serve the Sunshine Coast. From 1890 to near the end of World War I she sailed here from Vancouver twice a week carrying passengers as well as provisions for the residents.

Over the years, many wharves were built along the coast so that the USSCo ships could load and unload passengers, the mail, and other cargo more easily. There were wharves located at Hopkins Landing, Granthams Landing, Gibsons Landing, Roberts Creek, Davis Bay, Selma Park, Sechelt, Halfmoon Bay, and Irvines Landing.

Occasional weekend excursion trips to the Sunshine Coast were also made by USSCo. The first took place on July 18, 1891 when 250 passengers were brought on the S.S. *Cutch* (USSCo's first ship) to Pender Harbour. An advertisement for the trip appeared on the front page of *The Daily News-Advertiser* (Vancouver) and included this compelling description:

All those who want to spend an enjoyable time and see the beautiful scenery which meets the eye as the steamer passes Bowen Island, Howe Sound, Sechelt Inlet and Village, Trail Bay, Welcome Pass, Texada Island, etc., etc., etc., SHOULD NOT MISS THIS.



*Advertisement for an excursion aboard the S.S. *Cutch* to "Pender-Harbor" in the summer of 1891.

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This first excursion was a huge success. *The Daily News-Advertiser* gushed:

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*USSCo brochure (ca. 1926) showing the Selma Park wharf with Sechelt beach in the background.

and promoting the natural attractions of *The Path of Sunshine and Sea Charm along the Gulf Coast Riviera*, the exotic description of the route used in USSCo travel brochures.

One popular tourist destination was a 7-acre parcel of land at Selma Park — only a 3-hour steamer trip

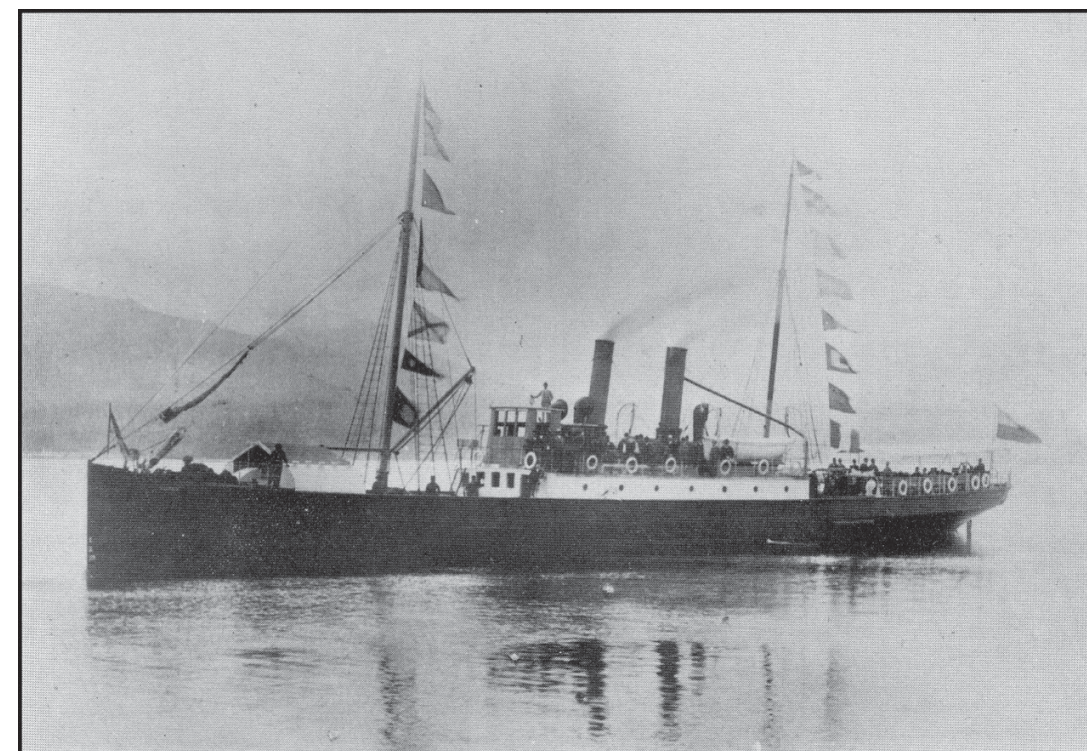


*Union Steamships illustrated envelope postmarked on the *Lady Rose* in 1937.

from Vancouver — which USSCo had purchased in 1917. People flocked to this resort for swimming, sunbathing, hiking, fishing, picnicking, and tennis. A large dance pavilion with a magnificent view was also built on the heights across the road from the wharf and visitors could stay in cottage bungalows, camp cottages, or tents.

A most enjoyable day was spent by the 250 people who took the good steamer Cutch yesterday morning for Pender Harbor. With the exception of a ten-minute shower, the weather was delightful, and scarcely any place could be more naturally adapted for holidaying than this beautiful water which has the distinction of being the first land locked harbor on the Mainland, north of Vancouver, deep enough for ocean vessels... Pender Harbor seems bound to become a favorite holiday resort for pleasure seekers and sportsmen.

In the 1920s and 1930s, USSCo was able to grow its business considerably by embracing the tourist trade



*USSCo's first ship, the *S.S. Cutch*, in full regalia for a weekend excursion in 1891.



*The *Lady Cecilia* arrived at the Halfmoon Bay wharf in the 1930s.

The price for a return trip to Selma Park in the early 1920s: \$1.50 plus an extra 50 cents for lunch at the nearby Sechelt Hotel run by local mogul Bert Whitaker. In 1926, USSCo acquired Whitaker's businesses and land holdings in the village of Sechelt, including the hotel, general store, and wharf at Trail Bay.

USSCo launched several of its "Lady" ships in the mid 1920s to accommodate its booming excursion and day-boat business: *Lady Evelyn* (1923), *Lady Alexandra* (1924), *Lady Cynthia* (1925), and *Lady Cecilia* (1925). They were nicknamed the "Daddy

Boats" because every Friday in the summer they were loaded with working men from Vancouver coming to visit their vacationing families.

By the late 1940s, USSCo's tourism and commercial operations began to suffer. On the tourism side, the popularity of the automobile and a better road network meant that more and more people headed to highways rather than ships when they went on vacation. On the commercial side, remote communities and camps came to favour private boats or the convenience and speed of float planes for transportation.

The Sunshine Coast's reliance on USSCo disappeared virtually overnight with the arrival of Black Ball Ferries' drive-on drive-off car ferry service between Horseshoe Bay and Gibsons in 1951 combined with the paving of the road to Sechelt in 1952. In early 1959, after 70 years of continuous service, USSCo ceased steamship operations completely: the Union Steamship era was over.

Today, the only Union steamship still afloat is the *Lady Rose*. She was launched in 1937 and later served as a cargo ship in the Barkley Sound region on Vancouver Island for many years. She was acquired by the Clayton family of Sechelt in 2019 and relocated to Sechelt's MacKenzie Marina. Restoration plans are still being formulated.



*Union Steamships Sunshine Coast route map from a mid-1920s brochure.



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The Making of the Persephone

A quick scan of the credits for the CBC's long-running dramedy *The Beachcombers* omits the steely personality and series regular, John. Yet for virtually every episode – and certainly during the opening title sequence – there is John, his steely presence to the fore. In fact, John literally carried Bruno Gerussi and most of the rest of the cast. They'd be sunk without him.

John was a fixture in the coastal beachcombing industry long before the CBC arrived and remained a celebrated Gibsons resident long after the show ended its epic run.

Not into gender stereotyping, *John Henry* was a beachcombing tug owned by the late Harry 'Smitty' Smith – and played the role of Nick Adonidas' beachcombing craft *Persephone*. Born in 1965 and midwifery by Gibsons boat designer/builder Jack (John) Gooldrup, the wood/later steel-clad vessel chugged through the Salish Sea and Howe Sound, hauling for local sort yards and mills.

In 1971, when the boat was chartered by CBC to serve as the salvage boat *Persephone*, its reliability and general seaworthiness contrasted well to its rival in the series – the jet boat piloted by the character Relic.

As *Persephone* “sailed into peoples living rooms” across Canada and, in syndication, around the world, she/he/it also became the most-recognized product of Gooldrup Boat Works. Initially focusing on craft for the fishing industry, Jack (John) Gooldrup and his brothers recognized that the first boats on the scene when any area opened had the most lucrative catch. They merged their uncle's boatbuilding experience with design elements of American racing hulls and wartime PT boats (Patrol Toredos) to produce vessels that would revolutionize the fishing industry. The planing hull was stronger, wider, faster, more maneuverable, and more stable than anything else on the water, with a modern, streamlined profile. They weren't just workhorses, they were pretty.



Photo Credit Stephanie Taylor

Coastal historian Lester B. Peterson noted in a 1963 article in *Popular Boating* magazine that the first of this design, the *Reef Isle*, launched in 1945. At the height of its production, between 1960-67, Gooldrup Boat Works produced more than a dozen boats ranging from 23 to 37 foot. Of these, the *John Henry* / *Persephone* has weathered more than most – literally.

After the *Beachcombers* wrapped its final series episode on July 30, 1990, the boat was decommissioned. The engine was removed and in 1991, Harry Smith donated the boat to the Town of Gibsons which stowed it at the edge of the Public Works Yard. And there it set for more than a decade.

Enter the Gibsons-based Sunshine Coast Museum & Archives Society. The Society, which had absorbed the marine enthusiasts of the Maritime Museum Society a few years previously, recognized the value

of *Persephone* / *John Henry* as a part of Gibsons' (literally) storied past. The Town transferred ownership of the boat to the Society. And so in 2003, the name *John Henry* was officially removed from the vessel registry and moved to a more accessible location at the Gibsons Recycling Depot, where Museum volunteers began a lengthy restoration process. Buddy Boyd, the GRD's former owner, enthusiastically welcomed the community project. “Mike [Clement] from the Museum Society built a roof over their two containers and they rented the land from us... We donated the water and electricity and all the garbage removal from the rebuild,” Boyd recalls. “It was fun watching it come together every day at our depot.”

The repairs and refurbishing of the steel hull and wooden superstructure, a five-year process, culminated in ownership of the boat being transferred back to the Town. Still lacking an engine,

the boat would never again enter the water but would instead be displayed on a vacant property that had formerly hosted a Shell service station at Gibsons' "five corners" intersection, adjacent to the equally-iconic Molly's Reach restaurant (another *Beachcombers* relic).

In a Facebook post on the "Friends of the Beachcombers" group page, former Parks Manager Wendy Gilbertson noted that the Shell property was contaminated. "I negotiated with [Shell Canada] to do a "brown field" remediation project and a non-petroleum (free) lease on that property. They paid for much of the project, along with a lot of donations from the community."

The *Persephone* rivaled Molly's Reach as a site for tourist photo ops, and was arguably the Town's most popular open-air display.

Although an open-air roofed structure was proposed to protect *Persephone* from the elements, it was never built. In the ensuing 14 years, rainwater pooled and rotted the superstructure, then leaked into the metal hull and inflicted even more damage.

In 2020, the *Persephone's* resting place at 'five corners' was sold for redevelopment as "Persephone Point." The boat that gave the project its name had to go.

Once again, *Persephone* sailed off on the back of a truck – all eight tons of her – to a familiar berth at the Town Works Yard and eventual restoration. A report on the October, 2021 move, featured in the *Coast Reporter* newspaper, noted that "when the boat was first lifted on October 20, water streamed out." Laser imaging scans of the vessel will be the basis for both detailed plans for the work, and possibly for 3D models to be sold as project fundraisers.

The restoration will be funded in part by a grant from BC Ferries. At a presentation ceremony announcing the grant, BC Ferries CEO Mark Collins remarked "I love that phrase: 'sailed into peoples' living rooms.' Because the *Persephone* sailed into my living room when I was a boy growing up in Newfoundland." BC Ferries, says Collins, is "thrilled to be a part" of this maritime project.

Town Councilor David Croal, a former *Beachcombers* art director and production designer, is leading the initiative to restore and reposition *Persephone*. He noted that the boat remains in storage and restoration remains in limbo as a suitable location for future display still has to be determined. "There is no sense restoring the vessel 'til we know where it's going. Right now," he added, "we're just waiting for ducks to get in line."



When the ducks do get their act together, the site chosen will likely be the triangular lot known as Pioneer Square, opposite Molly's Reach. According to Croal, the Ministry of Tourism, which formerly leased the building in the square that

housed the Visitor Information Centre, had proposed a redesign that would replace the old building with a roofed structure to house *Persephone*. "We're working on this with Tourism and also a First Nations designer," Croal said, "because we want to recognize the impact *Beachcombers* had on that community. It was the first show to portray First Nations people as equals, highlighting the culture's respect for elders, respect for the environment... People in residential schools were seeing this, and the impact was just huge.

Wherever the *Persephone* finally ties up, it will continue a journey that Jack (John) Gooldrup could never have imagined when, as the *John Henry*, she sailed off the shipbuilders launching trailer, more than half a century ago.

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WALKING BAREFOOT AND HEALING WITH NATURE

Written by Melissa Yarrow
 "Sacred Earth Healing Arts"
 Certified Yoga Teacher, Certified Meditation Teacher, Certified Usui Reiki Master



The moment my bare feet touch the earth I feel a rooted sense of belonging as if my soul remembers from lifetimes ago. I connect deeply to my ancestral roots of the Roma, the gypsies, the travelling people. With every step I sink into my body and my breath. I slow down and become intertwined with everything. As the mud squishes between my toes, the wind kisses my cheeks, while birds sing in the distance, I feel safe to let go. With no expectations of who I need to be or where I need to go, I become present with my authentic truth. I strip myself of societal pressures and labels that confine my soul, giving myself permission to be as I am in that exact moment. To feel, to express, to laugh or cry. To be open to receiving healing from the trees, the salt seas and mother earth. Every trail explored, every mountain climbed, every tree I hugged, every waterfront I

swam, they all had their own unique medicine. This is where I found healing.

It was the whispers from the ocean that brought me here to the Sunshine Coast two and half years ago. An empath battling chronic illness, my mental health was suffering, and I was desiring a better quality of life. I needed healing, I needed nature and I needed a sacred space away from the stresses of the busy city. It didn't take long for me to relax into the slower-pace coastal vibe I found here. It was almost as if my body and nervous system had been craving the deep serenity that is rooted in these lands. As I settled into my surroundings, I began to experience the layers of healing energy found in the sacred coastal landscapes I explored. Connecting back to my inner child, this playful curiosity and excitement

saturated each experience. The more I let go, the more I found healing. Dancing on the sand bars on the low tide became my soul's medicine. Bare foot hiking up the mountains; a mindful meditation. Cold therapy winter dips in the ocean supported energetic cleansing and rebirth. Sitting with the ancient trees, brought me comfort and clarity. I began living in a state of Santosha: true contentment, happiness, complete joy and acceptance, where I was free to just be me. Experiencing such a huge transformation in my own health through healing with nature, brought a wave of excitement and passion to share these practices with my students and clients.

Something truly magical happens when we engage with nature. We reunite with our soul. The simple act of walking barefoot on the earth helps to inspire play, reconnecting us to our inner child. Feeling into our senses, sight, touch, smell, and sound, creates a broader and more fulfilling experience. This body awareness offers clarity to our needs, wants, dreams and desires. As we soften, our nervous system relaxes and endorphins are released, balancing the physical and energetic systems in the body. Strengthening the tiny muscles in our feet improves balance and physical stability, as pressure points are stimulated, and tight fascia is released. As we draw this healing energy from the earth, we balance our chakras from the base root chakra to the crown chakra. Being completely rooted yet completely connected to this deeply layered spiritual experience. This is when we move into a mindful meditation, observing this life experience with more depth and awareness. Honouring these sacred practices connects us to our ancestors, whether that is walking the same forests or engaging in similar acts, they are among us. Feeling into their energetic imprints that have been left behind offers comfort and guidance. With every step we take, we do it with love and respect, honouring the stories, the land and the people of the land. Bringing offerings to the trees and blessings the ocean becomes a ritual to express our gratitude to mother earth and all the healing she has to offer.

To heal is our birthright. As we heal, we repair generational traumas and help shape a healthy future for those to come. I invite you to reconnect to the spirit of your inner child, exploring nature and mother earth while finding inner peace, true happiness, and healing.

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They say things happen for a reason and I am beginning to believe that! I am an Equine Assisted Life Coach, recently moved to Roberts Creek on the Sunshine Coast from Bowen Island. We sold our property on Bowen Island and didn't have a place to go. Our new property came up for sale and within

days we were the proud owners of a 5 acre farm. I am beyond excited to be waking up each day with my horses on my property!!

I am a mother of two teenage girls and have been with my husband for 20 years. We moved to



Vancouver from the UK back in 2005. We have lived on Bowen Island since 2008 and are now starting a new chapter on the Sunshine Coast.

I started training as an equine therapist in 2019 with Equine Facilitated Wellness Canada knowing I wanted to share the magic of healing through horses with others. I was so privileged to have my own horse and knew how relaxing and distressing it could be in their presence. I decided to certify as a Learning Professional and took time to work with Lisa Murrell from Equine Alchemy training as an International Coaching Federation Life Coach.

Roll forward to the present and I run my own practice, Present Moments Equine Facilitated Learning. I have a herd of five equines who are my business partners and mentors. If it weren't for them, I couldn't do this work and appreciate their gifts on a daily basis.

What is EFL? As a life coach, we help others to work towards their goals, guiding, allowing the client to find their true, authentic self. How does a horse

Summer fruit porridge

1/2 cup porridge oats (use gluten free oats if preferred)
5 fl oz. cold water
1/2 cup mixed berries (fresh or frozen) plus a few extra for topping
3 Tbsp. strawberry or vanilla flavor whey or rice protein powder (optional)

SERVES 1



PER SERVING:
346 Calories
38g Carbs
37g Protein
9g Fat



Top tip:
This high carb recipe makes an ideal post-workout breakfast.

If possible, presoak the oats for 8 hours or more. Soaking the oats for 10-12 hours overnight makes it easier for the body to digest. It also speeds up the cooking process, which is ideal if you are short on time in the mornings.

Mix the oats and water in a saucepan over a medium heat. Bring to the boil then reduce to a gentle simmer. Stir constantly until the porridge starts to thicken.

Add the berries and continue to cook, stirring for 1-2 minutes. Add more water if required if the mixture looks too thick.

Taste test the porridge to ensure that the fruit is heated through. Remove from heat and stir in the protein powder until thoroughly combined. Sprinkle over a few extra berries and serve.

Consume immediately.



Summer fruit pancakes

3 tps. coconut flour
2 medium sized eggs
1 egg yolk
1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
2 tps. stevia (or natural sweetener of your choice)
3 tps. coconut oil
1 Tbsp. plain or Greek yogurt (use dairy free yogurt if preferred)
1 cup mixed berries

SERVES 1



PER SERVING:
220 Calories
19g Carbs
10g Protein
16g Fat



Suggestion:
Berries are medium / low sugar fruits, ideal if you are watching your carb intake

Place the flour, eggs, cinnamon and stevia in a blender and mix until smooth. Add a bit more flour if the mixture is too thin, or if the mixture is too thick, add a drop of cold water or unsweetened almond milk. The aim is to achieve a pourable but not runny consistency.

Heat the coconut oil in a pan over a medium/high heat and then pour in around 1 1/2 fl oz. of the mixture into the center of the pan.

Move the pan around gently to even out the mixture into a circular shape. When small holes appear in the pancake (around 1-2 minutes), turn it over and cook for 1-2 minutes, until golden. Transfer to a plate.

Repeat with the remaining batter. Serve with yogurt and berries.

Store any leftover pancakes in an airtight container and refrigerate for up to 4 days.



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come into play? These majestic creatures mirror us, they allow us to see in them what we are putting out into the world and through this, we are able to change our habits, beliefs and conditioned self through building new motor neurons. We learn how our emotions have deep meaning and how to embrace these. The horse brings us back to our heart centre, allowing us to be intuitive through our gut and have a more sensible conversation through our head. The horse communicates with us through trust, our heart space and breath. Us learning to regulate our body, listening to what it is saying and working with our emotions we are able to change the story we have. Through this we can attain our goals, live a healthier, more fulfilled life. All work is done on the ground, no riding. This deepens our relationship with the horse as a partner.



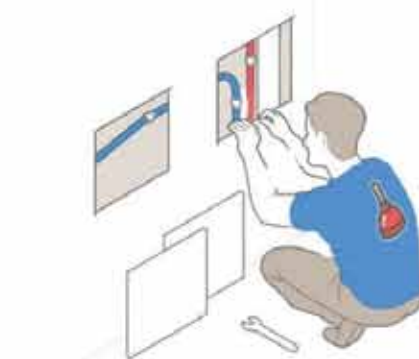
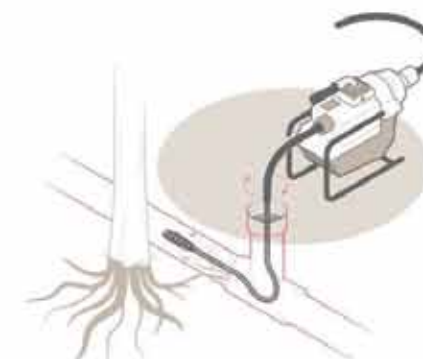
How does this transfer to working with kids? I work with a lot of kids with autism, adhd, stress, anxiety. Working with the horses enables us to learn about relationships, regulating our body, body language, and communication. We bring in the element of nature, learning how if we listen to our senses we can regulate ourselves. I bring my coaching skills into helping my younger clients problem solve, understand how their emotions affect themselves and others and how we can approach different social, family, school situations. Through working with how our energy affects everything around us, the horse teaches us how when we can work with our bodies, they connect with us and work with us.

It is a blessing to be able to offer ways to show the young and old how we can self care through nature and working with the horses and one another. This work has truly changed my life, I am happier, healthier, my stress levels are a lot lower and what better way to spend time outside



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