

Protecting the Legacy for Future Generations  
Local Food Sustainability  
Community Access

Summer 2012 Newsletter



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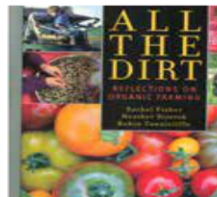
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## FLT Engages Historic Newman Farm

With the signing on May 24, 2012 of a three year lease agreement with the District of Central Saanich, the FLT began in earnest to prepare the property for agricultural use. This included removal of invasive species and pruning of long-neglected fruit trees. Requiring the application of organic principles, the FLT will recruit and select a suitable farmer or farmers to begin work on several acres in the early spring of 2013, and will create opportunities for access by the general public.

Also planned is a native plant garden with the help of Tsawout First Nations members, J.B. Williams and Earl Claxton, Jr.



*Joan Gibb, Sebastian Silva and Ed Johnson taking a well deserved break at a recent Newman Farm work party.*

Newman farm was first homesteaded by the Newman Family in the late 1800's. The original cabin still remains on the site. The District has been stabilizing the other buildings which include the main residence, a barn and several out-buildings with new roofs, exterior drainage, etc., for the past few years.

While the thought originally was to maintain and to farm the property as it was originally done, it soon became apparent that the Newmans were a "special breed" of people that were able to live on this property for over 100 years without running water and electricity-a rarity among the farming community today.

Therefore, the District and the FLT are sharing costs of servicing the property with municipal water this year, and anticipating electrical service in a year or so to further facilitate more modern practices.

The FLT intends to also facilitate educational and related learning opportunities, such as farming, harvesting and food preparation methods. Public events are in the works.

## 2011 - 2012 Update

It has been a year since our last newsletter while we waited to break the news that we had finally signed a Letter of Understanding with the District of Central Saanich, which is summarized above. In the meantime, there were other milestones achieved by our hard working team of volunteer board members, advisors and committee members which include the following:

- Carol Pickup has graciously agreed to serve as our inaugural patron and has enthusiastically embraced our goals in interviews with the media and through her extensive network of contacts from her decades of community service in Greater Victoria. We could not have chosen a better person for this position!
- FLT Director Tom Hobby obtained funding from the BC Ministry of Agriculture to develop a farmland management toolkit to aid new and young farmers in developing or expanding a farming business in Greater Victoria;
- Our Governance Committee finalized the inaugural FLT Governance Manual which provides a compendium of policies and protocols for managing organizational processes and associated decision-making in our Society. The committee, composed of board members, Natasha Caverley, David Clark, and Sebastian Silva, was also assisted by Madeline Walker and Don Caverley. Together, they also developed our "Patron Policy". Finance and Compliance Committee member, Nelly Tom Kee, is putting the finishing touches on our financial policy protocols for managing current and future FLT donations and related funds;
- We were also successful in bringing together a farmer, Ian Paul, with a few acres of land in Central Saanich, which you can read about in this issue;
- Our new slogan, "*Farms Today, Food Tomorrow*" was chosen to crystallize and reinforce our Society's commitment to farmland preservation and the protection of local food security in Greater Victoria;
- The FLT participated in various festivals and conferences, such as the Tsawout Seafood Festival, Eat Here Now 2 Event and Seedy Saturday; and,
- We continued to provide locally grown fruits and vegetables to the Beacon Community Services Association, the Victoria Riding Association for the Disabled, and Our Place Society. A new collaboration with the "Divas" reported in this issue will expand this effort 10-fold.

It has been an exciting year for our team and I am proud to be a part of the FLT ! Greater challenges await us as we expand our reach in helping to formulate policies with local governing bodies that will enhance the quality of life for Greater Victoria citizens through our mandate.

Thank you for your on-going support !

Ed Johnson, FLT Chair

## Welcoming our Inaugural Patron – Ms. Carol Pickup

Co-written by David Clark and Natasha Caverley



Through the efforts of helping to save Madrona Farm in Saanich, and being invited to restore the Newman farm in Central Saanich, the Farmlands Trust Society (FLT) has established itself as a viable organization devoted to the protection of farmland and related issues.

Furthermore, having achieved charitable status, the FLT is now in a better position to move forward in its endeavours.

Based on these notable efforts by the FLT, the Board of Directors, as part of its organizational structure, felt it was important to invite a key individual in the community as our inaugural Patron who shares FLT's values and endorses our community-based activities in Greater Victoria.

Our inaugural FLT Patron is Carol Pickup.

As an individual, Carol has earned the highest respect for her public and community service in Greater Victoria, and exemplifies the very attributes and organizational values that the FLT requires in reaching its goals and objectives: honouring heritage; building relationships; respecting and acknowledging First Nations interests; food sustainability, appropriate stewardship; and engaging in charitable initiatives.

We are honoured and extremely pleased that Carol accepted our invitation to become our Patron.

Carol's experience in many governing bodies of various organizations will be valuable in assisting the FLT in pursuing its activities with which she is familiar, as she has been a supporter since 2009 and was a proactive participant in the design of the first *FLT Strategic Plan*.

We are very fortunate to have Carol join the FLT team, where her support and knowledge will be vital to the growth of the FLT in Greater Victoria.

**Welcome and Many thanks Carol!**

# Indigenous Knowledge and Food Security

Based on interviews with Earl Claxton Jr. and Judith Lyn Arney  
by Kathi Low

Indigenous knowledge and food security is a weave of many interrelated components. The keystone components being gratitude and respect for the interconnectedness of all life.

This respect for the interdependence of all life was demonstrated during the time of the salmon spawning. When the salmon returned, fishing would commence. A shaman went out in a boat to say a prayer to ensure the salmon's return and to select a special salmon to bring to the children waiting on the shore. The children would sing a ceremonial song and bring this salmon to the village, showing respect for this gift, by limping, which indicated that they were also in need of and dependent on the salmon's return.



After the special salmon was selected, all fishing would stop, to allow enough fish to make it up the river to the other groups and so that enough salmon returned to their spawning grounds, to ensure the continuation of the cycle, in acknowledgement of the dependence of the people on the fish.

Other conservation methods were in place to ensure food security. The Saanich people believe that a school of fish is all one family. As a result, the design of the reef nets, used for fishing, ensured genetic diversity by including a hole so that not all the fish were taken and some fish from each school would pass through. The bones and carcass of the fish were returned, head first to the ocean, to show respect and to recycle nutrients to the sea.

The right to fish by traditional methods on traditional lands was granted by the Douglas Treaty and later when reef net fishing was outlawed in Canada, with no consultation, Saanich First Nations sought to gain back the rights granted by the treaty because experience proved that reef net fishing produces a sustainable harvest.



Camas meadows were another area where the principles of indigenous knowledge and food security were applied. These meadows were tended fields. Burning was practiced to control the spread of grass, Snowberry and Nootka Rose so that the camas bulbs could flourish. Burning returned nutrients to the soil and changed the acidity of the soil in a way that benefited the associated meadow plants. When the larger bulbs were dug up and harvested, the smaller bulbs were replanted. This stimulated growth in the smaller bulbs, allowing them to reach harvestable size.

Weaving the accumulated knowledge and experience of Saanich First Nations' stewardship policies and connections (along with the principles of gratitude and respect for what is given) into current local initiatives that promote food security will perhaps encourage all of us to interact with the environment in a beneficial way that recognizes the interdependence of the relationship.

## Notes From The Farm (Madrona)

by David Chambers



Last winter was the beginning of "operation feng shui" as I called it. Trying to unstuck energy blocks around the yards and buildings. I think as modern world dwellers, this is continual with most people as stuff just piles up. We are getting there. The shop is far more functional than ever and one more winter should really give us time to tweak it out and pick up a few more tools we need.



The Cub (tractor) if you have never really looked into them was the evolution of weed control after 2000 years of farming - right before herbicides were invented. The more I get to know it and collect the old tooling systems for it, the more its simplicity and effectiveness blow me away. I have also designed some new pieces that are now the mainstay of my three row veggies weed control. Little rolling cultivators that allow you to get 1/2 a centimeter from tiny seedlings at high speed.



A really good online series that I learned a lot about these things is on the eorganic website - a series called farmers and their weed control machines. I spent a whole winter watching these videos over and over and talking to everybody about it and lo and behold, I found a mechanic who had been collecting pieces for the cub for years hoping someone might be interested in using them again. He rebuilt three old rusty cubs into the one I have now which looks and runs like it just left the show room in 1949. Last winter, he made another one for Ian



King who is now running Sea Bluff farm. Ian came in the winter snapping shots of all the pieces and I look forward to seeing him and seeing how it is working for him. This year his production has increased from three to ten acres.



The real key here is as the older generation of farmers passes the torch and the land to the younger generation that

people see Round-Up is no solution worth using and that with the proper tooling much land can be effectively cultivated and managed without herbicides.

Oh my gosh I think I almost started to rant, I was just sending a little follow up note.

(The FLT continues to explore covenant possibilities for Madrona Farm in keeping with our previous financial commitment.)

