

# Westbank Express

## 40th Birthday Edition

### Westbank Museum and Arts and Crafts Society Celebrates 40 Years

*Gordon Ficke & Darci Ritchey*

When Clare Small and his wife Billie moved to Westbank in 1952, the population was only 600 people; however, the small town had a lot of history worth preserving. By the mid-1970s, Westbank's history was vanishing; heritage buildings and businesses were being torn down to make way for strip malls. Clare, a fruit farmer and former manager of the Westbank Irrigation District, refused to see his community's history disappear any longer.

In 1978, the Small family founded the Westbank Museum and Arts and Crafts Society. Clare donated a portion of his property for the purpose of a museum, and its construction began in 1979. In 1982, Bill Bennett, the premier at the time, cut the ribbon to officially open the Westbank Museum! From 1990 until his death in 2004, Clare and his daughter Margaret Jackson operated the museum with the support of a Board of Directors and summer students.

Westbank, and the Westbank Museum, have grown a lot in 40 years! By 2011, the museum was running out of space, so Margaret proposed the museum move to a new location. The old RCMP auxiliary building was scheduled for demolition, but the City granted the space to the museum. Staff and volunteers carefully packed up each artifact from the old museum and transported it to the new location at 2376 Dobbin Road.

Photo: Museum mascot Monty the Packhorse dons a birthday hat to celebrate the Westbank Museum and Arts and Crafts Society's 40th birthday.



#### Annual General Meeting and Birthday Party!

April 18th @ 7:00 pm

Westbank Museum, 2376 Dobbin Rd.  
Westbank, BC

Join us for a short AGM followed by cupcakes, trivia, prizes, and a museum tour. Everyone is welcome, but only Westbank Museum members can vote at the AGM. Becoming a member is easy and inexpensive. Individual memberships are \$10, couples are \$20, and family memberships are \$30 for one year.

#### With a membership, you receive:

- Personal invitation to special events
- The Westbank Express Newsletter
- Exclusive access to our resource archives including complementary copies

Your support goes towards the running of this publication and the museum.

Thank you!

Since the move, the Museum has had several special additions. Driving south on highway 97, when you pass the museum, you can catch a glimpse of an old truck on the roof. It is a 1936 farm Ford Pickup that worked in the McKinley Landing area, and was previously owned by a man nicknamed “Klondike Mike”. Many people desired the truck, so Klondike Mike reportedly had it chained to a tree. His son inherited the truck and sold it to Richard and Poppy Angus, who owned Rutland Auto Wreckers at the time. Their dream was to fix up the old truck, but it languished on their property in a bush for years until Poppy suggested putting the truck on the roof of the museum. They weighed the truck to make sure the building could support it, then used a crane to lift it onto the roof and then had it welded onto a frame. Many folks have asked if the truck is for sale; our answer is, “Sure, if you can get it down!”



*Photo: The 1936 Ford truck that sits atop the Westbank Museum today.*

In 2012, the museum welcomed the addition of a fur trapper cabin. The Fur Brigade Trail, along which First Nations and Europeans would meet to trade, ran up from the States and right through Westbank! Needing to represent the fur trade in the museum’s collection, Poppy Angus and Katharine Welsh went on a road trip in search of the perfect cabin. They met a man who had an authentic Hudson’s Bay fur trapper cabin; however, he could not part with such a special artifact. They then trekked to Penticton where they met a man who was working on a cabin for a client, when suddenly, the client backed out on the deal. The cabin found its new home beside the museum, and today it is furnished like an authentic trapper cabin from 200 years ago!

The museum is as youthful as ever on its fortieth birthday. What’s our secret? It is the support from our members, Board of Directors, volunteers, staff, the City of West Kelowna, Westbank First Nations, School District 23, and museum patrons. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts for helping us keep our history alive.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MARCH/APRIL

### WESTBANK

#### Interactive Wine & Cooking Demo

Quail's Gate Winery  
3303 Boucherie Rd

March 15 @ 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Jan Dobbener and Winery Sommelier Mike Lee will guide you through the wine and cuisine of the Mediterranean, showcasing their tips and techniques along the way. Best of all, you get to eat the delicious family-style meal at the end of the class, and take home the recipes to recreate them at home. \$99/person, \$89 for wine club members. For more info: [www.quailsgate.com/visit/winery-events/](http://www.quailsgate.com/visit/winery-events/)

#### Creative Art Series

March 24 @ 2:00 pm - 4:30 pm

Grizzli Winery, 2550 Boucherie Rd  
Join us for a guided tour and tasting at Grizzli Winery, followed by a painting workshop led by Louise Lambert of Wine Country Studios.

\$68 per person – PACKAGE INCLUDES:

- Discovery Tour and tasting at Grizzli Winery prior to workshop.
- Fully guided painting session.
- Two glasses of wine provided during workshop.
- Cheese & chocolate platter.
- All art supplies.

Limited space available. For more information call 250 -769-6789 or email [info@grizzliwinery.com](mailto:info@grizzliwinery.com)  
Must be 19+ to attend.

#### Beloved Opera Classics

Ad Lib Art Gallery, 3063 Bridlehill Drive, West Kelowna, V4T 2W1

April 8, 15, 22, 29

Four week program that explores operas that have survived the test of time, including La Boheme, Madame Butterfly, Aida and Der Rosenkavalier. Call ahead to book. For more information on Ad Lib art gallery, contact Claudia or visit her website:

Tel. 250-768-1404

email : [claudia.kargl@telus.net](mailto:claudia.kargl@telus.net)

[www.claudiakargl.com](http://www.claudiakargl.com)

#### West Kelowna Art Exhibition

Westbank Community Lions Centre

2466 Main Street, West Kelowna

April 14 @ 11:00 am - 4:00 pm

April 15 @ 11:00 am - 3:00 pm

A showcase of local artists.

Complimentary to attend.

### PEACHLAND

#### Gathering Peachland's Past

Peachland Visitor Centre,  
5684 Beach Ave, Peachland, BC

March 17 @ 1:00pm

Witness the grand opening of the new display that showcases Peachland's history and how it shaped the community's development.

Explore Peachland's early industries, the Fur Brigade Trail, Sternwheelers, and the artistry of the Westbank First Nations. Enjoy cake and refreshments afterwards.

# BUSINESS SECTION

## Featured Business: Ad Lib Art Gallery

Imagine enjoying a beautiful, artistic setting and sipping on a warm Viennese coffee as the smell of homemade pastries drifts through the air. The experience is *gemütlich* – a German word that portrays warm hospitality and will fill your senses. You do not need to travel across the ocean for this experience; a little piece of Austria is tucked away in the hills of Smith Creek in West Kelowna. A warm welcome awaits you at Ad Lib Art Gallery, operated by Claudia Kargl and Jim Gray. Claudia, born in Montreal to Austrian parents, developed a love for the arts at an early age. She is a skilled photographer and creates with her husband The Emotional Imagery in Music experience at her gallery. As a multidisciplinary artist and performer, she occasionally provides her live studio piano performance to demonstrate the art of music storytelling. They host curated entertaining and informative social events with organic, homemade culinary delights, that will enhance your appreciation for the arts. Four of Claudia Kargl’s framed photographs are for sale and on display at the Westbank Museum. Please contact the gallery to RSVP to social events.



**Ad Lib Art Gallery**  
3063 Bridlehill Drive,  
West Kelowna,  
V4T 2W1  
250-768-1404  
  
claudia.kargl@telus.net  
[www.claudiakargl.com](http://www.claudiakargl.com)

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