

# Westbank Express...

History, events, and local businesses can all be found in your local publication!



Your Informative Newsletter

## The Glenrosa Gym?

By Gordon H. Ficke



"Was there a gymnasium in this building?" A gentleman asked me one day, as he and his friend had stopped to take a photo of the old brown building, across the street from where I live.

"Yes, for a short while during the mid 1940s to the mid 1950s the building served as a gym for the local youths." I replied. That question has come up numerous times from locals and visitors alike as they take their daily walk past the building, or stop to take a photograph of themselves in front of the weathered door with the aluminium sign with "Glenrosa Gym" in faded black lettering above it.

This building was initially built as a gospel hall in 1911-'12 for the local Plymouth Brethren that settled here in Glenrosa. The lumber was provided by nearby Hitchner Brothers Sawmill. Several years later the facility was also used as a one-room school for grade 1 to 8 students. The requirement of two students per grade had to be met in order for the school to remain open. However, by the end of the 1942 school year, there were not enough pupils. The Glenrosa School officially closed on June 16<sup>th</sup>. Thereafter, building remained vacant for a few years.

Mr. Ab (Albert) Shetler, who resided a short distance down Glenrosa Road from the former school, saw a wonderful opportunity for the old school. Ab, who was originally from Saskatchewan, had travelled to work on Vancouver Island in 1936. On his way back to the prairies, he met a friend who invited him to come to the Okanagan Valley, as there was work there. Ab arrived in Westbank and ventured up to the Glenrosa area, where he secured a job, haying for Mr. Hitchner. It was hard work, but Ab was incredibly strong and a gifted athlete. He was self-taught in the sport of boxing and gymnastics and was adept in varying sports he decided to take up later in life, such as sailing and downhill skiing.

Cont'd on Page 2...

## Typewriting Contest



The Westbank Farmers' Market and the Westbank Museum partnered to create a typewriting contest on Saturday August 27th. Despite the wind, which began carrying away vendors' tents, four vintage manual typewriters were set up and contestants had an opportunity to win prizes for the highest typing speed! The organizers look forward to bringing the event back next year, hopefully with more agreeable weather. Start practicing your typing skills now!

## From the Westbank Women's Association Cookbook, 1931



**"Chocolate Fudge:** Two cups brown sugar, one teaspoon butter, one cup chopped nuts, one cup cream, one teaspoon vanilla. Place sugar, cream, and butter in saucepan and boil to soft ball stage. Remove from fire, allow to cool a little, add nut meats and flavouring and beat until thick. Pour on buttered plate and mark off in squares. - Mrs. T. Wells, Westbank."

## 14 Line Ode to the English Language

By Paul Desjardins

To baffle a stranger, speak simply in English  
 Of course, to the ear, could be Spanish or Swedish.  
 Take bruise, for example, a mark on a leg  
 Or are we speaking to what brews in a keg?  
 The confusion continues with words tied to boats,  
 like cruise and crews; is this language a hoax?  
 Did I mention the selling; oh my, the poor chump.  
 Who knew that a uno had a "g" at the front!  
 I know I should stop or at least slow it down  
 Before I am labelled a Fraud or a clown.  
 But to those who are listening, I'm sure you'll agree  
 All the quirks in this language need kneading you see.  
 So be patient my friend and watch for the case  
 Of homophone players; they do have (they're, there, their) place.



learning new skills and having a lot of fun in the process. Consequently, Ab gained a lot of love and respect from the around 10 or so kids that eagerly attended those classes for a number of years. These constructive activities also kept them out of trouble.

Pat Johnson (nee Pat Shetler), Ab's eldest daughter, recounted a hilarious incident that took place when she attended her dad's classes. "Although I was the youngest child there. I was quite lippy to the other kids." She admitted. "One day Dave Vollans, one of the older children, was annoyed with me and picked me up and stuck me up on the ledge above the closet in the corner of the gym and left me up there!" Ab and the other kids had a good laugh. "I was up there for what seemed like a long time."

It wasn't long and the Glenrosa Gymnastics Club gained a good reputation, and was one of the better gym clubs in the central Okanagan. Regular displays highlighting their talent and teamwork were held in Glenrosa, Westbank and even on the lawn of the Summerland Research Station.

In the late 1990s a Glenrosa neighbourhood reunion was held on the veranda of Mrs. Gertrud Ficke's house. This event presented a wonderful opportunity for the Glenrosa pioneer families to catch up about what was happening in their lives and reminisce about those early days. It was also an opportune time to arrange for several group photos. One of the photos taken was in front of the old Glenrosa School with the surviving members of the Glenrosa Gymnastics Club, along with instructor Ab Shetler. It was truly a memorable moment, one that paid tribute to a remarkable gentleman who took the time to invest in the youth of his community so many years ago.



## The Glenrosa Gym cont'd...

As well as being an accomplished athlete, Ab Shetler had a heart for the young people in Glenrosa and Westbank and was generous with his time to teach and mentor the youth.

In the mid 1940s an opportunity arose for him to form a gymnastics club in the Glenrosa School. Ab brought all the Glenrosa and some of the Westbank children together each Friday evening to teach them gymnastics on mats and a horse he provided. It didn't matter how old or what the abilities of the children were, he spent the time and energy to teach them the basics, from standing on their head to balancing to form a human pyramid. The children were kept busy



# WHAT'S HAPPENING IN SEPTEMBER

## WESTBANK

### Culture Days

**Various Locations, Sept. 30 - Oct. 2**

Celebrate West Kelowna art and culture with Culture Days, a family friendly festival throughout the community. See activities, performances, and exhibitions all free and open to the public! Locations include The Heritage Retirement Residence, Peachland Community Arts Council and the Little Schoolhouse, Blenz & Westbank Shopping Centre, Sncewips Heritage Museum, Lions Hall & En'owkin Centre, Wine Country Studios, Westbank Library, West Kelowna Yacht Club, Westbank Museum, Jonagold Park, TD Bank: Westbank, and Dogwood Nursery. See [www.westsideculturaldays.com](http://www.westsideculturaldays.com) for more information on the great activities planned!

### Explore Your Parks

**Kalamoior Park, Gellatly Nut Farm,  
Sept. 15, Oct. 1 & 6**

Sept. 15th @ 1:00 pm join us as we explore the unique geological features of Kalamoior Regional Park at the end of Collens Hill Road in West Kelowna. Oct. 1st @ 10:00 am and Oct. 6th @ 1:00 pm we'll stroll through Gellatly Nut Farm Regional Park. Participants will learn about this historic farm and the many varieties of nuts that are grown in this working nut orchard. Please meet in the parking lot off Whitworth Road. To register for these free events please drop in to the Environmental Education Centre for the Okanagan, email [eeco@cord.bc.ca](mailto:eeco@cord.bc.ca) or phone 250-469-6139. For more information about this program please visit the Regional District website [regionaldistrict.com/parksevents](http://regionaldistrict.com/parksevents) or contact the EECO at 250-469-6140.

### Westbank Farmers Market

Westridge Shopping Centre,  
Saturdays 9 am - 2 pm until  
September 17

Come to the corner of Main St. and Elliott Rd. for the local farmers market, featuring new activities each week!

### Kalamoior Community Breakfast

**Kalamoior Park, Sept. 10**

The Regional Parks Services Department and Friends of Kalamoior Regional Park Society host a community pancake breakfast on Saturday, September 10th from 9:00 to 11:00 am for a donation of \$3 per breakfast. It will be held on the beach near the lower parking area of Kalamoior Regional Park. Starting at 10:00 am, join a park interpreter for a guided one hour hike. For more information visit the Regional District website ([regionaldistrict.com/parksevents](http://regionaldistrict.com/parksevents)) or contact Parks Services at 250-469-6140.

## PEACHLAND

### Kokanee Interpretation

**Hardy Falls Regional Park, various dates**

It's the earliest known start to the Kokanee salmon spawning season. As a result, the Regional District of Central Okanagan is starting its interpretive programming three weeks earlier than normal. The land-locked salmon have already started moving up Deep Creek in Hardy Falls Regional Park in Peachland (off Highway 97 south at Hardy Street).

A Parks Interpreter will be at Hardy Falls Regional Park between 12 noon and 4:00 pm on Sunday September 4th and 11th. They'll have information about the life of the Kokanee and the importance of this annual rite of nature! The interpretation program in Mission Creek Regional Park off Springfield Road will run during the same hours each Saturday and Sunday from August 27th until October 2nd.

Weekday school tours and special presentations for community groups start September 8th and may be booked by donation through the EECO (Environmental Education Centre for the Okanagan). For more information on this and other EECO and Regional Parks programs visit the Regional District website [regionaldistrict.com/parksevents](http://regionaldistrict.com/parksevents) or contact the EECO at 250-469-6140.

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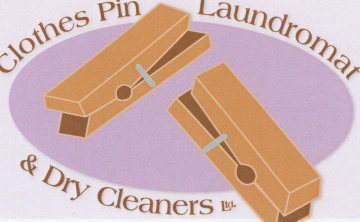
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