

Frenchtown News

June 2015

Frenchtown Historical Foundation

No. 4

FOURTH ANNUAL ST. JEAN-BAPTISTE DAY CELEBRATION AT FRENCHTOWN SITE JUNE 20

The Frenchtown Historical Foundation (FHF) will present the fourth annual St. Jean-Baptiste Day Celebration on Saturday, June 20, 2015 at the Frenchtown Historic Site (8364 W. Old Highway 12).

St. Jean-Baptiste Day has been observed annually since 1834 throughout Canada and parts of the U.S. to honor the birthday of Quebec's patron saint, Jean-Baptiste, and French-Canadian culture. Our event will include music, song and dance as well as a cabin tour and weaving demonstration. A community meal is also planned.

The event begins at 3:00 p.m. with an introduction of St. Jean-Baptiste Day, Frenchtown and the cabin tour. At 3:30 p.m., guests may leave for the cabin tour or stay on site for other programs such as shake splitting, weaving demonstrations and songs of the fur trade. At 5:00 p.m. there will be tours of the Frenchtown Historic Site, including tours of the cemetery and the Prince's cabin. A community meal is scheduled for approximately 5:30 p.m. and will be provided by FHF. The event will end with some closing remarks by board president Rich Monacelli covering our endowment campaign and this year's Frenchtown Rendezvous. Lastly, guests are invited to dance with members of the Walla Walla Friends of Acoustic Music starting at 7:00 p.m. with an introduction to contra dancing, followed by a contra dance program from 7:30-10:00 p.m.

All programs associated with the fourth annual St. Jean-Baptiste Day Celebration are free and open to the public.

Last year's celebration featured songs and presentations by the Voyageurs & Co. from Vancouver, British Columbia. This year we are honored to welcome master weaver and Walla Walla tribal elder Joey Lavadour to demonstrate his ancient art. Lavadour has worked with wool and hemp twine from the Pendleton Woolen Mills to produce stunning traditional and modern basket designs.

See the articles below for more program information regarding St. Jean-Baptiste Day as well as and other interesting FHF developments.



Les Québécois celebrating la Fête nationale du Québec,
St. Jean-Baptiste Day.

TOUR OF FRENCHTOWN CABIN SITES ON JUNE 20

The fourth annual St. Jean-Baptiste Day Cabin Tour will be presented by the Frenchtown Historical Foundation on Saturday, June 20, at 3:00 p.m. with an introduction at the Frenchtown Historic Site. A bus will transport the tour party to six cabin locations between the Frenchtown Historic Site and Whitman Mission. Tour guides Sam Pambrun and Dan Clark will indicate the likely location and family history of each cabin. The list of cabin sites and families include Marcel and Rosalie Dauphin Gagnon, Narcisse and Pauline Walla Walla Raymond, Jerry Desire and Rosalie Raymond St. Denis, Charles and Julie Beauchemin, Louis and Angelique Pendoreille Tellier as well as Michael and Catherine D'Aubuchan Pellisier. Information sheets regarding cabin sites and families will be distributed. The bus, provided by Walla Walla University, will return to the Frenchtown Historic Site before 5:00 p.m. for additional St. Jean-Baptiste Day activities. The cabin tour is free and open to the public.

A MESSAGE FROM THE FHF BOARD PRESIDENT

Dear FHF Members,

Thank you for the time and effort you all have invested in our organization! Without you, the success of the last year would not have been possible. Take the Prince's cabin for instance, this project kept the board busy for much of last year. Relocating and restoring the cabin has involved much risk and reward. Though more work is needed, the cabin already serves as a unique and powerful symbol of our organizational leadership and cultural heritage. Let us recognize this achievement together on Saturday, June 20 during our St.-Jean Baptiste Day Celebration at the Frenchtown Historic Site. Let us also celebrate and thank long-serving board members who have contributed so much of themselves to the Frenchtown Historical Foundation. They are Claro Bergevin, Debbie Bergevin Beal, Karen Zohner, Dan Clark and Sam Pambrun.

New board members, with bold ideas and fresh energy, are some of the valuable assets now at our disposal. They are Jean-Paul Grimaud, Charles Saranto, Tom Williams and Jehannot Poirot. With their support and other FHF members like you, I propose two new initiatives for 2015. The first initiative calls for more robust and strategic educational outreach. One of the principle components of the Frenchtown Historical Foundation is to promote and share our historic archives, artifacts and assets to a wide and varied audience. To forward that goal, I have established an alliance with other local "heritage organization" to share information, ideas and promotional materials for our mutual benefit. I have also sought the creation for an Education Outreach Committee within FHF. The second and perhaps most important initiative calls for greater financial sustainability. We need to develop and maintain long-term financing solutions to meet the mission and goals of our organization. Charles Saranto has agreed to lead the Endowment Committee. Please thank him and consider joining this critical group.

Let us continue our work in 2015 for the creation of a lasting monument that pays tribute to the unique history and culture of our region so that both may be enjoyed and treasured by generations to come.

Sincerely,

Richard Monacelli
FHF Board President

FHF LAUNCHES ENDOWMENT CAMPAIGN

Since February, the Endowment Committee has quietly raised \$1000 toward the necessary \$10K needed to establish an account with Blue Mountain Community Foundation. Such an endowment would help ensure the financial sustainability of the Frenchtown Historical Foundation by providing long-term growth and income from our initial investment. By investing in a diversified portfolio that includes equities and fixed income securities, an endowment can be expected to grow at a rate significantly greater than inflation. The public launch of the endowment campaign will occur on June 20 during the St. Jean-Baptiste Day Celebration. If you would like to donate to the endowment campaign or join the Endowment Committee, please contact Charles Saranto (509-520-1105, saltguy@saltguy.com).

FHF WEBSITE, FACEBOOK PAGE

Don't forget to visit FHF on Facebook! View photos, share comments and keep up-to-date on all projects and events. Also, visit our main Frenchtown website: www.frenchtownpartners.org.



SEPTEMBER 26 CHOSEN FOR FRENCHTOWN RENDEZVOUS

Plans are underway for this fall's Frenchtown Rendezvous on September 26 at Frenchtown Hall in Lowden. This event is our major fundraiser of the year. Proceeds from the Rendezvous help cover insurance costs, weed control, bird spikes, cleaning supplies and other expenses associated with the Frenchtown Historic Site. Your help is needed! Sell tickets to your friends and family! To obtain tickets please contact any FHF board member. Also, tickets will be available for purchase at the St. Jean-Baptiste Day Celebration on June 20. Stay tuned for information regarding raffle prizes/tickets. If you are interested in gathering or donating valuable items for the silent auction, please contact Margret Benson (509-522-0923, mbenson51_2000@yahoo.com). All other questions, comments or concerns regarding Rendezvous should be directed to Judith Fortney (509-529-8210, jafortney@q.com), FHF Treasurer and Rendezvous Committee Chair.

Special thanks and recognition must go to Karen Zohner, the 2014 Rendezvous Committee Chair. Last year the Rendezvous featured dinner, wine & beer, music, historical displays, a silent auction and raffle; Prof. Sarah Hurlburt of Whitman College delivered the keynote lecture, "Frenchtown Family Ties: the Bergevin Letters;" and raffle winners received an area dining package as well as a ticket package to the Pendleton Round-Up and Happy Canyon. Under Zohner's leadership, FHF netted \$8K as a result of a highly successful Rendezvous. She would like to thank the all the volunteers, community members and local business that contributed to the event. Zohner was also very impressed by the quality and quantity of items in the silent auction; artwork by Sarah Hurlburt and crafts by Dorothy Hall were wonderful additions to the products and services donated by Prodigal Son Brewery & Pub, Martin's Jewelers, Klicker's, Fort Walla Walla Museum, Tamástslíkt Cultural Institute and many other generous donors.

TRIBAL BLESSING OF THE PRINCE'S CABIN

New to the Frenchtown Historic Site is the relocation and restoration of the Prince's cabin. Built for the Cayuse Chief Prince in 1837 by French Canadian Metis of the Hudson's Bay Company, this cabin is apparently the oldest wooden structure still standing in the state of Washington. A tribal blessing of the cabin occurred on October 4, 2014. Various members of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation were in attendance. Kriss Peterson was also in attendance and presented with a gift from the Frenchtown Historical Foundation. Kriss and her late husband Rev. Robin Peterson were the cabin's previous owners.

Prior to his death in 2011, Robin had performed extensive research on the history of the cabin and planned to move it to a more prominent location on his property where it would be restored and serve as a center for cultural reconciliation. Following Robin's death, Kriss Peterson offered the cabin to the Frenchtown Historical Foundation on the condition that it be moved to and displayed at the Frenchtown Historic Site.



Judith Fortney, Co-Chair of the FHF History Committee, presents Kriss Peterson with a gift at the tribal blessing of the Prince's cabin.



Jesse Jones, Chief of the Cayuse, speaks at the tribal blessing of the Prince's cabin.

THE BERGEVIN LETTERS PRESENTED BY PROF. SARAH HURLBURT

Sarah Hurlburt, FHF board member and associate professor of French at Whitman College, lectured on the Bergevins letters during Museum After Hours at Fort Walla Walla on April 30. She lectured on the same topic as the keynote speaker at the Frenchtown Rendezvous in September 2014. Her research concerning the Bergevins, an early Frenchtown family, involved the careful interpretation and better understanding of the French-Canadian experience. The Bergevin letters contained multiple examples and references to correspondence involving children and adolescents. These letters ranged from youth learning how to write, to long messages written on behalf of entire families, to letters exchanged directly between cousins. The content and function of these written interactions provided a window onto the interpretive role of children in the immigrant experience. These children may have interpreted between written and oral communication for an illiterate parent, or between languages for a monolingual parent, or attempted to reproduce the close epistolary relationships of their parents' generation with cousins. Examples of these interactions in the Bergevin letters demonstrated the value placed on distant family relationships in the French-Canadian community and the evolution imposed on these relationships by immigration.

JOIN OR DONATE TO THE FRENCHTOWN HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

You are invited to join or donate to the Frenchtown Historical Foundation to promote understanding of our diversity and history.

Please mail your annual membership to Frenchtown Historical Foundation for one of the following categories: Individual, \$25; Couple, \$35; Immediate Family, \$45; Advocate, \$100; Sustainer \$250; Patron,\$500; Sponsor, \$1000; Benefactor, \$5000.

Please also consider a gift to the capital fund for the Frenchtown Cabin Project. All contributions are tax-deductible, and should be sent to FHF, PO Box 1222, Walla Walla WA 99362, together with your name, address, email, and telephone. Or you may contribute by credit card by providing the following information:

Charge my credit card in the amount of \$_____. Name on Card: _____
Card Number: _____ Expiration Date: _____ Card type: ___ Visa ___ Mastercharge
Signature: _____
Name: _____ Date: _____
Address: _____

Street City State/Province Zip or Postal Code

Thank you. Your efforts and generosity will continue to support a lasting monument that pays tribute to the unique history and culture of our region so that both may be enjoyed and treasured by generations to come.

FRENCHTOWN
Historical Foundation

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