

LOWE

William Robert Lowe and his wife Evelyn retired to Ocean Park in 1933, after purchasing a 5-acre parcel of land for \$500 from E. C. Hulks. Mr. Hulks was the owner of a sizeable piece of property north of Marine Drive between 131st and 132nd Streets. At the time of their purchase, the property was accessed from Marine Drive via 131st Street which was open only as far as 14th Ave. In those days 14th Ave. was little more than a cow path leading to the Lowe property and in the



WILLIAM and EVELYN LOWE

years that followed became known as Lowewood Road – the name derived from the pioneering Lowes and Hazelwoods who built a summer cabin on property situated between 130th and 131st Streets.

While building the small cabin which became their home for a number of years, William and Evelyn lived in a tent on the property.

Water was obtained by tap from a wooden tank on stilts located below Marine Drive on 130th Street – the tank being fed by ram pump from a spring close to the beach. Buckets were hand carried approximately four blocks back to the property.

William, Evelyn and 8-year-old son Maurice had emigrated from England in 1910. In England, Evelyn had taught school and William had been organist and choir master of several Sheffield churches. In 1910, he came to the post of choir-director and organist of St. John's Anglican Church in Saskatoon, Sask., becoming very active in the musical community of the time in addition to teaching voice.

From Saskatoon the family moved to Winnipeg, Man. where Maurice, now in his late teens, studied piano with the well-known piano virtuoso Leonard Heaton. Maurice met and fell in love with Anna Sveinsson, a co-student in the Heaton class. Anna was the daughter of Arni and Gudrun Sveinsson, Icelandic pioneer farmers in Manitoba's Argyle District. Maurice and Anna were married in 1922. A year later they moved to the outskirts of Seattle, Wash., built a cabin in the woods and established a music class.

In 1928, they came to reside in the Vancouver area where William and Evelyn were then living. In addition to composing and teaching music, Maurice became interested in sculpture which he also taught for a period of time. Anna studied violin with local violinist and conductor Holroyd Paull and for several years led the second violins in the Holroyd Paull String Orchestra. Maurice and Anna took up two-piano playing and performed compositions and transcriptions by Maurice on the CBC National Radio Network.

They and their children, Bernard and Diana, moved to Ocean Park in 1943, building next door to William and Evelyn on a piece of the five-acre plot. They continued their musical activity in this community, composing and teaching piano and violin to local adults and children. For a period of time, Anna also travelled to Murrayville to teach a class on Saturdays.

In retirement, Maurice built and enjoyed a sailboat while Anna continued her much loved hobby of gardening. Anna passed away in 1982 and Maurice in 1999 at the age of 96.

Bernard, his son John, and Diana each live on portions of the original property.

The character of the community has undergone vast changes since those early days, but Ocean Park still feels like home.

– Bernard Lowe and Diana Fader

FRASER

Joe Fraser's family first found Ocean Park in 1930 when they house-sat for his father's Vancouver Tech. colleague for the summer. The A. Fraser Reid house, 'Kinnaird' was on the east side of 128th Street, two blocks north of North Bluff Road. Joe's family bought the adjacent five acres and built a cottage, 'Baldovan'. Mr. Berry had owned the land and Berry's son, an oyster raker, had dug the well for them.

The drive from Vancouver was on dirt roads through New Westminster, over the railway bridge, down the tunnel of trees that was King George Highway, and along pot-holed Crescent Road.

Goods were purchased at Cope's Corner (128th and 16th) in the general store adjacent to a large farm and orchard. They bought eggs at Valentine's farm near 22nd Avenue.

For a Vancouver lad, summers in Ocean Park were idyllic. Young Joe explored the area alone walking past Cope's Corner to the beach trail near of the end of North Bluff Road. At the tiny post office, he met the Postmaster, a man Joe recalls as having a husky build, and who compensated for being deaf by reading peoples lips. On occasion Joe would help the Postmaster by carrying the mail bag up the steep, well-established trail from the rail line. In addition to the postal service, the Postmaster offered home grown fresh produce for sale: some of the biggest, sweetest, green peas Joe remembers eating.

Among the delights for the teen-aged Joe, most important was learning to drive his sister's car on one corner of his Dad's five acres. Another was finding the large crabs in the tide pools. With a homemade billy-can, forked stick and a grating, Joe cooked the crabs and took them home in a gunny sack, ready to eat. He did the same with clams, sometimes eating the clams raw, with salt.

Joe rented a row-boat for \$1 from the Religious Education Council Campsite. He liked going to Blaine with Mr. Berry's son to play Pool.

When Joe went to University, his father sold the property. The connection continues however, as Joe and wife Jean moved to South Surrey in recent years to be closer to their daughter, Cathie Stonier, now raising her family here.

– Shirley Stonier

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