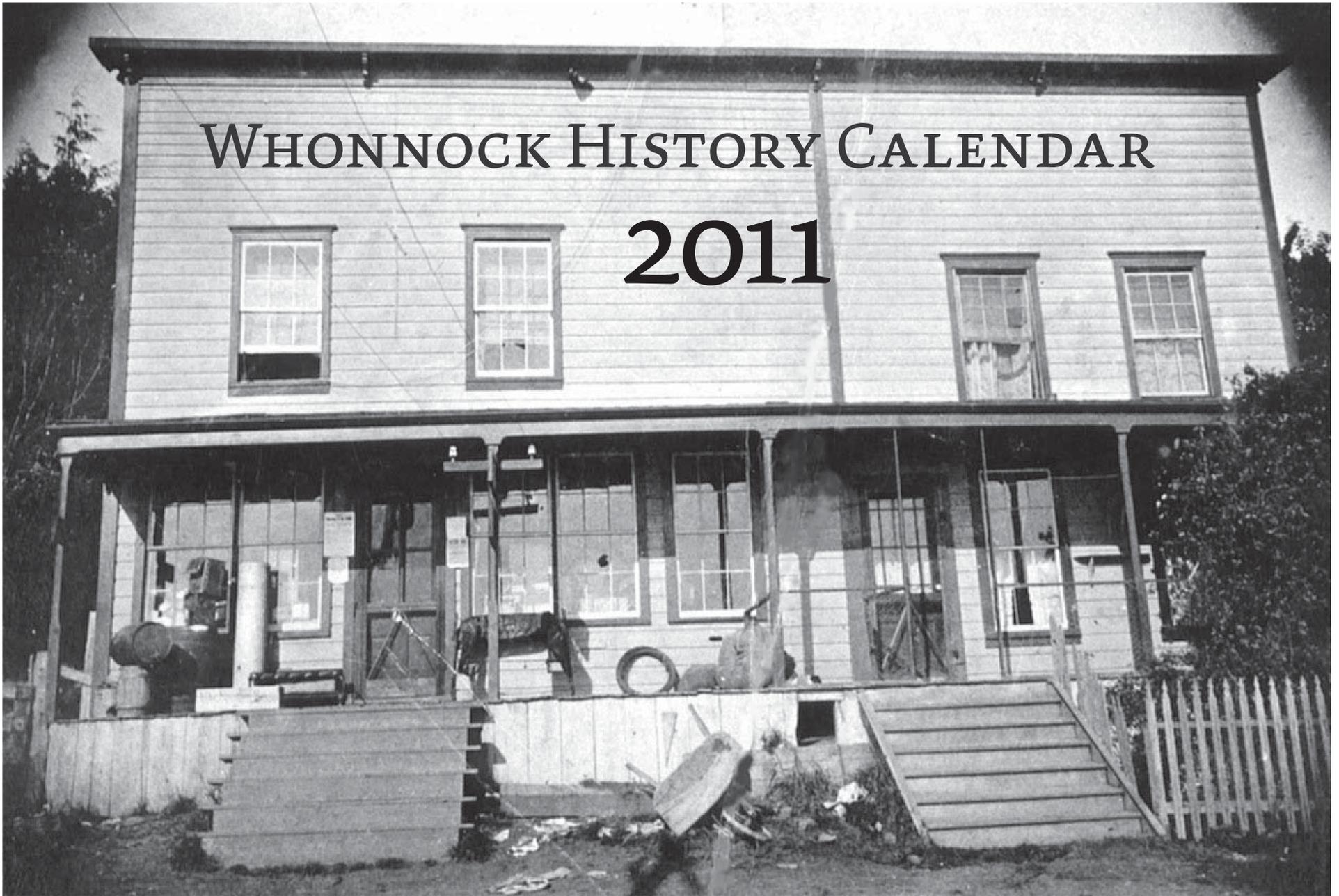


WHONNOCK HISTORY CALENDAR 2011



The first Whonnock post office opened in Noble Oliver's general store in 1885. The place where the store stood is now under Loughheed Highway. The building burned down in March 1916, but a few years earlier the post office had been moved to its own building on River Road.

APPLICATION
FOR A POST OFFICE

No. 102

E. H. Fletcher

18 September '84

An application

for a P.O. at

WHARNOCK

District of New Westminster.

No. of families: 15

Proposed service: from one to three
times a week from R[ailwa]y station.

Estimated cost: nil

Estimated revenue: \$50.00

Proposed Post Master: Noble Oliver

Recommended by: Mr. Homer, M.P.

Approved: 23 June 1885

WHARNOCK?

The application letter said:
"This place is more correctly
know as 'Whonnock' from the
Indian village in the vicinity."

Therefore WHONNOCK was the
name given to the post office and
the railway station.

N:102.

E. H. Fletcher

18 Sept '84.

On applⁿ
for a P.O. at
Wharnock,
District of New Westminster.

No. of families: 15 -
Proposed service: from one to three
times per week from Rly Station.
Estimated Cost: nil.
" Revenue: \$50.00
Proposed P.M. noble oliver.
Recommended by Mr. Homer M.P.

app'd
June 23/85
H. Homer



Sample of a "Type Five" passenger and freight station built under government contract prior to 1885, when CPR took over. This is the type of station that would have been in Whonnock in 1884 when the application for a post office was made.



This photo of the Whonnock station taken in 1914 shows that the original station was then still in use.

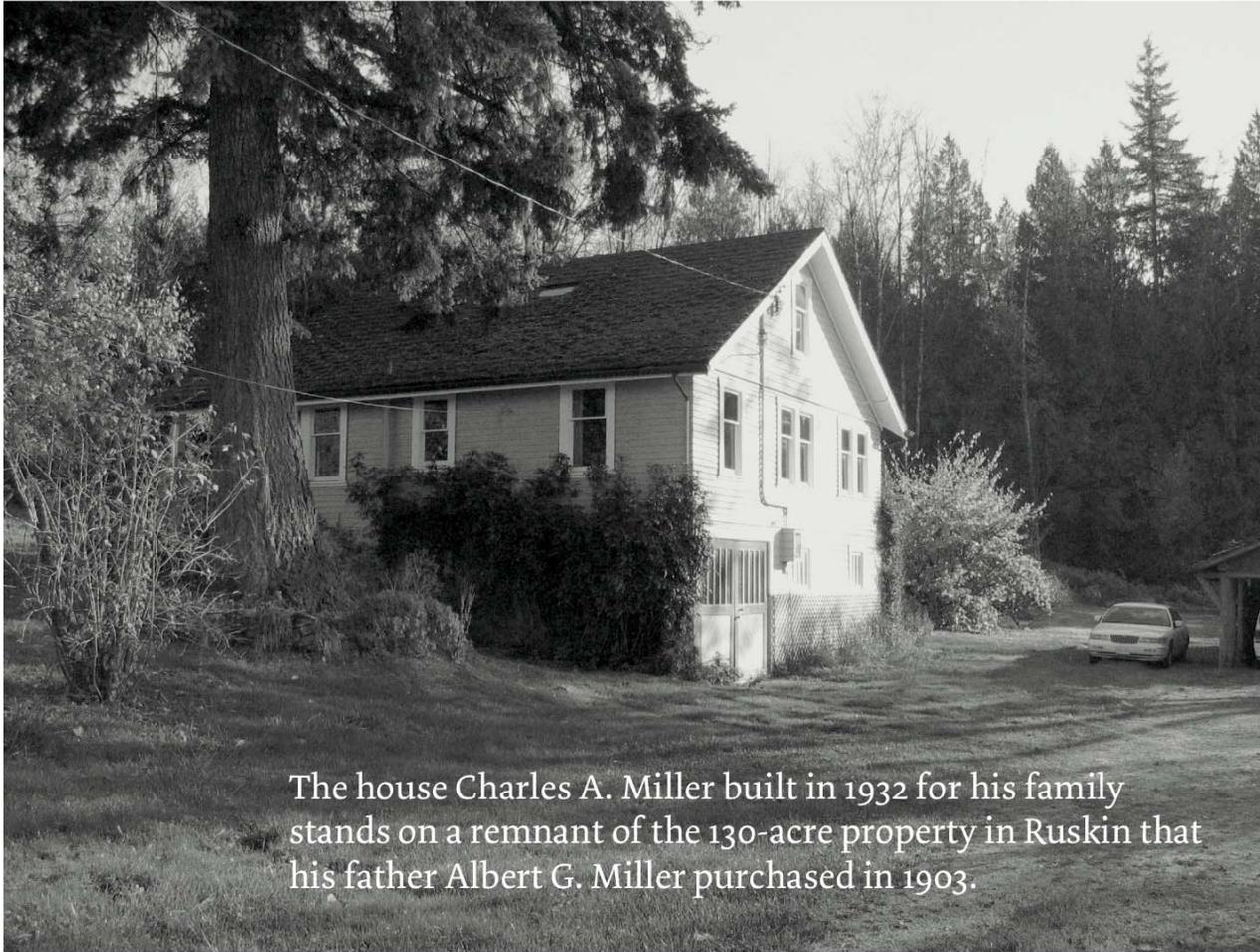


In 1914 Postmaster Richard Stanley Whiting (right) moved the post office from the store on Lougheed Highway to a small building on the open area between today's post office and Sue's feed store (Showler's Red and White store). The feed store was built in 1920.

On the left, taken in 1921, Margaret Milne looking out of the post office door. The other two pictures are of a later date. Note the change in the windows—security could be a reason why this was done. The post office building was moved to its present spot in the 1930s.

Whiting was postmaster from 1907 to 1953.

28594 104TH AVENUE
FORMERLY MILLER ROAD



The house Charles A. Miller built in 1932 for his family stands on a remnant of the 130-acre property in Ruskin that his father Albert G. Miller purchased in 1903.



In 1903 the Millers moved into a home that Moses Ball probably built before 1893. The growing family lived there until 1911.

Modifications to the original building were made over time. Today few if any of the original characteristics of the house remain, but the house is still there on the same property as the 1932 house.

This photograph is from the title page of Charles Miller's book *Valley of the Stave*.



There was yet another Miller home on the original property. Charles Miller included a photo (left) of it in *Valley of the Stave*.

With five growing children and the arrival of his parents, more space was needed and, in 1911, Albert Miller built what Charles referred to as the "new Miller home...about 400 yards south of and in line with the old house."

Later this 1911 house became one of the buildings of the Twin Maples Correctional Centre, where it was still in use in 1980.



Charles A. Miller
Author, historian and
story teller.



THE BLACK FAMILY
settled in Whonnock
in 1910.

John Stuart Black is sitting in the centre. His wife Kate (Catherine Augusta Cormack) is on his right. Son Farris is between them. Son Charles and daughter Helen are behind their father and daughter Jean is sitting on his left. The gentleman behind Jean (the photographer?) has not yet been identified.

Kate Black was a founding member of the Ladies Club that built the old community hall (the Ladies Hall) in Whonnock. She was very active in the community and the United Church. Both Helen and Jean were employed at the Whonnock post office at some time. Charles served overseas in the First World War. John Stuart Black is the only member of the family buried at the Whonnock Cemetery. After his death in 1932 the family moved away from Whonnock. — Photo courtesy Shirley Ryan.



JOHN BRODIE on the steps of his house next to the church. After his death the house served the congregation for education and social gatherings.

In 1914, a Church of Presbyterian faith was built on land donated by John Brodie. Following plans drawn by R.A. Hamilton, contractor/carpenter Olaus Lee constructed the building with volunteer help. The church was dedicated on Sunday, 12 September 1914, in the presence of the Reverend Dr. Alexander Dunn, Whonnock's first Presbyterian minister.

In 1925 the Presbyterian and Methodist churches in Canada were amalgamated, and Whonnock Presbyterian became Whonnock United Church.

In 2010 the dwindling congregation had no choice but to end almost a century of worship in this heritage building.





Brian and Isabel Byrnes

HERITAGE LANDSCAPE AWARD FOR "THE FRONT"



In 2009 four Whonnock residents, Sue Schulze, Trudi DesRochers, Steve Bentley, and Reginald Friesen, shared the Maple Ridge Community Heritage Commission's Heritage Landscape Award. They, by living in and caring for the Whonnock Post Office, the former Red & White Store, and the two former Byrnes residences, assure that "The Front," Whonnock's commercial and civic centre since the 1800s, is again as attractive and vibrant as it used to be.



GEORGE GODWIN's 1930s novel *The Eternal Forest* is regarded as giving a true picture of what life in Whonnock was before the First World War. That is unfortunate because facts, places and characters are distorted—sometimes maliciously, as in the case of some well-known residents.

The author and his wife Dorothy spent the years 1913 and 1914 on a Whonnock property—9770 268th Street. Here they had their first child, Eric. It was thought that the Godwins left Whonnock after 1914, but family snapshots marked “Whonnock” show Eric as a toddler. He would not have been walking yet in 1914.

Recent research shows that the Godwins did not leave Whonnock but moved to another property—9352 Spilsbury. That is where the snapshots of a house and young Eric and his mothers were taken before the Godwins returned to England in 1916—George to fight in France.

—Photos courtesy Paul Godwin, Eric's son



Charles Whetham built this house in Ruskin in 1894. Simple living and self-sufficiency may have been on his mind when he called it "Walden" after Henry Thoreau's famous cabin in the woods in Massachusetts. Whetham sold the house to the Gilchrist brothers in 1903, who chose to call it "Kildonan," perhaps after the township on the Isle of Skye. The ladies in the picture are George Gilchrist's wife Mina and Alex Gilchrist's wife Anna. Photo courtesy Shirley Ryan



From the *Journal of the American Rhododendron Society*, October 1958

On May 5th members were invited to view the gardens at Mr. Norman Whittall's Country estate at Whonnock, B.C. This estate situated on fairly high sloping land overlooking the Fraser River and valley for miles is a very lovely spot and seems to be ideal for rhododendrons.

Although the plantings are new within the last few years the use of very large specimens varying in size give the effect of having been there always. Mr. Whittall has a very impressive collection of variety both hybrid and specie. Certainly the members enjoyed their afternoon and it was most interesting to see what can be done with landscaping using rhododendrons and azaleas massed to the greatest effect.

The work of planting is still going on as there are thirty-five acres to be landscaped in all. After seeing all over, tea was served and a vote of thanks goes to Mr. Whittall for a most enjoyable afternoon.

NORMAN WHITTALL was the first president of the Vancouver Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society. He called his home in Whonnock MODA after a the location of a family property in Izmir, Turkey.



This old house represents a more common kind of dwelling in Whonnock. Today (right) the old building is hidden under a rough cedar siding. The old photo was probably taken after a renovation in the 1940s or 1950s. Note the pipe on the left leading down to the septic tank. A two-floor extension was added in the 1970s when Robert Davidson, the Haida carver and print maker, lived here.



WHONNOCK

IN MEMORY OF THOSE WHO FELL

W. M. DAVIN 47TH BTN. PASSCHENDAELE. 26-10-17.
R. FLETCHER 47TH BTN. LENS. 29-9-17.
S. CARNER 47TH BTN. HERSIN COPIGNEY. 18-12-17.
A. N. HACKNEY 29TH BTN. ROSIERES. 9-8-18.
R. H. HARRIS 8TH DUKE OF WELLINGTONS. SOMME. 29-9-16.
D. HANNA 1ST C. M. R. YPRES. 2-6-16.
H. S. FRASER C. E. F. KILLED IN FRANCE.
F. J. SNELLING C. E. F. DIED OF WOUNDS.
A. SORENSON 46ST BTN. PASSCHENDAELE. 26-10-17.
T. G. WILSON 2ND C. M. R. PASSCHENDAELE. 31-10-17.

“IN MEMORY OF THE SOLDIERS OF WHONNOCK DISTRICT WHO FELL IN THE WAR”



After the First World War the Ladies Hall on River Road became the Whonnock Memorial Hall. “In memory of the soldiers of Whonnock district who fell in the war,” a brass plaque was attached above the main entrance of the hall with the names of all those who did not return. Today the plaque is displayed at Whonnock Lake Centre.



SPILSBURY brothers successively owned land in Whonnock since 1872. On a visit in 1896 their sister Elizabeth (seated right) married August (standing right), a member of the Baker family from Albion. Beth and August preferred using the original French surname Boulanger. This family photo was taken ca. 1907, when Beth took August to meet the Spilsbury family in England. (Photo from Jim Spilsbury's collection.)

AUGUST BOULANGER died in Whonnock on Christmas Day 1938, 75 years of age.

....Mr. Boulanger was a very nice quiet man. You go there to the house and you never saw him. Well, he died just before the last war and she wanted to go to England and take August's ashes with her. And my sister was going to England just before the war and she found herself stuck here when the war broke out. Anyway, she said, she drove all the way and then they sailed from New York. Mrs. Boulanger sat in front of the car and August's ashes up on the dashboard all the way to New York. She was so upset when he died. ... She went to England and never came back here again. She was a great gardener, had a lovely garden. She was one of the old-timers.

[Margaret Cameron, interviewed in 1985].



The Boulanger house on Spilsbury Road is without doubt the most elegant remaining old building in Whonnock. It is unfortunately in a state of disrepair.