



HERITAGE DESIGNATION, REGISTER AND CANDIDATES ELECTORAL AREA C – COBBLE HILL

Community Heritage Register

At the time of adoption of the CVRD Official Community Plan, there are two South Cowichan historic places listed in the CVRD Community Heritage Register (CHR):

1. *Memorial Park*: Located within the core of Cobble Hill Village, this commemorative park is dedicated to those who fought in World War I. The cenotaph was unveiled in February of 1920 by Premier John Oliver. In attendance were 30 cadets from Shawnigan Preparatory School, 40 returned World War I soldiers, members of the Ancient Order of Foresters in their regalia and a large crowd of spectators. The monument was inscribed with 25 names of those who did not return from The War. The well-cared for cenotaph still stands after many years, unchanged except for the added names of those who fell in the Second World War. To this day, the site is used as a gathering place during Remembrance Day and other celebrations. The Ancient Order of Foresters organization dissolved in 1963, and the property reverted to the Crown. In 2009 the CVRD revitalized the existing cenotaph, which is managed as a community park, through a grant from Veteran Affairs and very generous assistance from the community.
2. *The Shearing Tree*: Believed to be one of the largest remaining Douglas fir trees on Vancouver Island, The Shearing Tree stands on land originally pre-empted by William Shearing in 1872, land that until recent years remained in his family. When the rest of his farm was logged to create farmland, Mr. Shearing left this massive example standing as a reminder of the huge forest that once covered the area. It is located off Telegraph Road in Cobble Hill.

Candidates

Other heritage resources that may have significant heritage value and will be considered for inclusion in the CHR include but are not limited to the following:

1. *Cobble Hill Village Core*: The commercial core area of Cobble Hill is one of the most significant concentrations of commercial historic resources on Vancouver Island. It corresponds with the earliest pioneer settlement and reflects Cobble Hill's early merchant activity, giving Cobble Hill its unique heritage flavour—the distinctive small-scale lots and buildings symbolizing the architecture of the 1800s. The Cobble Hill Village core area includes a legacy of history, including the post office, the telephone exchange, Cobble Hill School House 1, Cobble Hill School House 2, the Cobble Hill train station, the Cobble Hill market, the Bonner Block, the Cobble Hill bakery, the Cobble Hill hall, the cenotaph, Home Gas, the Baptist Church, Barry's Blacksmith, the creamery and other potential heritage resources.
2. *Railway Station*: With the coming of the railway in 1886, the Cobble Hill Village area boomed. All roads led to Cobble Hill's new railroad station that was complete with baggage room, ticket office, telegraph office, waiting room housing an old pot-bellied stove, and accompanying stockyards. When train traffic shifted to highway transportation, the deteriorating station was



replaced with the kiosk. The surrounding area fell into disrepair and did not offer a very pleasant visual entrance to the village core. In the winter of 2009, a revitalization project was undertaken resulting in the new attractive park-like setting that is managed as part of Quarry Nature Park.

3. *Station Hotel:* Later known as the Wilton Place Hotel, it was built in 1893 and stood on Cobble Hill Road across from the train station. This grand structure was one of the South Island destination spots before being razed to the ground by a devastating fire in 1942. The fire that destroyed the hotel was gallantly fought during the night by Cobble Hill's bucket brigade; however, by morning only smoldering rubble remained. This fire prompted the first Cobble Hill fire hall to be built. The hall with its firefighting equipment was located in a small building next to Barry's garage on Fisher Road.
4. *Post Office:* Cobble Hill's post office is the second oldest continuously running post office in all of Canada. The first post office in Cobble Hill was established in an old boxcar across the road from the railway tracks in 1887. The current post office, which is located on Garland Avenue, was built in 1949.
5. *The Walton Building:* Now known as the Cobble Hill market, this building was built by Tom Walton in 1911. When it opened, it housed a grocery store downstairs, and the upstairs held an art studio by day and a popular dance hall by night. The Cobble Hill Women's Institute held their meetings in the upstairs hall when they first formed their chapter. Currently, the upper floor of this historic old structure is home to the owners of the store.
6. *Telephone Office:* First listed in the British Columbia Long Distance Toll Directory on August 1, 1908, the Cobble Hill telephone office was originally housed in the Garland Block. In 1917, the telephone office moved to a newly constructed building at the corner of Fisher Road and Garland Avenue. The Minstrels Conservatory of Music is currently housed within the old telephone office. In 1917 there were 61 subscribers to the service but, as a sign of how rapidly the area was growing, that number was over 160 by 1921.
7. *Good Templars Hall:* The first community hall built in Cobble Hill was constructed by the Good Templars (a temperance group) in 1893 at the corner of Cobble Hill and Hutchinson Road, and the first Cobble Hill Fall Fair was held there in 1908. With a rapidly growing community, it was not long before the Good Templars hall was deemed too small and not befitting the many activities undertaken in Cobble Hill. When the building began to deteriorate, a committee was formed to explore the possibility of erecting a larger facility complete with recreation grounds. The Good Templars Hall served the community until the Cobble Hill hall was built in 1921.
8. *The Farmers' Institute at Cobble Hill Hall:* The existing Cobble Hill hall on Watson Avenue was built in 1921 by community subscription and assistance from the Ancient Independent Order of Foresters, Court Shawnigan, the Women's Institute, the Girl Guides, the Boy Scouts and the Farmers' Institute. The first function in the hall was a pageant put on by the Girl Guides on May 24, 1921. The Cobble Hill hall serves as a primary focal point for the community. The hall and the adjacent fairgrounds are alive with activity throughout the year, and particularly when the Farmers Institute hosts the Cobble Hill Fair at the end of August each year.



9. *Cowichan Bakery*: The aroma of freshly baked bread hung in the air over the Cobble Hill Village for many years as Cowichan Bakery was one of the village's most vibrant businesses. Operated for decades by the Scales family, this popular bakery was complete with a delivery truck to provide service to outlying areas. Historical records show that in 1925 one could purchase 12 loaves of bread for \$1.00. Still located on Garland Avenue, the bakery now acts a private residence.
10. *Barry's Garage*: Barry's Blacksmith was established in the village in the early 1920s when Patrick Barry moved his blacksmith shop from Cobble Hill Road to its existing location in the middle of the Cobble Hill Village. Without realizing it this move placed the business in an ideal location to service the automobiles that would soon grace the narrow streets of Cobble Hill. Barry's Garage soon became a gathering place for residents in the area.
11. *Cobble Hill's Schools*: Construction began on Cobble Hill's first school in 1914 and until its completion in 1915 students were accommodated in the Good Templars Hall just down the block. It was a one-room school having just one teacher for grades one to eight. In later years, the basement was used as a high school. The building is located on Watson Avenue and it now houses Evergreen Independent School. Soon after the high school was built, a second school was located in the village on Cobble Hill Road. Old School House Coffee and a few other local businesses now operate in this structure.
12. *Home Gas*: The Island Gateway home gas station can still be seen at the corner of Cobble Hill and Shawnigan Lake Roads. This station was a popular gathering place on a Saturday evening as, in addition to its gas pumps, there was a small coffee bar and grocery outlet in the station. It was converted to a house shortly after it closed.
13. *Cobble Hill Lime Quarry*: In 1946, Norm and Ralph Bonner established a lime quarry on the east side of Cobble Hill Mountain. Rock was blasted from the side of the mountain then put through crushers and a hammer mill after which it was screened and shipped across the Island. This lime was used for agricultural purposes, but it was also used by Bapco Paints as an ingredient for putty. The quarry closed in 1981 but it is still visible in Quarry Nature Park—a 23-ac block of land purchased by the CVRD in 1985 and managed as a community park.
14. *Knocking Shops*: These houses are well known in England for the night services offered to gentlemen callers. Cobble Hill had three such houses: an uptown house that still stands today, a mid-town house and the small cottage on the other side of the village with a sign over the door reading, "Oh So Easy".
15. *St. Mary's Church*: In 1916, several parishioners from St. John's Anglican Church built a church of their own in the Cobble Hill Village. This church was located on Hutchinson Road at the south easterly corner of the present-day playground of Evergreen Independent School. Built through donation and volunteer labour, St. Mary's had both leaded windows and architectural grace. In 1939 the church was in decline; after a particularly heavy snow fall damaged the roof it was dismantled, and the windows were used at St. John's and at the Mill Bay United Church Hall.



16. *The Creamery*: Located close to where the Cobblestone Pub is now located, the Creamery played an important role in the life of Cobble Hill, providing milk, feed and supplies for the village and surrounding area. The Creamery also housed Cobble Hill's first library of sorts.
17. *James Dougan Memorial Cemetery*: This pioneer cemetery is nestled in a peaceful meadow, surrounded by trees, just east of the Douglas Hill subdivision off Cowichan Bay Road. It is one of the few privately-owned cemeteries in Canada. Named after one of the Cowichan Valley's first pioneer families, this cemetery exists on land first owned by James and Annie Dougan in 1887. Care and control of the James Dougan Memorial Cemetery rests with a Society incorporated in 1927.
18. *The Chapman Memorial*: The Chapman Memorial is located on Telegraph Road across from Arbutus Ridge Golf Course. It marks the grave of Richard Chapman, who died at the age of 20 after being injured in a barn raising on his parents' farm. The nearest doctor was at Ladysmith, hence he succumbed to his injuries without medical attention and was buried by his parents on the side of a field, as was often done at that time. The site became overgrown and dilapidated and was refurbished by the Cobble Hill Boy Scouts in the 1970s, and again by Chapman descendants in the late 1990s.
19. *The Anglican Church of Saint John the Baptist on Cobble Hill Road*: The Anglican Church of Saint John the Baptist on Cobble Hill Road was dedicated for worship in 1889 and continues to serve its parishioners' needs today. Its cemetery, the largest in Cobble Hill, is the final resting place for many prominent and interesting local individuals and has been the site of many organized historical tours.