

Spring 2023

ESQUIMALT HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
NEWSLETTER



EHS Grads of 2022 Alumni Association Scholarship Winners

Three outstanding EHS grads of 2022 were awarded scholarships at the November AGM: Sofia Herbert Forrest, Silas Leske and Kieran Brown each won a \$1000 Alumni Association Scholarship.

Alumni Association Scholarship Director Lorna Reid presented the scholarships to the backdrop of a PowerPoint presentation created by Dana Bjornson, Scholarship 12 teacher at EHS and herself an EHS Grad of 1990. Each of the three winners are currently attending post-secondary and are no doubt making the same big impact they did at EHS.



Sofia Herbert-Forrest graduated from both the Challenge program and the French Immersion program, earning herself a Double Dogwood, while maintaining honour roll grades all four years. An all-round accomplished athlete, Sofia played basketball, volleyball, rugby, soccer and field hockey. Her ability did not go unnoticed as she won the EHS Excellence in Athletics Award, as well as the top Junior Athlete Award, an award that recognizes significant leadership and athletic qualities. Sofia says that sports were very important in her life, teaching her life lessons around hard work and dedication, as well as the importance of physical and mental health. Sofia reports that psychology is another of her interests, and plans to pursue more psychology courses in university. She is currently at the University of King's College (Dalhousie) attending the Foundation Year Program.



Silas Leske excelled in sports, music and academics. This active student was captain of his Victoria Volleyball Club team, a member of the school rowing team and, as a member of the school volleyball team, he helped the team qualify for islands for the first time in years. Silas was awarded the Joseph Barlow Sportsmanship Award in recognition of his contributions to the school's athletic program. He is also a talented and versatile musician, playing guitar, piano and trumpet in the R and B band, and also singing in the choir. And, his marks were excellent. Silas won the Top Senior English award, helping to pave his way to an early admission to UBC's very competitive engineering program. Silas plans to pursue a Masters and then a Doctorate degree, and hopes he can keep up his music and his sports at the same time.



Kieran Brown's passion is sports. He has played soccer and ultimate frisbee, and been a competitive speed skater for 12 years. Kieran competed at the Canadian Youth Short Track Championships in both 2019 and 2020 as a member of Team BC, and won the Peninsula Speed Skating Achievement Award in 2019. He also volunteered with middle schoolers through the Hockey for Heroes program, winning major leadership awards each of his high school years. Kieran earned himself a Double Dogwood, achieving honour roll grades as a member of both the Challenge Program and the French Immersion program. Kieran is a keen Blue Jays fan, and he hopes to work in baseball operations for the team after he completes his Sport Management degree at Brock University in St. Catherine's, Ontario.

Inaugural “Jason Buie Music Achievement Award” Winner

EHS 2022 grad Callum Rudyk won the inaugural \$1000 Jason Buie Music Achievement Award. The award was presented by Jason Buie’s mother, Gayle Buie, at the EHS Alumni Association AGM this past November. She was joined by her sister Gloria and Jason’s twins, Jackson and Etta, at the award presentation. This \$1000 scholarship was funded by RibFest and the Esquimalt Firefighters charitable foundation, and in future years, it will be presented to a graduating EHS student at RibFest.

Jason Buie was born and raised in Esquimalt. His parents, Gayle and Bob, both grew up in Esquimalt and graduated from EHS. As boys, Jason and his brother Chris spent much of their time with their grandparents, who lived near Saxe Point Park and Kinver Beach. Continuing the family tradition, Jason was raising his twins, Jackson and Etta, in his beloved Esquimalt when he unexpectedly passed away.

Jason was an award-winning professional musician who believed in giving back to his community. He released 4 independent CD’s over his 25 plus years as a musician, and his last album, Driftin Heart, was an award-winning CD. In 2018, Jason won the Maple Blues Award for the Best New Blues Artist in Canada. He was a co-founder of the White Rock Blues Society and a member of the Victoria Blues Society. When he was approached to come on board with the Esquimalt RibFest as the musician coordinator, he didn’t hesitate. Jason clearly loved being part of RibFest.

His community contributions extended to the annual Christmas gigs he organized in both Victoria and White Rock. Jason arranged for other musicians to give their time for the Christmas Toy Jam and the Yuletide Blues for the Mustard Seed Food Bank. He would give “up and coming” musicians breaks and have them play at his various gigs. He was very generous with his time to help fellow musicians. Jason was a big man with a giving heart.

Jason would no doubt approve of the first winner, who has clearly met the award criteria, which includes an intent to pursue studies in music, collaboration with other musicians, and a willingness to give back to their community.



Callum Rudyk has had a passion for music as long as he can remember. He joined his first ensemble in middle school, playing the viola in the junior strings orchestra. His interests expanded to other areas in the arts. He was a teacher assistant for junior art classes, and he spent all four of his high school years on the school’s improv team. In grade 10, he helped lead the school’s competitive team to win the Island Championship in the Canadian Improv Games.

Music continued to be his main passion as he performed in the strings, R & B and vocal ensembles. Callum is also a member of a popular local band called Anteater Eater. He worked with the school’s leadership program to realize his dream of organizing a Battle of the Bands for EHS. Some of the bands that formed to compete, enjoyed it so much they have decided to carry on with their new bands.

Callum was accepted into UBC’s School of Music where he began his study in music composition and production. He hopes to become a music teacher, as he says, to follow in the footsteps of some of the most important people in his life.

A Message from EHS Principal Sarah Garr

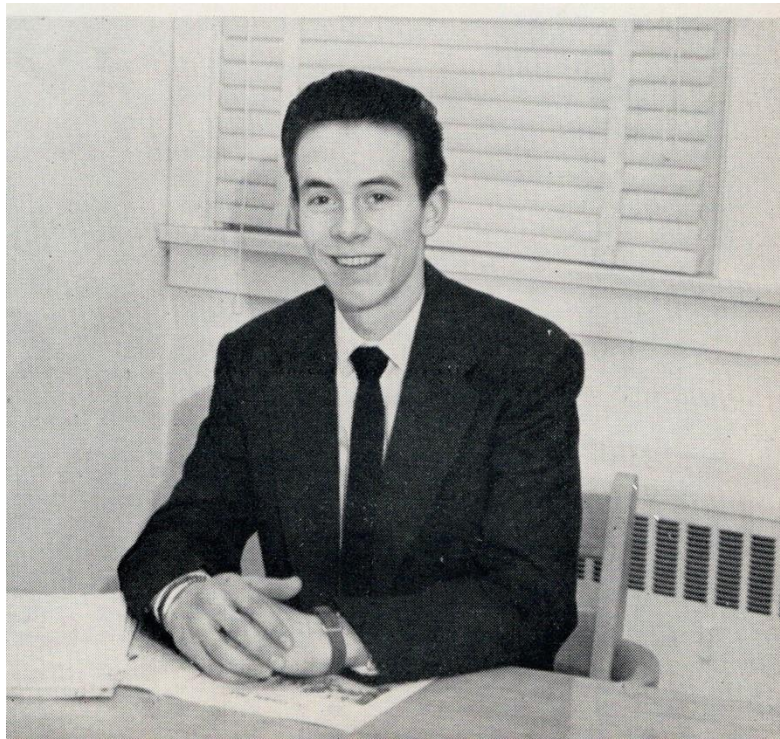
On behalf of the staff and students at Esquimalt High School, I'd like to take this opportunity to say thank you to our amazing Alumni who volunteer their time and energy to continue to support our school community! Your efforts provide many opportunities for our students that they otherwise wouldn't have.

April, May and June are busy months as we finish up this school year and look ahead to the next. I'm hoping some of you had the opportunity to enjoy our school musical, *The Addams Family!* We are so proud of our incredibly talented musical theatre students. This talent extends to our musicians, our artists, our student athletes and so many other students who showcase their skill and talent in extracurricular areas.

As we head closer to June, we are busily planning many year-end events including the Indigenous Student Grad, UVIC Grad, the Grad Dinner Dance and Awards Night. We look forward to these opportunities to celebrate successes with students and their families!

Thank you again to everyone who continues to stay connected to Esquimalt High School. Once a Docker, always a Docker!

A Tribute to Wes Umphrey- EHS Grad of 1955



1954-55 School President
Wes Umphrey

Wes Umphrey was not only the president of the EHS student body during his grad year of 1954-55, but he was also a founder and first president of the EHS Alumni Association years later. Sadly, Wes passed away earlier this year, but he is remembered for his significant contributions to the school and the community, both as a student and during his years in the Alumni Association.

Wes was one of a committee of 16 alumni members that worked to establish the new association, and once the EHS Alumni Association was formally incorporated in 2006, Wes took on the role of its first president. He remained active on the executive, assuming a variety of positions, and he continued to generously give his time to support a number of alumni initiatives until a few months before his death. Wes helped the membership to grow from its beginning of about 150 grads to its current membership of over 600 former students and staff.

His focus right from the start was to give his time and energy to support the current students as much as possible. Wes was a strong advocate for the Alumni Scholarship Program, which started with one scholarship of \$500 in 2006, and grew to where the Alumni Association now annually presents three \$1000 scholarships to deserving EHS grads (as noted earlier in the newsletter). He was instrumental in starting the annual Alumni Basketball event. Support for the Fine Arts Program and various student teams and clubs through fundraising was high on his priority list. If Wes was aware of a need in the school, he was always willing to try and see that the request was met.

About 15 years ago, Wes was one of several key people who raised the funds and pushed for the upgrades to the school theater. He also put his energy into looking for a variety of ways to raise the necessary funds for a school bus, starting in 2013, and ending with the purchase of the bus in 2016. Like many alumni members, Wes grew up in Esquimalt, and he always looked for ways for the students to connect with the history of the school. In 2015, he helped organize an event for students to help celebrate the school's 100th Anniversary. This memorable and fun event featured games on the field and a lunch provided for the young people. Hotdogs, a favorite of Wes', had to be on the menu along with a very large 4-foot by 8-foot cake, more than enough for 800 students and staff.



Wes and Esquimalt High students at the EHS 100th Anniversary celebration.

Community connection with the school was another priority for Wes. He regularly looked for ways to have groups come to perform at the school, and opportunities for students to participate in Esquimalt community events. He was instrumental in arranging for EHS students to participate in Buccaneer Days and the annual Esquimalt RibFest, a participation that continues today.



Wes and a fellow Alumni volunteer, Marilyn Emery, promoting the Alumni Association at Buccaneer Days.

In 2009, Wes was particularly keen to initiate the school and alumni involvement in the Remembrance Day Ceremony at the Esquimalt Cenotaph at Memorial Park. He would arrange for a current EHS student and an alumni member to lay a wreath on behalf of the school each November 11. In fact, for two years, Wes and his grandson Jamieson proudly represented the school, as noted in the photo below. This has now become an annual tradition for the Alumni Association.

Jamieson McGill and his grandfather Wes Umphrey



Nov. 11, 2013
at the
Esquimalt
Cenotaph.

Wes was very much a people person. He really enjoyed bringing former students together to share their stories with each other. He was again one of the main drivers behind the school reunions held in 2009, 2012 and 2015, where hundreds of former students were able to reconnect at events held in the school and in the community. In 2015, the 100th Anniversary of the school, Wes compiled displays on the history of Esquimalt High School, showcasing how the school started in the old Lampson School in 1915, moved to the Island Weavers' site on Esquimalt Road, and then back to Lampson Street School, before moving to the Head Street location and then finally to its present location on Colville Road. These displays have since been shared at class reunions and at Buccaneer Days. This led to a passion of his – the development of a school archives. Wes collected historical material, pictures and memorabilia. He began organizing these materials, and his comprehensive and neatly labelled binders have provided a starting point to formally establishing the archives. Wes also compiled a list of many former EHS grads who have gone on in their lives to have a significant impact in their communities. This list of Distinguished Alumni is now being considered by the present executive to see how these people might be honoured.



Wes greeting former grads, including his nephew Jim Umphrey.

Unsurprisingly, Wes has also drafted a detailed history of the EHS Alumni Association which will be featured in a future newsletter. Wes' pride in his school never wavered.

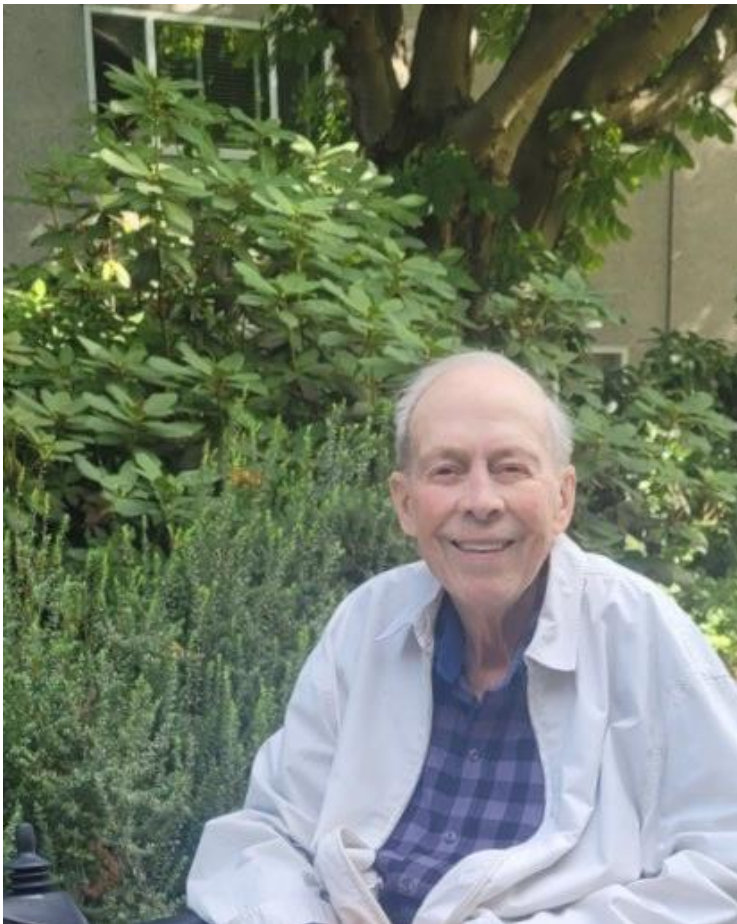
Wes was an avid athlete during his years at Esquimalt High School, playing soccer, basketball and rugby. His love of sports was clearly a family tradition, as Wes later cheered his sons and then his grandsons on soccer and rugby pitches and basketball courts. Apparently, Wes rarely missed a game. It is clear why Wes worked to establish the annual alumni basketball event at EHS.

Wes started his career with the provincial government as a summer student, working for the Forest Inventory Branch as a timber cruiser right after graduation. Three years later he joined the air classification crew, taking to the air to classify forests by helicopter. And, it was while working there, that he met Darlene, who would become his wife of 59 years. Wes and Darlene had three children, Catherine, Donovan and Robert, and six grandchildren.

In 1961, he moved from the Forest Inventory Branch to the Timberland Appraiser's office, assessing timber and forest land for property taxation. Wes became an accredited appraiser with the Appraisal Institute of Canada and a professional member of the Real Estate Institute of B.C., which led to him moving about the province, working as an appraiser in Quesnel, and then becoming the provincial assessor for the Prince Rupert and New Westminster assessment areas.

In the published obituary for Wes, we learned that one of the many accomplishments that he was proud of was becoming a Queen's Scout in 1953 with his good friend Jack Bragg. It was an honor at that time that few boy scouts had ever achieved. In July that year, Wes attended Canada's second national Boy Scout Jamboree in Ottawa. A month later he was selected to be the representative for the Boy Scout

Association to travel and chart the West Coast Road Route (becoming in part the West Coast Trail) from Jordan River to Bamfield with Victoria Daily Times Reporter Humphry Davy. The pair hiked 80 miles over 9 days. He attributes this and other scout activities to his early career start in Forestry.



When he retired from the province in 1995, Wes started his own company, Umphrey Appraisals & Land Management. After 12 more years, he finally retired a second time, allowing Wes and Darlene to enjoy many trips to Europe and to sunny Mazatlan.

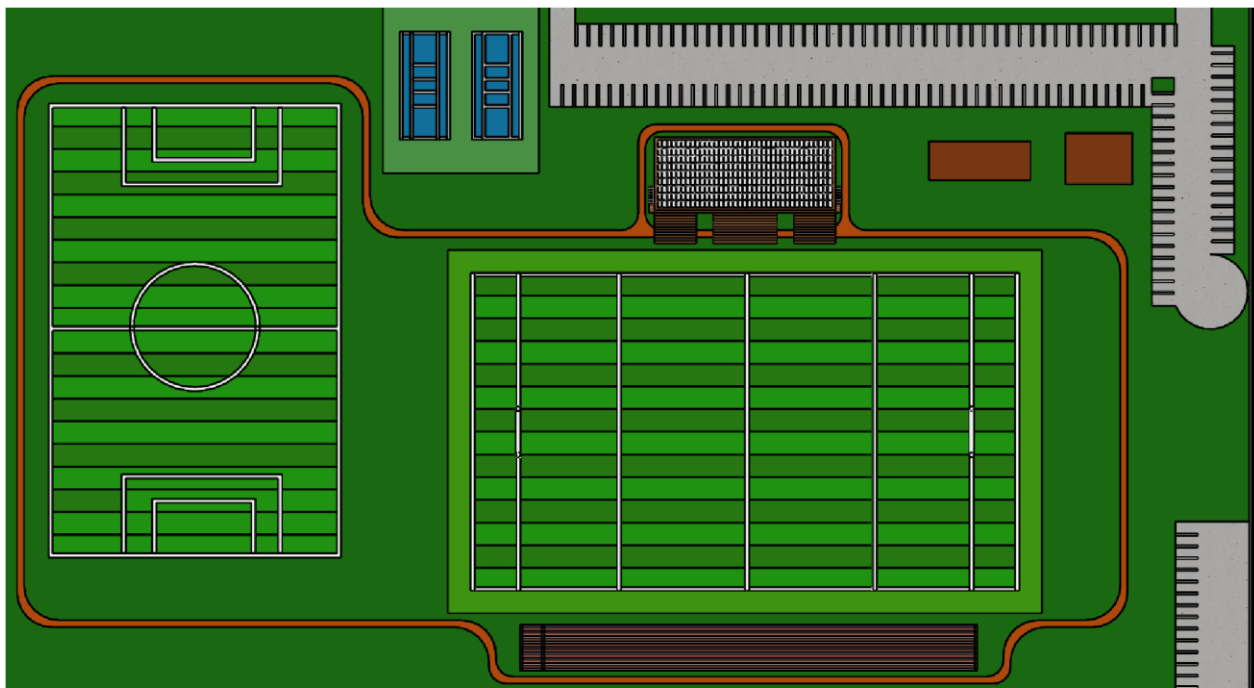
Wes' dedication, energy, and commitment to the Esquimalt High School Alumni Association have been outstanding and his memory will live on in the many contributions that he made to the association and school community. Our current Alumni Association has definitely been shaped by his leadership, guidance and direct involvement both on the executive and as a strong supporter behind the scenes. All of us on the Alumni executive are grateful for all that he did. He will be greatly missed by the community that he gave so much to.

As a final note, EHS parent Dawn Christy, who accompanied her daughter Soleil Fredrickson for the 2015 ceremony at the Esquimalt Cenotaph, posted a message when she learned of Wes' passing. She expressed how she felt fortunate to get to know Wes while volunteering at various events with him. Dawn described Wes as a lovely, caring and thoughtful friend, and she was especially thankful for the kindness he showed to her own aging mother. She said that Wes was so devoted to the Esquimalt High School community, that he knew everything there was to know about Esquimalt e felt that Wes knew High School. She wasn't far wrong.

Turf Field Update

Progress continues to be made for a new turf field at Esquimalt High School. A working partnership between The Greater Victoria School District, Esquimalt Municipality, Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations, Gorge Soccer Association, James Bay Athletic Association and the Esquimalt RibFest Society is developing a plan to have the turf field become a reality.

The chairperson of RibFest, Tom Woods, wrote a letter to Esquimalt Council on February 21 to ask them to consider using funds from the Growing Communities Grant from the BC Provincial Government along with one million dollars from Gorge Soccer, Esquimalt RibFest and James Bay Athletic Association to move this project forward. As this grant was so new, Council could not make a decision until they had more information, but they did unanimously reaffirm their support for the field. They asked staff to prepare a report outlining what the next steps might be. Director of Esquimalt Parks and Recreation Steve Knoke was tasked with this job. It is hoped the report will come before the Esquimalt Council later in May. Steve has also met with representatives of the Victoria School District who expressed their continued positive support for the project. Tom's full letter can be seen on the Esquimalt Municipal website (Agenda for February 27 meeting) - <https://esquimalt.ca.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=32524&GUID=D6ABDF99-1681-4245-8D1F95A7A4B09B0B> . Watch for more good news in the Fall newsletter.



New turf field in the middle and updated grass field at the far end of the school property.

“The Addams Family” – An EHS student production

Esquimalt High School students were not only “creepy and kooky and mysterious and spooky,” but the talented musical theatre cast also thoroughly entertained their audiences during six performances of The Addams Family this past month.

Director Kaehlin Allison, Assistant Director Dave Fuerst, and Technical Director Kristi Martinsen, did an outstanding job of coordinating the large cast of 60 students to present the funny, quirky and ever so enjoyable musical production of The Addams Family. Community members joined Esquimalt band students in a pit band which was conducted by Kaehlen Allison.

The lead actors were all very believable in their well-known roles. How on earth did Lurch manage to totter about the stage on his stilts, moaning - in character of course - at his fellow actors, without toppling over? It was an impressive performance.

Wednesday Addams never broke from her somber-faced character as she carried her crossbow purposefully across the stage, pausing occasionally to smack her brother Pugsley to keep him in line. What made this young actor even more remarkable was the beautiful huge voice that came out of her small frame. The theatre rang with those big notes.

Gomez Addams, was an eager to please but altogether quirky character. This young actor had an incredible stage presence - she was confident and sure of herself on stage, and when she sang, the audience sat up and took notice. What a voice.

Morticia maintained her haughty white-faced expression throughout the performance, while gliding smoothly across the stage in her flowing long black dress, firmly taking charge of her family members.

Pugsley often had the audience laughing as he lamented the idea of his sister moving out. "Who is going to torture me now?" Uncle Fester and grandma brought back many memories for those of us in the audience who remembered the popular tv show. Wednesday's love interest, Lucas, and his parents, presented a challenge to the Addams Family, which provided many kooky and humorous moments. The large cast of ancestors kept the show "creepy and spooky."

Well done to the entire cast and crew. You are a credit to Esquimalt High School.



The cast of The Addams Family – photo from Esquimalt High School's Facebook page.



Greetings to all Esquimalt High School grads

Planning a reunion but not sure how to organize it? Want to use the school gym or cafeteria for your celebration? Need help obtaining school memorabilia to spice up your get-together? The Esquimalt High School alumni school reunion coordinator can assist you with all these details and more.

Our archive room houses a wide selection of memorabilia, including school annuals (yearbooks) that can be loaned out for class get-togethers. You can also purchase an annual from your grad year for \$15, if in stock.

For help in planning your reunion or purchasing yearbooks email Bob Laidler (EHS '69) at:

bobtheman50@gmail.com

Class of 1973 50th High School Reunion

When: 09 September 2023 (Saturday)

Where: Gorge Vale Golf Course, Victoria, BC

It's time to celebrate our 50th anniversary!! More detail will be forthcoming. We are looking for grads and/or ex classmates from our class.

Please contact Gail or Teri. Their contact information is below:

Gail Lale gailale@shaw.ca
Teri Cotton love1955@shaw.ca

Class of 1971 - Annual pub night – Six Mile House

Class of 1971 grads are all invited to gather at the Six Mile Pub on [Friday May 26, 2023](#) at 6:00 PM.

We have made a reservation and need to let the pub know the approximate number.

Please RSVP by Tuesday May 23, 2023 by emailing hollandhouse@shaw.ca.

Pass this message to our classmates and anyone else who would like to join us. We hope to see you this year. Party on!

EHS Class of '71 Reunion Committee

Spring 2023 Art Auction – postponed



1966 Sandstone; oil 27" x 34"

The EHS Alumni Association executive, unfortunately, has decided to postpone this fundraiser until next year. We have not been able to co-ordinate this with the school's Fine Art Week. As mentioned in earlier newsletters, we are planning to hold a silent auction of some of the paintings of the late Joan Thompson, a long-time resident of Esquimalt. Her daughter Flora and nephew Ron Thompson, both graduates of Esquimalt High School, have made a generous donation of about 20 pieces of Joan's work to the Alumni Association. The money collected from the in-person and online silent auction would be added to the Scholarship Fund of the EHS Alumni Association. One of Joan's paintings is shown here, and it is hoped alumni members and those of the larger community will support this fundraiser. The Spring 2020 copy of the alumni newsletter also contains more information about Joan and copies of some of her other works please go to

<https://esquimalt.sd61.bc.ca/ourschool/alumni/newsletters/>

You Are Invited to Join the EHS Alumni Association Executive

EHS Alumni Association and EHS Alumni Foundation (the fund-raising arm) Directors are all EHS grads from various years (and a couple of us even returned to work on staff at EHS) and we would like to extend an invitation for you to join us.

As directors, we focus on fund-raising for EHS projects, creating and maintaining the archives of EHS, and anything else that supports the students of Esquimalt High School. It is satisfying and worthwhile work. The new school bus we funded gets plenty of use at the school, and now our fund-raising efforts are focussed on a new turf field, while we continue to support the annual Alumni Association scholarships. The time commitment is minimal.

The EHS Alumni Association and the EHS Alumni Foundation directors meet four Monday evenings a year (February, April, August and October), and meetings are generally an hour in length. And everyone is invited to join us at the November AGM.

If you would like to put your name forward to join the executive or if you would just like more information, please contact Dave Allen at davidwallen@shaw.ca or Marilyn McCrimmon at Marilyn.mc@shaw.ca.

Esquimalt High School Alumni Association & Esquimalt High School Alumni Foundation**MEMBERSHIP FORM**

847 Colville Road

Victoria, BC V9A 4N9

ehsalumni1959@gmail.com

To become an active member of the Esquimalt High School Alumni Association & Alumni Foundation you must be a former student or staff member and make a **one-time** membership payment of **\$10**.

Payment Options:

A. If you prefer to send a cheque, please make it out to **Esquimalt High School Alumni Association** and send to the address above and along with the completed membership form.

OR

B. If you prefer to send an Interac e-Transfer please use our email address ehsalumniassociation.payments@gmail.com to send it. When you send off your transfer please also send us your security answer for us to secure the payment. Also please print off the form and mail the completed form to the address above.

Full Name:**Maiden Name****(if different than above):****Years at Esquimalt:****(Example: 1998-2002)****Student/Staff:****Full Mailing Address:****Email:****Privacy Policy**

Personal information provided to the Esquimalt High School Alumni Association and Esquimalt High School Alumni Foundation will be used and disclosed only to support the purposes of the societies; i.e., to provide financial and other support to the school and its students, to facilitate reunions and communications amongst Esquimalt High School Alumni and to document the history of the school. By giving your email address you will subscribe to our emailing of notices and information on events.