



Fall 2023

ESQUIMALT HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

SAVE THE DATE! Save Monday November 20th for our Annual General Meeting starting at 7:00 pm. The agendas are on page 11, and all other meeting materials, such as previous AGM Minutes, will be on our webpage at <https://esquimalt.sd61.bc.ca/our-school/alumni/meetings/>. Hope to see you there.

Esquimalt High School Update

by Principal Sarah Garr



It has been a busy start to the school year! Our numbers continue to grow at Esquimalt High School, with our total population nearing 900 students. September and October have flown by with staff and students back to class, school sports in high gear, and a successful “Meet the Teacher Night” and BBQ in early September. We have welcomed a new Vice Principal, Mr. Chris Koutougos from Vic High as a great addition to our Admin team alongside myself and Mr. Jared Adams.

A new addition to our schedule includes a Grade 9 “Raft” class, essentially a homeroom block once a week to support building connections and relationships with our Grade 9s. A “raft” is a collection of otters, so it’s a good fit with our mascot Ollie the Otter!

Vice-principal Jared Adams, Principal Sarah Garr, Vice-principal Chris Koutougos

Additionally, we are continuing to incorporate student voice to help guide our decisions through input from our Student Advisory Council and Leadership class. These initiatives support our school goals –

1. Health, wellness, connection and belonging for all.
2. Meaningful learning opportunities with purpose and dignity for all.

Other areas of focus for the year include implementing some updates from the Ministry, including a new Reporting Policy, and our Indigenous Focussed Grad Required Courses. A significant shift is that Grade 9s will be assessed using proficiency scales rather than letter grades or percentages.

As always, Esquimalt High School continues to be a warm, welcoming and inclusive school community with amazing staff and even more amazing students. We are especially appreciative of the continued support from our Alumni in ensuring that we are able to offer many of the things that make this such an incredible place to learn and work.

We are looking forward to a great year ahead!

Esquimalt Ribfest 2023 - Another very successful community event

by Dave Allen and photos by Linda O'Keefe



The eleventh annual Esquimalt Ribfest was held this past September 8 – 10 at Bullen Park in Esquimalt. Between 35,000 and 40,000 people enjoyed BBQ ribs from six big-rig Rib Companies and beverages from nine local craft brewers. These groups were joined by 22 other not-for-profit and commercial vendors. The weekend patrons were welcomed by the unofficial mascot, a 15 foot-high inflatable pig, which was on loan from the Black Ball Ferry Company. This was a **must** have photo for many of those who attended.

Throughout the weekend 20 local bands played for the crowds along with Friday night's headliner Fleetwood Magic from Vancouver and Jack Semple and the Horn Dogs from Saskatchewan on Saturday evening. These musicians had many in attendance on their feet dancing until the close at 10 pm each night.



This year's event had a noticeable addition and that was groups of young people from Esquimalt High School, James Bay Rugby Association and the Victoria Cougars Hockey who were volunteering with various aspects of Ribfest. Many of these volunteers were easily recognized in the bright orange t-shirts that they were wearing. Many compliments were directed towards this group of volunteers as it was really nice to see that they were willing to step forward and help.

Saturday again was the busiest day with well over 15,000 people through the gates. The judging of the ribs and sauces of the six rib companies took place during that afternoon. This year's group of judges included Barb Desjardin, Mayor of Esquimalt; Captain Kevin Whiteside, Base Commander Esquimalt; Stacy Ross, news anchor CHEK-TV; Ryan Burles, President/CEO Black Ball Ferries; and Cliff LeQuesne, morning host at the Q-Radio. After judging, the following winners were declared: Best Sauce 1st place – Smoke Dem Bones and 2nd place – Pit Crew, and Best Ribs 1st place – Pit Crew and 2nd place - Prairie Smoke and Spice.



The judging followed a surprise visit from the Surrey Fire Fighters' Pipe and Drum Band. Even though the crowd was large this group of 17 members was able to parade around much of the park, and finished in the Blue Buffalo Saloon. Here they were treated to ribs and beer before making their way back to Vancouver. The Pipes and Drums were such a hit with the crowd it is hoped they will become a part of future Ribfest weekends.

The event as usual was by donation at the front gate as members of the Esquimalt Fire Fighters welcomed everyone to Ribfest. Those attending were very generous filling the donation bins with over \$75,000. These funds go directly to the Esquimalt Fire Fighters' Charitable Foundation and are distributed throughout the year to many local groups and charities. Many of the groups receiving support are directly involved with activities for young people. The Esquimalt Ribfest Society which runs the overall event also had another very good year in fundraising. This will allow the Society to make another sizeable donation to the Turf Field Fund held in trust at Esquimalt High School pushing the total to over \$430,000. The tremendous support of the community for Ribfest cannot be overstated. During the first 10 years of Ribfest over one million dollars has been channeled back to community endeavours. The support of generous sponsors and those who attend Ribfest have helped make this happen.



Alumni members, along with Leadership students and Rainbow Kitchen volunteers, raised over \$6000 selling 1100 langos, as well as pop and water at this year's RibFest.

Please mark your calendars now so that you can attend next year's Ribfest on September 6-8, 2024.

Esquimalt High Turf Field

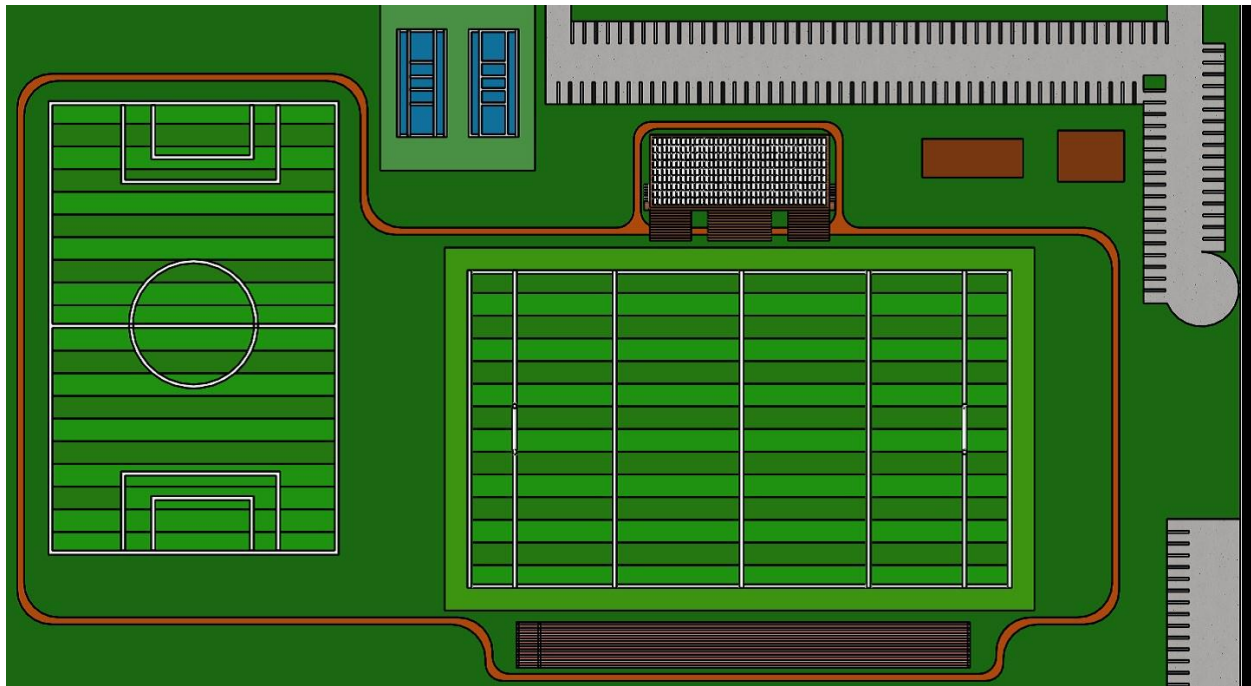
by Dave Allen

The turf field at Esquimalt High School continues to move ahead. With the funds held in trust at Esquimalt High School, there is now over \$387,000 for this project. These funds have primarily come from proceeds from the Esquimalt Ribfest Society with likely another \$40,000 to \$50,000 to be added from this year's Ribfest. This amount also includes donations from alumni members, combined with excess funds from a few grad reunions, and the interest that has been generated. These funds combined with funds allocated from the Gorge Soccer Association and James Bay Athletics Association provide a community contribution in excess of \$1.1 million.

Over the last few months several more steps have been taken toward the project actually happening. In June, the Esquimalt Municipal Council directed staff to prepare a business plan for the turf field project. This was to look at capital costs, maintenance, replacement costs and revenue streams, including user fees and possible grant money. The Director of Parks and Recreation, Steve Knoke, was to undertake this task and have a report to Council in the fall. This direction was passed unanimously by Council, demonstrating their ongoing support for the turf field.

New Turf Field Picture

Colville Road



Ellery Street

EHS is located on the right side and the Turf Field is located in the centre. The existing tennis courts are in blue.

Over the summer Steve Knoke used input from Gorge Soccer Association to look at costs and revenue sources. The Gorge Soccer Association has also just replaced the turf field at Hampton Park and they have shared these details. The Victoria School District has up-to-date figures on a project of this scale as the district is in the construction phase of a turf field at the newly renovated Victoria High School location. The Facilities Department at the School District has been very helpful in sharing information. Steve has also been able to use his own knowledge of turf field construction as he was Parks and Recreation Director in Sooke when the turf field was built in that community. Songhees First Nations are assisting him to look at possible grant programs and Esquimalt resident Linda Barnes is giving input as she was very involved in several of the turf fields that were built in the Western communities.

Once Council receives the business plan for the turf field they will consider the amount of funding they will put forward for the field. Hopefully by early 2024 there will be more positive news regarding the funding and even a possible timeline for construction phase of the field.

“Living in Two Worlds”

by Marilyn McCrimmon



If you have not visited Esquimalt High School since 2011, you are in for a delightful surprise. A large carved Coast Salish Welcome Figure, its arms raised to welcome people of all nations to EHS, will welcome you as you enter. Adding to that welcome, is a stunning contemporary Welcome Mural. The two artworks are the result of an impressive collaborative effort that began with a vision and came to fruition at an Unveiling Ceremony in June 2012.



The journey starts with artist Lorna Reid being hired as an art specialist at EHS in 1979. During her career at Esquimalt, Lorna says it was an honour to work with EHS Aboriginal staff and students, and while she valued what she learned along the way, she believed there was more that could be done to help the school's Aboriginal students feel more connected to the school. As an artist, she was well aware of the power of art, of how, in her words, "works of art can speak to our identity, heart and spirit."

Diane Sam, a Lekwungen and Ahousat First Nations young woman, was a student in Lorna's TA. After graduation, Diane returned to the school to work as an Educational Assistant. It was a fortuitous relationship. The two women shared a vision of supporting the school's Aboriginal students and families, and they wanted a visible presence of Coast Salish culture at the entrance of the school. Diane came up with the theme of "Living in Two Worlds," and then they began the tasks of fund-raising and of finding artists to bring their shared vision to life.

Lorna procured the necessary funding, beginning with a gift from the grad class of 2011. She wrote proposals and attended an Esquimalt Township meeting, and eventually managed to collect a grant from the municipality, a contribution from Esquimalt PAC, a Community Project grant from VanCity, an anonymous grant and finally, another grant from the Esquimalt Township through the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development. The vision was now a reality.

Douglas La Fortune and his son, Douglas Jr. “Bear” Horne, members of the Tsawout Nation of Saanichton, were commissioned to carve the Welcome Figure. Doug Sr. selected the 400-year-old log, saying, “the Welcome figure needed to emerge from this log.” The log was blessed by Cowichan elders Linda Modeste and Marilyn Olsen Page.

The Welcome Mural was designed by Esquimalt Nation artist, Darlene Gait, and was then completed by two young artists, Loreisa Lepine from the Songhees Nation and Christine White. Darlene interpreted the theme of “Living in Two Worlds,” in her own unique way, blending traditional and contemporary elements, and including a welcome in three languages: Lekwungen, English and French.

At the Unveiling Ceremony in June 2012, Elders Maryann Thomas from the Esquimalt Nation and Dell Dick from the Songhees Nation, performed a traditional ceremony at the high school to unveil both the Welcome Figure and the Welcome Mural. Scott Sam from the Tsartlip Nation chanted a sacred song. Lorna said that there was no media coverage during this part of the ceremony, and, it was the first time that this ceremony had been performed at Esquimalt High School.



The full story is beautifully documented in the book, “Living in Two Worlds,” written and produced by Lorna Reid and photographer (and EHS grad) Robin Duncan. You are invited to visit the school library learning commons (open from 8:30 to 4:30 most days) at EHS and read through a copy of the book. Check in at the school’s main office when you arrive.

Teacher-librarian Geoff Orme invites you to phone or email in advance if you’d like to

coordinate access to the library. He can be reached at 250-382-9226 Ext. 240 or 244 or at gorme@sd61.bc.ca.

When you return to the lobby to leave the school, stop and admire the two welcome artworks once again. Now that you have read through the story behind the two artworks, you will view both of them with an even deeper appreciation of all that went in to making them both a reality.



October, 2023

Greetings to all Esquimalt High School alumni,

Are you planning a reunion for your grad class? If so you should know that the EHS Alumni Association is ready and able to assist you in the promotion of your event. We can list the date and details of reunions on the Esquimalt High School Alumni Association Facebook page and provide assistance in reserving school venues, such as the gym, cafeteria or theatre, if required. We also can provide organizational details from past reunions that may assist you in planning your own event. In addition, we can loan out display panels, EHS signs, school annuals and items from the Heritage Registry for use at your reunion. As we move further past the pandemic years we expect more grad year groups will be eager to organize reunions. So let us know about yours. **We'd love to help you out.**

You can also help us out. We are currently upgrading our school archive collection and **are looking for missing grad class photos for the 1960 to 1970 school years.** If you, or someone you know, graduated in one of those years and is in possession of their grad class photo we would be grateful if you can send us a scanned copy or allow us to scan and return it to you.

Reunion inquiries or grad photos can be addressed to:

Robert Laidler, EHS 1969
Alumni Committee Reunion Coordinator
email: bobtheman50@gmail.com

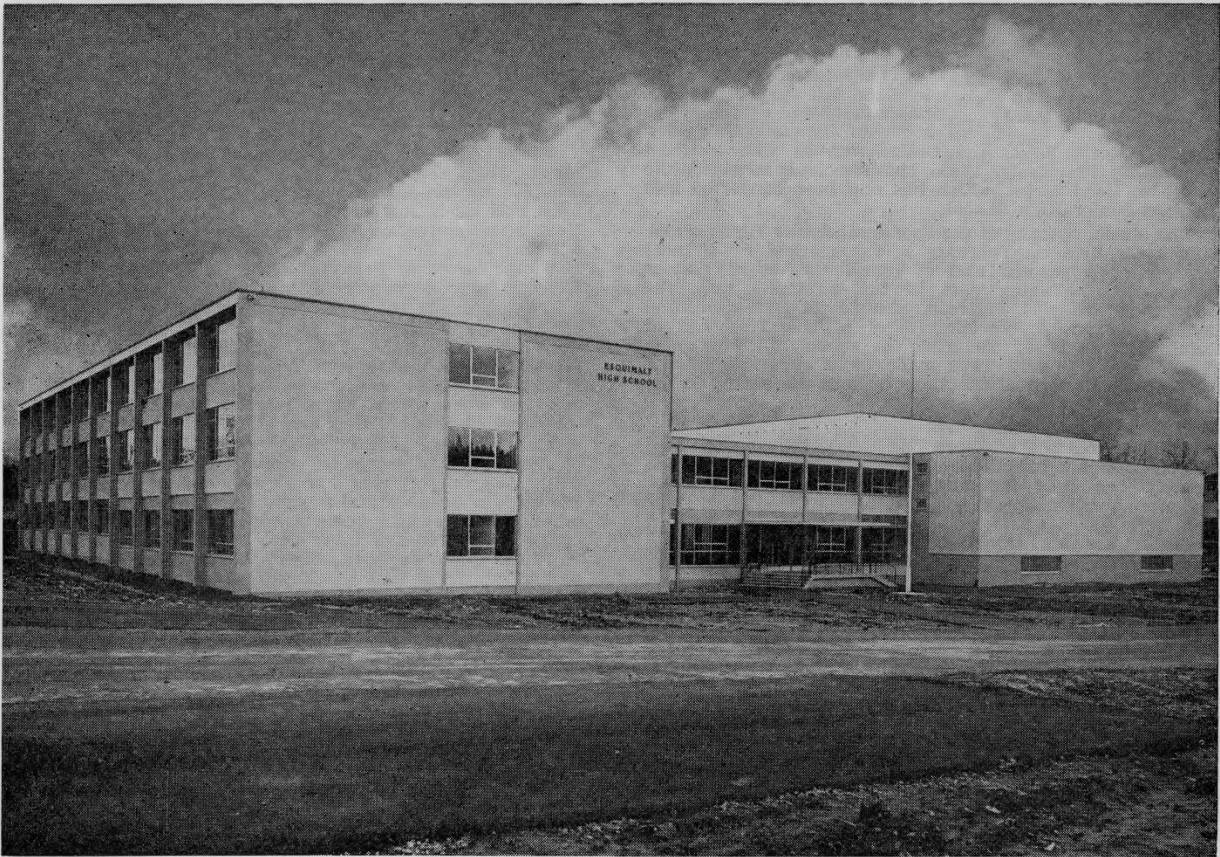
Help is needed for the Esquimalt High School Archives

VOL. 1, No. 4



FEBRUARY, 1960

Greater Victoria's Newest High School



Esquimalt Senior High School — Colville Road near Lampson Street

The Esquimalt High School Alumni Association is continuing to work on the school archives. There have been many donations already made and the Association is always ready to receive any pictures, stories, old yearbooks or other memorabilia from former students. Please reach out to the Association using the email ehsalumni1959@gmail.com to make any contributions to the archives. We are also looking for Volunteers to assist with setting up the archives, which will involve sorting and cataloguing all of the present items, as well as finding ways to collect more of the 108 years of history of Esquimalt High School. Please contact the Association using the above email if you wish to help.

Esquimalt High School Alumni Association AGM
Monday Nov. 20, 2023
Doors Open at 6:30 pm
EHS Theatre, 847 Colville Road

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|---|-------------------------------|
| 1. Call to Order at 7:00 pm | Emcee – Robert Laidler |
| 2. Welcome from the school | Sarah Garr, Principal |
| 3. Introduction of 2023 Scholarship winners | Brenda O’Connor/Dana Bjornsen |
| 4. Approval of the Agenda | Robert Laidler |
| 5. Approval of Minutes from 2022 AGM | Marilyn McCrimmon |
| 6. President’s Report | Cathy Wong for Barry Scott |
| 7. Treasurer’s Report | Ryan Richard |
| a. 2022/2023 Financial Statement & Review of Books | |
| b. 2023/2024 Signing Officers & Person to do Review | |
| c. Report on Scholarships | |
| 8. Director’s Reports | |
| a. Membership | Ryan Richard |
| 9. Elections of Officers | Marilyn McCrimmon |
| 10. Closing Remarks/Adjournment | Robert Laidler |

Esquimalt High School Alumni Foundation AGM
Monday Nov. 20, 2023
(Immediately following Alumni Association AGM)

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| 1. Call to Order | Robert Laidler |
| 2. Approval of the Agenda | Robert Laidler |
| 3. Approval of the Minutes from 2022 AGM | Cathy Wong |
| 4. President’s Report | Dave Allen |
| 5. Treasurer’s Report | Ryan Richard |
| a. 2022/2023 Financial Statement & Review of Books | |
| b. 2023/2024 Signing Officers & Person to do Review | |
| c. Motion to adjust the Foundation fiscal year | |
| 6. Fundraising Activities for 2023/24 | Dave Allen |
| 7. Elections of Officers | Marilyn McCrimmon |
| 8. Adjournment | Robert Laidler |

**Next AGM is on November 18, 2024.

Esquimalt High School Alumni Association
2023 FUNDRAISING DRIVE



The Alumni Association wishes to focus on raising money for the Scholarship Fund and the installment of the turf field. We are asking members to donate to one or both of these projects. The Scholarship Fund is currently at just over \$40,000. We are currently presenting three \$1,000 scholarships each year. Any donations of \$20 or more will receive a receipt for income tax purposes. Donations received **before December 5, 2023** will be issued receipts for 2023 and donations after this date will have receipts issued for 2024.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

- Send us an Interac e-Transfer via your bank by emailing us your donation to ehsalumniassociation.payments@gmail.com Please email us to your mailing address for your tax receipt to be mailed.
- Please make cheques payable to: **Greater Victoria School Board**
- Include notation on the memo line of the cheque for “**Scholarship Fund of EHS**” or “**Turf Field**”

Thank you for assisting the students at Esquimalt High School.

For income tax purposes, please complete & mail this slip with your cheque donation.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Amount: _____

Donation: _____

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