



THE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF THE CARIBOO WELLS GRAY EDUCATION AND RESEARCH CENTRE

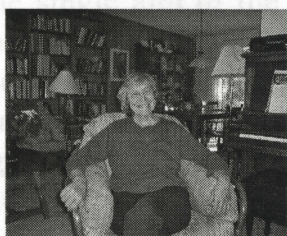
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Past, Present & Future

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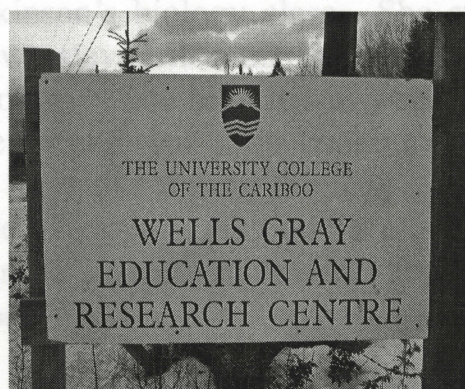
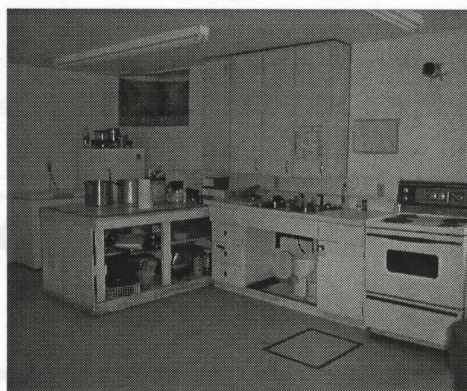
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The building to the top left was the school house. To the top right was originally used as the teacherage. The teacher who taught at the school would live in this building while teaching in the other. Today, the house has been transformed into a kitchen which is utilized by the staff and students of the University College of the Cariboo. There have been many changes and updates in the past few years with many still to come.



HELEN KNIGHT: INSTRUMENTAL IN ESTABLISHING THE RESEARCH STATION



Helen Knight has resided in Clearwater, B.C., since 1988. Helen became involved with the Friends of Wells Gray Park while still living in Kamloops. She was an original member of the Wells Gray Education & Research Centre Society, which was formed in 1988 and was based on the BC Parks Master Plan for Wells Gray Provincial Park. This society was a sub-committee of the Friends of Wells Gray Park, which aimed to establish a year round Research Centre that would provide a place for students and independent researchers to use as a base.

The committee sought out several sites in the Upper Clearwater Valley and decided on the old schoolhouse location. (See map on page 8) In the beginning, the research facility was not associated with the University College of the Cariboo, but was later included in the society's plans for the future. Helen

recalls that "the single aim of the society was to get a Research Centre going." The committee ran the Research Centre (as a nonprofit society) for three or four years before it was transferred to UCC. The committee needed money for electricity and maintenance, so volunteers gave their time and money over the years to keep the Research Centre running.

The biggest fundraiser for the society was the Ski for Knowledge/Research event. With the money raised, the society paid for renovations and additions to the buildings, as well as the necessary bills. The society also used the centre to teach weekend courses on nature that accommodated both adults and children. When the University College of the Cariboo took over the facility, the work of the society was finished. "The Research Centre was something people really had to believe in," Helen states.

SKI FOR RESEARCH: FUNDRAISER FOR RESEARCH CENTRE

The Wells Gray Education and Research Centre Society's largest fundraiser for the maintenance and up-keep of the Research Station was the Ski For Fun and Learning Event. It is also known as the Ski For Knowledge and Ski For Research Event. The fundraiser encouraged people of all ages to participate in a cross-country ski day in the Clearwater area. At the beginning of the day the skiers received a passport, which they had to have stamped at various educational stops throughout the route. Each stop taught the skiers something about nature and outdoor skills and tested their knowledge about the environment.

After a full day of skiing, the participants were invited to a dinner and social, which was held at the Upper Clearwater Community Hall. The dinner cost approximately eight dollars per person and consisted of turkey, ham, potatoes, vegetables, bread, coffee/tea and dessert. The ski route followed along Murtle River and continued through the Majerus Farm. This fundraising event was a success over the years and assisted the Wells Gray Education and Research Centre Society to raise funds for the maintenance and upgrading of the facility.

LAURA THEROUX, BIOLOGY STUDENT, DISCUSSES HER TIME SPENT LEARNING AT THE RESEARCH STATION



The UCC. Research Station has benefited a large number of students. One student in particular spent time at the Research Centre with Tom Dickinson's biology class. She states, "Wells Gray was awesome, as we stayed in bunk beds in the little bunk house next to the main lodge." She says it was small but cozy. The students bought groceries and took turns cooking meals, stayed up late chatting and went on walks during the day. Laura says the animal biology students were learning about tracks of different animals, and of course, since Tom was there, it turned into a bird lesson. "It was awesome, and I would definitely recommend it to anyone."

TOM DICKINSON, SUPPORTER AND PROMOTER OF WELLS GRAY EDUCATION AND RESEARCH CENTRE

Tom Dickinson, a biology professor at the University College of the Cariboo, was instrumental in establishing a Research Centre in the Upper Clearwater Valley. His involvement began in the summer of 1990 when he met Helen Knight and Trevor Goward, who at the time were both involved with Friends of Wells Gray Park. Tom and his wife, Nancy Flood, joined Helen and Trevor in a sub-committee of the Friends of Wells Gray Park, known as The Wells Gray Education and Research Centre Society. This society was involved in finding an appropriate site, one that would suit the needs of children, students and adults interested in nature.

Many properties were viewed, and each property was judged on a variety of characteristics. Potential sites needed space, access to crown land, and close proximity to a road from which wilderness and ecology were accessible. Tom acknowledged, "The farther you got away from the park, there were issues about transportation." After evaluating approximately seven to nine sites, the society agreed on the four-acre schoolhouse property.

The original goal of the society was "to educate people on the wilderness and other values of Wells Gray Park." The society has succeeded in preserving this ideal, and has successfully transferred this mission statement to the University. In 1992, UCC. applied to the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology for permission to take over ownership of the former Upper Clearwater schoolhouse property from School District #26. The transfer occurred between the two ministries and was finalized at the beginning of 1993. Once UCC. took over ownership of the property, the facilities were upgraded through various renovations.

The Bear Creek Corrections built new outhouses and trails, the electrical and heating systems were upgraded, and small cabins were installed for professor accommodations. In order to pay for the telephone, electricity, heat and toilets, a user fee was implemented. The charge of approximately ten dollars per day, per user, is used for bills and future expansion. A variety of people use the facility, such as Girl Guides, the Kamloops School District, University of British Columbia research students and University College of the Cariboo students and faculty. The Wells Gray Education and Research Centre is a place where people can enjoy the natural environment while participating in educational activities.

DR. BRIAN GOEHRING DISCUSSES HIS USE OF THE U.C.C RESEARCH STATION ...A SANCTUARY FOR MARKING AND AN INCREDIBLE PLACE FOR PEOPLE TO LEARN

Dr. Brian Goehring is a University College of the Cariboo geography professor who uses the Research Centre for both professional and personal purposes. As part of his Geomorphology 319 class, students have the option of participating in a field trip to Wells Gray Provincial Park. The class uses several sites within the park to study rocks in their natural state. The Research Centre allows Dr. Goehring and his students to camp and study in the heart of nature.

The property's location is essential for the student's research, since it is central to locations such as Helmcken Falls, The Ray Farm, Pyramid Mountain, Devil's Tongue and various rivers. Dr. Goehring believes that the Research Centre is an asset to the University. The covered picnic area enables students to complete field studies regardless of the weather, and the rustic buildings give scholars a sense of history.

Dr. Goehring believes that the Research Centre has a bright future because it offers both students and professors the chance to learn in a unique and natural environment. If the Research Centre did not exist, there would have to be an alternative location for research. This would be difficult, as students would most likely have to camp without a stable base.

Dr. Goehring also uses the Research Centre to mark papers in a quiet and peaceful setting. The solitude allows him to concentrate on marking with few distractions. He mentioned that he would love to teach a course in Wells Gray Provincial Park while using the Research Centre as a camp and classroom. The kitchen facilities, bunkhouses, outdoor toilets and covered picnic area give students the opportunity to indulge in the natural world.

TUM-TUM DISTRICT GIRL GUIDES CAMP



Sign posted outside at the UCC Research Station

When the Tum-Tum Girl Guides occupied the camp, it was still the legal property of the School District. As the Guide Camp started the process of becoming a research station for the Friends of Wells Gray Park, there was a verbal agreement set forth regarding the Girl Guides. At first the Girl Guides were upset that it had become a research location, because they felt it was being taken away from them. The Guides believed that the agreement allowed them to continue to use the property as a camp whenever they wished, without charge.

However, when the University College of the Cariboo received the property from the School District, the agreement with the Girl Guides became distorted. Today the Girl Guides pay a user fee to the University College of the Cariboo to cover costs such as electricity and the use of outhouses. However, the Girl Guides feel they had an agreement to use the facilities and property free of charge, unless there were classes in session. Today, there is still uncertainty regarding the Girl Guides agreement to use the facility.

FORMER BROWNIE NICOLE SINCLAIR TELLS ABOUT HER EXPERIENCES AT THE TUM-TUM DISTRICT CAMP



Nicole Sinclair, who is currently enrolled in the University College of the Cariboo, attended the Wells Gray Guide Camp from 1986-1989, as a Brownie. Nicole's time spent at the camp was a fundamental part of her Girl Guide experience. She learnt how to identify trees, plants, small animals and insects and spent time around the campfire telling stories, singing songs and eating smores. Day trips to Clearwater Lake, canoeing, horseback riding and fishing, were memorable events, especially since Nicole caught the biggest fish in her Brownie pack one year.

During her time at the Tum-Tum Camp, Nicole earned several badges that represent her accomplishments as a Brownie. Nicole says, "My personal experiences and time spent as a Girl Guide helped me make new friends and become more knowl-

SANDRA SINCLAIR'S ACCOUNT OF TIME SPENT AT THE TUM-TUM GIRL GUIDES CAMP

Sandra Sinclair was involved in the Tum-Tum Girl Guides as both a parent and a leader. As a leader of the Brownie Camp, she was in charge of the daily activities, meals and supervision of the young girls. Since Sandra disliked the cold, she would choose the bunk closest to the fireplace and the bench closest to the fire during camp games. Her involvement allowed her to spend time with her daughter Nicole and other parents, as well as to learn about nature. Since she loves to cook, Sandra's main role each year was to prepare the meals for the girls. She served the Brownies three meals a day plus two snacks, which made for a busy kitchen. The menu consisted of various foods such as spaghetti, hotdogs, hamburgers, vegetables and dip, homemade desserts and various junk foods (a necessity for any good camping trip).

Sandra assisted the other leaders by organizing nature walks, crafts, songs, and skits. Sandra remembers late nights with ten to fifteen Brownies singing songs and eating smores while admiring the night sky. "The girls and leaders would lie on the grass and look at the stars, imagining the stars as animals and shapes." Sandra believes that Girl Guides helps young girls become more comfortable in group settings, and at the same time, still express their individuality. The campouts in the Tum-Tum District Camp allowed Sandra to share her love of children and community spirit.

JEAN NELSON: GUIDE LEADER AND RESEARCH CENTRE ADVOCATE



Covered lunch area, provided by the Tum-Tums Girl Guides

Jean Nelson, a resident of Clearwater and a student at the University College of the Cariboo, has been involved with Girl Guides since 1970. Around 1975, Jean and the Girl Guides began using the old schoolhouse as a Guide Camp. Originally, the Guide Camp was used for Rangers (a form of guiding), but over the years, Brownies, Guides and Pathfinders began using the facility.

Jean informed us that what is today the cookhouse was formerly the teacherage, where the teacher of the old schoolhouse resided, cooked and marked papers. The guides used this building to cook meals when the outside conditions were poor. During the time of the Guide Camp, an outdoor facility was built for dining and gathering, as well as a fire pit for campfire activities. This covered area was constructed with picnic tables and a small woodlot. (See picture to left of article). The Tum-Tum Guide Camp also built the original bunks

in the old schoolhouse, a renovation that made it more convenient to organize sleeping arrangements.

Jean was enrolled in an early form of education classes to better inform her about nature. Jean took the Rangers and Girl Guides on day trips involving them in horseback riding and canoeing. The Guide Camp was used by a variety of districts, including Kamloops and surrounding areas. When a committee was formed to locate a spot in Wells Gray for a research station, Jean jumped at the chance to be involved.

As the president of the newly formed committee, The Wells Gray Education & Research Centre Society, Jean found herself caught between her love for the Guides and the park. The site of the Guides Camp became the prospective site for a new Research Station. Because of the latest events and Jean's involvement in the transfer process, she received criticism from the guiding community. "I felt it was a much more valid priority than Guiding," expressed Jean during our interview with her. Although the Girl Guides felt their camp was taken away from them, Jean still remains a strong advocate and active leader of the Girl Guide community.

KATRINA LINK DISCUSSES HER TIME AS A LEADER AT THE TUM-TUM GIRL GUIDES CAMP

During the time of the Tum-Tum Guides Camp, Katrina Link, who has been a guide leader for twenty three years, spent many enjoyable times at the current Wells Gray Education and Research Centre. She first went to the camp in 1982, when she helped her father put railings on the top bunks, painted, and performed various chores around the property. But the first time she actually camped there was in 1983. Each year, two to three groups of guides, approximately 18-24 girls, would use the camp.

During the summer of 1987, Katrina remembers camping on the property in canvas tents with groups of Guides spanning from Barrier to Valemount. She also recalls that the Guides replaced broken windows and executed various upgrades, such as building the campfire and the picnic area. "Camp was always kept in good repair. A wood heater was added to the sleeping area," adds Katrina.

When the property was transferred to the University College of the Cariboo, the Guides were told they would have free use of the campsite. This promise was not honoured. "I very much miss having this site available. The last time I personally wanted to use it, I was told it was being used by the college for the whole month of May," recalls Katrina. As a leader of the Guides, Katrina felt betrayed when they lost their rights to the Centre.

The camp was originally used as the starting point for Wells Gray Park. The Guides hiked nearby and established a good relationship with the surrounding neighbours. The site has been used by the Guides since the transfer, but with the changes made to the property and the lack of availability, the Research Centre is not



The History of the Wells Gray School House

The schoolhouse that remains on the Education and Research Centre property is the third school to serve people of the Upper Clearwater Valley. The first school was located twenty-two kilometres into the park and operated from 1928-1941.

The second schoolhouse was located near the Grouse Creek Bridge, on property owned by Charlie Shook. The schoolhouse was a small cabin, which often housed mice and provided little privacy for the teacher who resided there. The school was in operation for approximately one year and provided education to twelve children. The small cabin was eventually torn down after Charlie Shook decided to expand his homestead.

A new location for a school was needed in order to provide proper education to the children of farmers and homesteaders, following World War II. Before long, the Upper Clearwater School was established in a central location for many families. This schoolhouse was the third and final one built in the Upper Clearwater Valley and was situated on a section of land purchased by Henry Defosses.

The school is located one mile south of the Battle Mountain trail and includes a one-room schoolhouse and a separate teacherage. During the first year of operation (1950), a single teacher and five children attended the school, the required minimum. The school was open to children from grades one to eight and accommodated a maximum of twenty to twenty-five children per year. The older students in grades nine to twelve boarded with families in the village of Clearwater during the school year. The third and final school in the Upper Clearwater Valley closed in 1964, after a proper road was constructed to allow school buses to travel into Clearwater. The heritage of the schoolhouse is being preserved, since it now functions as part of the Education and Research Centre for the University College of the Cariboo.



The third and final school house in the Upper Clearwater Valley

JOHN KURTA SAVES OLD SCHOOLHOUSE FROM BEING LANDLOCKED

John Kurta, a retired lawyer and resident of Clearwater, subdivided the land on which the present day UCC Research Centre is located. The original schoolhouse was built before the land was properly surveyed. When John Kurta surveyed the land in 1977 and 1978, he discovered that he owned a small portion of property that provided road access. Without the legal ownership of the front portion of the land, the schoolhouse would be landlocked. Mr. John Kurta generously donated the small portion of land to the School District to provide road access to the schoolhouse. During March of 1991, the legal documents were finalized to transfer the land previously owned by Kurta to the School District.

ELLEN FERGUSON TELLS ABOUT HER DAYS AS A STUDENT AT THE WELLS GRAY SCHOOL HOUSE

Ellen Margaret Helset Ferguson is a resident of Clearwater and a former student of the Upper Clearwater schoolhouse. Ellen attended the schoolhouse from September 1960 to June 1964, during grades one to four. The schoolhouse closed in 1964, and the following year, the students were bused into Clearwater. In the years that Ellen attended the school, there were between twenty and twenty-five students, with only three of them in her grade level. The school provided education to students in grades one through eight. Students in grades nine through twelve were either boarded with families in town or learnt through correspondence (home schooling).

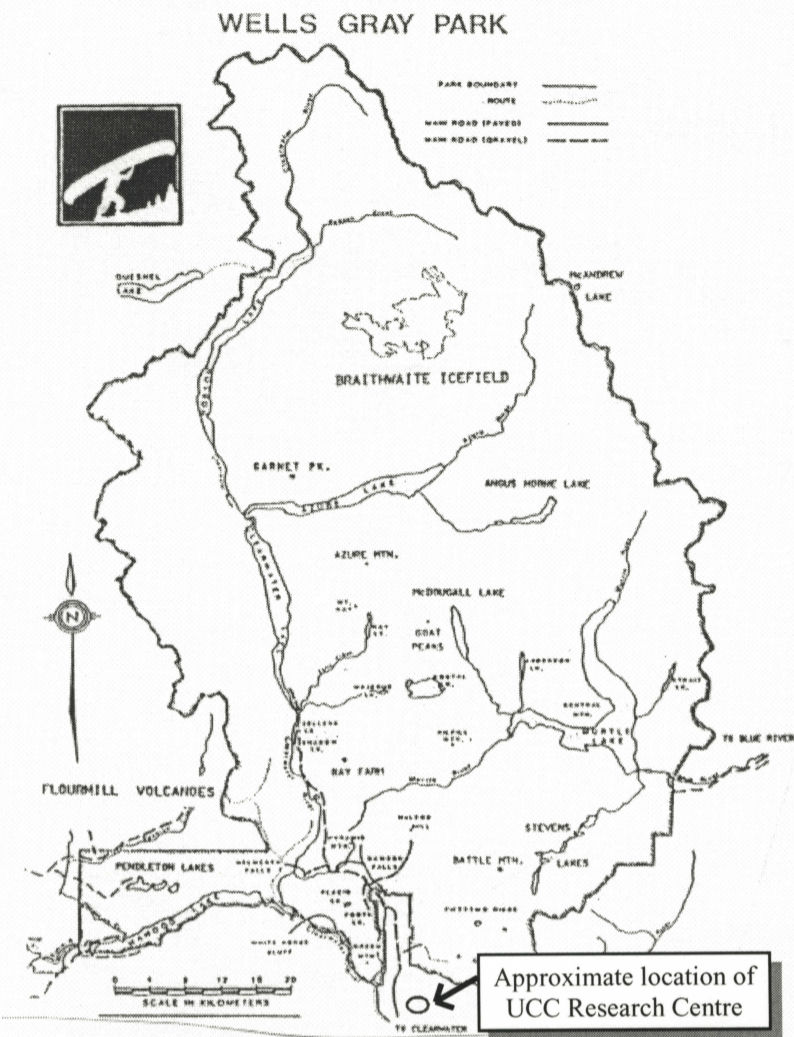
Ellen's family lived in the Hemp Creek Valley, 7 Kilometres north of the school. Ellen's sister drove her to school in grades one and two, and Eileen Mickey drove her to school in grades three and four. The Upper Clearwater schoolhouse followed a typical school day from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., with a fifteen-minute recess break and a one-hour lunch break. There was a section along the west side of the back wall for children to hang their coats and store their lunch boxes. Each morning, a student would bring a bucket of water from the pump into the schoolhouse in order for students to wash up or have a drink. There was a sink in the corner that had a slop bucket underneath, since there was no plumbing in the building. Ellen remembers the teacher's living quarters as having a small wood cook stove and a divider so the teacher could have a bedroom with some privacy. If a student was sick, he or she would lie down on the teacher's bed to recover, since there was no way of alerting parents. The teacherage also facilitated Bible studies and public health checks during which a doctor checked the students hearing, vision and general health.

There were many differences between the Upper Clearwater School and the Clearwater schools, besides the number of students. The Upper Clearwater School had no running water, electricity or flush toilets. The library consisted of one shelf of books, recalls Ellen, compared to an entire room of books in Clearwater Schools. Classes at the old schoolhouse included spelling, arithmetic, reading, social studies and music (there was a piano in the classroom). Ellen advised that memorization was an important part of school, for each week students had to memorize a poem and recite it to the class on Friday afternoons.

Field trips were not common, but she remembers one that her father organized. The teacher agreed to a day trip, hiking along the Murtle River and picnic time at the old Majerus Farm. The children enjoyed their time spent away from the one-room schoolhouse and had fun playing in the fields and along the river. Ellen reminisced about a teacher who arrived the last year the schoolhouse was in operation. Ellen referred to Mrs. Edith Money as a "gem." She said Mrs. Money was a fabulous teacher who helped students with the transition from the Upper Clearwater School to the ones in town. Mrs. Money knew the children were to be bused to Clearwater the following year, so she set out to raise the students up to the level that would be expected of them.

Ellen believes it is wonderful that the old schoolhouse is being used by the University College of the Cariboo and is excited about the possibility of it becoming a future heritage site. The Upper Clearwater School needs to be further researched in order to preserve the heritage of the building and the lives of the former students. The schoolhouse is a significant part of British Columbia's past because it reflects an important historical era in Canada.

Map of Wells Gray Park



Neave, Roland. *Exploring Wells Gray Park*. Kamloops: Nolan Publishing Limited, 1995.

OUR RESEARCH PROJECT ON THE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF THE CARIBOO EDUCATION AND RESEARCH CENTRE



One of the classes we (Jodi and Nicole) participated in during our winter semester was Service Learning 400. Within the class we researched the old Upper Clearwater School house that is now the UCC Research Centre. The research was conducted primarily through interviews because there was little written history available.

A suggestion for future research would be a more in-depth look into life as a student/teacher at the old school house. We found this section of the research challenging because it was difficult to contact former students and teachers. If a future research project was attempted this area of research would be recommended to preserve our heritage.

Jodi Ony and Nicole Sinclair, 3rd-year Bachelor of Arts Students