



Bella Coola pioneers, 1897

INTENTIONAL COMMUNITIES

A presentation for Sunshine Coast ElderU
Capilano University, March-April 2016



The sign above is at about the halfway point.



Sointula: “place of harmony”



Coming off the ferry, Sointula Co-op Store at upper left

Sointula Centennial 1901 - 2001



From a series of centennial postcards produced by the community in 2001.



Matti Kurikka, left. At right are two early archival shots of the village and wharf.

Theosophy

- study of hidden knowledge or wisdom offering individual enlightenment and salvation (definitions are thus somewhat vague)
- seeks to understand the mysteries of the universe and the bonds that unite the universe, humanity and the divine (ditto)
- believes in reincarnation, the existence of a universal soul or life force and a spiritual world beyond death
- teaches that contact between physical and spiritual realms is possible for highly evolved souls
- Theosophical Society founded in New York in 1875
- Madame Helena Blavatsky, author of *The Secret Doctrine* (1888), was a major figure
- very popular late 19th and early 20th centuries
- theosophical organizations still active in 52 countries



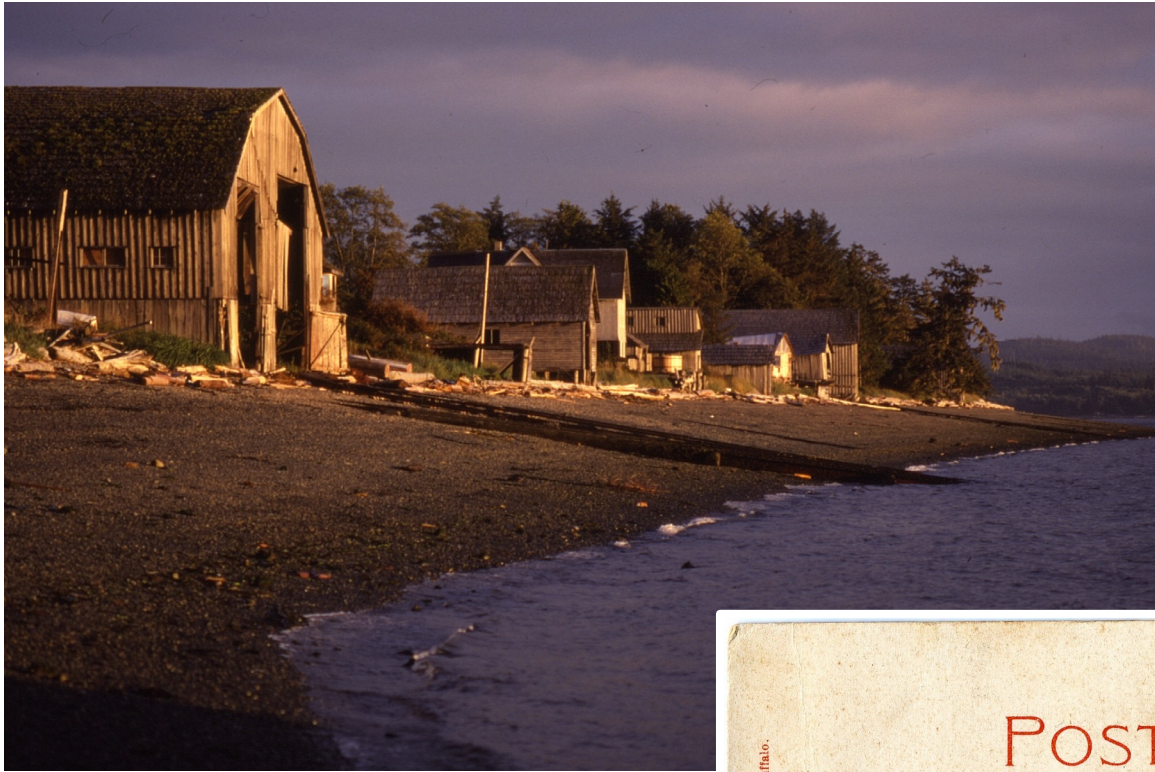
The cultural life was not neglected. Bandmaster Voitt Peippo sits in front of his numerous fellow musicians, 1903.

Sointula Centennial 1901 - 2001



Sointula Centennial 1901 - 2001





Above: boat sheds on Rough Bay.

Right: a postcard sent in 1908 from Sointula back to Suomi or Finland, "the old country."





REGISTRATION
\$125.00/person*

* Registration fee does not include transportation, accommodations, or site seeing tours/trips. The only meals included in the registration fee are those identified in the conference schedule.

POST CONFERENCE SIGHT SEEING TRIPS AND COMMUNITY TOURS WILL BE AVAILABLE AT AN ADDITIONAL COST
 From whale watching experiences to community tours. (Pre-registration for these events preferred)

For more registration details contact:

Annamaria Koch
 T: (250) 973-8465
 E: sointulacultureshock@gmail.com

To register visit
www.sointulan.ca

SPONSORED BY:



CULTURE SHOCK:

UTOPIAN DREAMS. HARD REALITIES

September 20-22, 2013

Presented by:
 Sointula Museum &
 Sointula Recreation Association

Keynote Speaker:
Dr. Edward Dutton: "Sointula and the Seeds of Culture Shock"
University of Oulu, Finland

Featuring:
 Andrew Scott: "Promise of Paradise"
 Charles LeWarne: "Utopian Settlements South of the 49th"
 Ann Curry: "Crawling Love, Justice and Harmony"
 Elizabeth Powers: "Modern Utopianism: The 18th Century Background"

Conference will be taking place in Sointula, Malcolm Island, British Columbia, Canada



Culture Shock: Utopian Dreams, Hard Realities Conference Outline

Friday, September 20th

8:30-9:00pm Wine and Cheese "Ice Breaker" - Sointula Bistro

8:00-9:00pm



Andrew Scott
"Promise of Paradise"
 Andrew Scott, a resident of Sechart, has written half-a-dozen non-fiction books about BC. An early work, *The Promise of Paradise*, crisis-crossed the province in search of utopia.

Saturday, September 21st

8:30-9:30am Buffet Breakfast - Sointula Finnish Organization Hall

9:30 - 11:00am



Sointula Finnish Organization Hall
Elizabeth Powers
"Modern Utopianism: The 18th Century Background"
 Elizabeth Powers is former chair of the Columbia University Seminar on Eighteenth-Century European Culture. She is a specialist in 18th-century German literature and editor of *Freedom of Speech: The History of an Idea*. This presentation will discuss some 18th-century sources of later religious and secular communitarianism, which sought worldly improvement within chosen communities sharing goods and labour.

9:30 - 11:00am



Sointula Old Athletic Hall
Shaun Macpherson
"Heroic Ladies: Protest & the Emancipatory Space of the Osoyoos Camp"
 Shaun Macpherson is a graduate student in Cultural, Social, and Political Thought (CSPT), an interdisciplinary program at the University of Victoria. He studies the history of technology and how new media and hacker culture are the sites for global cultural and economic changes.

11:00-1:30pm Buffet Lunch - Sointula Finnish Organization Hall

1:30-3:00 pm



Sointula Finnish Organization Hall
Charles LeWarne
"South of the 49th: Washington's Communal & Utopian Communities"
 Charles LeWarne is an award-winning Washington historian with a special interest in communal studies. Books include *Hopias on Puget Sound, 1885-1915*, and *The Love Street Family Urban Commune, Rural Commune, 1885-1915*, and *The Love Street Family Urban Commune, Rural Commune*. This presentation will focus on the socialist and anarchist communities from the early twentieth century that had names like Equality, Freedom, and Home.

Saturday, September 21st (continued)

1:30-3:00pm



Sointula Old Athletic Hall
Justine Brown
"A Post-Utopian Childhood"
 Justine Brown was born in Vancouver and grew up in bohemia. She holds an MA in English Literature from the University of Toronto. Her works include *All Possible Worlds: Utopian Experiments in British Columbia*, *Hollywood Shocks* and *The Siren's Secret*. The author will read excerpts from her two books: *All Possible Worlds: Utopian Experiments in British Columbia*, and *The Siren's Secret*.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

3:30-5:00pm



Sointula Old Athletic Hall
Dr. Edward Dutton
"Sointula and the Seeds of Culture Shock"
 Edward Dutton is Adjunct Professor of the Anthropology of Religion and Finnish Culture at Oulu University in Finland. His books include *Culture Shock and Multiculturalism* (2012) and *The Finnish: Finnish Culture and the Religion of Uniqueness* (2009). Also a journalist, his articles have appeared in such newspapers as the *Times Educational Supplement* (UK), and *University Affairs* (Canada).

This speech presents original research proving that Kalervo Oberg (1901-73), a BC born anthropologist, was influenced by his early childhood experiences in Sointula when he developed "culture shock" as a staged process. Oberg's father was the treasurer for the Kananan Kanana Colonization Company in Sointula and Dutton contends that this community is the "nut behind culture shock."

Sunday, September 22nd

8:30-9:30am Buffet Breakfast - Sointula Finnish Organization Hall

9:30-11:00am



Sointula Old Athletic Hall
Ann Curry
"Crawling Love, Justice and Harmony"
 Dr. Ann Curry has alternated between being a librarian and an educator throughout her career. Her positions include children's puppeteer, of company librarian, public library manager, and university professor. Her research focuses on ownership issues and the importance of information within society, both historically and today, from the scroll to social media. This presentation will explore the role of libraries and reading in Sointula from the establishment of the first library in 1902 to the present day.

CONFERENCE CONCLUSION



Only a few traditional Doukhobor “community houses” still exist. These ones are located near Grand Forks. The houses were usually built in pairs, side by side, surrounded by small outbuildings. Several are now museums.



Top left: about 7,500 Doukhobor refugees came to Canada in 1899, arriving at Halifax.

Top right: after travelling by train to Saskatchewan, a large group marches to reserved prairie land at Yorkton.

Left: during their first years in Canada, the Doukhobors barely survived. Lacking animals, they farmed the prairie by hand and sometimes (famously) harnessed themselves to the plough.



Left: Peter V. Verigin (“the Lordly”) was the sect’s capable leader from 1888 until his violent death in 1924. Right: Peter Lordly’s funeral was attended by thousands of followers.



Lower right: the next Doukhobor leader was the corrupt Peter P Verigin (“the Purger”). He stands behind the young boy in this 1927 photo of an outdoor sobranie or prayer meeting. The lower left photo shows the scale of some sobranies held in the 1940s and ‘50s.

Top left: a group of Sons of Freedom men disrobe while watching Doukhobor farm buildings burn to the ground.





An old community house near Grand Forks, which later became the Mountainview Doukhobor Museum.



Left: The Fructova school, built in 1929, is one of the few Doukhobor institutional buildings to have survived (despite several Freedomite arson attacks). Today it is a cultural heritage centre.



Right: Beautifully restored, but with slightly modernized machinery, this 1915 flour mill still produces modest quantities of flour, bran and animal feed for local health-food and specialty stores.

Brother XII & the Aquarian Foundation



Rare photo of Brother XII, posing at Cedar-by-the-Sea with some of the governors of the Aquarian Foundation. (The brother didn't like to have his photo taken; he's the one above the arrow, in the front row with a beard and tie.)



Many of today's homes at Cedar-by-the-Sea were originally built by Brother XII and his followers in the 1930s. At right is the Brother's "House of Mystery," his personal meditation cabin, where he later installed one of his female partners.



The south end of De Courcy Island is now a lovely provincial marine park called Pirates Cove. A protected lagoon—which was known in Brother XII's day as The Haven—provides anchorage for small vessels.



Brother XII's followers look happy enough to be working the land in this photograph.



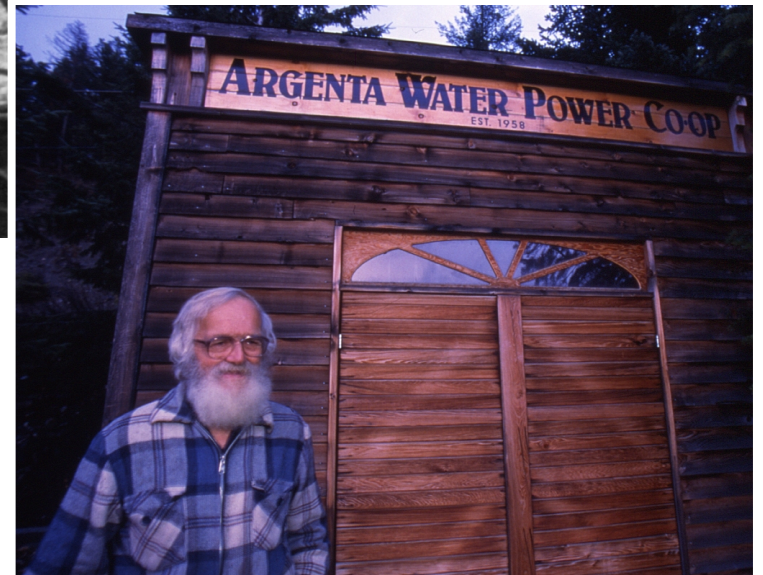
Typical shoreline scenery on De Courcy Island.



The trek from California and the search for land



Above: laundry day. Right: Hugh Elliot, founder of the Argenta Water Power Company, in front of the building where a Pelton wheel provides hydroelectricity for the community.

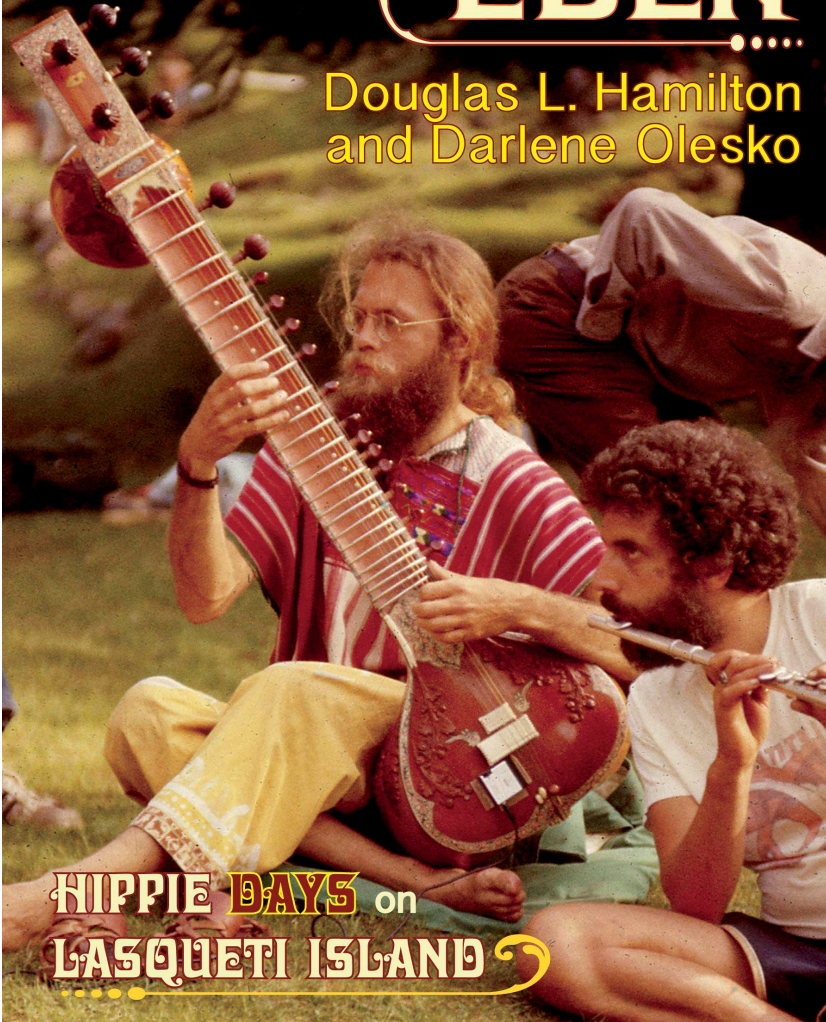




Elmo Wolfe and Bob Boyd hewing timber in the late 1950s for the construction of Argenta Friends School.

ACCIDENTAL EDEN

Douglas L. Hamilton
and Darlene Olesko



HIPPIE DAYS on
LASQUETI ISLAND



The story of Ted Sideras and his Lasqueti Island commune has been recently retold in *Accidental Eden*. Stone House, above, was the Lasqueti headquarters for this unusual early BC intentional community.



Campus Residence Co-operative Association

- better known as New West Co-op
- oldest housing co-op in BC
- celebrates 50th anniversary in 2016

Fulford Harbour: Rising Spirit Centre, Steven's Farm
Victoria: Mother's Vision, Springridge, People Share,
Cook's Farm Collective
Hagensborg (Bella Coola valley): Moonstar Family
Ganges: Bright Farm, Sydney Banks Spiritual
Foundation
Maurell Island Co-op
Refuge Cove Co-op
Tofino: Catface Community
Hornby Island: Syzygy, The Shire
Abbotsford: Living Water Estate, Edenvale
Mayne Island: Treefrog
Shawnigan Lake: Zero Holdings
Courtenay: Last Frontier
Cortes Island: Rainbow Family
Vancouver: Demeter Village, Saturna Heavyweight
Aggregate, Maya House, Beshara, Waterfront Co-op,
Turning Society, Holy Order of Many, Cosmic Debris,
Arica House, Inner Symmetrics, Clear Springs,
Community Alternatives Society, Pacific Life
Community
Grand Forks: Harmony Farmstead
Yale: Texas Lake Community
Roberts Creek: Crowe Road Commune, General Store
& Funny Food Farm, Legal Front Commune
Sechelt: Bayview
Nelson: Earth Seed

Lumby: Swamp Hollow, Genesis, An Alternative
Community
Harrogate: Jubilee Traders
New Denver: Gestalt Community
Queens Bay: The Farm
Rock Creek: The Rock
Boswell: Kootenay Brotherhood
Williams Lake: Pepperland, Ochiltree Organic Commune
Wycliffe: New Joy Farm
Quesnel: Min Opah Monastery
Armstrong: Caravan Theatre Farm
Ashcroft: Human Family
Christina Lake: Bodhi Farm, Castle Mountain
Lillooet: Applespring, Yalakum
Golden: Sunbird
Kootenay Bay: Yashodhara Ashram, Center of the World
Beautiful
Whaletown: Redlands
Cherryville: Workshare Farm, Ambado
Galiano Island: Primal Point
Chase: Lee Creek Community
Enderby: Grindrod Community, Space Feather Family,
Common Good Co-op, Fantasy Farm
Castlegar: Stonetree
Procter: Kosmunity
Summerland: Bar None Farm

Communes on the Sunshine Coast

- 18 government-funded “community projects” announced on the Sunshine Coast in 1971, much to the outrage of local citizens. Most had some kind of agricultural basis.
- Crowe Road Commune
- Shark-ain Co-operative Community
- Oyster Bay Family Workshop



1972: *Weekend Magazine* declared Sunshine Coast “at the vanguard of the Canadian commune movement” and estimated that “perhaps a thousand young people” were living here. Why so popular? Cheap real estate, proximity to the big city, idyllic rural beauty in a coastal paradise.

Roberts Creek: Legal Front Commune, General Store and Funny Food Farm (Richard Schaller), turned a garage into a community tool-pool and car-repair teaching centre

Sechelt: Bayview, a rural commune providing free meals and places to stay for transient youth.

Storm Bay: on Narrows Inlet, not a commune but a summer place for members of the Western Front, a renowned Vancouver artists’ co-operative, and their friends. Still there today.

Galley Bay: in Desolation Sound, written about by Grant Lawrence and Paul Williams (*Apple Bay*)



CEEDS (Community Enhancement and Economic Development Society) is one of very few counter-culture communes to continue to thrive in BC. Its founder, Jerry LeBourdais (left), died in 2004, but five other original member, supported by friends, family and neighbours, today manage three leased properties at Horse Lake near the village of 100 Mile House.

Why do intentional communities continue to form and flourish?

- need to escape social or political oppression
- wish to attain a more spiritually evolved or perfect human condition
- related wish to create better societies: more equitable, more sustainable, more co-operative
- universal yearning for a deeper, richer human connection and sense of belonging
- deliberate attempt to solve particular (sometimes unconventional) housing and living needs
- trend towards decentralization, grassroots power and harmony with one's surroundings
- desire for safer, more productive and satisfying human networks and neighbourhoods

Why do intentional communities succeed or fail?

- MONEY: Financial naivety and unrealistic economic plans/expectations caused many failures, while those with agricultural or other skills often flourished.
- LOCATION: Remote location fatal for Cape Scott but not for Bella Coola or Metlakatla
- LEADERSHIP: A strong leader was not always a hindrance, but he (and it always seems to be a “he”) can be a hard act to follow. Communities with a “distributed” leadership, where some form of consensus needed to be achieved, seem to have a better chance. But if the leadership is too rigid (ie Duncan, Kurikka, Brother XII, etc), the community is usually doomed.
- SUCCESSION: How to turn things over to the next generation? How to bring in younger people with new ideas and energy yet still respect the elders? These are issues that intentional communities all over North America are struggling with today.

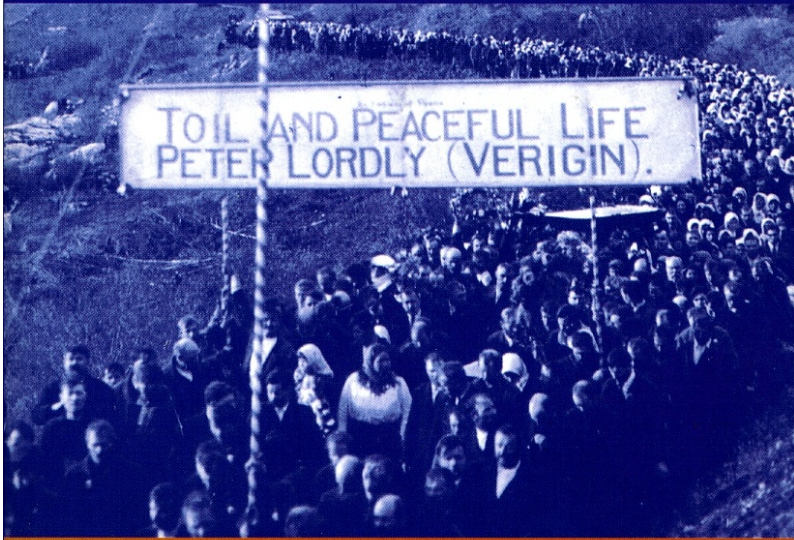
Why are there so many intentional communities in BC?

- mild climate, spectacular landscape, reputation for tolerance (also many communities in California, Oregon and Washington, for instance)
- BC was the last hospitable corner of the world to be explored and colonized. It was the end of the road for restless souls and visionaries looking to create new ways of life. It was still relatively undeveloped and “remote.”
- BC appealed to many northern Europeans, especially ones fleeing poverty and discrimination. Many of its landscapes looked reassuringly familiar, and there were often jobs available (albeit not very good ones). Government often offered incentives and encouragement to settlers.

“A wonderful tale of perseverance, idealism—
and magnificent failure.” —Peter C. Newman

The Promise of Paradise

Utopian Communities in B.C.



Andrew Scott

The Promise of Paradise

Utopian Communities
in British Columbia

By Andrew Scott

Updated & expanded
Second Edition
available from
Harbour Publishing
Spring 2017