

Canadian History is Boring by Lori Treloar

Canadian history is boring. . . that is what the teacher told my daughter's grade eight social studies class. As an educator, and an advocate for Canadian history, I was appalled! I understand that our history is young compared to other cultures and countries in the world but boring? Absolutely not! Unfortunately, teachers who express opinions such as this can make impressions that last a lifetime. Fortunately, it is easy to excite young people about history – too bad it doesn't happen more often. The apathy of the average Canadian towards their own history is a *learned* behaviour.



Sir John A MacDonal, Canada's 1st Prime Minister, visited Shawnigan Lake on August 13, 1886 to drive the last spike on the E & N Railway at Cliffside.

“People tend to forget that the word *history* contains the word *story*” ~ Ken Burns.

History is really a patchwork of small stories. The stories are about **people** - their experiences, achievements and challenges. A multitude of small stories adds up to the history of a community, a province and a country. If the storyteller is excited about the stories, then history is never boring. It is all about the delivery.

For more than a decade, I was one half of a musical duo that presented and promoted Canadian History through music, anecdotes and audience participation. The audiences were primarily schoolchildren and American visitors. Americans are well known to be proud, flag waving citizens who enjoy their history. That made it especially rewarding to be able to excite them about Canada. For the most part, they know very little about our country. The audience response after every performance indicated that they had a new respect for our history and our accomplishments. Did **YOU** know that the zipper was invented by a Canadian? And the time zones of the world? And the game of basketball?

On Canada Day, you will have the chance to be entertained by the history of Shawnigan Lake and of Vancouver Island. The Shawnigan Lake Museum will be open for visitors from noon - 4. In addition, the museum has arranged for the **Seeds and Salt Theatre Company** to present their new show, “*The Road Less Travelled*”, as part of the celebration. This live performance includes four vignettes showcasing different Vancouver Island stories. Their performance last year was delightful and the stories made you want to laugh and cry. It was anything but boring! The show begins at noon on the Centennial Park slab at Elsie Miles School Grounds. You don't want to miss it! Funding for the theatre troupe relies on donations from the audience. We look forward to new stories next year so please contribute to their success.

“Sometimes the most important history is the history we are making today” Anon.

On July 1st, come out and celebrate the history of Canada, Vancouver Island and Shawnigan Lake. Be a part of the story...