

## Memories of Manson's Landing.

Frank Hayes in conversation with Sue Ellingsen and Doreen Thompson, at his home in Westview, May 2005.

My grandparents, Alfred John and Florence Hayes emigrated to Canada from England. Grandfather Hayes had been a gardener at Buckingham palace in the early 1890s. (I have a vase given to him by the Prince of Wales, who became King Edward VII, when he left their employ). They were living in Winnipeg when my grandfather saw a newspaper ad in which the Columbia Coast Mission was looking for an engineer for their Victoria-based vessel *Columbia*. He applied for the job and was hired; the Mission folk, upon his arrival in Victoria with nine children, encouraged him to be based on Cortes Island where more children were needed in order to keep the school open.

The family arrived at Manson's Landing, then called Clytosin, in 1917. Grandfather, Grandmother, seven daughters - Betty, Florence, Nerine, Marjorie, Nora and Dorothy - and two sons, Art and Jack. They stayed in the Lodge for awhile then moved to the log house on the Bartholomew place (1188 Bartholomew Rd) before settling on their homestead at Poison Bay (1291 Bartholomew Road) which ran from the road down to the beach on Baker's Pass. Their home was in the upper orchard; Grandfather's brother, my uncle Arthur, had a cabin in the lower orchard.

After his engineer's job for the Mission Grandfather Hayes worked as a knoter out on Hernando Island, chopping knots off of trees felled in the logging that was being done out there. He also worked in Powell River, laying the boardwalk when the township was built, commuting by boat from Blind Creek (Cortes Bay). Later on he farmed the land at Poison Bay. His son, Art, would become my father.

Dad was a commercial painter at Vancouver Motors in Vancouver when he met and married my mother, Mary Margaret Keeley, in the late 1920s. My sister, Nerine, was born in 1929. I was born in 1932. Dad's job, which included both house and commercial painting, took him out of town to places like Stillwater where he painted the water tower that dominates the community. They left Vancouver when I was about three, relocating to 'The Happy Ranch', a 52 acre parcel of land at Blind Creek (1368 Bartholomew Road) which Uncle Jack owned. After being there dad bought the place at the head of the bay (896 Cortes Bay Road) from a Mr. Roy for \$300.00. Mr. Roy was a French Canadian, I remember that he gave us pieces of maple sugar that he broke off of a large chunk with a hammer. The land had been a Japanese logging camp before Mr. Roy owned it, there were still old buildings there that had housed the crew and the horses.

Dad found work in logging camps. When I was pretty young he worked for Kelly Spruce at their Teakerne Arm booming ground. He walked from Blind Creek to Squirrel Cove, rowed to Teakerne, worked there from Monday until Saturday night, made the long trip home via rowboat and trail .....often spent his one day off looking for our milk cow which often wandered off during the week.....and returned to work. He made enough money to keep me in canned milk! He worked there for 5 years or more, I can remember going up there in George Griffin's boat *Loumar* and watching the old sailing ship *Malahat* being loaded up with logs for export.

Dad's next venture was chicken farming, building a huge chicken house on the property and raising laying hens. When they started producing he rowed to Squirrel Cove, Refuge Cove and Bliss Landing once a week to supply eggs to the general stores in those communities. He got ten cents a dozen for pullett eggs. Eggs were also shipped to Vancouver on the Union boat that made weekly stops at Seaford; chicken feed arrived there.....in 100 pound sacks. Dad had to tow a raft around to Seaford, load the feed on it, tow it back home where it was beached in front of the house. Then the real work began, hauling those sacks of feed up to the feed shed half way between the beach and the chicken house. He hired 3 old fishermen to do that one time, they were sort of the forerunners of hippies. Not too ambitious. Dad was logging at the time, when he got home they hadn't finished the job and were packing one sack between two of them up the trail. Dad found a sack of alfalfa, which was just as large but a lot lighter, slung it over his shoulder and walked it up to the feed shed. They took one look at him and quit.

Dad continued to gyppo log with Andy Byers and Bill Illman well into the 1940s. They had a donkey and worked along the north shore of Blind Creek, out to Hynek's place on the point. Bill and Andy left and Dad partnered up with Ken and Harold Hansen; they moved back toward Gunflint Lake, at the base of Easter Bluff, on the McKay place. (Far end of Lakeview/Linnaea field). They were there in the fifties and built the road through to the one that goes to Squirrel Cove. Their old *White* truck couldn't haul a load up from the valley bottom so they rigged up a device called a *squirrel* to help it haul itself up. It was a counterweight system that relied on a heavy log sliding

down a guy wire attached to a spar tree at the top of the hill. The truck was hooked to the other end of the cable the log was on, as the slid down the guywire the truck came up the hill. Bill Hawkins and Dad were logging together in the early sixties, then in sixty-three or four Dad bought the *Debby Marie* and went fishing. He fished the gulf for awhile then when I bought the *Moonbeam*, and later the *Misty Lady*, we both fished the west coast of Vancouver Island around Winter Harbour and the Charlottes.

My grandparents, who were getting on in age, moved from their Poison Bay homestead to a cabin near the beach on Dad and Mom's place in the early fifties.

Back to my growing up years. I had chores to do to keep me out of trouble. Feeding and watering the chickens, packing wood. Nerine and I started school in the log school that was at the dogwood tree across from the community hall. I was also in the class that Nick Manson taught in the church in 1946. Then they towed the teacherage - fireplace, chimney and all - down from Rexford's place at the end of Beasley Road and set that up in the schoolyard for an extra room. Nick Manson was a great teacher, he had an old Ford truck that he let us take to Manson's to get his mail at lunch time. Told us that if we wanted to smoke to do it behind the school so the little kids wouldn't see. I remember having a new pocket knife and getting in trouble for whittling in class .....I was told that if I wanted to whittle I could take all of the pencils outside and sharpen them then come back in and put the knife away. So I gathered up everybody's pencil and went out, sharpened them down to almost nothing. Brought them back in.....got in deep shit!! Blair Dixon was the next teacher, we were going to school in the hall. I was a bit more than he could take. He sent me into the kitchen to "smoke, drink, do whatever you want - just stay away from the rest of the kids!" I was in grade seven when Mr. Flowers arrived to teach. That was my last year. I threw a snowball through one of the windows and was expelled until I fixed it. I never went back.

I went logging, working for my Dad. In the summer of '48 Nerine and I and our cousin Rosemary Churchill went to the Okanagan to make our fortunes picking fruit. I picked apricots for one day and had half as many as the girls I was working with. I dumped them all into their baskets and took off.....with a shirtful of peaches stolen from the orchard owner's special tree that we were not supposed to touch!

Then it was off to Winter Harbour on the west coast of Vancouver Island to work at Bill Moore's logging camp. It wasn't an easy place to get to in those days. I had to take the Union Steamship down to Vancouver then up to Port Hardy. I remember getting to Port Hardy in the middle of the night and sitting in a hotel lobby until daylight. There was an advertising calendar on the wall put out by A. Hole and sons. I remember thinking "A Hole, they sure got that right". An old flat deck truck took us out to Coal Harbour where we boarded a water taxi for the trip to Winter Harbour. I stayed there 3 months, working six days a week and living in a twelve man bunkhouse on a float with a barrel heater and floorboards that didn't meet. On Sunday we had a picture show and fished for shiners through the cracks in the floor! We were getting \$7.00 a day out of which came \$1.50 for board. The food was good for most of the week but by week's end, with the freight boat delivering meat and groceries only once a week, the meat was getting a little ripe. The cook picked up each piece of stew meat, smelled it.....the bad stuff went out the door, the no-so-bad went into the pot!

I continued logging, at a variety of places all over the coast but kept coming back to Cortes. I met Nancy Molrude, who was from Stuart Island and boarding at Hector and Pearl Graham's to go to school. I was working out at Tofino then, took me three years to get around to proposing. We married in 1960 and had two children, Roddy in 1961, Alisa in 1964. I was logging in winter and fishing in summer, then in 1973 I sold the boat and we moved to Nanaimo. I went timber falling, working away from home and living in camp. Nancy and I split up in 1974. I worked in a shrimp processing plant in Nanaimo for awhile, that was grueling work. I remember working for thirty hours straight one time. I moved 7 times in the next two-and-a-half years.

I was doing some clam digging in March of 1982 when I "found" Julia Rowell, my present partner, on the beach at Savary Island. I'd come back to Cortes and was living onboard my boat, *Sea Syndrome*. I moved ashore and rented the yellow house by Jack's Pond (504 Sutil Point Road) for awhile before buying Jack Parry's old place from David and Judy Guthrie (488 Smelt Bay Road). Julia and I lived there while I was operating an oyster lease out in Carrington Bay that I bought from Robbie Graham. I sold the lease to Sheldon Ramsay from Camp Island in 1996 or 7 and retired in Courtenay before moving to Powell River.

