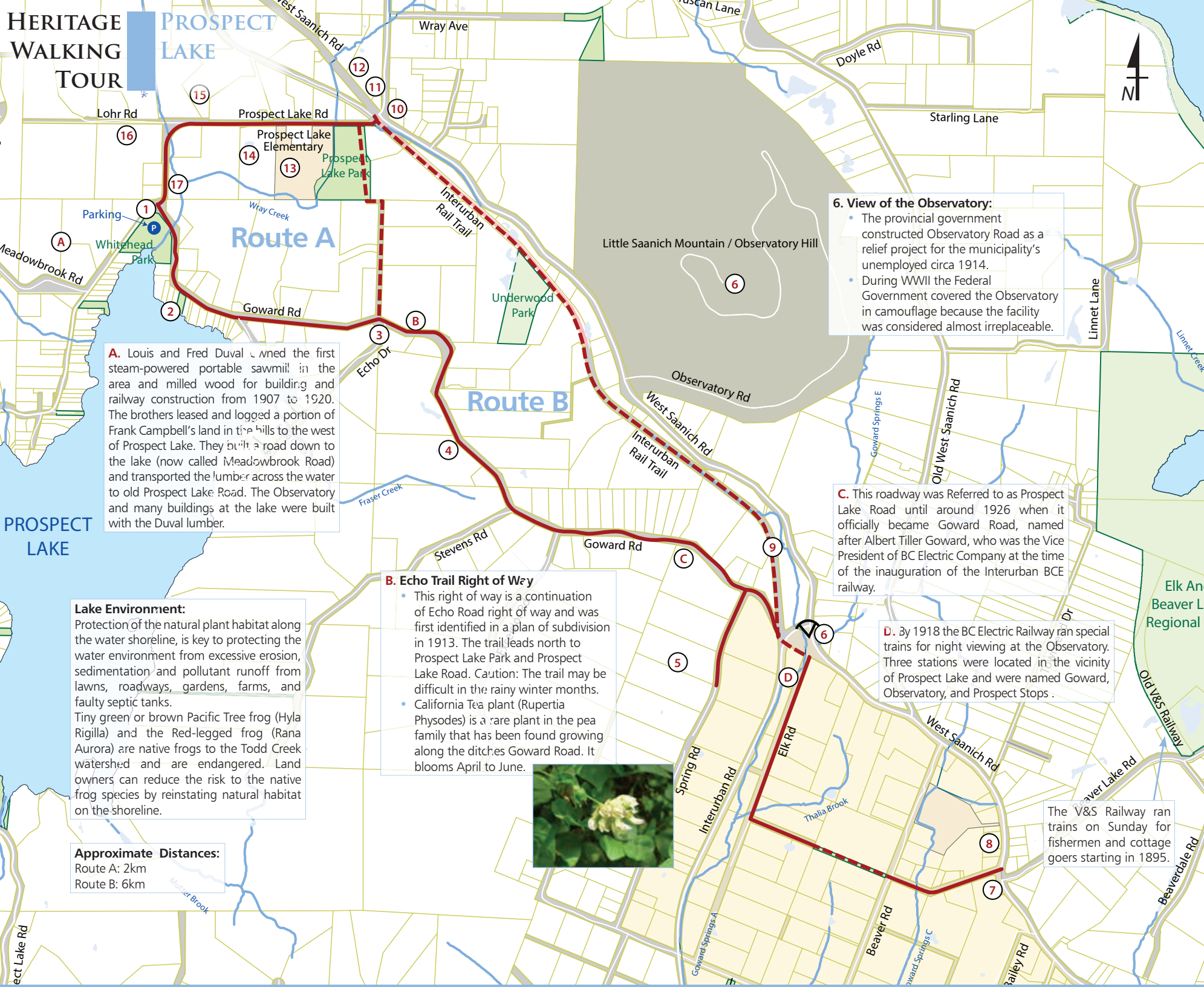


HERITAGE WALKING TOUR

PROSPECT LAKE



A. Louis and Fred Duval owned the first steam-powered portable sawmill in the area and milled wood for building and railway construction from 1907 to 1920. The brothers leased and logged a portion of Frank Campbell's land in the hills to the west of Prospect Lake. They built a road down to the lake (now called Meadowbrook Road) and transported the lumber across the water to old Prospect Lake Road. The Observatory and many buildings at the lake were built with the Duval lumber.

Lake Environment:
Protection of the natural plant habitat along the water shoreline, is key to protecting the water environment from excessive erosion, sedimentation and pollutant runoff from lawns, roadways, gardens, farms, and faulty septic tanks.
Tiny green or brown Pacific Tree frog (*Hyla Rigilla*) and the Red-legged frog (*Rana Aurora*) are native frogs to the Todd Creek watershed and are endangered. Land owners can reduce the risk to the native frog species by reinstating natural habitat on the shoreline.

Approximate Distances:
Route A: 2km
Route B: 6km

B. Echo Trail Right of Way
• This right of way is a continuation of Echo Road right of way and was first identified in a plan of subdivision in 1913. The trail leads north to Prospect Lake Park and Prospect Lake Road. Caution: The trail may be difficult in the rainy winter months.
• California Tea plant (*Rupertia Physodes*) is a rare plant in the pea family that has been found growing along the ditches Goward Road. It blooms April to June.



6. View of the Observatory:
• The provincial government constructed Observatory Road as a relief project for the municipality's unemployed circa 1914.
• During WWII the Federal Government covered the Observatory in camouflage because the facility was considered almost irreplaceable.

C. This roadway was referred to as Prospect Lake Road until around 1926 when it officially became Goward Road, named after Albert Tiller Goward, who was the Vice President of BC Electric Company at the time of the inauguration of the Interurban BCE railway.

D. By 1918 the BC Electric Railway ran special trains for night viewing at the Observatory. Three stations were located in the vicinity of Prospect Lake and were named Goward, Observatory, and Prospect Stops.

The V&S Railway ran trains on Sunday for fishermen and cottage goers starting in 1895.

General

Ancestors of the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations were the first known residents of southern Vancouver Island. Please visit the Esquimalt (www.esquimaltnation.ca) and Songhees (www.songheesnation.ca) First Nations to learn more about their history.

European Settlement of the Prospect Lake area began with pioneer farmers in the mid 1800s. Jack Durrance arrived in 1852 and paddled up Tod Inlet and Tod Creek to find good farmland. Other early European settlers included Frank Campbell, Horace Oldfield, Sam McCullough, Fred Duval and Tony Williams.

Prospect Lake soon became a popular area for fishing and hunting. An 1866 article from the Colonist newspaper describes the lake as being "thronged with anglers." An 1888 Victoria Water Supply map shows that a dirt track named West Road (now Old West Saanich Road) provided access in the vicinity of the northern end of the lake. By 1895 people could access the lake by taking "the Victoria & Sidney Railroad to Beaver Lake station, and (then) an interesting tramp of two and a half miles to Prospect Lake." Daily Colonist November 3, 1957.

A second railroad, the Interurban Railroad, was established in the area by BC Electric Railway in 1913. The Interurban Railroad brought people even closer to the lake and provided several stations along the route. By 1914, wealthy families who were able to buy motor vehicles found it much easier to get out to the lake and more summer cottages were built.

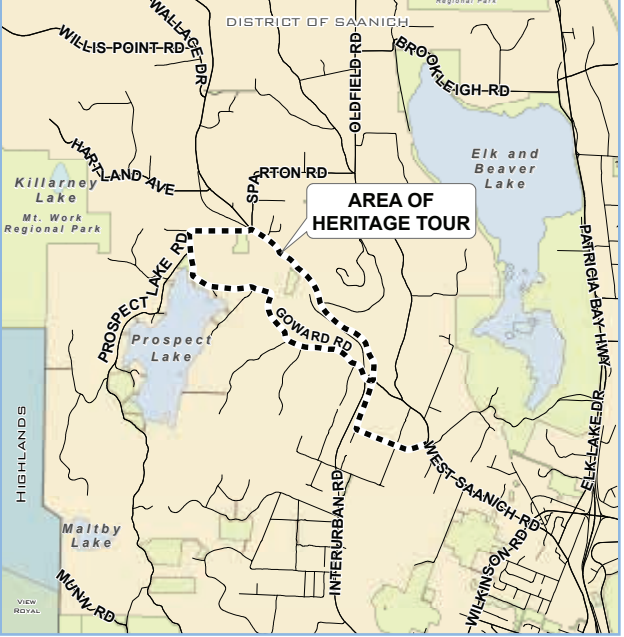
Stories

Jack Whitehead remembers trout as big as 23 inches being caught out of Prospect Lake in the 1930s. Jack's father, Albert Whitehead, built a fleet of 16 small flat bottomed boats and rented them for \$1 a day.



Westwood Vale was the name of the valley east of Prospect Lake and west of Beaver Lake, where Goward Springs drain from the hills into Viaduct Flats. The road that runs parallel to the old BC Electric Interurban rail line was called Westwood Vale until 1923 when it was changed to Spring Road.

Students of Prospect Lake School in the 1920s and 30s remember a two room schoolhouse that was built over a water well. John Oldfield recorded that "In the hallway outside the rooms there was a big cast iron pump with a creaky handle that was pushed up and down a few times until the water gushed out. The water was clear and cold. There were two separate cups, one for girls and one for boys." The rooms were heated with round cast-iron wood stoves. "During the winter students sitting next to the stoves roasted while the rest froze." John also remembers that each desk had an inkwell and in the cold winter of 1929 the ink froze solid. (Prospect Lake Heritage Society).



Welcome to Saanich Walking Tours

Saanich Heritage Walking Tours are provided to increase public awareness of Saanich Heritage.

Sources for the historical and architectural information and photos include: The Prospect Lake Heritage Society, Saanich Archives www.saanicharchives.ca; Saanich Heritage Register, Donald Luxton & Associates and Jennifer Nell Barr www.saanichheritage.ca.

We liked to hear from you if you have any historical information about a site within this neighbourhood. Please contact Saanich Planning 250-475-1775 or planning@saanich.ca.

Please Note: No sidewalks on this route
All residences on the tour are privately owned. Please remain on public property during your tour and respect the privacy of residents.



Photo credits:
www.spiritoftomorrow.com - oldfield garage workshop
www.sbwildflowers.wordpress.com - California tea plant
Front cover photo credit:
Saanich Archives 1993-001-021 Car on West Saanich Road near the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory [after 1918]

HERITAGE WALKING TOUR
BIKE OR HIKE

PROSPECT LAKE

SAANICH

1. Whitehead Park

Whitehead Parkland now provides lake access, recreation space, and natural shoreline (riparian area).

The land was originally owned by Albert and Nellie Whitehead who operated a farm on the property circa 1923 until 1960 when they sold the land to Saanich on the condition that it be established as a park. Their farm included a greenhouse and small orchard. They also raised goats and Mrs. Whitehead would load up a goat cart to travel with her three children from the north end of the lake to the south for picnics. Albert built many of the summer cottages around the lake.



2. Ethie's Villa (1927) - 147 Goward Road

Ernie and Ethel Todd bought property on Goward Road in 1927 and named the cottage they built, Ethie's Villa. Ernie Todd was the grandson of J.H. (Jacob Hunter) Todd, who made his fortune selling provisions to miners in Barkerville and after moving back to Victoria built up a very successful fishing and canning business. J.H. Todd & Sons Fishery & Cannery business operated from the early 1880s. The operation of the business continued under Jacob's sons and grandsons until 1969.

Marilyn Bell, famous Canadian long distance swimmer, who was the first to swim across Lake Ontario and the youngest to swim the English Channel, stayed with the Todds while she practiced for her successful swim across the Strait of Juan de Fuca in 1956. A couple years earlier a famous US long distance swimmer, Florence Chadwick, also practiced swimming from the Todd's property in preparation for her attempt to swim the Juan de Fuca Strait. *Painting by the designer of the present house, John William "Bill" Turkington, 1981.*



3. Echo Road

The land surrounding what is now Echo Road was known as On Hing farm in the late 1800s. On Hing Farm was operated by a Chinese family. Local memories tell of the On Hing produce wagon "travelling around the country side with produce and crates of chickens underneath." In 1913, after the death of their father, the sons subdivided the property and thirty three acres of the farmland were sold. This subdivision marked the beginning of Prospect Lake's popularity as a summer getaway.

4. Fraser Residence - 321 Goward Road, 1945

The first house built between Interurban Road and the lake cottages. Goward Road was little more than a logging track and the Fraser's carried water from a nearby spring until electricity came in 1947.

5. Stevens Residence - 4816 Spring Road. Built 1895.

John Stevens (1835-1914) ran a hotel called "The Half-Way House" (now addressed 4794 West Saanich Road). He lived above the hotel/saloon with his wife, Georgina (née Holmes, 1840-1929) and their children. Georgina decided that living above a saloon was not a good place to raise their children, and moved to this house in the 1890s. In 1906, John sold the farm to the South Saanich Realty Company, Limited.

Architectural notes:

- Queen anne revival cottage
- Hipped roof
- Projecting gable extensions at the front and side
- Semi-octagonal front bay window
- Distinctive gable screens



6. Dominion Astrophysical Observatory - 5071 West Saanich Road, 1915-18

Owners, His Majesty the King in right of the Dominion of Canada, William Henderson, architect.



At the intersection of West Saanich Road and Interurban Roads you can view the white-domed Dominion Astrophysical Observatory that is located at the top of a winding road on Little Saanich Mountain. It is part of a scientific campus of buildings on 50 acres of Federal property. Scientists had expressed the need to measure the approach and recession of the stars. The Saanich Peninsula was selected as the location for the observatory because of its superior viewing conditions due to the clear atmosphere, minimal city light to interfere in obtaining clear images and the equability of year-round temperatures.

The construction of this observatory by the Federal Government represented a significant contribution to "the cause of pure science." Dr. John Stanley Plaskett,

an astronomer with the Department of the Interior, Ottawa, designed the telescope. The Observatory was a magnet for scientists from all over the world. When the Observatory opened on May 16, 1918, the telescope was the largest of its kind in the world.



7. Stevens Halfway House Hotel / Westwood - 4794 West Saanich Road

After apprenticing as a seaman, John Stevens emigrated from Kent, England. He worked on steam vessels in the West Coast waters for a number of years. John was a widower with a young daughter in 1850 when he married Georgiana. Georgiana was a widow with a child, David. It is said that "Georgiana did not fancy sea life," so John sold the schooner that he had inherited from his Uncle and bought a section of land at Beaver Lake Road in 1859. The home was half way between Victoria and the Tod Inlet and became a favourite place to visit so he turned it into a hotel.

This building, constructed around 1898 was likely the third hotel built by John Stevens on this portion of land. John Stevens retired in 1895 and his adopted son David ran the Hotel, which at that time was called Westwood.

Architectural notes:

- Queen ann revival
- Gabled wing facing the road
- Half-timbering was applied on top of the siding later
- Original verandah roof became a second-storey balcony

Retired missionary Reverend Walter Thomas Currie (1855-1915) and his wife, Amy, rented the house from 1912 until 1915. He and his wife pioneered the Canadian Congregational Mission to Angola in 1886, the first missionaries to enter Angola. He was also the founder of the Currie Institute. In 1937, the United Church of Canada erected the plaque at the site in Reverend Currie's honour.



8. Beaver Lake Store - 4808 West Saanich Road

Eulalie (Harrison) Willoughby, Marie Oades & Bruce Willoughby, Owners; circa 1933

The facade of this building is a replica of the small store building that stood here from 1933 to 2008. The facade was replicated as a reminder of the small neighbourhood businesses that grew up to service the growing population of this rural area. The original business was a confectionery store that cousins Eulalie Harrison (1881-1982) and Marie Oades, built on rented property on the east side of West Saanich Road. When their landlord raised the rent, they hauled the building across the road, renting and later buying the new property.



9. Interurban Railroad / Centennial Trail

The BC Electric Railway ran the Interurban rail line from Victoria to Deep Bay from 1913 to 1924. This railway was the third to open on the Saanich Peninsula. It competed with the Victoria & Sidney Railway that ran from Douglas Street to Sidney and with the CNR Railway that ran from Hillside Avenue to Patricia Bay. The trip from Victoria to Deep Bay took approximately 36 minutes and cost 25 cents. The railway lost money through its operation and with the increased use of the automobile in the 1920s, train use declined. The company announced its closing in September 1924.

Today the old Interurban rail line is used as a regional trail for biking and walking.



10. Oldfield Service Station & Shop- 5295 West Saanich Road

Brian & Basil Oldfield, Owners

The service station was built in 1934 and it was operated by Brian Oldfield. In the 1940s Brian's brother Basil constructed the building next to the service station as a shop where he could create his many mechanical innovations. One of his innovations was a four wheel drive logging truck that could steer both the front and rear wheels. Basil also designed and built a futuristic looking car and called it "Spirit of Tomorrow." The Royal BC Museum displayed the car during a program showcasing 'inventor's ingenuity.' Basil also constructed a home at 5321 West Saanich that spins on its axis with the help of a washing machine motor.



11. Prospect Lake General Store - 5303 West Saanich Road

Samuel McCullough, Owner; circa 1913

Ranchers, Samuel (1860-1929) and Susannah (1863-1949) McCullough were Irish immigrants who came to Canada in the early 1890s. The couple moved to the house next door (5323 West Saanich Rd) in 1912. Samuel built the store in 1913 for his daughter Sarah and her husband John Findlay. John and Sarah ran the store and local post office. Between 1946 and 1963, Jack and Evelyn Durrance owned and operated the store.

Architectural notes:

- Two-storey commercial building with living quarters above
- Original craftsman style
- Features are hidden by stucco cladding



12. Erskine Residence - 5323 West Saanich Road

James Erskine, Owner; circa 1895

This house was built for Captain James Erskine (1851-1943), who immigrated to Canada from Ireland with his wife Mary (née Hall, 1851-1948) in 1894-95. He farmed here from about 1895 until 1901. In 1912, Samuel and Susanna McCullough bought the property, which the family owned until 1930.

Architectural notes:

- Front-gabled farmhouse is an example of frontier functional building design common to the area
- Hipped-roof wraparound verandah on two sides
- Square columns
- Simple balustrade
- Windows surrounds have scalloped apron sills
- Cornice mouldings above the windows and doors



13. Prospect Lake School

The current Prospect Lake School is the third school building to be constructed in the area. The first schoolhouse, built in 1894, has been converted into a residence. It remains at its original location 1km north of the current school at the intersection of West Saanich Road and Wallace Drive (5640 West Saanich Road).

In 1923, Samuel Cameron donated 1.75 acres of land at the northwest corner of West Saanich Road and Prospect Lake Road, near Wray Creek, to the Saanich School Board, and that year the second Prospect Lake Schoolhouse was built. It was a two room schoolhouse. It was closed down in 1966.



Prospect Lake School, 1894

14. Sharps Residence - 293 Prospect Lake Road

Henry Sharps (1873-1924) and Hilda Sharps (née Sales, 1879-1954) came to Saanich from England circa 1910, and practised mixed farming. Harry was also an electrical engineer. The Sharps family owned the property until 1931.

Architectural notes:

- Craftsman bungalow
- Hipped roof with a shed-roofed dormer
- Deeply inset verandah
- Paired columns with knee brackets
- Verandah balustrade are cantilevered out from the front wall plane



15. Oldfield Residence - 260 Prospect Lake Road,

Horace & Edith Oldfield, Owners; circa 1910-14

Horace Oldfield (1868-1950) arrived from Norfolk, England in 1895 and by October 1896 he had acquired title to three large blocks of land in Sections 86 and 87. Horace kept poultry, planted an orchard, and made regular weekly trips into Victoria to deliver produce and pick up supplies. In about 1910 he married Edith (née Percy, 1881-1977) and built this house shortly afterwards.

Architectural notes:

- Craftsman bungalow
- Low-pitched hipped roof
- The watertable, stringcourse and frieze encircling the house emphasize its horizontal proportions
- Open front verandah with square columns on shingle clad battered piers
- Balustrade with simple, square balusters
- Square corner bay and a semi-octagonal bay
- Large gabled dormer fronted by a balcony on to the roof was added in 1990



16. Lohr Residence - 187 Lohr Road - Reginald & Alice Lohr - 1903

Reginald and Alice Lohr and family immigrated from Tierra del Fuego, Chile. They moved to this little country house in 1914. The house was originally built in 1903. The Lohrs expanded the home adding two bedrooms. The road was named after the Lohr family in honour of all three sons serving during World War I. The elder sons, Harold and Alfred, served overseas. Alfred died in action and was buried in France. Harold returned, suffering from the effects of mustard gas.

The windmill that stands on the property was brought from an abandoned farm in Alberta. The windmill was transported by truck in three pieces and reconstructed on this site. It was used to water the gardens of the Hopkins family who purchased the home in 1964.



17. Lake Side Store - 100 Goward Road

This structure was once a small confectionery store that served the summer cottage population. Locals remember buying candy, popsicles, and 5 cent freezies.

