Kaleden Pioneer Park

A waterfront park in Kaleden had been envisioned even in the early days.

James Ritchie, Kaleden's founder, had designated Banbury, Ponderosa and Sickle Points as public recreation areas when Kaleden was first surveyed. However, that designation had not been registered when the First World War intervened, resulting in the bankruptcy of the English company financing Ritchie's development of Kaleden. The creditors quickly sold the first two of these to private individuals. As a result, residents were constantly looking for an opportunity to remedy this loss of lakeshore property. The residents used a small portion of sandy beach just north of the packinghouse for swimming.

North Beach circa 1956

Marathon Realty (CPR) owned this section of land, and, in 1956/57, Marathon decided that it was worth money to them to lease this area to Kaleden. The Kaleden Community Centre Association entered into not one, but two leases. One to lease the beach property at $5.00 per year and a second lease to provide a pedestrian crossing over the tracks for another $5.00 per year. Considering the Province and landowners had given the CPR land at very reasonable costs, one would think that the CPR would have provided these two leases for free.

We have to thank those volunteer Kaleden citizens who ensured that we had access to that area for our enjoyment as kids!

~~DWELLING~~ LEASE NO. LV 4950

This Indenture,

made in duplicate the First day of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and fifty-seven,

IN PURSUANCE OF THE "SHORT FORM OF LEASES ACT",

BETWEEN THE

APPROVED
Supt.
Asst.
Dist. Engineer
General Supt.

Canadian Pacific Railway Company

hereinafter called the "Lessor" of the First Part,

AND

KALEDEN COMMUNITY CENTRE ASSOCIATION, of Kaleden, in the Province of British Columbia,

--
Occupation

hereinafter called the "Lessee" of the Second Part.

WITNESSETH, that in consideration of the rents, covenants and agreements hereinafter reserved and contained on the part of the Lessee to be paid, observed and performed, the Lessor doth demise and lease unto the Lessee for the purpose of a public beach park that parcel or tract of land and premises situate, lying and being at Mileage 7.4, Osoyoos Subdivision in the Province of British Columbia, shown outlined in red on the plan attached hereto which is hereby declared to be part of this lease.

SAVING AND RESERVING to the Lessor the right to construct and operate a track or tracks of railway over any part of the said above described land and premises not actually covered by the buildings or structures, hereinafter mentioned, and the right to enter for such purposes the whole, without payment by the Lessor of any damage or compensation for damage of any nature or for any cause whatever.

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the said demised premises unto the Lessee for and during the term of one year from the First day of April in the year A.D. 1957. At the expiration of the said term of one year this lease shall, unless sooner terminated as herein provided, be considered as renewed for one year, and thereafter shall continue in force from year to year as a yearly lease, subject to all the covenants, provisoes, terms and conditions herein contained; YIELDING AND PAYING THEREFOR yearly and every year during the said term unto the Lessor, its successors and assigns, the sum of - - -FIVE & xx/100 - - - - - - - - - -($5.00) Dollars, to be paid in advance on the First day of April in each year.

AND the Lessee covenants with the Lessor:

TO pay rent;

~~AND to pay the following charges monthly to the Lessor for supplying heat, electric current and water~~ for the building erected on the said premises, viz.:

Heat	$	per month
Electric Current	$	per month
Water	$	per month

PROVIDED that the Lessor shall not be liable for any loss or damage which may be sustained or suffered by the Lessee by reason of the failure of the Lessor to supply heat, electric current or water for the said building, and whether or not such loss or damage be caused by or in any way results from the negligence of the Lessor, its servants or agents, or otherwise howsoever.

AND TO pay all license fees, taxes, rates, duties and assessments whatsoever which may become due or payable by reason of, or in respect of, or in any way arising out of the use of the said premises by the Lessee, including all business taxes;

AND to pay and indemnify and save harmless the Lessor from and against all license fees, taxes, rates, duties and assessments whatsoever (including taxes assessed or charged or levied for local improvements and for business taxes) now assessed or charged against or levied upon or which

R.W. 31
File No. LV 4952

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY COMPANY

PEDESTRIAN
~~PRIVATE~~ CROSSING (With Watchman)

THIS INDENTURE made the First day of April
One thousand nine hundred and fifty-seven;

BETWEEN

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY COMPANY,
hereinafter called the "RAILWAY COMPANY"

OF THE FIRST PART;

AND KALEDEN COMMUNITY CENTRE ASSOCIATION, of Kaleden, in the Province of British Columbia,

hereinafter called the "PARTY OF THE SECOND PART"

OF THE SECOND PART;

APPROVED
Supt.
R/W Lease Agent
District Engineer
General Supt.
APPROVED AS TO FORM
G.L.H.
ASSISTANT SOLICITOR

WHEREAS the Party of the Second Part has requested the Railway Company to permit the Party of the Second Part to construct and use a pedestrian crossing over the Railway Company's right of way at or near Mileage 7.4 Osoyoos Subdivision of the Railway Company, at the point indicated in red and as specified on the plan attached hereto, for the purpose of providing access for pedestrians from Main Avenue to a public beach park area.

AND WHEREAS the Railway Company has consented to the construction and use of such crossing upon the terms and conditions hereinafter contained:

NOW THEREFORE this agreement witnesseth that the parties hereto have agreed as follows:

1. The Railway Company hereby grants to the Party of the Second Part permission to construct and use a pedestrian crossing over the Railway Company's right of way at the point indicated in red and as specified on the said plan attached hereto, suitable for the aforementioned purpose. The said crossing shall be constructed, ~~graded and planked~~ to the satisfaction of the District Engineer of the Railway Company, and the Party of the Second Part shall not use the said crossing until the approval of the said District Engineer has been first had and obtained. The cost and expense of the said crossing and of any work incidental thereto shall be borne by the Party of the Second Part.

IT IS UNDERSTOOD AND AGREED between the Parties hereto that there is reserved unto the Railway Company the right to require the Party of the Second Part to convert the said pedestrian crossing to an overhead pedestrian crossing at any time should the Railway Company so desire, the cost and expense of the said conversion to be borne by the Party of the Second Part.

In 1981, that tiny section at the northern edge of our present beach was purchased from Marathon Realty. The following year, the Hotel property was purchased and designated park, but this still provided little sandy beach.

KMA 2018.001.P111 Ron King Collection

The Packinghouse in its final days, prior to demolition.

When it was determined that the Packinghouse had outlived its usefulness, the Oliver Co-operative Growers, who had taken over ownership, prepared to put it on the market. On November 14, 1985, the RDOS called a meeting to present a plan by which the community would buy a small portion of the land adjoining the tiny beach area purchased from Marathon Realty four years earlier. The much larger remainder would be sold to a developer who had shown interest in erecting an apartment block on the attractive lakeside location. The RDOS got the opportunity to call the shots due to the required zoning change and so had stepped in to see that Kaleden's interests were protected. For a time, it seemed the proposal would be accepted but, before a vote could be called, Ted Swales introduced a motion that Kaleden should see if we could raise the funds to purchase the entire property, demolish the packing house and develop a park.

This motion passed and a whirlwind campaign was launched to convince taxpayers of the community that this project, though costly, was essential. It was a whirlwind effort since a vote to authorize the borrowing of up to $220,000 would be held in conjunction with the RDOS election just one month later on December 14. Two committees already were in place: a parks committee, headed by Ted Gane, and a recreation committee that essentially looked after the Hall and recreation, headed by local postmistress, Noreen Williams. To these committees, anyone interested was added and a house-by-house campaign entered to sell the concept that the benefits of a park fully justified the tax increase that would be experienced. Before the campaign could get under way, an outline had to be drawn up showing exactly the costs and presenting the concept of what facilities would be provided. In retrospect, the fact sheet that each canvasser carried turned

out to be a very close forecast of the facilities that exist today. Despite a small group that opposed the purchase, the debenture vote passed in December, with 74 percent in favour.

The community saying goodbye to the Packinghouse.

There was little time for rejoicing, however, as two developments threatened to scuttle the efforts. The major problem surfaced when tenders for demolition were received. It had been taken for granted that the salvaged materials would be valuable enough to cover the costs of demolishing the building and cleaning up the site. Indeed, a couple of the tenders met those criteria, but they were from small companies who could not provide a performance bond. As a contrast, the highest bid by an established company demanded a payment of $76,850 in addition to all the salvaged material. This was finally resolved by direct negotiation with Triple N Construction, a Penticton firm, pointing out the amazing quality of the lumber available in the 1930s, with four by twelve beams spanning as much as thirty feet, being completely knot free. It ended costing the committee $3,000 in addition to salvaged material, but that was manageable. The second problem involved taxation. As a park, it was not subject to taxation, and it had been purchased in December of 1985. However, because of provincial regulations and what was termed the “quashing period,” the sale was not finalized until the spring of 1986, which gave the taxation department time to submit a bill for nearly $16,000. This problem was finally overcome with the help of MLAs Ivan Messmer and Jim Hewitt, but not until May 7, 1987.

Clem Battey, longest serving Manager.
Bill King, longest serving President.
Jud Findlay, longest serving Employee.

In 1986, as demolition began, these three "Oldtimers" were on hand to give the Packinghouse an affectionate handoff.

Meanwhile, the planning and financial negotiations had proceeded. In 1986, a more permanent committee of Kal Rec was set up to be responsible for park development. The members were: Dan Nicholson - Chairman, Ted Gane - Vice Chairman, Alan Tucker - Secretary, Barbara Gane - Treasurer, Jeanne Lamb, Helen King, Reg Murfitt, Sue Austin, Ian Cox, Joy Whitley, and Cay Swales, with Ron King- Chairman of Kal Rec and Noreen Williams - Vice Chairman - also attending. It was arranged that the actual handling of money, property deeds and transactions was through RDOS, with Vanessa Sutton providing invaluable support. The debenture provided a basic sum of $210,000 and the sale of eight town lots owned by the Packinghouse directly across Ponderosa Avenue would eventually reduce our costs by about $80,000. Local fund-raising events gave further help, so that the temporary 10 percent mortgage for $160,000 which we had required, was soon paid off. To cover development costs, we applied to the B.C. government for a $102,000 Lottery Fund grant and due to poor penmanship by some government staffer we were approved for $107,000. Of course, they eventually discovered their mistake and wanted the $5,000 back but Vanessa said, "Sorry, it's all spent."

The demolition of the Packinghouse began in March of 1986

Now the grant came with the condition that local contributions must account for a sum twice the amount of the grant. The debenture, volunteer labour, donated material, and machine time all counted as part of the local contribution and, attesting to the fact that one man's pain is another man's gain, we benefited from the fact that 1987 was a very slow year for construction and road building. While thousands of hours of volunteer labour were duly recorded, it was the donated hours of trucks and heavy equipment that made this requirement so easy to meet, as an acre of cement floor was torn up and hauled away to make way for tennis courts and grass. Arnold Reum, Marvin Hayter, George Brent, and Ed Courtney gave generously and made quick work of a heavy task.

One construction job that was labour intensive was the building of the change rooms. John Roberts, a local architect, donated his time in providing plans. Elmer Marchant, aged sixty-eight, was in charge of construction, guiding his crew of "young fellows": Ron King – 72, Norman Ashe & George Robertson – each seventy-one and Jim Robertson – a mere stripling at 69. Elmer used to boast that the crew had 350 years of experience.

Another major project took place that summer. After hours of research and planning, construction of the tennis courts was completed in late 1987, with many hours of volunteer labour involved.

In 1988, the projects began again, and many others gave hours of time, rolling out sod for the lawns, planting trees, weeding, preparing flower beds, building fences, or shoveling sand on the beach. Two people who deserve mention by name for participation during the first years, would include Barbra Paterson, who did the detailed layout of all the garden areas and Jean Lamb, who was our RDOS liaison.

During the early years, volunteers covered almost every labour need, with work parties generating community participation, but there was one important exception. The B.C. government introduced a summer employment program, under which they subsidized the wages of students engaged in community projects. For a period of some seven years, until the job description was changed, we had one local youth (male or female) keeping the park in shape during the summer holidays. Their work included such mundane tasks as weeding, cleaning, and mowing but they also supervised children's activities and were given the opportunity to be assistant instructors in the sailing classes which were held each summer during those same years. The young people who served in that position proved to be great role models.

Over the intervening years, improvements have been made. Dan Finlayson installed work-saving automatic sprinklers in 1992 and has spent countless hours assuring that they are operating efficiently. Twice a single individual has taken on the responsibility of installing the children's playground. In the 1980s, it was Alan Tucker who set up the original equipment and just in the last few years Doug Robinson completely modernized and enlarged this much used facet of our park. As recently as 2008, a major addition was constructed in the form of a covered picnic area (gazebo), plus a new sidewalk was installed and a number of new picnic tables have been added.

In 2009, Kaleden's Centennial year, the "Trees for Tomorrow" grant made it possible for addition of many trees and shrubs to enhance both the beach and tennis court area and around the old hotel site. Today the park stands, not only as a tribute to the men and women who pioneered in this community, but to the enterprise of its citizens over the century.

Improvements to the park by RDOS in more recent years:

- 2009- Irrigation at the Park and Hotel sites upgraded.
- 2010- Tennis court lights were added.
- 2016 – The accessible washroom renovation was completed for $9,000 and this also included lighting in the washrooms.
- 2016/2017 – Park planning and base survey work for Pioneer Hotel and Public lands in between - $8,000.
- 2018 to 2020 - The parking lot, access, and boat launch upgrade - $645,000.
- 2022 – The septic system was replaced - $66,000.
- 2023/2024 - The south end of the park pathways, landscaping, and irrigation - $116,000.
- 2024 – South Beach enhancements - $60,000.
- ~~2025- The Tennis court project is underway with a budget of $302,000.~~
- 2025 – The tennis court was re-developed as a multi-racket court - $329,000.00

Through the Kaleden Community Association (KCA) and others, we have had park furniture, bike repair stand, water fountains, and a few electrical projects (lighting at ~~multiuse~~ multi-racket court, Gazebo electrical) added to the park as well.

There are many pictures of the building of the washrooms, tennis court, irrigation, and planting that the museum unfortunately does not have. If you happen to have any of these pictures, the museum would love to have them.

The half built washrooms, in June, 1987.

M.G. February 2026