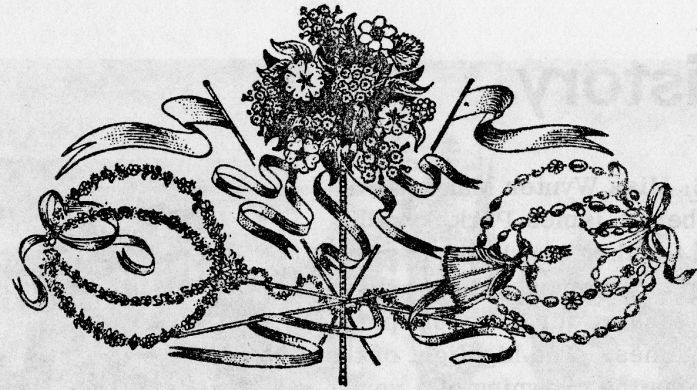


MAY DAY MEMORIES

PORT COQUITLAM, B.C.





MAY DAY MEMORIES

May-Poles in the sunshine,
And little, lovely Queens;
Hot dogs and ice cream,
Races and a baseball game --
Sometimes it rained
On a small bedraggled parade.
But always there was laughter,
Always there was fun,
And at the end of each May Day
Another memory was tucked away.

Compiled by Edith Chambers
from the files of
The Coquitlam Women's Institute

Port Coquitlam
1976

History

1916: Miss Wynter Maxwell, a teacher at James Park School, used the theme of "May Day" to bring together parents, students and teachers for a day of sports and games. The highlight of the day was the crowning of a young queen.



1923: Port Coquitlam now had two schools; Central and James Park. Mrs. T. Routley organized all of the children for what is now considered as the first official May Day.

1925: As President of the Women's Institute, Mrs. Routley arranged for this group to sponsor the new yearly event as one of their projects. Through the many years of its growth the W. I. has been responsible for the traditions that make this day a special event.

1962: Due to the city's rapid growth, one organization could no longer successfully co-ordinate this event. To carry on the tradition of May Day, volunteers from local service clubs and organizations joined with the W. I. and formed a May Day Committee.

1973: Once again, the growth of this event had become a problem and the city hired Mr. Lee Kallen as a co-ordinator. Volunteers still provide the much needed assistance to successfully stage this annual event.



Queen Marjorie Killam, 1919



Queen Edna Keith, 1921



Queen Helen Berry, 1925



The Royal Party, 1925



Mayor R. Galer and May Queens from 1925 - 1932



Queen Margaret Gardner and Attendants 1937



Queen Blanche Cole and Royal Party 1940



Queen Marjorie Edward 1952

TO BETTY, QUEEN O' MAY

May all your days be as today,
 Sweet Betty, Queen of May;
 Your path between with flowers sweet,
 No thorn to pierce your dainty feet;
 May all your brightest dreams come true,
 No tempest cloud your sky of blue;
 May love beside you ever stay,
 And bless you - Queen o' May.

There's blossom on the apply tree,
 Dear Betty, Queen o' May,
 The promise of sweet fruit to be,
 That is like you, full fair to see;
 So live that when life's blossoms fall,
 Time finds you, what is best of all,
 Still filled with sweet simplicity
 At heart the Queen o' May.

A poem written by Justin Wilson to honour
 1929 Queen Betty Hunter.



MAY QUEEN MANDY

cordially invites you
 to a banquet in her honour

5:30 p.m., Saturday, May 31, 1975

Mabbett Room, Port Recreation Center

2150 Wilson Avenue, Port Coquitlam, B.C.

R.S.V.P.
 941-3522
 May Day Office

A Contemporary Invitation to the Traditional Banquet

THE PARADE

During the early years, a tour of decorated cars carrying the Royal Parties, wound its way through the grounds of Essondale (Riverview) and thence to the Aggie Hall park.

Gradually, the addition of floats, decorated bikes, doll carriages, wagons and even pets gave the parade a gala appearance.

Minnekhada Farms and Colony Farm always stole the show with their prize winning horses. Merchants vied with each other. The fire department added a touch of humour and Scouts, Cubs, Guides and Brownies turned out in full force.

At first, one band sufficed; sometimes it was the city band while other years it was a pipe band from Port Moody or Haney. A slow-moving train on the Shaughnessy crossing always delayed the parade and gave the marshall ten more grey hairs.

Hours of fun-filled labour and thousands of paper flowers turned the city work truck into a Royal Carriage. Admittedly, sometimes the evening dew or the odd shower played havoc with the paper flowers.

Today the parade is much longer. There are more bands, floats, cars and people but the float that carries the May Queen is still the center of attraction.

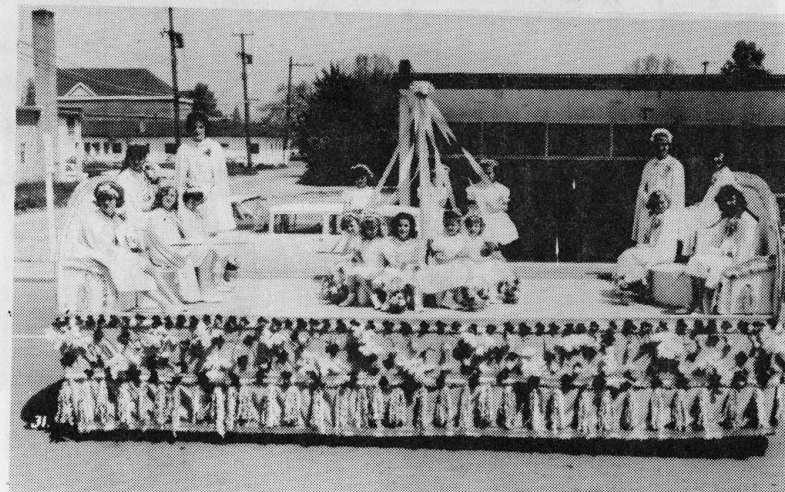


1946



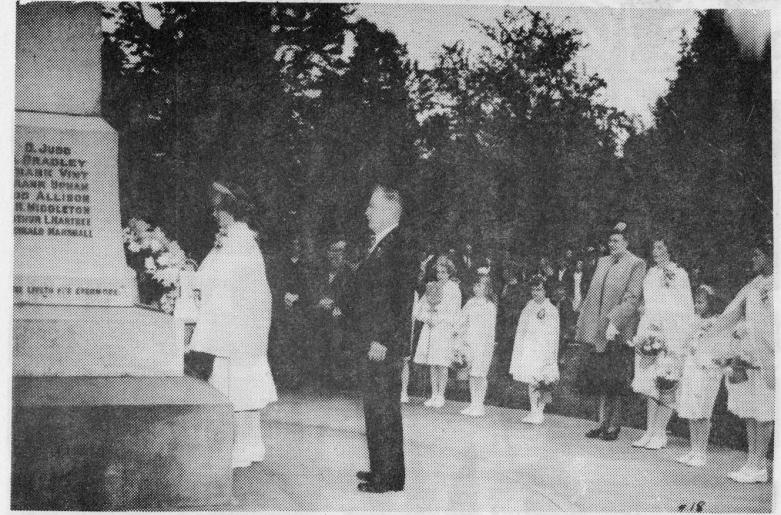
1955

Home handicrafts made up private floats and Royal Carriages in the earlier years. Below, 1964

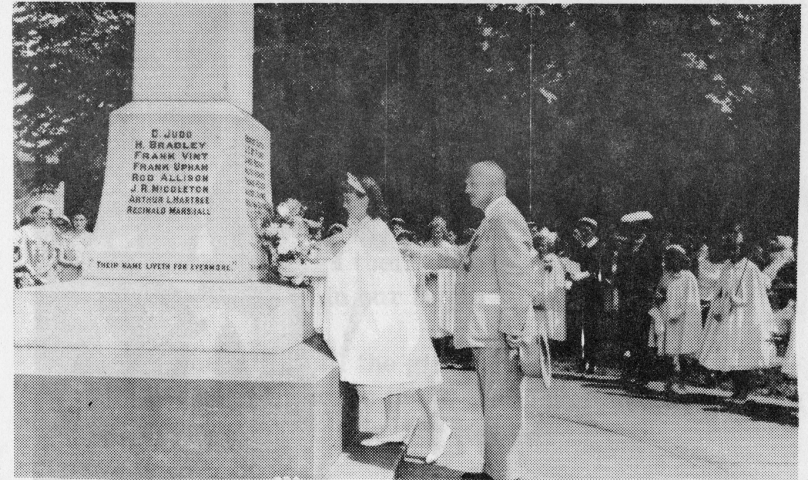




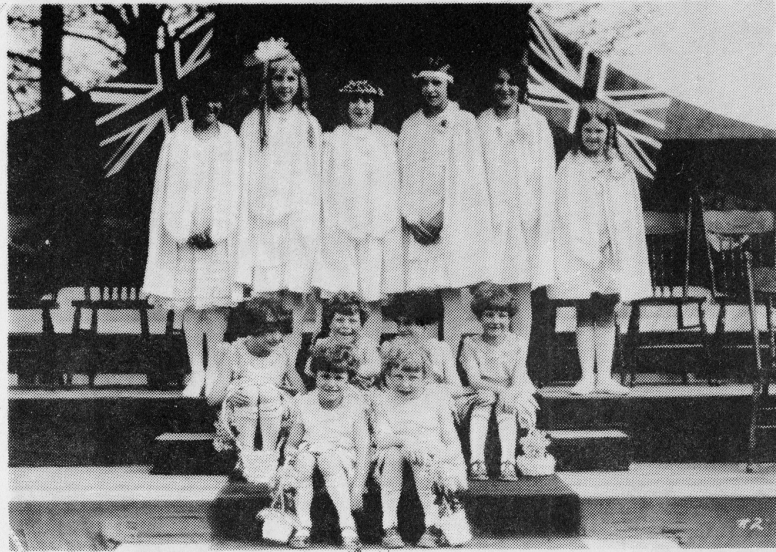
Cars, bikes, marching groups, and even Dandelion, the donkey have been welcome parade members. Photo court courtesy A. A. Edwardson



Mayor Charles Davies with Queen Karen McLennan, 1950



Queen Ruth Langley with Mayor John Oughton, 1956



Queen Betty Hunter, 1929



The Grand March with Queen Lori Jacobson and Mayor Bruce Scott

A MAY QUEEN'S SPEECH

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, GIRLS AND BOYS OF THE CITY OF PORT COQUITLAM!

The past year has been one of sadness and joy. Our beloved King and Monarch, George the Sixth, has died. But new hope and joy has been given to us by his daughter Elizabeth the Second, Queen of Canada. The queen has set for us a noble example. Her Majesty has shown her devotion to family life and a selfless duty towards her realm. May we follow in her footsteps by showing our love towards our family and by doing our duty for our community.

To be chosen for your Queen of the May for 1952 is indeed a great honour. I trust that I may serve you, my subjects, throughout the coming year as faithfully as did my predecessor, Queen Jean.

May time is a day of great rejoicing, for young and old alike. We must be happy. I feel that because of all the hard work that has gone into the preparation of this our twenty-eighth May Day, it will be one of the most remembered occasions in our city's history.

But what has made it so? The key to its success has been your co-operation and participation. Boys and girls, men and women have given of their talents and their time. Through their efforts, this day will be made one of the greatest in our lives.

On behalf of all the girls and boys of our city I would especially like to thank the ladies of the Women's Institute for making this day possible.

NOW I COMMAND THAT YOU START WITH YOUR GAMES AND YOUR DANCING.

Why Do We Like May Day

OUR own celebration of traditional May Day has not been observed this year, will not be observed until next Friday, but the general feeling prevailing us all is that this ceremony will top those of recent years.

Judging from New Westminster's gala day when 25,000 persons attended with an enthusiasm outdoing what is normally the greatest celebration in the lower mainland, we are perhaps only in line for a repetition in a smaller way; such a spirit may be infectious.

We are proud that our decorated car, carrying our Queen, Queen-elect and royal party, was named over the air. Indeed, of eleven such entourages, ours was the only one claiming special comment.

"Here comes Port Coquitlam's . . . a beautiful flower-decked car" said the announcer when he singled out Mayor Davies' car where our small and lovely May Queen representatives were seated with Women's Institute President, Mrs. M. J. Baumgartner.

At home every listener felt involuntary pride. And most especially those that are aware of the hours spent by the W.I. Committee in preparing the garlands, creating designs

This year two new buildings—not in use this time last year—are contributing to the overall success of celebrations set for next Friday. The Viscount Alexander cafeteria will provide the lovely setting

for the banquet; the auditorium for the lancers and children's dance to follow. And nigh at hand, with the wide floor waiting to admit throngs of May dancers, the Port Coladium is offered freely to the Women's Institute for the public dance later.

Add to these factors the personalities behind all the May Day plans, the individual women who work because they love their home city and their home folks who year after year sponsor this event with no backward glance to any discouraging feature of the past.

It might be, by their attitude, that there never was any but a fine parade to go down our streets. It would seem that the work involved in a thousand ways is a mere whim of the word. All is accomplished by a comparatively few women who make up the Women's Institute here.

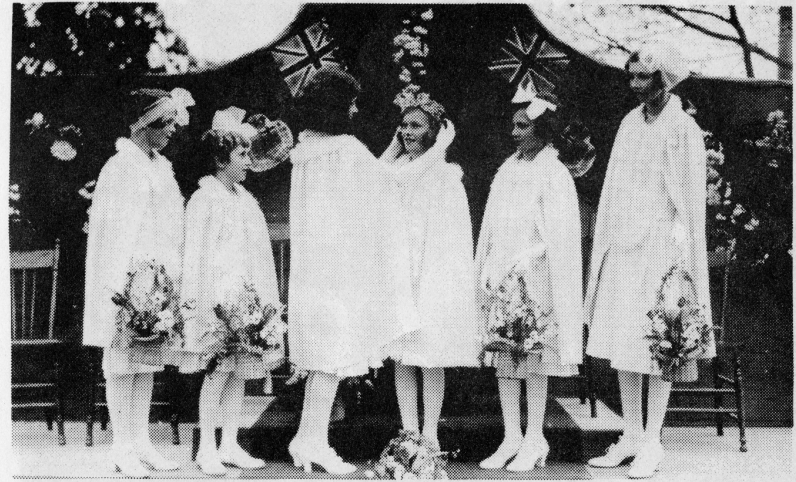
They do their share.

Shall we do ours?

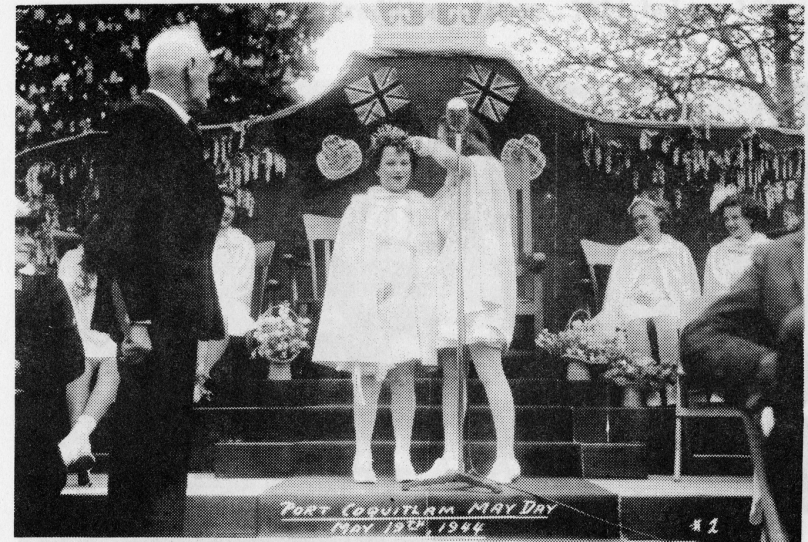
Are we going to let this new stir of interest enlarge within us so that, as far as possible, we will assist in putting May Day across? Have you a bike, and a boy or girl to ride it? Can you not decorate your car with full play of creative art you were not aware of? Is there anything you can do . . . and dare not do it?

"There is a different feeling this year—a good one," remarked one W.I. lady last week. Let's prove she is not wrong.

The Coquitlam Herald, 1952



Queen Evelyn Hemphill crown Queen-elect Jean Richmond in 1933.



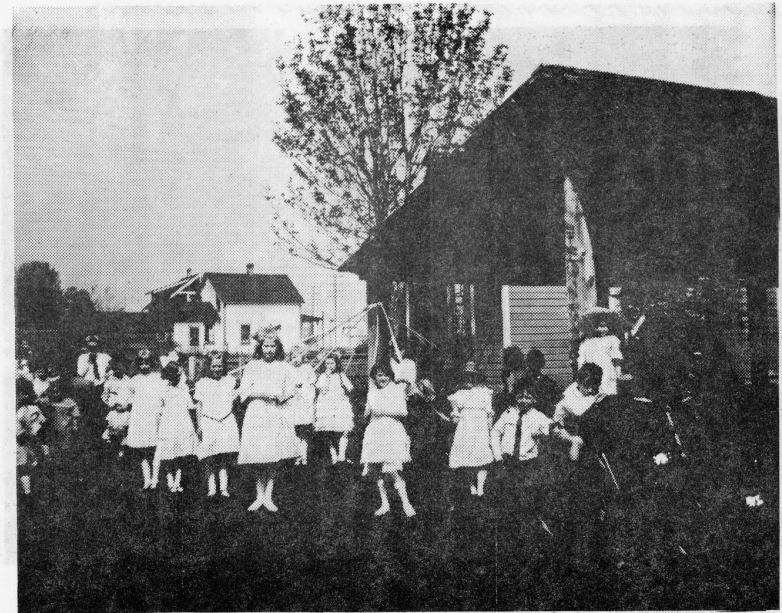
Donna Hartwig receives her crown from retiring Queen Shirley Brewer in 1944



Mayor R. Galer escorts Queen Mary Morris, 1932



Queen April Wingrove and Mayor Robert Hope, 1959

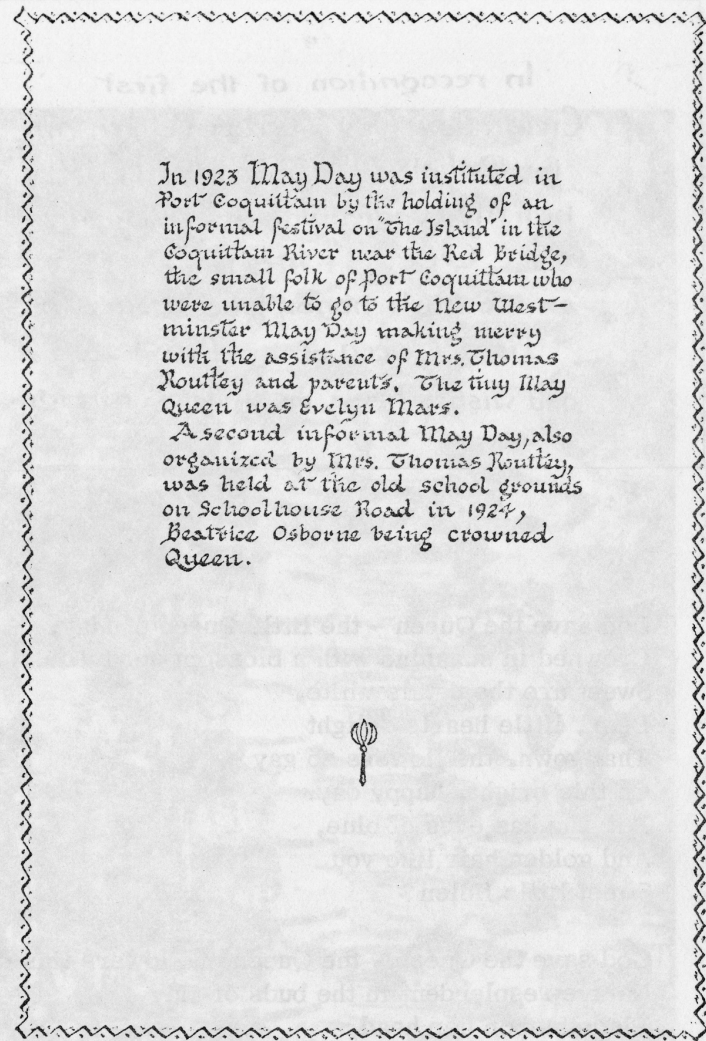
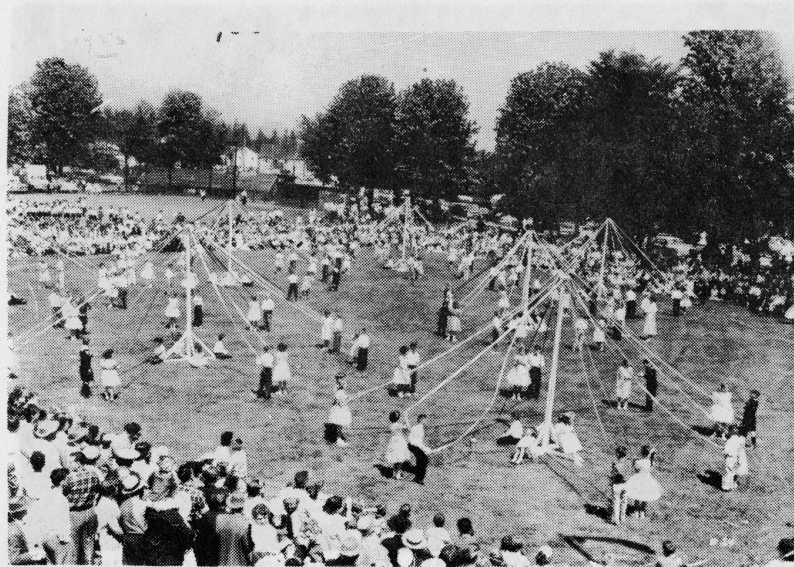


Whether on school grounds or fair grounds, the May Pole Dance remains a firm tradition. Above, 1924, below, 1932





The number of dancers grew with increased population. Above, 1944; below the traditional softball game can be seen in the background. 1958.



In 1923 May Day was instituted in Port Coquitlam by the holding of an informal festival on 'The Island' in the Coquitlam River near the Red Bridge, the small folk of Port Coquitlam who were unable to go to the New Westminster May Day making merry with the assistance of Mrs. Thomas Routley and parents. The tiny May Queen was Evelyn Mars.

A second informal May Day, also organized by Mrs. Thomas Routley, was held at the old school grounds on Schoolhouse Road in 1924, Beatrice Osborne being crowned Queen.



This sample page from the Official May Queens' Book was handinked by Miss Ada Irvin

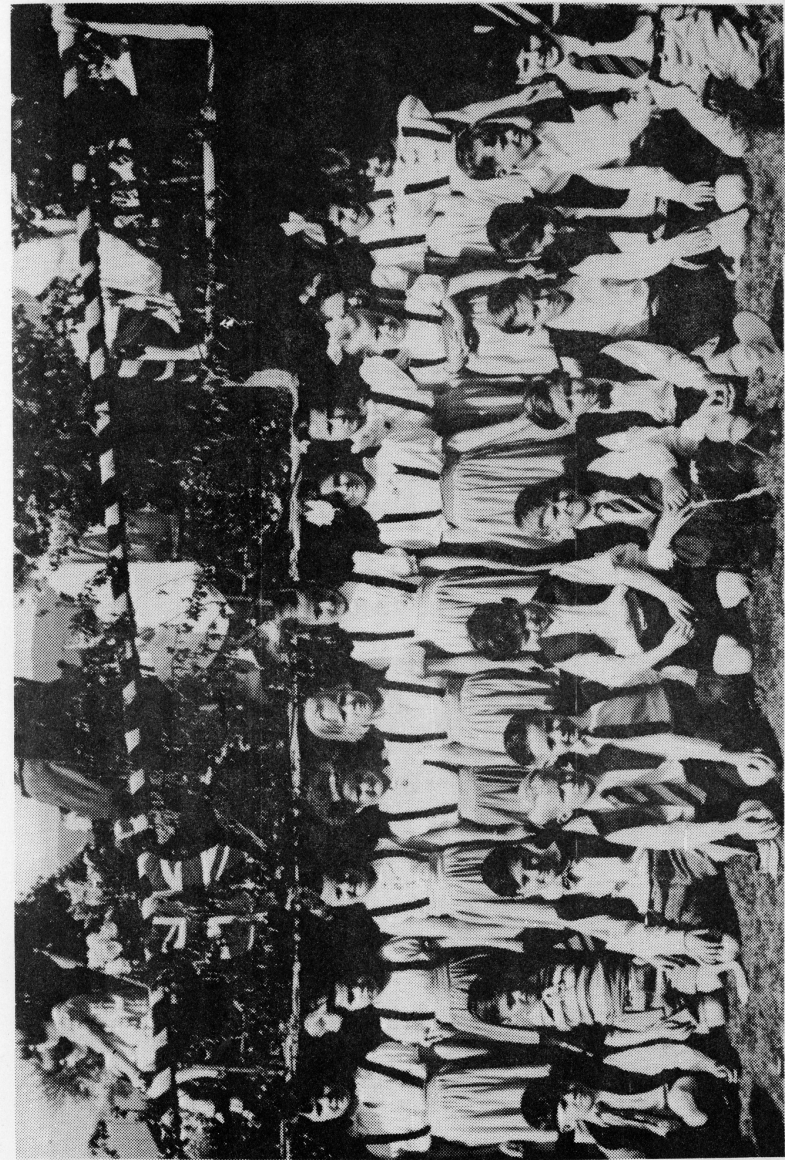
a poem to Helen Berry by poet Justin Wilson

In recognition of the first
Civic May Day of Port Coquitlam
the Donald McLean Chapter I.O.O.F.
heartily congratulates Her Majesty
Queen Helen
on the high honor she bears as
First Queen of the May
and wishes her a most halcyon reign.

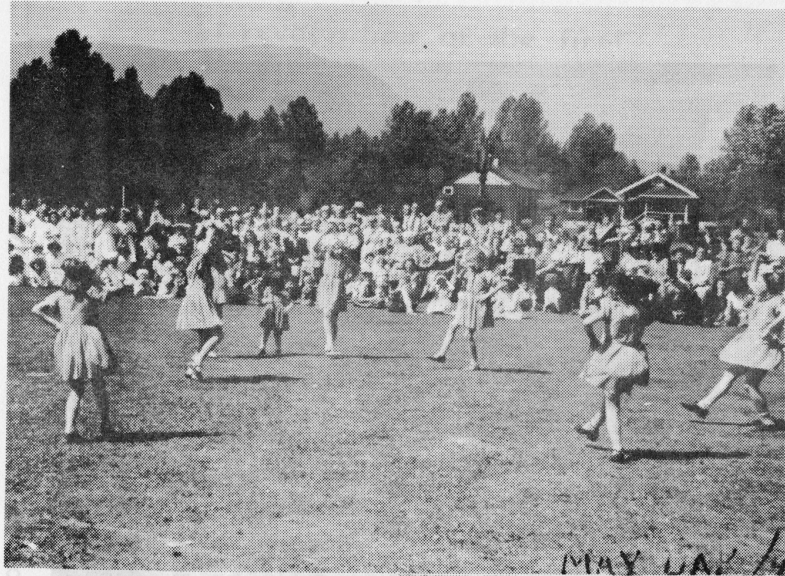
God save the Queen - the little Queen of May,
Crowned in sunshine with a blossom spray!
Sweet are the petals white,
Dear, little hearts delight
That gown, the flowers so gay
On this bright, happy day.
But who has eyes of blue,
And golden hair like you,
Sweet little Helen?

God save the Queen - the Queen of Flowers this day.
Nature resplendent in the buds of May
Placeth upon her head,
Gathered where angels tread,
Flowers of a fragrance rare
Which but a child can wear.
Flowers that for God alone
Spring up before His Throne,
Crown thee, sweet Helen.

a poem to Helen Berry by poet Justin Wilson



Drills performed by school children in honour of the Queen and the festive day, 1941.



Special costumes, dances, and drills were some of the school contributions. Above, 1946; below, 1941.



a poem to Helen Berry by poet Justin Wilson



Everyone joined in the folk dances and baseball game, 1939

COME ONE — COME ALL

PORT COQUITLAM

49th
ANNUAL

MAY DAY CELEBRATIONS

1971

May Day's Centennial Salute

SATURDAY MAY 29

PARADE STARTS 12:30 P.M.

Central & Shaughnessy

CROWNING OF QUEEN CATHY

(McLean Park)

AFTERNOON PROGRAM

- ★ West Coast Amusements (Rides) ★ Bingo
- ★ Barbecues ★ May Pole Dancers
- ★ Afternoon Tea ★ Food Concessions



ROYAL LANCERS - Evening Children's Dance

TEEN DANCE . . 10:00 o'clock

75c Single — \$1.00 per couple

Poco High

ADULT MAY DAY COSTUME BALL

Port Recreation Center

Dancing 9:00 to 1:00

\$1.00 per person

PRIZES — TICKET DRAW

SUNDAY, MAY 30

GIANT

GYMKHANA

BEGINS

10 a.m.



WEST COAST AMUSEMENTS (Rides)

FOOD CONCESSIONS

PARADE ENTRY FORMS AVAILABLE AT CITY HALL

COME ONE — COME ALL

The Coquitlam Herald, 1953

For Long Time Folks Have Danced the Lancers -- Born in Scottish Highlands

It takes a quick step and a suitable partner for each of the merry heart to make the most of the five girls' making up the Royal Lancers. It takes a showing or two, then the music to pull you into it for a dance come from the heathered Highlands that figuratively entices every watcher into the set, through the five changes, keeps them breathless up to the last step and note.

So says Bill Marshall Sr., who learned to dance the Lancers here in Port Coquitlam and has for 15 years been teaching school kids how to do what he has enjoyed for 50 years. "Before that," he said, "some of us men danced it every year." He named several of the town's leading citizens who, only a decade and a half ago stepped aside and told growing-up lads to find a partner and dance.

"Wasn't as hard to get the boys in as some thought," remarked this big man who, every year finds a

partner for each of the five girls' making up the Royal Party, which group is augmented by the reigning May Queen and her two maids of honor.

Regularly every week these eight lads and lasses congregate in the Agricultural Hall. Mr. Marshall says he "pushed them through it a couple of times" and the music does the rest. Easy, he says. Easy as anything.

But teaching the youngsters takes him back. Back to the first years when Port Coquitlam would have been hard to find on any map; to the days when folks known now as old-timers were young and their parents were here and, as often as could be arranged, they got together for long evenings at somebody's house.

There was nothing fancy to those parties, but they are mighty hard to forget, and worth remembering.

It was at those parties, Mr. Marshall recalled, that he learned to dance the Lancers. "I would have been mighty hard to stay off the floor with Bill David—still up on David Road—and Jake Rowland, and Jimmie Quiltie making music with wonderful freedom."

The same tunes are used yet. Some of them are common, but some go by the tune and no name. Once a letter was sent to Snowden's in Calgary, where every old-time record comes over the air, to enquire the name. "They played the tune—but we still didn't get the name."

It will soon be finished for another year. Next Friday in the Viscount Alexander auditorium sixteen dancers will hit through the Lancers before rows of spectators.

At the piano? Why, none other than Bessie David McLaren.

MAY DAY AND THE WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

When the idea of a Port Coquitlam May Day was first planned, the talents of every member was utilized. Even though it was a small affair as compared with our neighbour, New Westminster, still the care and precision was a large project.

For the parade many hands made decorations and sewed and pinned a million flowers; for the may poles, miles of ribbons were necessary. The hot dog stands as well as ice cream and soft drinks had to be taken care of. As a note of interest, for many years the Elks gave to each child an ice cream cone. They also ran the races and it has to be told every child got a prize; no tears for May Day!

The Royal stand, itself under the direction of Mr. J. Renton, became a flowered court. The crew at Colony Farm used to provide not only flowers but the lumber as well. However, a depression made that lumber quite valuable and some years before they could remove it, that precious lumber was already gone. Then the old band stand from across the grounds was placed on the south-east corner and decorated. This was around 1946.

The afternoon tea for the Royal Party was first held upstairs in the Aggie Hall. The tables were most tastefully decorated and favors for years were made by Mrs. Sweeney, Senior, Mrs. J. Renton, and Miss J. Kilmer. Each president became the official hostess of the day, and every mayor the official host.

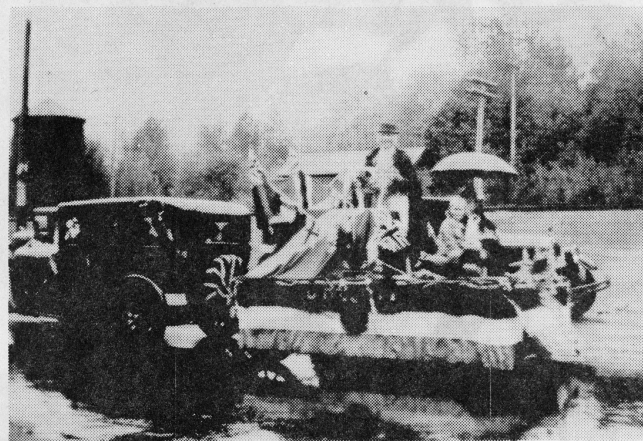
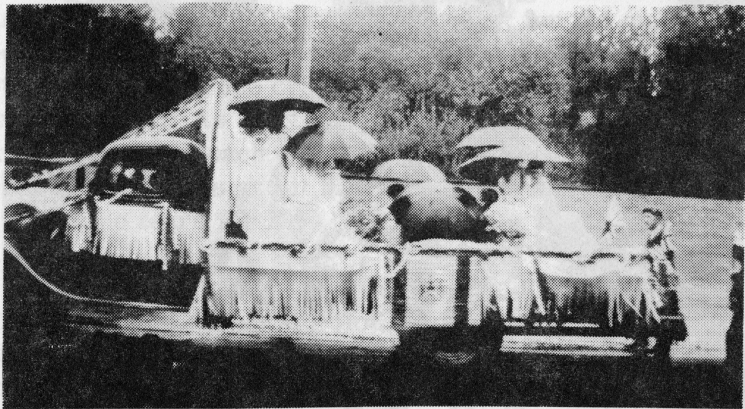
Members baked and served the Royal Banquet and washed dishes. It was only through the dedicated efforts of these women that the spirit of May Day was kept alive. What started out as a family picnic has become a city tradition.



An upstairs room in the former Aggie Hall was graciously set for the Royal Party afternoon tea by the Womens' Institute. 1925. Inset, Mrs. T. Routley.

MAY DAY AND THE WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Sometimes it rained. Parade participants made the best of it in these photos from 1939.





Afternoon tea continues with the Womens' Institute's help. Today, it is held in the Port Recreation Centre. This is the 1972 Royal Party. Photo A. A. Edwardson

1938

In 1938 the Women's Institute added two further positions of honor—Miss Canada and Record Bearer. One candidate was elected in each of the local schools—Central, James Park, Victoria Drive and Essondale—and these girls were assigned by ballot to the various positions, as their names appear below.

May Queen
Pauline Talbot

Maid of Honor
Pauline Talbot

Maid of Honor
Blanche Thompson

Miss Canada
Lawson

Record Bearer
Elise Manning

Every member of the Royal Party signs this official register. An artist designs a special page for each year.

MAY QUEENS 1916 - 1976

The Port Recreation Centre. This is the 1972 Royal Party. Photo A. A. Edvardson

| | | | |
|------|------------------|------|-----------------|
| 1916 | Alice Holtby | 1946 | Jean Davison |
| 1917 | Annie Stewart | 1947 | Carol Ogilvie |
| 1918 | Evelyn Hull | 1948 | Sheila Wald |
| 1919 | Marjorie Killam | 1949 | Noreen Marshall |
| 1920 | Hazel Stewart | 1950 | Karen McLennan |
| 1921 | Edna Keith | 1951 | Jean Fletcher |
| 1922 | Norma Mouldey | 1952 | Marjorie Edward |
| 1923 | Evelyn Mars | 1953 | Glenda Rae |
| 1924 | Bea Osborne | 1954 | Lois Bloomfield |
| 1925 | Helen Berry | 1955 | Sylvia Luschnat |
| 1926 | Lucy Mabbett | 1956 | Ruth Langley |
| 1927 | Amy Colodin | 1957 | Judy Kiltbau |
| 1928 | Betty Hunter | 1958 | April Wingrove |
| 1929 | Victorine Young | 1959 | Marlene Cave |
| 1930 | Amelia Walters | 1960 | June Levis |
| 1931 | Mary Morris | 1961 | Beverly Cutrell |
| 1932 | Evelyn Hemphill | 1962 | Louise Sweeney |
| 1933 | Jean Richmond | 1963 | Anita Luschnat |
| 1934 | Doris Cunningham | 1964 | Dawne Driemel |
| 1935 | Norma Lawson | 1965 | Debbie Rieu |
| 1936 | Phyllis Chilcott | 1966 | Debbie Ponsart |
| 1937 | Margaret Gardner | 1967 | Linda Ramsay |
| 1938 | Pauline Talbot | 1968 | Joan Stamhuis |
| 1939 | Helen Gordon | 1969 | Toni Hart |
| 1940 | Blanche Cole | 1970 | Joyce Butler |
| 1941 | Ida Watt | 1971 | Cathie Goddard |
| 1942 | Nancy Ogilvie | 1972 | Lori Jacobson |
| 1943 | Shirley Brewer | 1973 | Chris Graham |
| 1944 | Donna Hartwig | 1974 | Diane Jansen |
| 1945 | Margaret Hall | 1975 | Mandy Cornall |
| | | 1976 | Corinne Morton |

