

Mack Laing Heritage Society Annual General Meeting June 11, 2016, Shakesides, Mack Laing Park

The AGM was called to order at 4 pm

President's Report:

It was another stormy year for the Society, with continued activity to save Baybrook house.

The Society received a BC Heritage Award in February for Education and Awareness, for its work to raise public awareness of the importance of history, and the heritage of Mack Laing himself. Several members of the Executive attended the gala in Vancouver at their own expense.

Baybrook house was demolished on August 5, 2015. Attention then switched to Shakesides, Mack Laing's last home. The house was saved from demolition at the 11th hour by the intervention of the Attorney General of BC.

In the fall of 2015, the Society began a concentrated program of invasive plant removal around Shakesides, with the support of the Town of Comox Parks Department. As a result of this work, the area around the house is seeing native species return. The group has also planted fawn lilies rescued from the Tsolum River area, where the new inland highway connector will be constructed.

The Society's website has proven an effective and popular tool for distributing information. It has had thousands of visitors over the past year, with between 50 and 100 visitors a day during peak periods. Over 60% of visitors were between the ages of 18 and 35.

The comments received while working around Shakesides, and from the online petition to save Shakesides, make it plain that there is considerable support for a natural history museum in the house.

The Society participated in the BC Nature Annual Convention in May. Author Dr Briony Penn was presented with the Mack Laing Award for her biography, *The Real Thing*, about Ian McTaggart-Cowan, a student of Mack Laing's.

The Society voted to have future AGM's held on or near the date of Mack Laing's birthday, February 6th, an important date recognized with a special party for two years. The most recent, also held behind Shakesides, attracted over 50 people and was considered a great success.

Election of Executive:

President: Kate Panayotoff

Vice President: Angela Burns

Secretary: Kris Neilson

Treasurer Monica Carew

Directors: Fred Newhouse, Loys Maingon

The AGM was adjourned at 4:30 pm