

P.O. Box 1494, Comox, BC, V9M 8A2  
Email: macklaingsociety@gmail.com  
Website: www.macklaingsociety.ca

*Winner of 2016 Heritage BC Award  
Education & Awareness*



## **Special News Release**

April 4, 2016

### **It's time to honour Mack Laing's Will**

The Town of Comox has failed in their stewardship of Shakesides House in Mack Laing Park, and in their administration of the Mack Laing Trust funds.

On March 17, 2016, Comox Council agreed to release documentation requested by the Mack Laing Nature House Advisory Committee, a body appointed by Council. The Mack Laing Heritage Society is making these documents public.

The document package may be viewed here, under "The Mack Laing Trust":

<http://macklaingsociety.ca/?p=361>

Both the house and the land were deeded to the Town by Mack Laing in 1973, with very clear conditions attached. The Trust should have been created on the death of Mack Laing in 1982.

Under the terms of his Will, the Town was gifted with an after-expense amount of \$45,000, for the creation and maintenance of a "natural history museum" in Shakesides house. Instead, the Trust funds were put into general revenue, accruing little interest.

The Town has not kept a proper accounting of rental income, nor properly administered the funds and property they were entrusted. Shakesides was to be used for "public enjoyment". Instead, it was rented to a succession of tenants over 30 years.

The Town failed to create the museum stipulated in Mack Laing's Will, when it was possible to do so, and did not commission a professional assessment of the house. Council decided not to proceed based on limited in-house advice.

Shakesides is still regarded as a structure worth preserving by local experts. It's time to right the wrong, honour Mack Laing's wishes, and utilize Shakesides as he intended and in accordance with his Will.