

## Correspondence regarding the value of Baybrook House



## TOWN OF COMOX

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

File No: 6800-01

March 10, 2015

Ms. Kate Panayotof, President  
Mack Laing Heritage Society  
PO Box 1494  
Comox BC V9M 8A2

Dear Ms. Panayotof:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Mack Laing Heritage Society for all of their work in researching the possibility of preserving Mack Laing's first home for the historical benefit of the community. On behalf of Council, I would like to say that I appreciate all of the effort that has gone into your work.

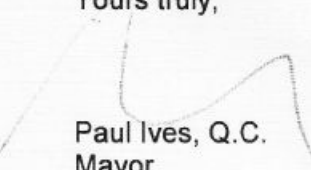
A staff report on the Society's Phase 2 Report was presented to Council's Committee of the Whole at its February 25, 2015 meeting (enclosed). The report advised that economic potential of the home restoration and management of the property appear to be optimistic, and that, over the long term, the ability of the proposal to be successful is questionable.

Please be advised that Council concurred with the report's recommendations and passed the following resolution at its Regular Meeting of March 4, 2015:

*That the Town confirms the existing plan to remove the remaining structures from the Baybrook property and the Mack Laing Park property as they are in poor condition and finalize the park use plan to return the property to a natural state for passive recreation use.*

Again, thank you for all of the work that the Society has put into this project. If you require anything further, please do not hesitate to contact Town staff or me at 339-2202.

Yours truly,

  
Paul Ives, Q.C.  
Mayor



June 23, 2015

Mayor Paul Ives and Council  
Town of Comox  
1809 Beaufort Ave  
Comox, BC V9M 1R9

Dear Mayor and Council:

Re: Baybrook

Heritage BC has been contacted a number of times by members of the Mack Laing Heritage Society and others who are concerned about the proposed demolition of the house "Baybrook" located in the Mack Laing Nature Park.

Constructed in 1922 by noted naturalist, author, and photographer Hamilton Mack Laing (1883-1982), and home to Mack Laing and his wife Ethel from 1923 to 1949, Baybrook is a significant heritage site for the province of British Columbia. The heritage values of Baybrook lie in its association with the life and work of Hamilton Mack Laing and its context within the natural surroundings of what is now Mack Laing Nature Park, a mecca for birdwatchers and constant inspiration for Mack Laing's work.

Because of Baybrook's rich heritage value, and value to the local community, province of British Columbia, and Canadians in general, we believe that Baybrook should be conserved for present and future generations. We encourage the Town of Comox to retain the Baybrook property and use the building in ways that will conserve the heritage values of this significant site while celebrating the important life and work of Mack Laing.

It is our understanding that Baybrook has been assessed by a qualified professional and deemed a candidate for heritage conservation and rehabilitation. Heritage BC would be happy to offer our assistance to the Town of Comox in this process, including advice, capacity building training, and assistance with conservation planning. The conservation of Baybrook would also be eligible for a potential grant through the Heritage Legacy Fund Heritage Conservation program administered by Heritage BC.

We write with concern for the future of the irreplaceable heritage of Baybrook and encourage the Town of Comox to consider alternatives to the demolition of this important heritage resource in your community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kathryn Molloy".

Kathryn Molloy, Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Janice Henry".

Janice Henry, Chair





*Patron: His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston  
C.C., C.M.M., C.O.M., C.D., Governor General of Canada*

*Président d'honneur : Son Excellence le très honorable David Johnston  
C.C., C.M.M., C.O.M., C.D., Gouverneur général du Canada*

July 31, 2015

Mayor Paul Ives and Council  
Town of Comox  
1809 Beaufort Avenue,  
Comox, BC V9M 1R9

**Re: Proposed demolition of Mack Laing House**

Your Worship and Members of Council,

As the national voice for the conservation of built heritage in Canada, the National Trust for Canada is following with interest the proposed demolition of the Mack Laing House known as “Baybrook” located in the Mack Laing Nature Park in Comox. Concern about the future of this important heritage site has been brought to our attention by Heritage BC, the Mack Laing Heritage Society of the Comox Valley, and others.

Baybrook was the home of esteemed naturalist, collector, author and educator Mack Laing (1883-1982) from the time of its construction in 1922 until 1949, representing his most active and prolific period of research and writing. The natural setting in Mack Laing Nature Park contributes to the heritage significance of Baybrook, which is so closely tied to this important Canadian conservationist.

Property assessments undertaken by both a professional structural engineer and architect have concluded that Baybrook can be carefully rehabilitated and adapted to a new public use. And the Mack Laing House Conservation Committee has submitted two reports that provide viable options for the future of the site and propose strategies for a cost-effective rehabilitation.

The National Trust urges the Town of Comox to reconsider its decision to demolish this important heritage property. We encourage you to recognize the heritage significance of Baybrook and to take advantage of Heritage BC's offer of assistance in conservation planning and capacity building training that will help ensure its retention and adaptive reuse for future generations.

Yours sincerely,



Natalie Bull  
Executive Director

cc. Hon. John Duncan, MP, Vancouver Island North and Minister of State and Chief Government Whip  
Hon. Peter Fassbender, MLA Surrey-Fleetwood and Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural  
Development  
Kathryn Molloy, Executive Director, Heritage BC  
Kate Panayotof, President, Mack Laing Heritage Society  
Dr. Loys Maingon, President, Comox Valley Naturalists Society



## TOWN OF COMOX

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

File No.: 6800-01/15-300

October 8, 2015

Loys Maingon (MA, PhD, MSc, RPBio)  
Aardscan Biological and Environmental Ltd.  
6069 Tsolum River Road  
Courtenay, BC  
V9J 1N9

Dear Loys Maingon:

Thank you for your email of June 25, 2015 regarding the Mack Laing Trust.

Please be advised that at their Regular Meeting of Council on October 7, 2015 Council received and filed your above letter.

Council passed a motion for staff to prepare a report with a draft Terms of Reference for a working group to investigate the potential of fulfilling the terms of Mack Laing's will.

Should you require further assistance please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours truly,

Paul Ives, Q.C.  
Mayor

RK/II

Mack Laing House Loys Maingon