

vhes



THE VICTORIA HUMAN EXCHANGE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Welcome to our world, a world of Friendship, where every meeting of persons can be an exchange of life's gifts - a Human Exchange

Edition 104

January - March 2015

**YOU are invited to join us for our 23rd Birthday Celebration
and Annual General Meeting
SATURDAY JUNE 13TH - 1.00pm to 3.00pm
at CHOWN PLACE HALL 3057 Harriet Road**

Thanks to the generosity of the Chown Place Fellowship

As long-time volunteer Board members retire because of age or illness, we hope to attract younger people who also belong to other groups that work towards the elimination of homelessness.

**If you are willing to stand, please give us your name by phoning
250-920-5056 (Victoria) 250-668-6008 (Nanaimo)**



The painting to the left is by talented Salt Spring Artist **Diana Dean** <http://dianadean.com/>

It makes a statement about the plight of so many families, such as the family described by Rev. Al Tysick in a recent post, where the Reverend asked:

"...with three children all under the age of 10...they ended up on the street when the father was laid off work; then his unemployment ran out; he and his wife looked for work every day but were forced to apply for welfare and wait and wait and wait—so they could not pay their rent and ended up on the street, sleeping in shelters at night. How can this happen in such a rich country as Canada?"

In the photo to the right, two VHES founders are pictured 23 years ago at an historic occasion. **Stephen Glanville**, centre, and **Ken Barnett**, RIP, wrote our Constitution and is seated in foreground.

A sample of the folk who enjoyed the BBQ at the memorial for **Larry Gatlin Baker** who had died from exposure under the Apple Tree /Johnson St Bridge.



See **Gulf Islands Gift Exchange** (newsletter insert)

Testimonial Letters

Thank you VHES for the opportunity to find hope again. Without the availability of the resources provided through VHES life would continue to be a struggle. Since moving in I have been able to clear my body of substances which negatively impacted my life. I have also been able to progress to the point of enrolling/registering as a student at Camosun College, classes begin January 6th! A renewed sense of worth and value has replaced the seething wax twine ball of confused emotion that once was. Again, I thank you. -Lee

Heartfelt appreciation to the Victoria Human Exchange Society for accepting me here in my time of greatest need. Coming from an abusive relationship of many years to the peace and safety of a VHES House has left me ever more grateful than words can express.

With severe arthritis in one hip, I arrived and was very fearful of what life had left to offer me. Within a couple of months from my arrival, I was diagnosed with medical issues that landed me in RJH only to realize that I have severe heart issues and over a series of doctor visits and tests have determined this is an ongoing issue I have no control over. It is very frightening and the other women in the house have been kind and helpful as I try to do my best to help out where I can, feeling very frail for a better part of the time. I am in the process of getting disability assistance but suffer also from social anxiety which makes it difficult some days to deal with the things in life that others find the norm.

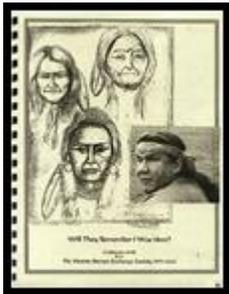
Had it not been for VHES I don't think I would be around today as I was looking at living in my car at 60 years old before finding a warm bed, warm hearts and patience while finding my way back to some form of health and happiness. I have been able to connect with my son recently, and for that am ever grateful. - L.M.

Thank you all so very much for the opportunity to stay here and help me to transition into society once again. Over the past years, I have been through a serious depression which culminated into checking myself into the hospital earlier this year. Knowing only too well how depression can turn into addiction, I have found a lot of help and the most gracious of aids to me was being able to live in this house. I had been living in the salvation army for the past 6 years, working fulltime and paying my own way, surrounded by drugs, booze, thievery, fights, and almost any kind of trouble you can imagine. *To leave that behind has been one of the most healing things that has happened to me in years.* The tranquility of this community and the peace I find within this house has been miraculous in my mind. - Richard

VHES has been a godsend for me. Having a safe and clean place to live, with other people in recovery as well, has enabled me to focus on my sobriety. As my previous living situation was extremely harsh and abusive, the future wasn't looking good. My life is back on track and moving forward now -- an enormous thank you to VHES!
- David

In Loving Memory

Our valued facilitator **Brian Smith** has been dealing with a death in his family. Brian's twin brother, **Allan Bruce Smith**, passed into Spirit on Jan. 10th after a lifetime of disability. His Memorial Service was on Feb. 4th. We assure Brian and his family of our warm, loving support and ongoing prayers.



Fifteen years ago, in the year 2000, we published a book of Poetry and Art of the earliest members of the Human Exchange, many of whom had passed into Spirit. We called that collection: "Will They Remember I was Here?"...this being the title

of the first poem in the booklet which was from the Steve Drake Song Book. And this poem was gifted to us by Burt Warner, our earliest maintenance person at the first Apple Seed Houses in 1992/93.

Would you like a copy of this booklet filled with the gifts of people like Freddie-Jo Morry, Stonechild, Sunshine, Barbara Schreck/Pandora and many others, some of whom are still with us? If so, let us know now or wait until our AGM in June, at which copies will be available in return for a donation.

Also in the year 2000, with the help of the Victoria Foundation, we set up the Frances Thibeau House in Sidney, which is now 15 years of age.

So now in 2015, with VHES at 23 years of age, we celebrate the 15th anniversary of both the Frances Thibeau House and the booklet "Will They Remember I was Here?"



Remembering Christmas Day

Diane Dillon; Dec. 24, 2014

When life was still ahead
And I was just a child
Getting ready for bed
On a night that seemed the longest of all
We children would wait for Santa to call
For a day where there was nothing but play
And treats to eat all day
Like dreams spun on a magic screen for all to see
The wonders of Christmas with friends and family
Stories told around a special tree
Creating memories for everyone
With songs and laughter
Until the day is done.

Special thanks to all those churches, businesses, and individuals who helped to make Christmas very special for those who live in our Houses at all the Branches.

THINGS WE WOULD BE GLAD TO RECEIVE

- Lamps of any kind
- Small tables
- Household items like:
 - laundry soap/dish soap
 - garbage bags
 - light bulbs
 - batteries all sizes
 - bleach
 - tinned food
 - bus tickets
 - gift certificates

Financial donations of any size

See contact info page 4.

SINCERE THANKS TO:

*We acknowledge the financial assistance of the Province of British Columbia,
through a Direct Access Grant.*

- **Knights of Columbus** –especially **Paul and Mark R** for arranging a donation from **St Patrick’s Council** and **Gary S** for funds from **St Joseph the Worker Council**. **Paul** for repairing vacuum cleaner.
- **St Vincent de Paul Society** through **Grant C. the Social Concern office** and **Salvation Army Family Services** through **Pat H**, for plenty of toys for Christmas. **Wes** for picking them up in time for the Party.
- **Wes M.** for also obtaining food from **Country Grocer** and **Cobs Shelbourne** for the Christmas party—*Thanks again to those donors and all who contributed.*
- **Mark’s Work Wear House** for welcome gifts in kind for **Fran Thibeau House men**. **Bob A. of St VdeP** for enough bicycles for the men’s house.
- **St Dunstan’s Anglican Parish, Gordon Head; Holy Trinity Sidney; Sacred Heart Christian Charities;**
- Financial gifts from **Rex Pendril B.** in memory of **Betty; Josie and Ted N.;** **Lois M and Alana P.** for monthly donations; **Paul R and family: Pauline M.; Catherine C.; Marjorie L.; Sheila C** through **D. C. Marine Services Ltd.;** **Aideen L.; Annley K.; Marilyn M.; Gordon and Nancy S.; Elizabeth O. and all those who have given through Canada Helps.:** **Mark S., Vikki M., Kathy T., Susan D., and others..**
- Thanks to all our generous Landlords for working with us to house men and women in need. **Jeanette and Sandy Santarelli** for very generous financial donation. **Ken Gibson** for attending Board meeting.
- **Our friends at Chown Place** for booking Hall for AGM and always providing food /drinks for meetings.
- Thanks to all who use **Thrifty Smile Cards** and so give to us through shopping. Thanks **Thrifty Foods.**
- Our new treasurer/signer **Brian S.** also new signer/secretary **Patti R. All Board members/facilitators.**

The Human Exchange has a presence on Facebook and at time of printing we had 301 friends signed up.

facebook

If you do Facebook please LIKE us and tell others about it.

Go to our Homepage on our web-site www.humanx.org

Cell phone - Patricia: 250-920-5056 See facilitators contact info on Home page

**DONATIONS to Victoria Human Exchange Society,
709 Yates St, Box 8534 – Victoria Main Post Office, Victoria BC - V8W 3S1**

And the Canada Helps button on the Home page of our Web-site.

