

"We are lucky to have received a summer student grant from HRDC (Human Resources Development Canada) which has enabled us to go ahead with our plans," Welder told Council. Also assisting them to get up and running is School District #53.

"Mayor Larson and myself met with the District's management committee and they have given us the use of one

written in stone, he advised, noting that the youth will be consulted to see if these hours work for them.

Posters and pamphlets will advertise the programs and Welder said, "We most likely will provide more than one option per day so we aren't just servicing one particular segment [of the teens who participate]."

While technically the centre is termed 'drop in' because it does not require pre-

Welder told Council that Irons' first three weeks would be spent working on community development, looking for volunteers to help with staffing and meeting with youth and teens in the community to determine where their interests lie and what they may be looking for.

"Brad will then take that information and feedback and create the programs

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BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB**



## Judges' choice!

Sue Webster was the recipient of two awards for her extensive garden, which she says was at the height of its beauty earlier this year. "I think it looked its best in early June." Although, as this picture testifies, it is still glorious to behold.

# Summer camp focusing on day school artwork and drama

**BY WENDY JOHNSON**

Art has its own vocal chords and its language is heard by receptive minds and emotions. This month when 20 Osoyoos Indian Band students aged eight to 12 walk through the doors of Sen Pok Chin School to attend a six-week summer sun fun camp, they will learn to communicate with themselves and each other through their own artwork—a level explored more than 60 years ago at the Inkameep Day School, by teacher Anthony Walsh. In addition they will rehearse or adapt a play written and produced by Walsh's former students,

"How the Turtle got its Tail."

This is the first year of an addition to an existing program that grew from tentative dreams, as the story of the re-discovery of the day school's singular accomplishments spun out beyond the borders of the Okanagan and captured the imagination of the Vancouver Art Gallery, the Knowledge Network, various museums and collectors both here and abroad.

With the support of OIB Chief Clarence Louie, the University of Victoria and the Osoyoos Desert and Heritage Centre, UVIC researcher Dr. Andrea Walsh (no relation to Anthony) met with

Sen Pok Chin teacher Ruth Laurie to discuss the possibility of incorporating the former day school's artwork and drama into the summer camp's schedule.

"The whole idea of this portion is to infuse the kids with some knowledge of the Inkameep Day School—that it has a deep history on the reserve," said Andrea Walsh, a visual anthropologist at UVIC who has been researching the day school since the artwork re-surfaced in 2000. "We hope they are inspired by either the artwork or the drama or the story itself to create their own work."

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SUMMER CAMP**



# Summer camp

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Aboriginal peoples have used art as an adjunct of language throughout their long histories, but it has been a form of communication often endangered by repressive actions taken and enforced by governments and mainline churches during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and a large portion of the 20<sup>th</sup>.

Anthony Walsh succeeded in reviving and reaffirming the significance of that form of expression while he taught at the Inkameep Day School on the reserve during the 1930s and early 1940s—an initiative that saw the resulting artwork win awards overseas during the war years and brought the children to the attention of the great American cartoonist Walt Disney and British royalty.

Now his methods will be tapped again and given voice through new fingers and body language. Many of the camp's attendants will be the grandsons and granddaughters of the original group of children who thrived under Walsh's tutelage; others will be students who seek their own story and place within their Band, by contributing their own rich interpretations of the two worlds they inhabit.

And standing before them in the classroom will be a direct tie to that matchless decade. Former day school student, Jane Stelkia will share her recollections of that heady period when the children entertained the valley, raised funds for the war effort, sang on CBC radio and opened Thunderbird Park in Victoria.

Since Anthony Walsh incorporated native art and cultural themes into the day school's curriculum, that approach will be used during the summer camp, whose focus traditionally has been science, math and language. The mornings will be reserved for those components, while the afternoon sessions will be devoted to the day school's legacy. Each week will have a different theme and end with a field trip based on that structure.

"We are going to link as many science concepts as we can to the artwork," explained Laurie, who will conduct the sun fun program with three employees.

Week one will introduce art as a form of communication, easing the students into the role of using their body movements and brush strokes to express themselves. A contemporary Okanagan artist will be invited to discuss what it is like to communicate through that medium. Week two's emphasis will be on the prevalence of animals in native artwork, and engage the students in doing masks and making costumes for the turtle play. A field trip to Robert Stelkia's ranch will focus on horses and other animals of the Okanagan, which played such a prominent part in the day school's artwork. Week three will be devoted to the play and the children will choose whether they want to rehearse it verbatim as it was written or create a modern version of the tale. Props for the play will be created and individual art projects inspired by the story developed further. Richard

Baptiste will escort the students to photographs on the reserve and explain their importance to the overall story.

"That is really where the art started. Mr. Walsh went right back to the old drawings and told his students they had a long history of making art that says who they are.

"We feel that by going to the photographs last, the kids will have had two or three weeks of making their own art and these will hold more significance," said Andrea Walsh.

The fourth week will consist of final preparations for what organizers hope will be a mini exhibition on Friday, August 13. This contemporary art show will be featured next to the artwork completed at the day school, highlighting the differences and similarities in the creative styles of two groups of youngsters born more than 60 years apart. Organizers also hope to have the play ready for a public audience at this time.

Walsh will be in attendance too, working with two anthropology students from UVIC who are studying the day school story, as well as with Jim Hoffman a drama professor from the University of the Cariboo.

"Professor Hoffman's specialty is BC theatre history and he is quite aware of the significance of the day school's drama. When I told him we wanted someone who could teach drama properly, he agreed immediately and volunteered his time for the month."

The First Nations Schools Association and the First Nations Education Steering Committee have agreed to fund and administer the summer program. Extra expenses and staff salaries will be covered by the OIB, while the University of Victoria will donate funds for accommodation.

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Above is an archival photo of the children at the Inkameep Day School rehearsing for a play based on one of their traditions. During the Summer Sun Fun program at Sen Pok Chin School, OIB children will explore the day school's history through the Virtual Museum website, perform a play written by the former students of teacher Anthony Walsh and learn to create their own art as a means of communication.