

Savary's Unique District Lot 1375: Owners Past and Present

by E.C. Landale, Savary Island Heritage Society

In early July 1891, ninety-nine years after Captain George Vancouver sailed past and named Savary Island, Comox pioneer and government surveyor **George Fawcett Drabble** landed on Savary at the request of **John Green**, who had settled at Green's Point a few years previously. Drabble's survey divided Savary into five district lots, D.L. 1375 being the middle one.

By the end of 1892, John Green was the owner of three of Savary's five district lots, including D.L. 1375. He had established a trading post at the east end of Savary during the late 1880s and employed people clearing trees and building fences that would contain his livestock which included a herd of sheep. Green was murdered in October 1893 but it was not until the summer of 1909 that the administrator of his estate sold the Savary properties.

Also in 1909, **Harry Leroy Jenkins**, a self described timber merchant, purchased all the District Lots on Savary including D.L. 1375, making himself the sole owner of the whole of Savary Island. Within a year, Jenkins had arranged the subdivision of three of Savary's five district lots into small-sized lots, but D.L. 1375 and its eastern neighbour, D.L. 1373, were left unsubdivided.

Around 1917, Jenkins transferred D.L. 1375 to Katharine Ashworth, the wife of George Johnston Ashworth. George Ashworth has been credited with providing the impetus for Jenkins' subdivisions, but George Ashworth's name does not appear on the documents and the Ashworth's Savary properties were typically recorded in Katharine's name.

Around 1922, the Ashworths started to subdivide D.L. 1373, the district lot east of D.L. 1375, but Katherine Ashworth retained ownership of D.L. 1375 until early in 1923 when the property was transferred to the Vancouver Reliance Company. After Jenkins died in 1921, the Vancouver Reliance Company acted for the Jenkins estate and was engaged with the Ashworths for many years in complicated and protracted dealings, mostly pertaining to the Ashworth's Royal Savary Hotel.

In December 1948, Harry Keefer arranged the sale of D.L. 1375 from the Vancouver Reliance Company to a group of four Powell River people - Roderick Falconer, Mrs. Wilfred Woodward, 'Batt' MacIntyre and Roy Harper. Roderick Falconer had come to Savary as a boy because his family had a house just west of the wharf. His father, Joe Falconer, was, for a time, the resident manager of the Powell River mill. Mrs. Woodward was the wife of a long-time Powell River resident who had arrived with his parents as an infant in 1911, around the time the Powell River mill was started. 'Batt' MacIntyre was, from 1949 to 1952, the Conservative MLA for the area that included Powell River and was the owner of the Rodmay Hotel, for many years Powell River's only hotel. Roy Harper worked as a bartender at the Rodmay. Within a year, Roderick Falconer sold his share to the others in the group who themselves held D.L. 1375 until January 1952 when they sold at a tenfold profit to Eureka Sawmills of Vancouver.

During the 1950s there was some logging activity in D.L. 1375 carried out by **Vanwest Logging** and perhaps other companies and that also involved Puget Sound Pulp and Paper, which was acquired about

that time by Georgia Pacific. Eureka Sawmills continued to own D.L. 1375 until the company went into voluntary liquidation in 1971, at which time D.L. 1375 was acquired by Victoria-based Warm Beach Investments which held the property until 1981 when it was bought by David Syre and Roger Sahlin who used the address of the Trillium Corporation of Bellingham, WA. Each shared an undivided half interest in D.L. 1375. During the 1990s, Roger Sahlin transferred part of his share of D.L. 1375 to other Sahlin family members and there were two unsuccessful attempts to divide D.L. 1375 into smaller lots. In March 2002, a couple of years after the second attempt had lapsed, David Syre transferred his half interest in D.L. 1375 to the Nature Trust of BC.

Today, one hundred and twenty years after Savary's five district lots were created, D.L. 1375 is unique among the five, being the only one that remains un-subdivided and without houses.

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