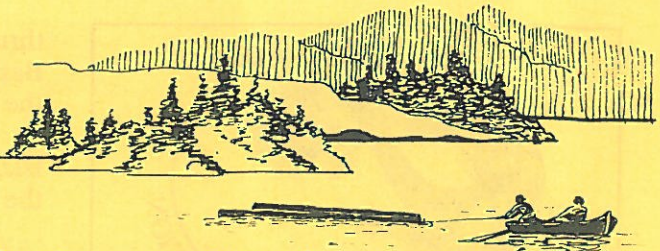


Archipelago

autumn 97



news, views, reviews and interviews on island community and conservation

THE MAKING OF AN ISLAND

Volume I, Number 3

*And the ragged rock in the restless waters,
Waves wash over it, fogs conceal it;
On a halcyon day it is merely a monument,
In navigable weather it is always a seamark
To lay a course by: but in the sombre season
Or the sudden fury, is what it always was."*

T.S. Eliot, "The Dry Salvages"

volcanic islands, far out in the primeval Pacific Ocean called *Panthalassa*. It was a suitably bizarre beginning for events that would follow in more recent history. And it set the stage for how these islands ever after would hold irresistible attraction for wanderers . . . for some a magical moated kingdom rising from the sea, for others a ragged rock, a stone of stumbling, a shipwreck zone.

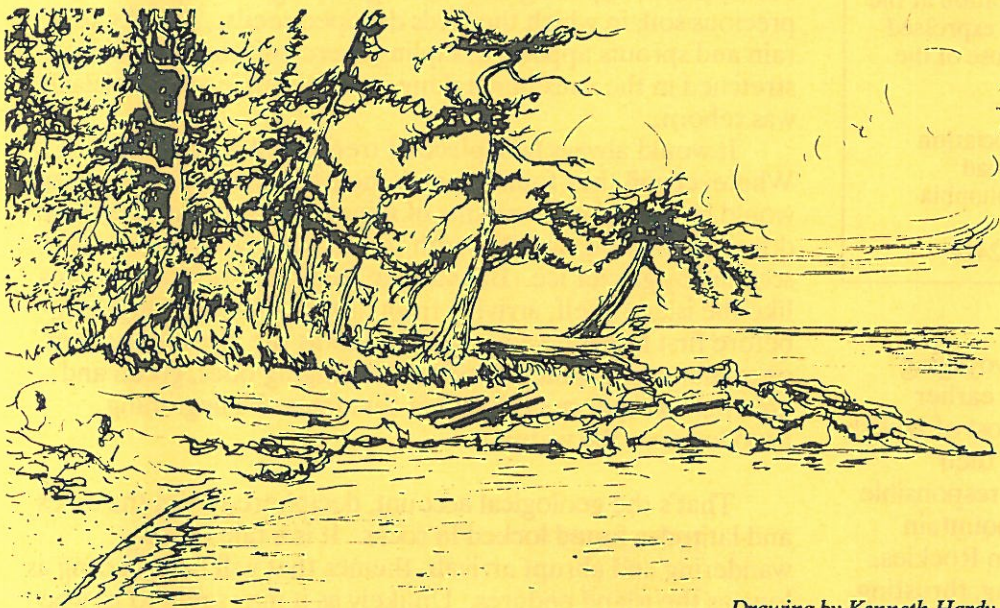
To begin with, the islands themselves spent half their life wandering. Drifting on the inexorable currents of seafloor spreading that were pushing even continents around, the island chain first set out southward on a many million year migration that only succeeded in damping its fires and eroding its peaks to a submarine plateau, where colonies of marine animals flourished in warm clear seas.

Think of it as a leisurely vacation to Baja California or coastal Mexico. Some geologists even refer to this sojourn as Baja British Columbia,

because much of our province first assembled there. So the story goes, our underwater "islands" here ran into a larger terrane that was headed north, and decided to come along for the ride . . . especially since their meeting got the old fires burning again and led to a whole new volcanic affair.

It proved to be more than just a passing craze. The new pair stuck together for eons before abandoning their northward voyage in order to join other travelling terranes rendezvousing on the northwest coast of North America. As of this writing, they're still together and likely to remain so.

continued page 2

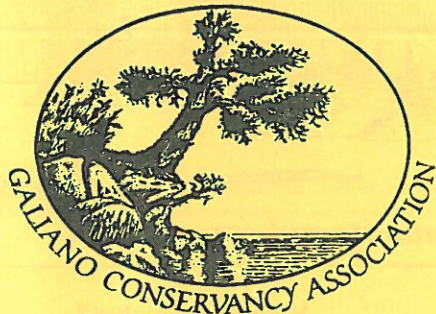


Drawing by Kenneth Hardy

Galiano wasn't always an island unto itself. Nor was it always anchored here, sheltering among the Gulf Islands archipelago in the lee of Vancouver Island, breasting the currents that come flooding twice a day up into Georgia Strait.

If myths attempt to fathom origins that lie deeper than collective memory, then ours apparently began in some uncharted western sea, caught in the drifting terranes of a cooling earth. And geologists are our loremasters, since only they can read the mysteries hidden in stone.

Their tale recounts an odyssey that began hundreds of millions of years ago as a series of



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Submissions, reactions, illustrations and poetry are welcomed for publication at the editor's discretion. Opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the publisher.

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Such was the size of our voyaging islands that, together with the earlier arrivals, they now comprise most of British Columbia. And the impact of their collision with the continent is responsible for the province's abundant mountain ranges, including the Canadian Rockies.

The crumpling, subducting, thrusting, faulting, folding and uplifting that resulted from these cataclysmic encounters continued for what must have seemed an eternity before finally calming down about 60 million years ago . . . the classic fender bender of all time.

Even so, the Gulf Islands never would have shown their heads above the waves if some pieces of the continental margin south of the border had not been cast loose later on and rammed under the edge of Vancouver Island. It led to a repeat performance of the earlier province-wide drama - only on a smaller scale - compressing, shortening, folding and

thrust-faulting the strata that had accumulated in the Georgia Basin to form some very special islands (typically uptilted to the west) in the lap of the far-ranging terrane.

If there are scenes that could be replayed from Galiano Island's remote, exotic origins, these two would head the list: the first, fast, fiery uprising from an ancient Paleozoic seafloor . . . and the second, slow, interminable reemergence 300 million years later - after an incredible odyssey - above the waters of Georgia Strait.

The one was birth, an abrupt delivery from the womb of the sea, vaporizing the amniotic fluid and spewing ash in its first cry, with no one in attendance. Earth has many such children, created in the surprising warmth of her internal affections.

The other later reappearance was like a steady, silent dawn, elaborately planned and long foreseen. Gradually the waters shoaled where Galiano Mountain now rears its head. Cautiously a rock appeared and then another, crowned with streaming seaweeds, sea stars, pearls and periwinkles.

Tidal currents boiled around them as they rose, became a string of reefs the waves could not beat down, linked up to others now uplifting to the north, soon formed a growing bulwark with imposing headlands guarding secret pockets of precious soil, in which the birds dropped seeds. The sky sent rain and sprouts appeared, saplings here and there took root, stretched in the sunshine, taking in their native air. An island was reborn.

It would always be a place of trees. Not an easy place. Whatever soil they found to sink their tenacious toes in always would be tentative, remnants of mineral-rich marine clays laid down during long ages beneath the sea, easily washed away or scoured by glacier ice. But still the trees returned, sometimes, like the island itself, arriving from distant climes. Long, long before first humans came, the island was the home of patient ones that stood rooted beside the changing tides, green and growing metaphors of the spirit that from the beginning brooded over the waters.

That's the geological account, deciphered from the dates and latitudes found locked in rocks. It is a tale of long wandering and abrupt arrivals, themes that will be recurring as long as the island endures. Unlikely as it may seem to us who think we stand on terra firma, it is the myth we have inherited from the ages - a travelling, reappearing, tree-clad island - something to keep an eye on or it may be gone again.

By Greg Foster

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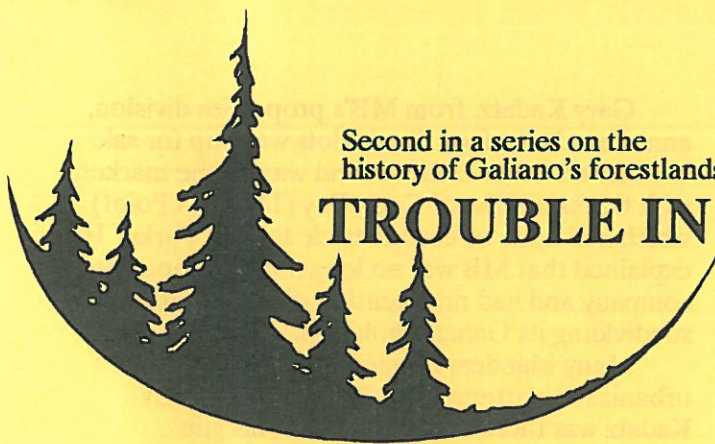
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Recycled Paper



Second in a series on the history of Galiano's forestlands.

TROUBLE IN THE FOREST

Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.

George Santayana, 1905

Two lessons emerge from the story of Galiano's forestlands as the safe-for-the-moment '70s gave way to the ominous '80s:

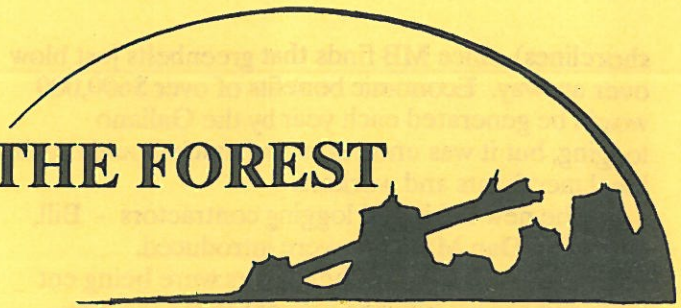
- 1) You should never underestimate the intelligence of islanders determined to protect this lovely place, and
- 2) You don't thwart the largest forest company in Canada without serious consequences.

Balked in its first development scheme by the Community Plan in the early '70s (see last issue), MacMillan Bloedel returned to the scene of conflict in the '80s . . . this time with a logging blitzkrieg.

A glance at the graph on page 4 tells the story. Based on actual volumes recorded by the Ministry of Forests, it shows how the MB tree take jumped from an average of 5,000 cubic metres per year (1979-84) to 33,000 cubic metres in 1985, an increase in logging activity of 666 percent.

It was a well planned assault. Company documents which would come to light during the court battles of the '90s reveal that MB intended as early as 1983 to bring in off-island contractors and increase the cut level to 35,000 cubic metres/year. Supporting infrastructure was to include construction of a 10.5 km mainline east coast logging road, a dryland log sort, crew housing, and upgrading of dumping and booming facilities at Whaler Bay.

Nothing on this clear-cutting scale had yet been seen on Galiano, and even worse would follow. The 1985 push caught islanders off-guard, napping in their peaceful gardens to the sound of buzzing bees. Abruptly the gentle ambience was shattered with a different buzz: the sound of chainsaws just over the ridge. Suddenly overloaded logging trucks were barreling along the rural island roads, scattering debris and confusion in their wake. On peak days up to twenty-five truckloads of logs thundered down the skids into once-sylvan Whaler Bay, and the boom boat roared out its throaty challenge day and night.



Assault indeed. To quiet living islanders, it was as if an all-out warfare on the trees had erupted in their own backyards. Little did they realize even then how shockingly the consequences would invade their lives, or how close to home the devastation would extend.

* * * *

*The Tree is old.
Older than you and older than me.
Always he stood on the same place
Beside the creek bed in which the melt-waters run in
the spring.
Then his tender root-hairs were drinking day and
night.
The sap did rise upward under the bark, pulled by
magic powers,
Up into each branch-end and far up into the highest
top.*

From "A Canadian Requiem" by Resi Duerichen

* * * *

THE NEW AGENDA

It was the start of a 7-year push by MacMillan Bloedel, touted as a worthy project to "rehabilitate" its 7,800-acre holdings on Galiano. It was also the start of large public meetings on Galiano. The first was an information meeting in August 1985, chaired by the local Islands Trust representatives, at which MB spokesmen presented the company's logging plans and answered questions.

Two hundred residents came out to hear MB district manager Bill Cafferata explain a 20-year strategy to convert a mixed forest into a perpetually-producing monoculture tree farm based on clear-cutting, burning and replanting.

"We intend to log an average of 26,000 cubic metres of wood per year, or an average of 141 acres of land," Cafferata reported. "On peak days, there will be eleven truckloads taken to the Whaler Bay log dump."

He said logging would be carried right to property lines and water edges (including

shorelines), since MB finds that greenbelts just blow over anyway. Economic benefits of over \$600,000 would be generated each year by the Galiano logging, but it was uncertain how much would reach local merchants and workers.

The new off-island logging contractors - Bill, Chris and Dan Mattin - were introduced. Although local logging contractors were being cut back and special housing brought in for the new crews, a major logging road was being constructed on the east side of the island and the gravelling was to be supplied by local truckers.

In response to polite, respectful questions from the audience (the only kind permitted by chairman Donald Macdonald), Cafferata said that clear-cutting was the only economical method, that it would have no major impact on watersheds or the water table, would not affect property values, and would require extensive burns. Herbicides could be used if necessary, an environmental impact assessment of the Whaler Bay log dump would be too expensive, and most log dumping would be done in winter when tides are high during daylight hours.

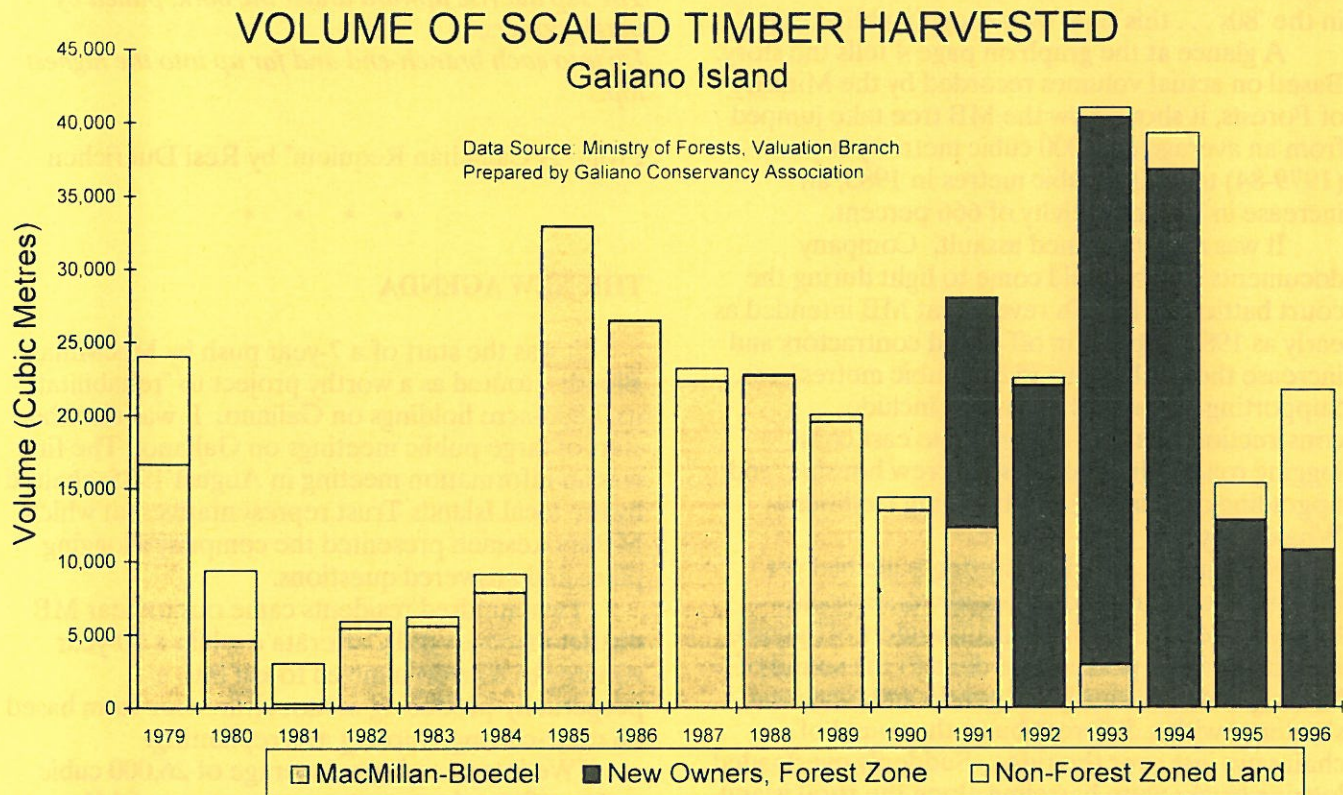
Gary Kadatz, from MB's properties division, announced that four district lots were up for sale but that no other Galiano land was on the market, with the exception of Coon Bay (Dionisio Point) which had been offered in trade to B.C. Parks. He explained that MB was no longer a development company and had no intention of developing or subdividing its Galiano holdings.

Many islanders remembering MB's urbanization attempt in 1972, wondered why Kadatz was there at all, and heard his glib reassurances with considerable skepticism.

* * * *

"During the course of this profile a common theme emerged . . . residents are not opposed to logging, what they are opposed to are the methods which are currently being employed."

From Connor Development Services Ltd. Report to MacMillan Bloedel on "Galiano Island Social Profile", Dec., 1988



THE SAD STORY OF GALIANO LOGGING is graphically portrayed in the timber volumes harvested from 1979-1996. A forthcoming article will show on an island map where major cutting has occurred: by MacMillan Bloedel, by new Forest Zone owners, and by non-forest landowners.

If MacMillan Bloedel's intention was to provoke a confrontation, as many islanders believe, its hopes were disappointed. No demonstrations erupted, no blockades appeared, no tree-huggers chained themselves to cats and skidders. No marine biologists even pelted the operator with clamshells when a bulldozer summarily decided to excavate the mudflat down to bare rock below the dump in Whaler Bay, making way for even more intensive dumping.

Nevertheless, 1985 marked the beginning of woes for Galiano. It started with private grief over the loss of the trees, since there was no public outlet for expressing it . . . grieving and frustration that a major forest company (the largest in Canada) could be so insensitive as to pillage one of British Columbia's rarest jewels, set aside to be an *Island In Trust*.

And side by side with grief ran fear. Earlier in the year, MacMillan Bloedel had placed its 4,800-acre holdings on nearby Salt Spring Island up for sale, deciding they were "no longer suitable for the company's long-term forest management plans."

Despite its assurances at the public meeting, was MB also thinking of disposing of its Galiano real estate - comprising over half the island - in a classic example of the old "cut-and-run" logging game? Repugnant as the devastation of the forests was to those who cherished the island's green canopy, was not the possibility of a sell-out even more alarming? What would happen to Galiano if the forest lands - with or without their trees - were suddenly catapulted out of tree farm classification right into the laps of developers?

* * * *

"There's lots of room on (the Gulf Islands), and growth starts with clear-cut logging."

Murray Cyprus, Salt Spring developer, reported in the Vancouver Sun, June 25, 1988

* * * *

For two years islanders watched helplessly and silently while the forest removal continued and logging volumes hovered around 25,000 cubic metres. In September 1986 an article appeared in the *MB Journal*, the company newsletter, showing happy campers on Galiano

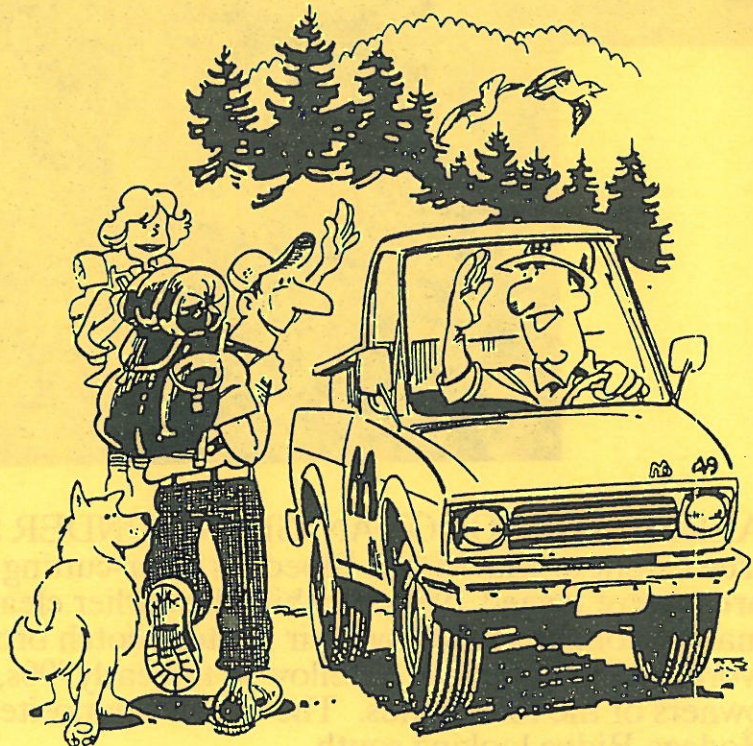
waving to the affable MB forester. It was entitled *A Commitment to Multiple Use*.

The first of British Columbia's beautiful Gulf Islands that Victoria-bound ferry passengers see after leaving Vancouver is Galiano Island. Its forested cliffs provide what appear to be a picture-postcard example of the rugged natural beauty of the Gulf Islands - except that in this case, most of the island is actually managed as an industrial tree farm.

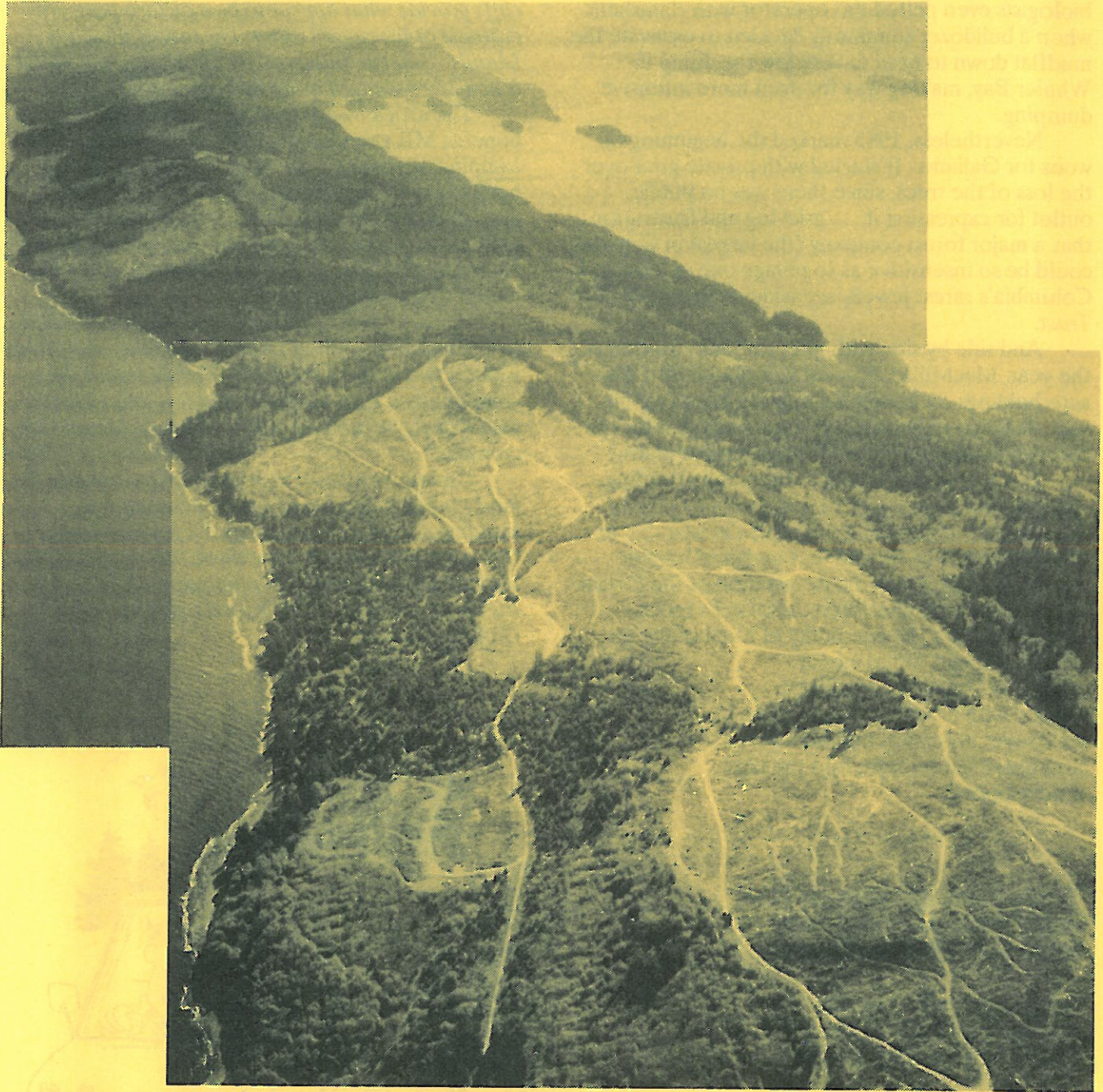
The article went on to enumerate the varied benefits MB graciously allows on the island: camping, sunbathing and swimming at Coon Bay; beehives on a new plantation; horse and cattle grazing near Bodega Resort; salal and moss gathering; public firewood permits; accessible trails for riding and hiking; and a solid-waste dump site leased to the Galiano Club.

"Galiano people would be most upset if MacBlo left," the article quoted Don Macdonald, one of the island's two elected trustees. "People regard the company as a good neighbor and feel that Galiano would likely be ruined if it left. It would become too crowded."

Galiano resident Pat Weaver who caretakes the land for MB points to an eagle's nest in a tree standing alone in an area logged a few years ago. "It's company policy to save them. The eagles come back to the same nest year after year." It's another aspect of MB's good neighbor policy on Galiano Island.



The "rugged forested cliffs of Galiano" were even more breathtaking seen from the air . . .



AERIAL PHOTOS OF AN ISLAND UNDER SIEGE, taken in 1987, reveal the true extent of MacMillan Bloedel's clear-cutting strategy since the late '70s. Bare areas were logged 1985-87, while the earlier clear-cuts are distinguishable from the mature conifer forests by their lighter Scotch broom or deciduous regrowth. Still worse devastation was to follow in the early '90s, this time at the hands of some new owners of the forestlands. The above composite photograph was taken from near Bodega Ridge looking south.

UPPING THE PRESSURE

The following year, 1987, saw the second in the series of public meetings with MacMillan Bloedel over company activities. But this time the public was noticeably absent.

The meeting was called by the Chamber of Commerce on October 22, and representatives of island organizations were specifically invited. "The Chamber felt that a smaller [14 persons], invited audience might result in a more civilized encounter," Basil and Kathlyn Bengner noted in their report to the Gulf Islands Driftwood. Basil Bengner was to become the major reporter of the bewildering series of events which began soon after this meeting. His contribution to keeping the island on an informed course during the next stormy years has never been adequately recognized.

If MB was aware of growing disaffection within the community, the company gave little acknowledgment. Its spokesman this time was Bruce Francis, division manager, who said that the logging plans presented in 1985 were still in effect, and made no bones about the fact that MB was "the most responsible forest manager on the coast."

Questions brought to light MB's intention to log beside the proposed park area at Coon Bay during 1987-88 - a highly controversial prospect - necessitating road closures for three months during the upcoming winter. When asked if some selective cutting could be employed out of respect for park boundaries and neighboring property owners, Francis replied that selective logging by previous contractors in the past had been a problem on the island resulting in a "hodge-podge" of low value forestry sites.

* * * *

"The waste - by INDISCRIMINATE clear-cutting - of A WELL ESTABLISHED UNDERSTORY REGENERATION on Galiano is no more or less than a repeat of the cut-and-get-out of our early history."

Veteran forester D.M. Trew in letter to Adam Zimmerman, Chairman of Noranda Forest Inc. (owner of MacMillan Bloedel 1981-93)

* * * *

Another block slated for clear-cutting was the area between Galiano Way and the island solid-waste dump. Since Porlier Pass Road traversed the lands in question, Francis admitted it would be "a



conspicuous show" requiring closure of the road for three months during the winter and re-routing of traffic via Clanton Road and the Montague Hill. He said that the current rate of logging could continue for up to ten years (down from the 20-year plan of 1985), after which there would be a logging hiatus lasting twenty years or more while replantings came to maturity.

Forest managers, according to Francis, were always on the defensive against special interest groups, who advocate parks, wilderness areas, conservation of wildlife and the environment, and who are against clear-cutting and monoculture.

"These special interest groups present a real problem in that they are prepared to see one solution only: no logging. This is an unworkable situation. MB is prepared to compromise where a compromise would not interfere with logging practices which are safe and economically feasible for the company [namely clear-cutting]."

Another source of difficulty Francis saw was the Islands Trust, and the possibility that "a further level of bureaucracy could be imposed requiring application for licenses to cut trees." He said MB would find that a very real obstacle to its operations, as well as an invasion of private property rights.

"What position or responsibility does MB take for research and protective measures," it was asked, "where other resources are impacted by the effects of MB's logging practices (i.e. watersheds, wildlife, etc.)?"

Francis replied: "MB tries to adopt a consultative approach where it has the responsibility to ensure multiple use of forestry lands (in the 80 percent of tenures where it does not own the land). On its private property (such as Galiano) it follows the *best logging practices* and regulates itself accordingly."

In response to the major local concern that MB's emphasis might change from forestry to real estate, Francis assured island representatives that there were no present plans to sell off Galiano lands.

"If you intend to continue to trace the history of Galiano's forestlands, I think it would be important to include a few other important events, such as WHY MacMillan Bloedel were finally forced off the Island by an overzealous committee called Clear Cut Alternatives. . ."

Irene Frith, Past-president of the Galiano Ratepayers Association, in Open Letter to Archipelago published in July '97 Active Page

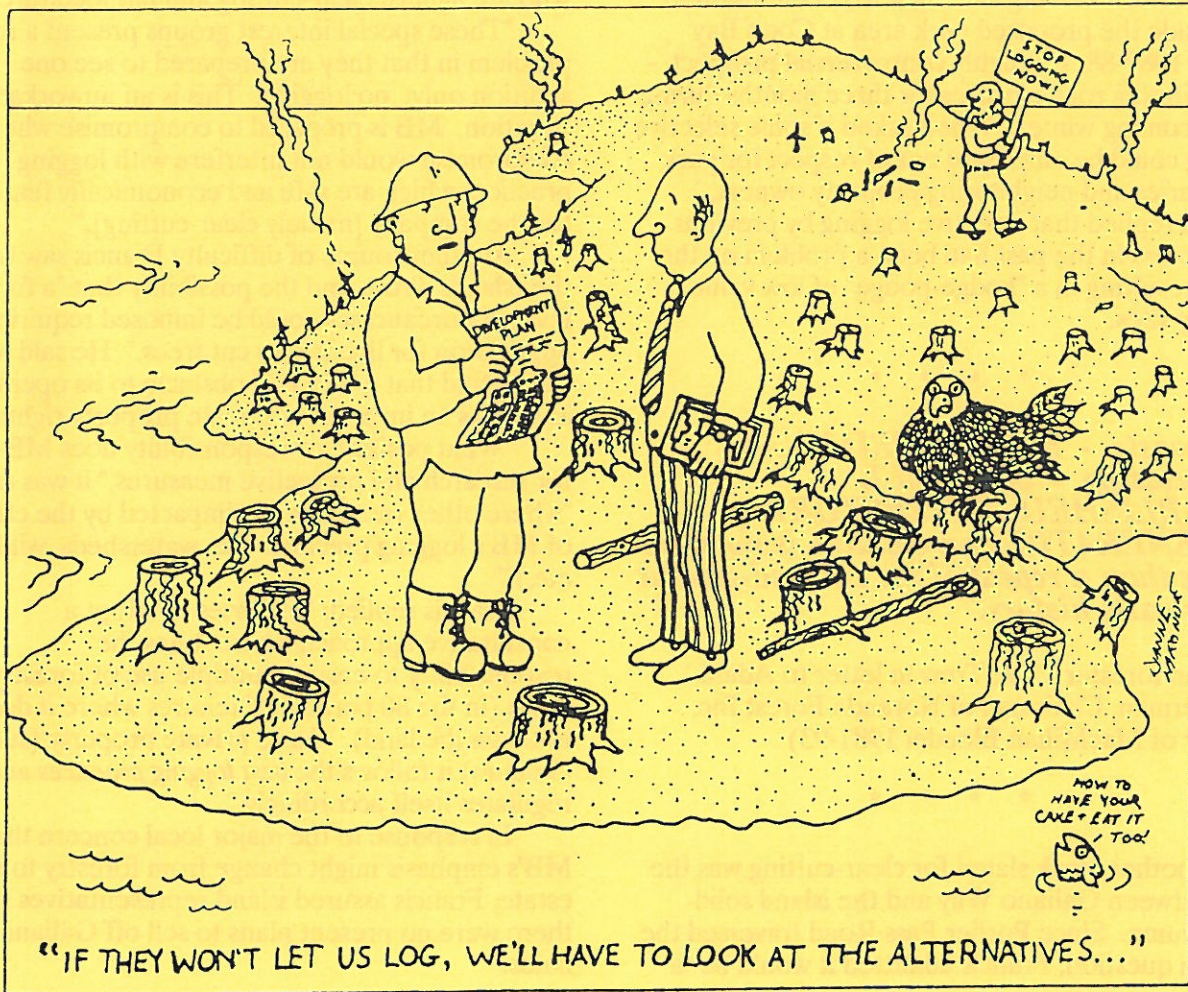
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The MB loggers wasted no time in getting down to work on their 1987-88 agenda. By mid-November they were leveling not only conifers but magnificent stands of arbutus and maple bordering the proposed Dionisio Park site. If the islanders had been long-suffering until now, their reaction to the butchering of the landscape around one of Galiano's chief heritage treasures was immediate and comprehensive. The slow fuse had finally reached the powder.

Let's take a close look at the events of this fateful month, since different versions of what happened would continue to persist and influence island politics for many years to come. Two quotes will set the scene.

First, from a Bruce Francis memo to Grant Ainscough, MB's chief forester and vice-president: "During that week, a group of islanders organized, chased fallers out of two widely separated areas, contacted media and government officials, and held a demonstration which was recorded by CBC television."

And second, from islander Ken Millard, former physicist and violin-maker, who was to become a major advocate of *community-minded* forestry: "I believe MB's drastic logging was an attempt to provoke the community into taking drastic action. Instead the response was: *We want you to log, we just want you to do it differently, on an appropriate scale.* MB didn't know how to deal with that. They didn't want to reach an accommodation on logging, yet they could not defend their over-cutting. They wanted confrontation, but were asked to sit down and talk."



A chronology of the November 1987 events looks like this:

Oct 22

The Chamber of Commerce hosted a meeting with MB and selected island groups at which MB outlined logging plans for 1987-88. Concerns were voiced about the impact of large scale clear-cut logging.

Nov 14, 17

A delegation of concerned citizens met with our MLA's to enlist their support for islanders' concerns about MB logging plans and practices.

Nov 18

Clear-cut logging commenced on District Lot 92 next to Coon Bay.

Nov 23

Clear-cutting was averaging 4 acres a day. A spontaneous meeting of concerned citizens and naturalist organizations (over 60 people) was held at the North Galiano Community Hall, chaired by Gary Moore. The consensus was that

- clear-cut logging was inappropriate on Galiano Island, and
- the company should consider alternatives that would better complement the island character.

Clear Cut Alternatives was formed and a working committee of eight persons selected. The meeting adjourned to the logging site and requested that the loggers stop clear-cutting until MB management could hear the group's concerns.

Unfortunately for those expecting fireworks, this "confrontation" with loggers was disappointingly civil and polite ... no abuse or militancy on either side. It was clear that the loggers were expecting the delegation.

Nov 24

Logging moved to District Lot 17 (solid-waste dump). Again loggers were asked to stop until talks with management could be arranged. Logging continued at a third site.

Nov 25

Management agreed to meet with Clear Cut Alternatives when MB heard that the media was getting involved. CCA's calls to the company had not been answered during the previous week.

Nov 27

A previously planned Picnic and Rally took place at Coon Bay. A broad cross-section of islanders (70 persons) indicated their support for a new approach

to forest management on Galiano Island. Media coverage at the rally focused on the desire for consultation with the company and a temporary moratorium on clear-cutting.

Nov 30

Clear Cut Alternatives met with MB representatives Bruce Francis (manager) and Jack Lavis (forester). Also in attendance were representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, The Galiano Naturalists, Galiano Island Visitors Association, the North Galiano Community Association, and other concerned citizens. After four hours of negotiation, it was agreed that:

1. Logging on DL 92 would cease until Jan. 15, by which time islanders must secure a letter from B.C. Parks agreeing to include DL 92 and 95 (or parts thereof) in the Dionisio Park proposal [they were ultimately included in Dionisio Point Provincial Park].
2. Logging would continue on less visible MB lands.
3. A 66-foot screen would be left on the west side of Porlier Pass Road south of the dump. However, the company insisted the trees on the east side must be clear-cut right to the road edge to prevent blowdown. [This cutting never occurred.]
4. There would be a 3-year moratorium on further clear-cutting along the edges of Porlier Pass Road. [MB lands bordered large stretches of main roads on the island.]
5. Islanders would be given the opportunity to identify for preservation certain trees, groves and other ecological features in any MB logging area, subject to the company's agreement in specific cases.
6. MB agreed to participate in a public educational forum to be held during the spring of 1988, to address the issue of large scale clear-cutting and alternatives which could be satisfactory to all parties.

Dec 9

"The islanders had legitimate concerns," Bruce Francis admitted to the Driftwood.

One of his classic statements to island representatives at the Nov. 30 meeting was: "We intend to clear-cut to the roadside all over the island, because we want to see what the community's response will be."

"How the company logs right alongside other properties does have a huge esthetic and economic effect on adjacent landowners."

Times Colonist editorial, Dec. 1, 1987

* * * *

"In such an environment, it is a matter of astonishment to a visitor from another country - where such environments [as Galiano] are a very rare commodity if available at all - that relatively large scale clear-cut felling by a single commercial interest can be allowed. It is more than astonishing when apparently there is minimal economic benefit to the local community."

International forest management expert Dr. James McCarthy, Deputy Director of the Nature Conservancy Council of Scotland, and visiting professor, UBC Faculty of Forestry, during 1988 tour of MB logging sites on Galiano

* * * *

AFTERMATH

Major news coverage of the Galiano situation quickly followed in early December. "Logging triggers protest", proclaimed the Vancouver Sun. "Grannies fight MB", said The Province. Both articles quoted Bill Paterson of the Galiano Naturalists, who allegedly said: "We're very determined not to let MB ruin our property values and the rural charm here by clear-cut logging everywhere. There are a lot of raging grannies over here who would put themselves in front of bulldozers rather than let MB tear up the beautiful forest."

"Islanders fight MB Clear-cut", noted the Times Colonist on Nov. 27, following it with an editorial (Dec. 1) about Galiano logging. Locally, the Gulf Islands Driftwood gave front page billing to what it described as a "forced halt" to logging by protesters, quoting Bill Paterson and Bruce Francis.

The media could have done the public (and history) a bigger favour by focusing on the real problems that led to November's events instead of trying to milk them for their sensationalism. As with the crisis of 1972 (Summer '97 Archipelago), when MB attempted urban-scale developments on many of its Galiano waterfront holdings, the real story lay deeper and would have more far-reaching consequences.

It would again be the story of a community finding its feet and defining its place in the struggle against corporate profiteering.

That first struggle produced a landmark document - the first Official Community Plan - first in the Gulf Islands and among the first in British Columbia. The second struggle would be more protracted and against even greater odds, calling for a level of wisdom, tenacity and clear-headed priorities seldom if ever required of a small community.

That first venture into community self-determination lasted for seven months. The new odyssey would drag on for seven years, and even then the elusive outcome would only shift like the fog to a more subtle engagement with different protagonists.

This time, there would not be one document (like the OCP) summarizing the challenge and announcing the final resolution. Instead there would be many mileposts along the way. One at the start deserves special attention because it distills the heart of the concerns troubling most islanders during this time of change, when the face of Galiano was being altered so drastically.

Even before the formation of Clear Cut Alternatives, a delegation of islanders representing different organizations - Bruce Francis would have called it "a special interest group" - went to visit MLA's Mel Couvelier and Dr. Terry Huberts in mid-November, 1987. Members of the delegation were Ed Andrusiak, Margaret Griffiths, Hall Tingley, Akasha Forest and Dr. Bill Paterson.

Excerpts from their presentation highlight island concerns:

Two of the main attractions of Galiano Island - lifestyle and quality/beauty of the natural environment - are being threatened by clear-cutting.

MacMillan Bloedel owns over 50 percent of the Island (tree farm tax status). The Company has stated its intent to clear-cut all of these lands and plant a monoculture of fir to replace the mixed forest they clear-cut.

The attractive "country lane" roadways, scenic valleys, ridges covered with arbutus and rural charm of the Island are the main attractions for Island residents and visitors - old and new.

Water shortage is a critical problem on Galiano. Will clear-cutting 50 percent of the Island increase this problem even more? Will citizens' wells go dry because rain water is running into the ocean instead of being held by the forest and recharging our water table?

Will wildlife that depends on old mature forest disappear?

Monocultures of any species are not desirable because they are prone to attack by disease and

insects. If a major infestation occurs, will MB resort to controversial chemical sprays as has happened in eastern Canada?

The slash left after logging is a major fire hazard especially during dry Island summers. How can an Island short of water effectively fight a forest fire?

Road closures during logging will force rerouting of the school bus over two of the steepest parts of the island. This is especially hazardous when the roads are icy.

How will clear-cutting affect Galiano's economy? Will tourists want to come see clear-cuts? What will happen to property values of lots bordering clear-cut areas? Can [the economic disadvantages] be balanced by MB employing 3-5 residents as loggers and spending some money for materials and supplies?

We want all our economic sectors to prosper, not just one at the expense of others.

Can a moratorium be placed on clear-cutting along roads, shorelines, water bodies, water courses, and along land zoned other than tree farm on Galiano?

MB should realize that their ownership of land brings responsibilities as well as rights. We would like them to be good community citizens. The Company's right to make money should not be the only factor considered when the welfare of the whole community is at stake.

Were these concerns legitimate? Subsequent events clearly demonstrated that most islanders believed them to be.

Should they have been voiced? Few citizens with the good of the community at heart could have watched mutely while the landscape was trashed.

Would the Galiano community's initiative to soon form a Round Table with MB and government - spearheaded by Clear Cut Alternatives - force MacMillan Bloedel to eventually leave the island? That is what the company wanted the public of British Columbia to believe. But history would tell a radically different story.

"The danger in reaching an agreement to practice commercial forestry is that it may prevent us from selling our Galiano property at a substantial profit."

Bill Cafferata memo to Adam Zimmerman, Chairman of the Board, MacMillan Bloedel Ltd., May 1988

* * * *

SALT SPRING PRECEDENT

The tense year of 1987 closed on an ominous note. On New Years Eve, Dec. 31st, the announcement was made public that MacMillan Bloedel had sold its 4,800-acre properties on Salt Spring Island to a local buyer, Salt Spring Lands Ltd., for around \$3.5 million. Thirty-three individual parcels in seven separate blocks were involved, and the real estate company announced that nine local buyers were already in line to purchase blocks.

In response to fears of offshore investors or off-island developers, Mel Topping of Salt Spring Lands reassured islanders that, "It's all local people. A lot of our

concern was that this would be good for the island."

Everyone was not reassured apparently,

since a Driftwood

editorial asked:

Was a different

result possible?

Under the headline

"Forest

management

problems

eliminated",

the

Driftwood's

front page (Jan.

6, '88) noted that

the sale was a big

relief to MacMillan

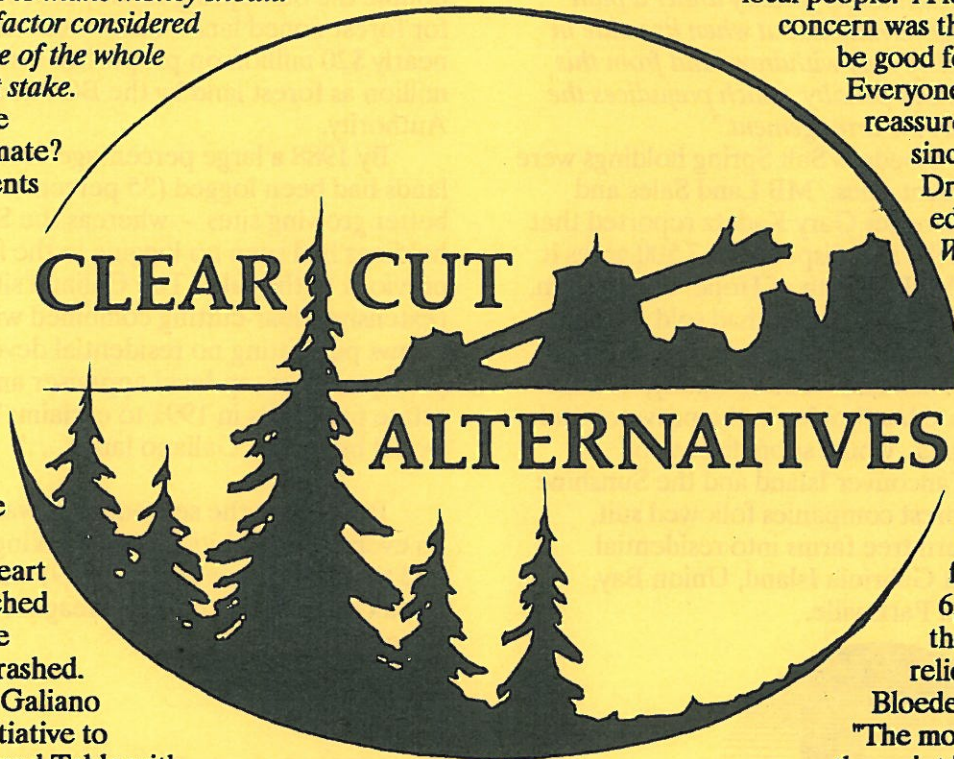
Bloedel.

"The money is beside

the point," said MB Land

Sales Manager Gary Kadatz.

"By selling, we got out from under a forest management problem of a long-term nature." According to Kadatz, the problem was not local logging protests - MB had not even been harvesting its Salt Spring lands - but rather the



"scattered isolation" of the sites.

Neither scattered isolation nor local buyers would prevent most of the properties being withdrawn from Managed Forest (tree farm) status and sprouting residential developments instead of trees. As a matter of fact, never before had it been so easy to remove land from tree farm classification.

By an Order In Council on Sept. 24, 1987, the Provincial Government followed Assessment Authority recommendations in changing regulations from complex (requiring Ministry of Forests approval) to simple (only a letter of intent from owners). "What really took our breath away," according to local observers two years later, was learning that MB's vice-president for Property, Taxes, and Risk Management, Jim Finkbeiner, served on the Commission advising the Assessment Authority in this matter. Finkbeiner would become the major figure representing MB in their upcoming fiasco on Galiano Island.

Other loopholes in the Assessment Act were more longstanding, as the following quote from the 1976 Royal Commission on Forest Practices reveals:

The present Taxation Tree Farm system can be used as something of a tax shelter. Owners may enjoy tax advantages on this land by virtue of its commitment to continuous forestry under a plan approved by the government; but when its value in other uses rises, they may withdraw land from this commitment without penalty, which prejudices the public's interest in the arrangement."

MacMillan Bloedel's Salt Spring holdings were not the only current sales. MB Land Sales and Development manager Gary Kadatz reported that in September 1987, MB disposed of 7,500 acres it held in Empire Valley north of Hope. In addition, during '86 and '87 the company had sold off five parcels of forest land on Galiano and holdings on the outskirts of Nanaimo. The company, which is the largest private landholder in the province and perhaps in Canada, would soon dispose of properties on Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast. Other forest companies followed suit, attempting to turn tree farms into residential developments at Gabriola Island, Union Bay, Cumberland and Parksville.



"90.6 percent of the respondents [to an MB questionnaire mailed to Galiano residents] do not want MB to sell their land - I believe the Salt Spring experience weighs heavily in this matter - and most Islanders want to see the status quo maintained. Herein, of course, is the problem. They want to have their cake and they want to eat it too . . ."

Jim Finkbeiner memo to MB management, Feb. '89

* * * *

Galiano residents were indeed aware of the Salt Spring precedent, and were agonizing about alternatives . . . caught between the gathering devastation of the forest lands and the threat of large scale development on those same lands. This time the forest company giant had the island cornered, with no way to turn. All the options were held by MB and it would use them well.

The Salt Spring parcels sold for an average price of \$750/acre. Three years later, in 1991, when MacMillan Bloedel sold off most of its 7,800-acre Galiano holdings, the average price would be nearly double the Salt Spring figure, at around \$1500/acre for forest-zoned land. This would net the company nearly \$20 million on properties assessed at \$2 million as forest land by the BC Assessment Authority.

By 1988 a large percentage of MB's Galiano lands had been logged (35 percent) - mostly on the better growing sites - whereas the Salt Spring holdings had seen no logging in the forty years previous to the sale. The Galiano situation (extensive clear-cutting combined with forest zone bylaws permitting no residential development) prompted one top-level appraiser analyzing the real estate prospects in 1991 to exclaim: "Only a fool would buy these Galiano lands . . ."

But before the sell-out, MB was contemplating an even more ambitious undertaking for Galiano, and the next two years (1988-89) would prove to be the most turbulent in this beleaguered island's history.

By Greg Foster

Special thanks to the Vancouver Sun, The Province, Times Colonist, Gulf Islands Driftwood, and MB Journal, for permission to use quotes, and to Galiano Conservancy Association librarian Linda Millard for her help in accessing the Conservancy's archives.

LEST WE FORGET . . .

THE CORTES CORRESPONDENCE

A ROAD MAP FOR CORPORATE-STYLE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

MacMillan Bloedel's campaign of contradictions on Galiano caused many to question whether there was a corporate strategy at all. A definitive answer surfaced in 1993. Without mentioning Galiano, the company set out all the familiar tactics in a letter from MB's Properties Division to the Regional District of Comox-Strathcona about its Managed Forest holdings on Cortes Island. Using quotations from this document, here are the signs that corporation-style "sustainable development" is under way on private forest land near you. In communities throughout the southern B.C. area, forest industry strategists are setting this plan in motion.

1. ANNOUNCE "REHABILITATION": "diseased and decaying forest must first be removed and then regenerated with healthy seedlings."

2. DISCARD DISPUTE RESOLUTION: "due to the diverse and varying interests of the community we found that the consultative process and negotiations to reach consensus failed."

3. THREATEN LOCAL AUTHORITY: "If an OCP (Official Community Plan) is adopted that becomes too rigid to operate within, these lands may be disposed of to owners who will remove timber according to their own personal schedules and not on a planned sustained regulated cut."

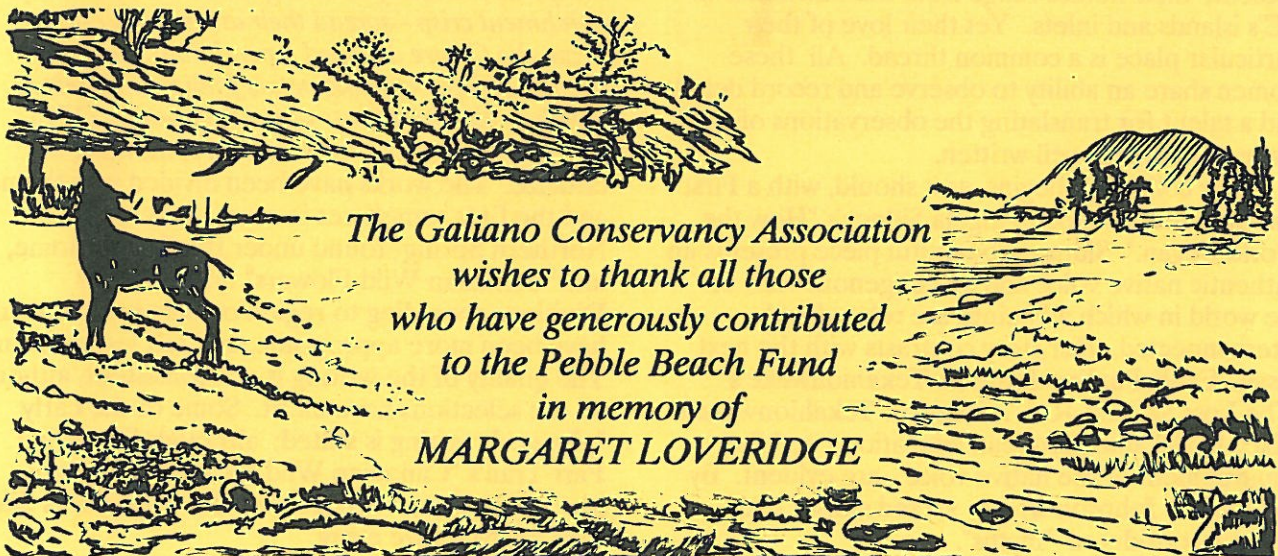
4. COMMIT TO "HIGHER FORCES": "While it is certainly our intention to maintain our properties as Managed Forest, overly restrictive land use policies and conflicting land use pressures (e.g. rural residential and residential subdivisions) surrounding specific parcels may force a higher use other than long term forest management."

5. CONFIRM THE INEVITABILITY OF DEVELOPMENT: "Eventually, due to public and or political pressure, some of these lands will be no longer suited for long term forest management."

6. HINT AT REPRISALS: "This is not unique to Cortes but caution should be exercised in this issue to avoid the subsequent conflicts that have arisen elsewhere."

Most repugnant of all is the presumption of naivety. The strategy's success depends on a community's willingness to participate in good faith. No consequence has been more painful and humiliating for the people of Galiano than to admit that their trust was exploited and that their sincerity in cooperation was abused.

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*The Galiano Conservancy Association
wishes to thank all those
who have generously contributed
to the Pebble Beach Fund
in memory of
MARGARET LOVERIDGE*

Book Review

LIVING IN HARMONY: Nature Writing by Women in Canada

Edited and with an introduction by Andrea Pinto Lebowitz. Victoria; Orca Book Publishers. 1996.

Reviewed by Jillian Ridington

When I first saw *Living in Harmony* in the Galiano Conservancy Association library, I thought, "About time!" Women have been writing about their relationship with this land since before it became Canada, and this is the first major collection of their writings that I have seen. Although it is not as comprehensive as one might wish - perhaps no one book could be - it is an excellent start at bringing together an important, and neglected, genre of writing. As editor Andrea Pinto Lebowitz, Assistant Dean of Arts at Simon Fraser University, states in her introduction, "a 'garrison mentality' that rejects nature for its supposed obliteration of human values" has dominated Canadian literature. She believes that, "Bringing these women back into focus redresses a wrong of literary history but more importantly it offers another way of seeing our connection to the land." The writings she has selected show that nature can offer "an alternative way of being human through harmony with the land." (ibid.)

That holistic perspective is shared by all the women whose writings are included in *Living in Harmony*. The authors are diverse; they include First Nations women and immigrants, teen-agers and older women, gardeners and pioneers. Their writings extend from "time immemorial" to the present; their homes range from the Maritimes to BC's islands and inlets. Yet their love of their particular place is a common thread. All these women share an ability to observe and record detail, and a talent for translating the observations of their senses into words well written.

The collection begins, as it should, with a First Nations creation story, Angela Sidney's "How the World Began." Sidney's beautiful piece presents an authentic native voice and an indigenous view of the world in which all beings are related and interconnected. Her story contrasts with the next essay, Emily Pauline Johnson-Tekahionwake's "The Lost Salmon-Run". Johnson-Tekahionwake's mixed blood and European education - and the diminishment of the native voice - are evident. By 1911, when Johnson wrote, sacred stories had become considered "myths".

For me, the greatest delight in reading the book was discovering new (to me) writers. I made several such discoveries; Peri McQuay's "On a Morning so Beautiful it Makes a Mockery of Fear" excited me the most. McQuay, in thrall of "a mesmerizing charm to the May morning which draws me on" walks through an unnamed landscape. She unwittingly gets between a mother deer and her new-born fawns, and finds herself in conflict with the animal's strong protective instincts, and in a danger which contrasts with the apparently serene countryside. McQuay escapes unharmed, and returns, relieved, "to a pastoral, cultivated world." The words in which she describes her return articulate the ambiguous feelings that all of us who live in places where wild beings are close neighbours may experience in peak moments: love of the natural world and its creatures, and respect for their powers.

The difficult walking is over, and survival no longer forces me to pitch my senses high. But there also is sorrow at losing this pitch as well. The drama back in the pine thicket seemed more pungent and powerful by far than my life at home. (132)

Meryl Simonds Mohr was another discovery for me. Her "Stubborn Particulars of Place" tells of her love of the North Bay region, and particularly the lady's slippers which, for her, marked the coming of spring there. It evokes the sadness we all feel in leaving a beloved place. Mohr's description of the lady's slipper shows that she possesses an artist's eye:

Four wisps of brownish tissue - two sepals and two petals, virtually indistinguishable and already parchment crisp - spread their arms like a cross. From the Centre drooped a pendulous pink sac formed by two opposing petals folding themselves together, like the sleeves of a silk kimono. (172)

Being a critic, I have to find something to criticize. The works have been divided into themes, and the fit is sometimes inexact. Why is "A Northern Spring" found under the theme Home, and "Canadian Wild Flowers" under Place? Divisions according to region or time period would have been more appropriate, and felt less arbitrary. The quality of the writing is not consistent, although all the selections have merit. Some of the early "pioneer" writing is stilted; although Catherine Parr Trail's "Canadian Wild Flowers" may have historical value, it reads more like a scientist's diary than an evocative essay.

Many of the selections, such as those from Emily Carr's **The Book of Small** and Sharon Butala's **The Perfection of the Morning**, although excellent, are readily available elsewhere. My enjoyment of some of the selections ("A Morning so Beautiful it Makes a Mockery of Fear" is one example) would have been enhanced if I had had more information about their settings. This should have been included in the short introductions to each piece, or in a map of Canada pinpointing the locations. Just where in the vastness of Northern B.C. is Tetana Lake, where Theodora Stanwell-Fletcher identified flora and fauna and experienced the "Northern Spring" from which her essay gets its title? I would have liked to have seen selections written by today's native women writers, and at least one selection from Newfoundland, included. If I were not a chauvinistic British Columbian, (and perhaps Lebowitz is another) I would think that our province is disproportionately represented. But I attribute that imbalance to the fact that we have more wonders to write about.

The final selection is again by Peri McQuay. Entitled "Seizing the Strawberry", it is a fine defence of nature writing against charges that "writing that celebrates nature obscures the threats facing the natural world." (215) McQuay notes that nature writers have understood and fought against the diminishment of the natural world for as long as there have been nature writers, and it is from their works that other naturalists have gained inspiration; "It is from these cherished authors that I have learned to honour nature as the sustaining organism of which we are small parts." (218) We can no longer write, or read, about nature as if it were a whole, but that does not mean we should not continue to celebrate what we have left. As McQuay puts it:

Recognizing our despair over the ravages to the biosystem is necessary. However, when we become paralyzed by despair, we opt out of the organism which is our proper home and become part of the destructive force. This is why I think we need the gift of nature writers' special vision more than ever. Because nature's wholeness is besieged on all sides, affirmative spiritual and philosophical discourse remains essential. It is exactly because we must not take leave of our senses in the face of the holocaust that we need the focus of the visionary.

Many of the writers whose works are among the 23 selections included in **Living in Harmony** have "the focus of the visionary." Like McQuay, I see their vision as an antidote to despair that can paralyze us. Your favourites may not be the same as mine, but I'm sure you will discover a new voice that resonates with yours, somewhere within its covers.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

LETTER TO CLARA CLAM

Dear Clara,

Your seafaring friends on the west side heard the news with sinking hearts about your conditions in Whaler Bay (Summer '97 *Archipelago*). We knew life was difficult on the "east side", but your letter really touched our gills.

Along our stretch of Trincomali Channel, things are moving a lot more swimmingly. We put some notes on hooks about all the small fry in the nurseries and schools here, and guess what? It looks like we're going to get some School Zone signs! One of the first places on the Pacific Ocean side of Canada!

The Conservancy got wind of what's going on down here, and decided to get into some really fishy business for a change. They're calling it a proposed Marine Protected Area, which is hard to pronounce under water. "School Zone" is easier, and makes a lot more bubbles. Try it. Whatever it's called, we just hope it will have real teeth, not just more of this endless mouthing around.

Our mother rockfish especially like the idea. Maybe it will help keep some of the young urchins off the street even.

One of our strongest adherents, Mike Mussel, is edging his way to Whaler Bay to lend support to your cause. He should be there by the end of the century. That's the 22nd, of course. Even though it may seem like life has hit the surface, it is worth fighting to protect your home. Just remember to keep your head under water.

Yours,
"Tiger" Rockfish

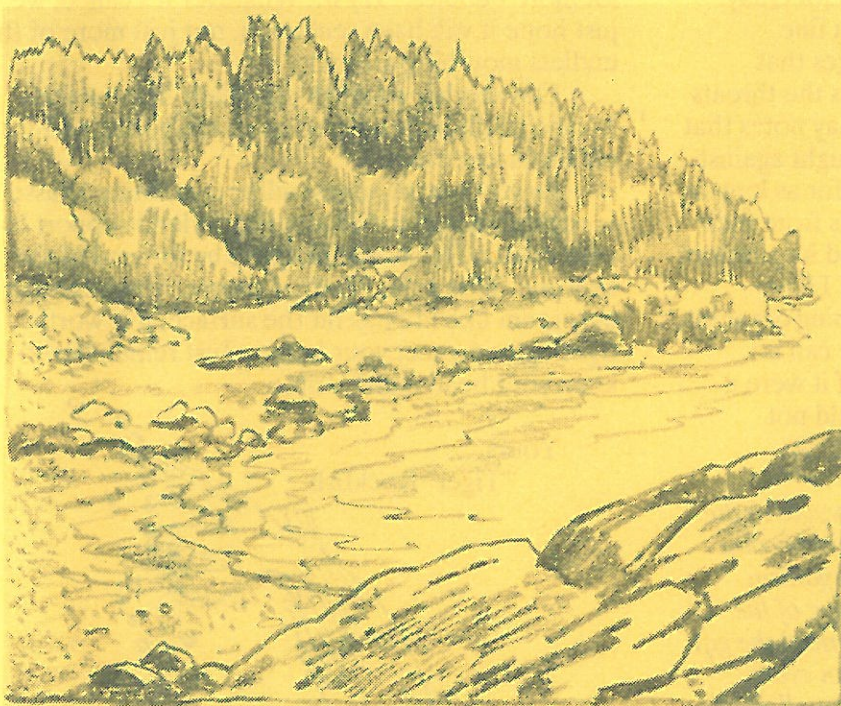


LOW TIDE AT SHAW'S LANDING

Squinting in the mid-day sun, we move towards the water, shells cracking under our feet, eyes riveted to the ground. The tide is at its lowest and the intertidal life in all its diversity is in plain view.

We are drawn by an array of cylindrical structures looking like rejects from a potter's wheel. Stefani Paine, our naturalist guide, explains that these are moon-snail egg masses, a leathery mixture of sand, slime and eggs (Barbara Geary has published excellent photos of moon-snails in the August Active Page). The beach is covered with them and there are more in the water beyond.

Anik and Tycho Mommsen, the keenest (and youngest) observers among us, quickly find a live moon-snail, partly submerged in the soft sand, its spongy foot fully extended. This fist-sized snail, the largest on the beach, eats clams by piercing a little hole in their shell through which it sucks out their innards.



Shaw's Landing by Annette Shaw

The beach is littered with pierced clam shells, leftover snail snacks. It takes a lot of clams to feed all these snails, whose abundance is a clear indicator of the richness of life in the sandy shallows.

We came here today, about ten of us from the Conservancy interested in the proposed Trincomali Channel Marine Protected Area (MPA), to find out about life on the edge of the Channel. The MPA's main justification is as a nursery area for juvenile rockfish, but the intertidal nearshore area is by far

its most accessible part. What shape is that area in? What lives there? What is there to protect here?

Shaw's Landing, near the northern limit of the proposed MPA, is an easily accessible pocket beach, a sandy cove flanked by wedges of rock. At high tide, the cove is full, waves lapping at the shore near the road. Now, at low tide, under a full sun, oysters, clams, snails and periwinkles are faced with heat exposure and desiccation. Purple starfish congregate in rock crevices to avoid the sun and stay moist. A small starry flounder lies there, stiffly curved in rigor mortis. Barnacles are shut tight; crabs hide under rocks. Low tide is fine for biologists, but hard on those who normally live under water.

Shaw's Landing used to see more human activity than mere beach combing: iron rings growing out of the rocks and cement pilings are witnesses to former use as a steamship port; the creekbed of Jack Creek was once a log skid; the rusted skeleton of an old car blends in with the rest of the beach. Over the past century, the cove itself has been slightly truncated by periodic road construction. Nevertheless, the area is rich with a great diversity and abundance of intertidal life.

"Why protect an area that is doing so well on its own?", one might think. "There is a great abundance of sea-life here, near shore and in the deeps, and it's doing well on its own, thank you." Well, it is precisely this wealth of life which is worth protecting! What guarantee is there, for example, that some licensed clam digger might not show up with hydraulic equipment and scoop up all those clams and snails? Legally, too!

Shaw's Landing is a little pocket of exuberant life in a steeper, more sober coastline; a little oasis for clams in a rocky desert. Protecting it as part of the Trincomali Channel MPA is an insurance policy against over harvesting of clams and other species elsewhere. It is also a way to ensure that those residents and neighbours who now love, use and protect the beach, will continue to enjoy it in the years to come . . . and that the children of Anik, Tycho and their friends will continue to experience the joy of discovery on the seashore.

By Paul LeBlond